

A Qualitative Analysis of Intimate Partner Violence

Chiquita D. Howard-Bostic

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Sociology

Carol A. Bailey, Chair  
Ellington T. Graves  
James Hawdon  
Jill Kiecolt

May 13, 2011  
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: intimate partner violence, female perpetrators, intimate terrorism,  
violent resistance, situational couple violence, mutual violent combat

Copyright 2011, Chiquita D. Howard-Bostic

# A Qualitative Analysis of Intimate Partner Violence

Chiquita D. Howard-Bostic

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore women's dual experiences of IPV to examine whether their motivations fit the current framework on four types of intimate partner violence (IPV) in light of Johnson's typology, which includes: violent resistance (VR), situational couple violence (SCV), mutual violent combat (MVC), and intimate terrorism (IT) (Kelly and Johnson 2008). I applied these types of IPV to describe women's physical aggression, control, and emotional responses experienced and performed during IPV. Johnson's typology classified six of 10 participant experiences; to describe the remaining four, I applied blended types of IPV. Findings in this study indicated that VR and SCV overlooked women's use of controlling physical aggression; this study identified alternative concepts and additional dimensions of control and resistance, and introduced tempered violence resistance (TVR), a new IPV type to describe women's use of controlling physical aggression during protective violence. Correspondingly, findings also indicated that interpretations of physical aggression and control in MVC and IT did not consider wide-ranging degrees of control such as self-control, situational control, and partner control. Hence, distinctions between SCV or MVC and MVC or IT were limited by vague interpretations of control. Furthermore, VR, MVC, and IT did not fully describe women's emotional responses. These types of violence focused solely on the context of physical aggression and control, which minimized perceptions of conflict and omitted reported samples of motivations. Forthcoming studies applying Johnson's typology should include external contexts of relationship conflict and consider multiple types control and dimensions of resistance.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful for support from my committee members, family, and friends. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my chairperson, Dr. Carol A. Bailey, for her unconditional encouragement and boundless leadership. I would also like to thank my committee members Dr. Ellington Graves, Dr. James Hawdon, and Dr. Jill Kiecolt for guiding and inspiring my research and academic career. Dr. Graves, thank you for offering continued support and for paying attention to details during each teachable moment over the past several years.

I would like to thank my husband, Alex Bostic who is my source of motivation and strength. He always stands by my side and brings out the best in me. I would like to thank my daughter, Sydney Bostic who has also brought endless joy to my life. I also thank my mother, aunt, uncle, and mentor, Tanja Holder, Sandra McClemore, Stanley Scott, and L. Nathan Hare for their caring words, positive outlooks, and encouragement, and my entire family because they support each career goal and initiative. Finally, I would like to thank my good friends (Enid Headen-Montague, Lisa Wood, Ann Knefel, Joanna Perry, Jessica Brown, Anna Skopal, Jahi Johnson, Jeff Toussaint, and Rammy Haija) who have shown support, encouraged new ideas, and given their best suggestions. I dedicate this dissertation to my late grandmother, Georgia M. Howard who helped to pave each path on the road to my success.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix

### **PART 1: INTRODUCTION 1**

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH AND IPV .....	1
1.0 Significance of study .....	1
1.1 Conceptual definition and IPV .....	6
1.2 Context and external motivations .....	11
1.2.1 <i>Immediate (situational) context</i> .....	12
1.2.2 <i>Broader (historical and cultural) context</i> .....	13

### **PART 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORY 13**

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	13
2.0 Women as victims of IPV .....	14
2.0.1 <i>Power and IPV</i> .....	17
2.0.2 <i>Motivating factors and IPV</i> .....	19
2.1 Women as perpetrators of IPV .....	21
2.1.1 <i>Similar rates for men and women</i> .....	21
2.1.2 <i>Higher rates for men than women</i> .....	22
2.1.3 <i>Higher rates for women than men</i> .....	24
2.2 Comparing rates that consider types of violence .....	25
2.2.1 <i>Criminal justice and rates of IPV</i> .....	26
2.2.2 <i>NCVS and UCR</i> .....	27
2.3 Police practices and mandatory arrests .....	28
2.3.1 <i>Homicide</i> .....	30

CHAPTER 3: REVIEW OF THEORY, MODELS, AND TYPES OF IPV.....	31
3.0 Models on female violence .....	31
3.0.1 <i>Models on women's motivations for IPV</i> .....	32
3.1 Theories on IPV .....	35
3.1.1 <i>Theories on coercive controlling violence</i> .....	37
3.1.2 <i>Theories on situational conflict</i> .....	41
3.1.3 <i>Separation-instigated violence (SV)</i> .....	43
3.1.4 <i>Models on gender equality</i> .....	46
3.2 Theoretical models on female-perpetrators of IPV .....	51
3.2.1 <i>Self-defense</i> .....	51
3.2.2 <i>Theories on resistance</i> .....	53
3.2.3 <i>Feminist theory</i> .....	54
3.2.4 <i>Theory on exposure reduction</i> .....	55

3.3	Johnson’s typology .....	57
	3.3.1 <i>Two dimensions of aggression and control</i> .....	58
	3.3.2 <i>Aggression, control, and types of IPV</i> .....	60
	3.3.3 <i>IPV types and themes</i> .....	62
3.4	Conclusion on theories, models, and types of IPV.....	66

**PART 3: METHODS AND EVALUATION** **67**

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY .....		67
4.0	Research questions .....	67
4.1	Centered approach and thematic analysis .....	68
4.2	Access and recruitment .....	70
4.3	Interview .....	72
	4.3.1 <i>Interview guide</i> .....	74

CHAPTER 5: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES .....		75
5.0	Centered analysis of interviews.....	76
	5.0.1 <i>Brittany Jones</i> .....	76
	5.0.2 <i>Ann Wardrop</i> .....	80
	5.0.3 <i>Susie Jordan</i> .....	84
	5.0.4 <i>Aaliyah Kanter</i> .....	88
	5.0.5 <i>Sarah Jenkins</i> .....	92
	5.0.6 <i>Veronica Holmes</i> .....	98
	5.0.7 <i>Debra Smith</i> .....	101
	5.0.8 <i>Renee Garcia</i> .....	107
	5.0.9 <i>Sasha Davis</i> .....	110
	5.0.10 <i>Saridy Wilkins</i> .....	114
5.1	Assessing participant experiences .....	117
5.2	Two-dimensional relationship and participants .....	119
	5.2.1 <i>Control</i> .....	119
	5.2.2 <i>Violence</i> .....	120
	5.2.3 <i>Escalation of abuse</i> .....	120
	5.2.4 <i>Severity of violence</i> .....	121
5.3	Participants and IPV patterns .....	121
5.4	Participant experiences and thematic analysis .....	124

**PART 4: ANALYSIS** **126**

CHAPTER 6: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES AND VR .....		126
6.0	Resistance .....	127
	6.0.1 <i>Types of resistance</i> .....	128
	6.0.2 <i>Behavioral patterns and resistance</i> .....	132
6.1	Non-controlling resistance .....	136
	6.1.1 <i>Restricted control</i> .....	137
	6.1.2 <i>Dependence</i> .....	140

6.1.3	<i>Non-controlling retaliation</i>	143
6.2	Coercive controlling behavior	144
6.2.1	<i>Fear-inducing behavior</i>	145
6.2.2	<i>Possessive behavior</i>	149
6.2.3	<i>Degrading behavior</i>	150
6.3	Physical abuse and resistance	153
6.3.1	<i>Frequency and duration of resistance</i>	155
6.3.2	<i>Severity of resistance</i>	156
6.3.3	<i>Injury during resistance</i>	158
CHAPTER 7: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES AND SCV		160
7.0	Immediate context, aggression, and control	163
7.0.1	<i>Substance abuse</i>	163
7.0.2	<i>Financial instability</i>	166
7.0.3	<i>Lacking trust</i>	167
7.0.4	<i>Child abuse</i>	169
7.1	Broader context, aggression, and control	171
7.1.1	<i>History of violence</i>	172
7.1.2	<i>Gender inequality</i>	173
7.2	Situational conflict	176
7.2.1	<i>Control of decision-making</i>	177
7.2.2	<i>Control of behavior</i>	179
7.2.3	<i>Frustration</i>	180
7.2.4	<i>Minimization</i>	182
7.2.5	<i>Self-defense</i>	184
7.3	Domestic abuse and situational violence	185
7.3.1	<i>Frequency and duration of situational violence</i>	185
7.3.2	<i>Severity of situational violence</i>	188
7.3.3	<i>Injury during situational violence</i>	192
CHAPTER 8: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES AND MVC		193
8.0	Battle for control	195
8.0.1	<i>Gaining control</i>	195
8.0.2	<i>Mirror punishment</i>	197
8.0.3	<i>Patterns of coercive control</i>	198
8.0.4	<i>Premeditated physical aggression</i>	201
8.0.5	<i>Emotionally reactive responses</i>	202
8.1	Situational conflict	203
8.1.1	<i>Strained emotional attachment</i>	204
8.1.2	<i>Sexual violence</i>	205
8.1.3	<i>The sexual “other”</i>	206
8.1.4	<i>Child abuse</i>	206
8.1.5	<i>Substance abuse</i>	207
8.1.6	<i>Financial conflict</i>	208
8.2	Domestic abuse and mutual violence	210

8.2.1	<i>Frequency and duration of mutual violence</i>	211
8.2.2	<i>Severity of mutual violence</i>	213
8.2.3	<i>Injury during mutual violence</i>	222
CHAPTER 9: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES AND IT		224
9.0	Behavioral patterns and IT	226
9.0.1	<i>Dependent IT abuse</i>	226
9.0.2	<i>Antisocial IT abuse</i>	227
9.1	Coercive control	228
9.1.1	<i>Defining masculinity</i>	229
9.1.2	<i>Devaluing cultural capital</i>	231
9.1.3	<i>Economic control</i>	232
9.1.4	<i>Domineering control</i>	234
9.2	Psychological abuse	235
9.2.1	<i>Verbal aggression</i>	236
9.2.2	<i>Threats and fear</i>	239
9.3	Domestic abuse and coercive controlling violence	242
9.3.1	<i>Frequency and duration of coercive controlling violence</i>	243
9.3.2	<i>Severity of coercive controlling violence</i>	245
9.3.3	<i>Injury during coercive controlling violence</i>	248
<b>PART 5: DISCUSSION</b>		<b>248</b>
CHAPTER 10: EXTERNAL CONTEXT AND MOTIVATIONS		249
10.0	Addiction	250
10.0.1	<i>Alcohol consumption-only</i>	251
10.0.2	<i>Abuse of drugs and alcohol</i>	252
10.0.3	<i>Abuse of narcotics</i>	253
10.1	Child abuse	254
10.2	Culture of violence	258
10.2.1	<i>Family and community violence</i>	259
10.2.2	<i>Cultural violence</i>	261
10.2.3	<i>Gendered and violence</i>	262
10.3	Social Support	263
10.3.1	<i>Counseling services</i>	264
10.3.2	<i>Shelter services</i>	266
10.3.3	<i>Domestic violence support services</i>	266
10.3.4	<i>Authorities</i>	267
10.3.5	<i>Family and peer network</i>	268
CHAPTER 11: CONTROL AND IPV		270
11.0	Participant experiences and control	270
11.0.1	<i>Findings on non-controlling behavior</i>	271
11.0.2	<i>Findings on controlling behavior</i>	272
11.0.3	<i>Findings on gender and control</i>	275

**PART 6: IMPLICATIONS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 280**

CHAPTER 12: TYPOLOGY, LIMITATIONS, AND SUMMARY..... 280

12.0 Conceptual challenges ..... 281

    12.0.1 *Conceptualizing non-controlling aggression* ..... 281

    12.0.2 *Shifts in physical aggression*..... 283

    12.0.3 *Types of control* ..... 284

    12.0.4 *Measuring control* ..... 285

12.1 Additional type of IPV ..... 287

    12.1.1 *Tempered violent resistance* ..... 287

12.2 Mixed type interpretations ..... 289

    12.2.1 *External motivations condition violence*..... 289

    12.2.2 *Control is not conditioned by severity of violence* ..... 290

    12.2.3 *Participant experiences and mixed types of IPV*..... 290

12.3 Limitations of study ..... 294

    12.3.1 *Biases and single informant studies*..... 294

    12.3.2 *Methodology* ..... 296

12.4 Summary of findings..... 299

12.5 Recommendations..... 300

REFERENCES ..... 303

APPENDIX..... 336

    Appendix A: IRB Consent Form ..... 336

    Appendix B: The Revised Controlling Behaviors Scale (CBS-R) ..... 339

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Types of IPV, acronyms, and descriptions.....	62
Table 2: Participant experiences and IPV .....	123
Table 3: Controlling and non-controlling behavior .....	279

## **PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH AND IPV**

In this chapter, I outline the significance of this study of women's perpetration and victimization during intimate partner violence (IPV). Given that researchers and policymakers use conflicting conceptual definitions of IPV and other related concepts, theoretical explanations and empirical findings are not consistent (Dasgupta 2001; McHugh and Frieze 2006). I briefly identify conceptual issues related to the study of this topic. As well, I define the conceptual framework for immediate and broader contexts of IPV, which distinguish situational and external motivations that shape violent responses.

#### **1.0 Significance of study**

The purpose of this research was to examine women's experiences as both victims and perpetrators of intimate partner violence (IPV) to examine whether their motivations fit the current framework on IPV. The research applied a current typology that has attempted to classify four types of IPV: violent resistance (VR), situational couple violence (SCV), mutual violent combat (MVC), and intimate terrorism (IT) (Johnson and Leone 2005; Kelly and Johnson 2008). Unlike Johnson's typology, most existing frameworks for understanding occurrences of IPV have examined women's victimization, generally ignoring women as perpetrators.

The latter is not surprising because research in the last two decades shows that compared to men, women are disproportionately victims (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). For example, data in 2001 from National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) indicate that intimate partners physically attack, sexually assault, or rape 588,490 women as compared to 103,220 men (Rennison 2003). Furthermore, research on intimate partner disturbance police calls involving

injury find that women were injured 94% of the time, while men were injured 14% of the time (Berk et al. 1983).

Although literature on women as perpetrators receives less research attention than findings on women as victims of IPV, instances of female-perpetrated IPV are increasing. For example, data on domestic violence arrests of women in Connecticut show a steady rise from 11% in 1987 to 18% in 1997 (State of Connecticut 1998) to 31% in 2002 (Hirschel and Buzawa 2002). Despite the increase in female-perpetrated violence, most studies on perpetrators use samples of men and research of victimization uses samples of women. This study used samples of women to research perpetration and victimization experienced by women during IPV.

Most studies on IPV also fail to examine women's motivations for IPV. For example, findings on motivations for IPV among men in Anderson and Umberson (2002) are applicable to those described by current theories on IPV. However, Anderson (2008) finds that motivations for IPV among women do not fit consistently within current categories of IT and SCV. Thus, it remains unknown if these samples apply to female-perpetrated violence. Following Anderson's recommendations, this study examined motivations for female-perpetrated IPV to assess whether the current themes in types of IPV best describe female-perpetrated IPV.

Among studies on perpetrators and victims of IPV, central themes in theories on IPV include fear of men's violent behavior and their various tactics of intimate domination. These themes are present in theory on IPV in the areas of power, control, and conflict. Present theories also highlight violent consequences for women who challenge masculine superiority, institutional control, and patriarchy hierarchies (Pridemore and Freilich 2005). In brief, current scant theoretical attention on female perpetrators centers on men and masculinity, leaving women's motivations, experiences, explanations, participating factors, and other issues largely

under-examined. I included women's centered narratives with the goal of enhancing theory on women's use of power and control during IPV.

Some explanations that include women characterize female predators as aggressors who seek status and masculine authority through patterns of domination that include intimidation, coercive control, conflict, and oppression (McNeely and Mann 1990), and others assume that like their male counterparts, female perpetrators commit violence to express forms of revenge (Hines and Saudino 2003). Still others characterize women as self-defending victims of male authority (Dugan, Nagin, and Rosenfeld 1999), although ultimately self-defense may add to a woman's vulnerability rather than increase her safety (Bachman and Carmody 1994). I examined women's patterns of aggression and their unique motivations for physical violence.

Since 2008, Johnson and feminist writers have engaged in a public debate about whether current theories on IPV are gender neutral. Only two current studies, Anderson (2008) and Caldwell et al. (2009), offer evidence that motivations for IPV differ between men and women. The general understanding of female perpetrators of IPV is inadequate and understudied. Since findings show that women who use violence in intimate relationships often perpetrate IPV in response to their victimization, I examined women who were perpetrators and victims of IPV. The analysis of this study was women-centered. The thematic analysis also offered an advantage of framing women's motivations for IPV as they arose in each interview.

The first goal of this study was to specifically examine types of IPV (violent resistance, situational couple violence, mutual violent combat, and intimate terrorism) offered by Johnson (Johnson and Leone 2005; Kelly and Johnson 2008). I included types of IPV in Johnson's typology, which is one of the most frequently cited typologies in the study of IPV (Anderson 2008). By identifying types of IPV, Johnson has introduced the convincing case that not all

forms of IPV are the same, and types of IPV are apparent in different contexts, samples, and methodologies, which has urged researcher and policymakers to consider different types of IPV (Johnson 1995). Johnson has also introduces central concepts that distinguish different types of violence and control. Johnson's typology was an optimal starting point for creating a framework to classify women's experiences of IPV.

The second goal was to examine the motivations and contexts of women's victimization and female-perpetrated IPV. I considered findings from Anderson (2008) and Caldwell et al. (2009:685) on motivations for VR among women such as self-defense, negative emotions, avoiding control, control, intimidation, injury, and jealousy. This study examined the immediate and broader contexts to assess a full range of emotional responses that triggered IPV. Beyond resistance, this study extended the discussion of IPV to account for women's use of physical aggression and control, and the corresponding motivations for perpetration of SCV, MVC, and IT.

The third goal was to examine women's perpetration of situational, mutual, and coercive violence. Theories on gender inequality and IPV have been one-sided, with a general focus on female victimization. In tandem with the debate about gender neutrality of theories on IPV, feminists have also entered a debate about the significance of power and control in studies of female-perpetrated IPV. For the past two decades, researchers have argued about whether there is gender symmetry in IPV, or why women are becoming more violent (Archer 2000; Johnson 2001; Graham-Kevan and Archer 2003). Furthermore, women's access to power in relationships has not been thoroughly examined within the context of Johnson's categories of IPV; when considering the most relevant category, mutual violent combat (MVC), Johnson contends that little is known about frequency, features, and consequences of the category. Nevertheless, Kelly

and Johnson (2008:477) exclude MVC from their conversation about implications of the overall body of knowledge, assessment, and treatment interventions for IPV utilized by criminal, civil, and family courts. Ultimately, the third goal of this study contributed to a more theoretically informed typology that included several dimensions of women's control and resistance.

Therefore, this study employed the following research questions: the overarching research question was, in what ways does Johnson's typology (VR, SCV, MVC, and IT) fit women's experiences as a perpetrator and victim of IPV? There were two sub-questions: what are external motivations for IPV among women who are perpetrators and victims of IPV? What role does control play in women's experiences of IPV, and how do they express and experience control?

I used a qualitative methodology to address the research questions. The sample was 10 women, some of whom I recruited through a network of women's groups and centers in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. While attending a human services advisory group at a community service organization, I initiated partnerships with these organizations. Administrators at each site helped to recruit participants who received mentoring, counsel, or assistance at the partnering centers. Among this recruited sample, the court system characterized some women as aggressors of violence in their abusive relationships, while other women had joined the women's center network voluntarily. Face-to-face interviews were the primary form of data collection.

Theory on female-perpetrated IPV is limited, vague, and poorly conceptualized. For that reason, I examined whether Johnson's types of IPV described women's experiences of IPV. This also framed a theoretical discussion around violence, power, control, conflict, and issues of gender inequality. The extensive discussion on Johnson's typology had a two-fold purpose. First, current literature on types, models, and theories of IPV guided my use of concepts throughout

the study. For instance, Johnson's literature on types of IPV provided sensitizing concepts during the interview and analysis. Secondly, the typology informed the reader of sources of current and potential bias in types on IPV.

I assessed whether Johnson's typology was applicable to accounts of IPV perpetrated and experienced by women. Narratives of participant experiences offered a bridge between my concerns as a researcher and the participants' subjective experiences. The personal narratives of abuse formed the focus of each analysis. These scenarios told the story of participants' personal experiences of IPV, emphasizing their own words or interpretations as much as possible. I identified common themes across interviews as the basis of the qualitative research. Then, subjective experiences and abstract concepts were woven together to join the two very different worlds of the researcher and participant (Auberbach and Silverstein 2003:40).

### 1.1 Conceptual definition and IPV

Conceptual definitions and terms used to refer to IPV have changed over time and have been the subject of considerable debate. Researchers have been critiqued by some for failing to combine similar experiences under the general rubric of IPV, while others argue that researchers have misrepresented forms of abuse by consolidating types of abuse as universal experiences of abuse (McHugh and Frieze 2006:122). Earlier studies on violence between intimates had used the terms wife abuse and spousal abuse. However, new research has changed the terminology as it has become clear that the former terminology is too limiting in its focus. Studies on wife abuse and spouse abuse highlighted physical violence experienced by married, heterosexual women (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 1998; Dasgupta 2001). McHugh and Frieze (2006) argue that researchers have now broken the silence about battering by identifying additional victims such as lesbians, gay men, unmarried cohabiting couples, dating couples, and women in the process of

separation and divorce (Neff, Holaman, and Schluter 1995; Donovan and Williams 2002). This research examined experiences of heterosexual women who are married, cohabiting unmarried couples, dating couples, or women in the process of separation.

In studies examining a similar sample, researchers began using a more inclusive term, domestic violence, instead of wife or spousal abuse. However, studies critiqued this term as well because some argued that “domestic” implies that violence is not as severe or repugnant as other forms of violence. Studies have also interpreted the concept of domestic abuse, as with family violence, as being too all encompassing because these studies often include child abuse. Some feminists have argued that terms such as “domestic violence” and “spousal abuse” do not distinguish between battering and combative relationships (Breines and Gorden 1983).

Battering and physical assault are other terms used because their definitions have a greater correspondence with legal definitions (Straus 1999:38). Furthermore, policymakers and activists have used the term “battery” in a wide-ranging effort to end various forms of oppression enacted against women. Battery requires an intentionally violent act and offensive contact with another person. However, one difficulty with conceptualizing violence in intimate relations is that the studies often ignore emotional violence. This study adopted the term “intimate partner violence” (IPV) from Johnson (1999) to conceptualize violence among intimates.

As noted above and elsewhere, the definition of violence is highly varied. For example, the United Nations (UN) defines violence as “any act that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (Russo and Pirlott 2006:181). In this study, I conceptualized IPV more narrowly. I defined IPV as only physical violence. Further, in keeping with Johnson’s terminology, I used the terms physical violence,

violence, and physical aggression interchangeably. I also incorporated discussions of emotional violence or abuse and verbal aggression in this research; however, I considered those terms as being distinct from physical violence.

To distinguish between types of IPV, I applied a typology of IPV types (Johnson and Leone 2005; Kelly and Johnson 2008). Although they do not fully address emotional violence, Johnson and Leone (2005) offer a typology as a useful classification system for research on IPV. They distinguish between situational couple violence (SCV) and intimate terrorism (IT). They argue that SCV is violence that occurs when conflict arising from a specific situation or context escalates to physical violence. During SCV, one or both partners appear to have poor ability to manage their conflicts and, or poor control of anger (Johnson 2005). Causes of SCV vary from couple to couple and across different incidents of violence experienced by the same couple (Johnson and Leone 2005). SCV tends to occur once or infrequently and is not committed as a way of controlling the other person. Violence is not explicitly or implicitly threatening or used as a way of making the other person act in a certain way, although it could ultimately have that effect. Johnson (1995) finds that SCV is a form of abuse experienced and perpetrated by both men and women, also alleging that this type of IPV offers a gender-neutral examination of violent relationships.

In contrast to SCV, Johnson and Leone (2005) use IT to describe violence that occurs when one partner attempts to exert general control over the other partner on an ongoing basis. Johnson and Leone suggest that studies should apply IT when proposing a more complex understanding of physical assaults that includes elements other than just violent acts. For example, IT tends to include psychological abuse. Behavior performed by perpetrators of IPV is more intimidating than conduct performed by perpetrators of SCV (Johnson and Leone

2005:323). Hence, Johnson's typology also examines emotional responses during IPV, but IT limits an analysis of emotional motivations to the situational context of violence and control performed during IPV.

Johnson argues that distinct types of violence have different psychological and social roots, interpersonal dynamics, and consequences for the victim. Hence, Johnson claims that earlier literature on IPV failed to distinguish between SCV and IT. He argues that distinctions between SCV and IT have implications for understanding the effects of violence on its victims and the development of theory and intervention strategies (Johnson 1995; Johnson and Ferraro 2000; Johnson and Leone 2005). Unlike previous types of IPV, Johnson attempts to establish dimensions of divergence that researchers can operationalize and investigate empirically. Thus, the remainder of this dissertation contains frequent references to types of IPV presented by Johnson.

This study also considered two additional IPV types offered in Johnson's typology: violent resistance (VR) and mutual violent combat (MVC) to describe experiences of IPV. However, the definitions were unclear and ill defined; studies had conducted minimal research using these types of IPV to assess perpetrators and victims. In particular, findings were also limited: studies found that VR occurs when a partner of an intimate terrorist uses non-controlling physical aggression (Johnson and Ferraro 2000). Studies on MVC were limited to a single observation that MVC entails two intimate terrorists battling for control (Graham-Kevan and Archer 2003).

Although Johnson's typology was widely applied in this study, there are limitations in the use of the typology. Research applies the typology inconsistently in research on IPV. Some use randomly selected categories (Kelly and Johnson 2008). Some studies also examine frequency

and severity without considering the intricacies of each type of violence. Since research has begun to question the type of IPV itself (Anderson 2008), Johnson has called for more research due to inconsistent findings among agencies and academic research (Johnson 2009). This study reviewed, operationalized, and (re)defined the conceptual framework of each type of IPV. I extended the context for examining emotional responses and motivations for IPV. I also offered recommendations for modifying use of control and resistance in future research applying the typology. This study also considered current critiques of the typology.

Although findings reveal the usefulness of Johnson's research, current literature also comments on of his typology. First, Caldwell et al. (2009) reveals that there are limitations in the conceptualization of the types of IPV. Johnson asserts that justifications and motives are different. However, little research is available that explores the motives of IPV. Although Johnson describes violence, severity, and frequency, he fails to consider specific behaviors that motivate violence such as expressing anger, revenge, etc. (Caldwell et al. 2009). Although expressions of anger or revenge are not examples of control, they may be extremely important in a typology on female-perpetrated IPV. In this study, observations emphasized by Caldwell et al. were considered in chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9 in the analyses of participant experiences and types of IPV.

Second, control is a central concept in the typology. However, Wesley (2006) argues that Johnson's types of IPV offer very little development of the key concept of control, especially in the areas of frequencies, types, and motivations for control. Studies using Johnson's types of IPV often report inconsistencies in frequency or severity of IPV across each type. There are also inconsistent findings on motivations for exercising control and performing physical aggression.

This study considered Wesley's critique in the analysis of the roles of controlling and non-controlling behavior (See Chapter 11: Role of control).

Third, Anderson (2008) reports that Johnson's typology assumes that only one type can be applicable to one experience of IPV. The typology does not thoroughly consider ways in which types of violence may change or escalate over time (i.e. SCV transitioning into MVC, or MVC escalating to IT) (Johnson and Leone 2005). Instead of considering Johnson's typology, some researchers have argued that there may not be discrete types of violence. They posit that a continuum of motivations for violence occurs in each violent intimate relationship (Anderson 2008). Finally, whether concerning conceptualization, control, or types of IPV, Straus (1999) urges that studies have not applied Johnson's research in light of female-perpetrated experiences of IPV. This study considered recommendations in Straus (1999) and Anderson (2008) by applying both single and mixed type interpretations of women's experiences of IPV (See 12.2: Mixed type interpretations).

## 1.2 Context and external motivations

Understanding the context of IPV can help a researcher better evaluate vulnerability to abuse, how batterers apply control and abuse, and barriers for seeking and receiving help (Lindhorst and Tajima 2008). When defining the phenomenon to be studied, measuring acts, and documenting violence, the researcher must have knowledge of the context (how, when, where, and why) in which violence occurs. The context of external motivations shapes how participants define violent behavior and influences ways that individuals respond to victimization.

Survey research in the field of IPV is notably lacking in its attention to contextual factors. Early measures of IPV focused on simple counts of behaviors. However, they offered limited attention to broader contextual factors. In this study, the context of violent events and their

meanings helped establish a sense of women's accounts of violence. I considered the immediate and broader contextual and emotional dimensions of IPV. The immediate context was the setting of the situation and individualized social construction of meaning. The broader context was the cultural and historical environment and background of oppression. The contexts and motivations for IPV were incorporated into each analysis of participant experiences (See chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9). A more detailed analysis of the contexts and the corresponding motivations for IPV was examined in chapter 10 (See Chapter 10: External context and motivations).

### *1.2.1 Immediate (situational) context*

The immediate or situational context of IPV incorporates motivations for violent behavior. The immediate context of IPV is also useful for identifying the aggressor of IPV. Issues such as frequency and severity of violence are also situational. Additionally, circumstances such as ongoing violence in the relationship or immediate physical harm are examples of situational contexts of IPV. Fergusson, Horwood, and Ridder (2005:1006) contend that issues that might provoke or encourage fear or intimidation are critical to uncovering the immediate context of IPV. This examination of violence and control in intimate relationships considers the immediate context to better interpret perpetrators' tendencies to violence and their attitudes toward their partners when the immediate context is considered.

Each perpetrator of IPV has a perceived meaning of the severity of abuse (Yoshihama 2001). Meaning of IPV exists in the representations built by the persons experiencing IPV. When they create meaning, they do it in the context of the situation, which includes their partner, family and friends, space, and histories of violence. Since knowledge of how female perpetrators carry out IPV is rather limited in Sociological research, it is important to know the respondent's perception of the abuse.

### *1.2.2 Broader (historical and cultural) context*

A broader context of IPV considers both cultural and historical contexts of oppression. It is important to identify culturally specific behaviors that are associated with IPV (Yoshihama 2001). In order to develop a type of IPV, research must consider conditions and experiences of diverse cultural groups. Revealing a cultural or historical context of violence offers explanations on increased vulnerability for abuse, degrees of control, and barriers for receiving help (Raj and Silverman 2002).

The context of oppression considers gender traditionalism (MacMillian and Gartner 1999). Issues such as gender inequality are critical in examining power of women in abusive relationships. Some perpetrators and their partners disagree about delegation of family roles and housework tasks (Atkinson, Greenstein, and Lang 2005). A perpetrator may also disagree with her partner about family decision-making relative to a history of violence or gendered oppression.

## **PART 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORY**

In part two, I review literature on male and female-perpetrated IPV. I provide an overview of the prevalence of women as victims initially, and then I discuss the rise of women as perpetrators of IPV. I also include a summary of theory from prior research and a detailed discussion of current explanations of female-perpetrated IPV.

### **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, I review existing literature on women's victimization and perpetration of IPV. I examine the role of power in violence committed against women. I also offer an overview of reported precipitating factors of female victimization. The literature includes rates of violence performed by men and women, as well as data on frequency and rates of male and female

perpetrated attacks, assaults, and homicides; I also include literature on police practices and male and female arrest rates (this data is relevant to later discussions on whether IPV is gender neutral). I also examine survey instruments and research methods used in research on IPV.

## 2.0 Women as victims of IPV

Rates of victimization of IPV vary by gender, race, ethnicity, and social class and their intersection. There is considerable evidence that women are more likely to be victims of violence than are men. For example, Rennison and Welchans (2000) report that women are five times more likely than men to be victimized by spouses, partners, ex-partners, boyfriends, or girlfriends. Johnson (2001:1127) finds 11% instances of long-term violent abuse in a general sample, 68% in a court sample, and 79% in a shelter sample of women. Research conducted in Britain by Graham-Kevan and Archer (2003) find higher rates of victimization — 33% of women in a general sample and 88% in a shelter sample of women.

Data on the severity of victimization is limited. Victims in severe cases of IPV may be more difficult to locate than those who experience less severe forms, or when available, may be more reluctant to respond to surveys. Studies such as community samples offer few cases involving severe assaults that occur every week or more often. Straus (1997:216) notes that community surveys may not be the best data source for examining extreme cases because they contain too few individuals to analyze separately. Non-response rates tend to be as high as 40% (Johnson 1995). Nonetheless, existing research suggests that women may be more likely to suffer serious injury from IPV than are men (Stout and Brown 1995; Crowell and Burgess 1996). Further, intimate partner homicide accounts for approximately 40% to 50% of U.S. female homicides. Male partners perpetrate the vast majority of intimate partner homicides, with .05%

of intimate partner female homicides in the U.S. perpetrated by female partners (Glass et al. 2004). Homicide is the seventh leading overall cause of premature death for women.

Female victims of IPV are disproportionately African American. The rate of victimization for African American women is more than one and a half times the rate of victimization for Anglo women (Vieraitis and Williams 2002:36). For example, Goetting (1988:5) reports that during the years 1982 and 1983, 81.9% of the victims of domestic homicides in Detroit were African American. A partner or former partner is more likely to kill an African American woman; this occurs more often among African American women than Anglo women (O'Carroll and Mercy 1986). Hampton, Gelles, and Harrop (1989) speculate that African American women have relatively greater access to economic resources as compared to African American men and therefore may be less tolerant of abuse and may be empowered to retaliate with violence (Hamberger and Potente 1994).

Latina women also have a greater risk of partner abuse than Anglo women, but less risk than African American women (Neff et al. 1995). Gondolf, Fisher, and McFerron (1988) find that among Latina, African American, and Anglo women living in shelters, Latina women report the longest duration of abuse and the fewest attempts to seek help. The findings depict Latina women as being likely to feel cultural pressure to remain in a violent relationship (Gondolf et al. 1988).

Asian women may have lower rates of intimate abuse than other ethnic groups (Koss et al. 1994). However, some Asian women, such as military wives and mail order brides, may be particularly vulnerable to abuse (Jang 1994). Native Americans in urban areas are likely to have histories of family violence as high as 80% (Chester, Robin, and Koss 1994).

Dutton, Orloff, and Hass (2000) show that 30 to 50% of Latina, South Asian, and Korean immigrant women have been sexually or physically victimized by a male intimate partner. Bauer et al. (2000) report that, due to cultural dictates and economic necessity, battered immigrant women are often isolated from family and live with or close to their husband's family, which results in increased likelihood of abuse from in-laws (Morash, Bui, and Santiago 2000).

Pridemore and Freilich (2005:219) relate gender income equity to White non-Hispanic female homicide victimization rates, and these rates are significantly higher in the South. Their data show that lower middle-class White males who experience real and perceived status loss on several fronts are most likely to abuse their partners. However, their findings also indicate that gender income equity, regional location, fundamentalism, and the percentage of rural populations are unrelated to overall female homicide victimization.

Other factors further complicate determining rates of violent victimization of women. For instance, Hutchinson, Hirschel, and Pesackis (1992) find that women from lower socioeconomic groups may be more likely to call the police to address problems in the private sphere, which results in disproportionately higher arrests of men in these groups. In contrast, Rasche (1995) argues that some women of color may be reluctant to call the police after experiencing domestic violence. Rasche's research suggests that some African American women may be reluctant to seek relief from a criminal justice system that they perceive as dealing too severely with non-White men.

Because of the array of differences in victimization described above, Hill and Crawford (1990:603) argue that research on female victimization should examine gender role socialization, race, ethnicity, social class, and family structure. They suggest that studies should examine

processes that expand labor market opportunities, relative economic positions of males and females, and the influence of conventional attachments.

### *2.0.1 Power and IPV*

Use or threat of IPV is one basic use of power in a relationship. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) develop a three-type typology of attitudes among violent men to examine how and why different men use violence against their wives. The dimensions of their typology include severity and frequency of IPV, family only or extra familial violence, and personality disorders or psychopathology of the batterer. They find that a lower percentage of anti-social or generally violent men will be present among batterers. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994:481-482) also find that family-only batterers should engage in the least severe marital violence and sexual abuse. They also evidence very little passive-dependent personality disorders among male batterers.

Understanding who is in control or likely to get their way in the relationship is another way to examine power in relationships. Frieze and McHugh (1992) measure power and influence in close relationships. They argue that the most prevalent conceptualization of power in marriage is an analysis of who makes decisions: husband, wife, or both. Hence, they examine who tries to exert influence and wives' perceptions of influence attempts of their husbands. They identify strategies such as evasion, verbal manipulation, demand, laissez-faire, telling, reasoning, asking, bargaining, persistence, and stating importance (Falbo and Peplau 1980). Research on IPV neglects many of these coercive strategies (Steil and Weltman 1992).

Other power strategies include what Gruber and White (1986) identify as masculine strength strategies. These strategies include claiming superior knowledge, persuading, using reason, and using physical force. For example, a batterer might draw a gun and threaten a woman

with death, or abuse her during pregnancy, which also threatens the death of an unborn child. A masculine strength strategy might also include massive property damage or threatening to limit the woman's financial privileges. Some researchers argue that both men and women apply similar strategies (Falbo and Peplau 1980), or find no effects due to the sex of the actor (Howard, Blumstein, and Schwartz 1986).

Campbell (1999) argues that American society is more likely to condemn women's physical aggression. Hence, gender differences might arise when men are more likely to justify physical aggression and women are more inclined to excuse expressive accounts. Archer and Haigh (1999) suggest that moral acceptability of violence is more specific to particular sex-of-actor and sex-of-target combinations (i.e. the least acceptable of four possible permutations of interactors' sex are male-on-female and female-on-female aggression) (Astin, Redston, and Campbell 2003). Astin et al. (2003:131) examine whether participants believe their aggressive actions are morally acceptable. Nevertheless, they attempt to describe why men are more likely than women to justify violent behavior; findings in Astin et al. do not confirm or find support for the proposal that men hold a more condemnatory attitude than women do about female-directed physical aggression.

Several studies have researched attributions that males use in accounting for their abusing behavior (Shields and Hanneke 1983; Jones 1993). These studies describe forms of denial that allow men to place blame on others and external motivations to often justify men's violent behavior. Most findings correspond in some way with Scott and Lyman's (1968) strategies that account for systematic failure: First, the accused acknowledges responsibility and seeks restitution. Second, he makes excuses that deny responsibility. Third, the problem is re-

identified, justifications are declared, and the partner may belittle the victim. Finally, the accused refuses to show guilt and avoids reference to the act.

Victim blaming, or saying the wife is responsible for violence, is a common justification for male battering. Hence, it is not likely for male batterers to perceive themselves as the cause of violence. A male batterer then faults the victim for his need to exercise a volatile temper or for arguments. He experiences a lack of control in the relationship or claims to be jealous because of her behavior. For instance, Bograd (1988) finds that 80% of abusive men in their study justify violence because violence is the only way to handle conflict, the wife fails to meet his expectations, or she shows aggression. Stamp and Sabourne (1995) suggest that husbands even blamed their partners for their alcohol consumption and violence occurring following substance abuse. Ultimately, men are likely to report three primary causes of male abuse: dissatisfaction with the female partner, retaliation for women's verbal abuse, and jealousy concerning women's communication with other men (Coleman 1980).

### *2.0.2 Motivating factors and IPV*

Although research has historically viewed IPV as a private family matter, it is now widely recognized as a common societal problem. A growing amount of empirical literature reveals various relationships between precipitating factors and the occurrence of IPV. Examples of precipitating factors are psychological distress, depression, alcoholism, and substance abuse.

Existing evidence indicates a strong and consistent association between psychological distress or depression and IPV (Caetano and Cunradi 2003). Studies of depression in the general population confirm that prevalence among Black and Hispanic women who do not report IPV is two and a half to three times higher than among their White counterparts (Jones-Webb and Snowden 1993). Frequency and severity of IPV is also higher among Black and Hispanic women

than among White women. Feldbau-Kohn, Heyman, and O'Leary (1998) find an increased prevalence of IPV among men experiencing psychological distress or depression.

Research over the last 30 years indicates that drinking and alcohol-related problems also figure prominently as a risk factor for IPV (Caetano, Schafer, and Clark 2000; Caetano, Schafer, and Cunradi 2001). In the context of interpersonal conflict, alcohol intoxication often leads to hostility and violence. For example, more than half of the victims of IPV reported in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) that the perpetrator had been drinking (Bureau of Justice Statistics 1998). Furthermore, more than 20% of males and 10% of females were drinking prior to their most recent and severe act of violence (Kantor and Straus 1990). According to Kyriacou et al. (1999), women who have partners who abuse alcohol are 3.6 times more likely than other women to experience IPV.

Findings on whether addictions are a cause or effect of IPV are inconsistent. Bhatt (1998:S27) notes that a common characteristic of substance abusers is impulsive personality:

With an impulsive personality and rebellious nature, they resort to violence at the slightest pretext. People experiencing depression or distresses use these substances to forget life's realities. They are often short of money and have to resort to violence to extort money from family members or strangers.

In tandem, Cunradi et al. (2002:498) indicate that conflict rather than substance abuse is an appropriate determinant to consider when studying substance-related violence. Hence, the presence of substances abuse spawns conflicting circumstances (Bhatt 1998; Galvani 2004). For instance, substance abuse spawns conflict when a partner who is under the influence depletes a family bank account, which later causes an argument and physical dispute. Other studies argue that alcohol and narcotic drugs are responsible in aggravating IPV (Bhatt 1998). For example, the addiction is responsible for IPV if one partner attacks the other partner while under the influence when they would not typically engage in violent behavior otherwise.

Both marijuana and hard drug use have been associated with increased likelihood of experiencing violence in new relationships. Women's experiences of IPV and substance use reflect the use of substances as a means of self-medication following victimization. Research shows increased substance abuse following trauma such as physical or sexual assault (Kilpatrick et al. 1997). Although violence is not associated with subsequent problem alcohol use, Salomon, Bassuk, and Huntington (2002) find that experience of IPV predicts subsequent onset of drug use among a sample of low-income mothers.

## 2.1 Women as perpetrators of IPV

Data on intimate partners rarely examines victimization and perpetration together. Anderson (2002) suggests that failure to examine women as victims and perpetrators simultaneously limits our ability to identify causal order and gender symmetry among specific types of IPV. In national surveys, about half of IPV perpetrators report that they are also victims of partner assaults (Stets and Straus 1990). Women are more likely than men are to be both victims and perpetrators of IPV. This study, unlike most studies, focuses specifically on women as both perpetrators and victims of IPV. Because literature so often fails to consider women who are victims and perpetrators simultaneously, the following review primarily includes comparing rates of violence among men and women.

### *2.1.1 Similar rates for men and women*

Research provides little comparable information about experiences of IPV among women and men (Anderson 2002:861). However, a small body of research indicates that women are as violent as men (Bookwala, Smith, and Ryan 1992; Caulfield and Riggs 1992; Macchietto 1992; Dutton 1994; Moffit and Caspi 1999; Schwartz 2000). Since 1975, studies have found that annual rates for wife-to-husband abuse are similar to those of husband-to-wife abuse, although

their patterns of occurrence for women are not consistent (Straus 1980). Straus indicates that 11.6 % of females abused their male partners, followed by a slightly non-significant increase in occurrence of female violent behavior the following year (12.1%). Rates of severe annual abuse perpetrated by females are virtually the same for males in both surveys (4.6% and 4.4%). Studies that are more current also offer evidence that SCV (conflict-oriented violence) is nearly gender symmetric (Johnson and Ferraro 2000). Straus (1993) and Cook (1997) find nearly equal levels of assaults by male and female intimate partners among conjugal or cohabiting partners. Straus (1989) uses survey evidence indicating that women are as likely as men to be physically aggressive toward their partners. Recent family violence research has upheld claims that women are as likely as men to commit violence (McNeely and Mann 1990). The findings suggest that women's violence has occurred more frequently than in the past and the gender gap appears to be narrower (Archer 2000).

### *2.1.2 Higher rates for men than women*

Recent studies offer evidence in support of gender asymmetry in IT (Archer 2000; Johnson 2001; Graham-Kevan and Archer 2003). Graham-Kevan and Archer (2003) find that 87% of IT and 45% of SCV in Britain were male perpetrated. They argue that violence creates and maintains male status over women (Stanko 1995). IT, violence intended to control, is almost entirely male perpetrated and is strongly related to masculine attitudes (Johnson 2005:1130). For instance, in Hamberger and Potente (1994), only 3 out of 67 women clearly exhibited primary perpetrator characteristics. Almost all women in their study experienced significant victimization from their partners. Hamberger and Guse (2002) find that women are rarely the batterers in relationships, and are less likely to engage in hitting their partners (Johnson and Ferraro 2000; Dasgupta 2002; Kimmel 2002).

In the 1980's, some men's rights groups argued that IPV was a "falsely framed issue," that denied an equal distribution of male and female victimization (McNeely and Robinson-Simpson 1987). These groups have relied on an annotated bibliography that includes 117 scholarly investigations, 94 empirical studies, and 23 reviews that demonstrate that women are as physically aggressive or more aggressive than men are in their relationships with their spouses or male partners (Fiebert 1998:1). These groups argue that escalating rates of violence against men will soon exceed those against women because of programs that domestic violence activists design to aid women (Dasgupta 2002). Men's rights groups also request termination of funding for domestic violence programs on the grounds of discrimination against men.

Using findings offered by Johnson (1999), Kevan-Graham and Archer (2004:6) examine the degree of violence performed by men and women and ways that varied samples classify men and women in violent relationships:

Using cluster analysis, Johnson categorizes relationships involving physical aggression as SCV (55% male, 45% female), IT (97% male, 3% female), VR (4% male, 96% female), or MVC (50% male, 50% female). These types of relationship physical aggression are then identified as belonging to either a general survey sample (90% SCV) or a shelter sample (74% IT/VR).

Researchers using agency samples find domestic violence to be almost entirely male-perpetrated. Cases of coercive controlling violence dominate most studies on domestic violence, and they describe cases of intimate terrorism. Agency samples in heterosexual relationships are almost entirely male-perpetrated (Johnson 1995; Johnson 2001). Conversely, research dominated by samples of SCV uses general survey sample, and these studies find IPV to be roughly gender symmetric. Family violence theorists who use general samples have also argued that during everyday tensions and conflicts of family life, women are as violent as men in intimate relationships (Straus 1999). Johnson argues that research offers false interpretations about female

violence when they interpret SCV as “domestic violence.” Hence, Johnson argues that “there are as not as many battered husbands as there as battered wives” (Vangelisti and Perlman 2006:558).

### *2.1.3 Higher rates for women than men*

Yet another finding in the literature is that women initiate physically aggressive interactions more often than do their male partners (Bookwala et al. 1992; DeMaris 1992), or are even more prone than men to use physical violence in intimate relations (McNeely and Mann 1990). In a review of nonreciprocal violence between intimate partners, Arehart-Treichel (2007:31) reports that women are more often the perpetrators. Scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that more women than men (52 percent versus 47 percent) had taken part in violent disputes involving reciprocal violence. Regarding perpetration of violence, more women than men (25 percent versus 11 percent) were responsible and 71 percent of the instigators in nonreciprocal partner violence were women.

However, research stating that women are more physically aggressive than men has undergone considerable critique. For example, Swan and Snow (2006) counter the interpretation of data that women commit more violence and argue that popular press reports which conclude that women are just as violent as men stem from contextual survey studies comparing prevalence rates of women’s and men’s physical violence. Straus (1999) claims that women’s violence should be studied in the context in which it occurs. These findings generate great controversy because there is no theoretical framework to explain women’s violence (Straus 1999; Bible et al. 2002).

Johnson and Ferraro (2000) argue that the frequency and type of violence between two intimate terrorists is similar in cases of MVC. However, when violence has been initiated “50-50” by males and females, they argue that women are more likely than men are to suffer serious

injuries. Johnson and Ferraro note that in 31% of mutually violent couples, the male initiates more violence, as opposed to 8% in which the female initiates more violence.

## 2.2 Comparing rates that consider types of violence

More recently, researchers have also found that the gender gap between violence committed by men and women is smaller for violence involving less severity, less offender culpability, and behaviors that occur in private settings and against intimates. However, the definition of violence, threshold of severity, and correspondence to victimization are not always consistent in studies on women's physical aggression. Some researchers use the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) studies to indicate similarities in the number of assaultive acts by men and women and highlight substantial differences in injury levels enacted toward women (Moffit and Caspi 1999). CTS count "blows" and "severity" of violence. A problem of CTS is that it does not account for potential differences; they weigh both actions equally (McHugh and Frieze 2006).

Steffensmeier et al. (2001:75) created a roughly constructed scale of least to most serious violence that included threats of physical assault, attempted assault, throwing items, pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping, kicking, biting, hitting with a fist, hitting with an object, choking, trying to drown, threatening with a weapon, and using a weapon. In accordance, some research does not interpret all of these indicators as "violence." Kevan-Graham and Archer (2004) categorize acts of physical aggression as attacks, violent assaults, and IT violence. There is also much discretion in defining violence by citizens, police, and other officials. For example, threats to injure might be included as a violent incident, whereas others consider only assault or attempted assault to be violent. According to Steffensmeier et al. (2001), the gender gap in arrests for both aggravated and simple assault has narrowed and year-to-year changes in female-to-male rates are positive and statistically significant. Their analysis shows that women are

making arrest gains for aggravated and simple assault. However, women are not making arrest gains for the interpersonal violence crimes of homicide and rape. In Campbell and Soeken (1999:1018), almost half (45.9%) of the sample experience sexual assaults and physical abuse; it is estimated that 40 to 45% of all battered women are forced to have sex by their male partners.

Steffensmeier et al. (2001:89) identify five trends of arrest and victimization between 1980 and mid-1990. First, male levels of IPV are much higher than female levels. Second, male levels of IPV are much higher than female levels for more serious forms of violence. Third, for homicide, rape and sexual assault, and robbery, female rates have not been rising and the gender gap has not been closing. Fourth, since 1990, only trends in assault differ by type of data. UCR arrest statistics show female rates rising and the gender gap closing, whereas victimization data show a stable gender gap. Fifth, although arrest trends in assault are the driving force behind recent concerns about rising levels of female violence, those trends are not borne out in victim's reports.

### *2.2.1 Criminal justice and rates of IPV*

The lack of consistency in rates of violence by women may be, in part, due to differential responses by the criminal justice system. Studies on social norms judge the range and severity of violence inconsistently across gender. The criminal justice system, social programs, and the general public have mixed responses to women's physical aggression. When the male dies during female-perpetrated acts of IPV, many of these records are not present in homicide statistics (Straus 1999). At the same time, legal systems may criminalize women for performing masculine disciplinary actions when they slap, kick, or verbally assault their husbands or boyfriends (Harrison and Esqueda 1999; Gilbert 2002).

Various legal systems rate the severity of specific physical acts differently depending on whether or not the perpetrator is male or female (Marshall 1992). Stark (1996) find that female offenders may feel justified in scratching, biting, and shoving a controlling partner, without understanding the legal ramifications of those actions. Miller (2001b) suggests that passive and helpless behavior among female perpetrators may reinforce traditional female gender role stereotypes of compliance and submissiveness thus leading to the criminal justice system being more likely to criminalize women who deviate from submissive stereotypical behavior (Ferraro 1989).

Women now represent nearly 20% of IPV related arrests (Durose et al. 2005). DeLeon-Granados, Wells, and Binsbacher (2006) conducted a review of explanations regarding increases in female arrests for domestic assault. Chesney-Lind (2002) argues that increases in female arrests are not associated with increases in the use of violence by women. Arrest data might explain increases in numbers of reported female violence. However, Chesney-Lind notes that recent increases in female arrests are due to the implementation of mandatory dual arrests for domestic violence calls. Current literature on female-perpetrated IPV debates the following question: are women more violent, or are current rates of arrest an over-exaggeration of increases in female-perpetrated violence?

### 2.2.2 *NCVS and UCR*

O'Brien (1999) contends that the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) produces a more balanced view of whether Uniform Crime Report (UCR) arrest trends result from changes in offender behavior or changes in police arrest practices. NCVS collects information directly from crime victims and remains less impacted by changes in the behavior of criminal justice officials. However, partner violence scholars repeatedly caution against interpreting national

survey findings of gender symmetry as evidence of gender equity in intimate partner assault. Steffensmeier et al. (2001:86) explore ways in which various forms of research methods offer inconsistent findings on female-perpetrated violence. Using an NCVS analysis, they rely on both Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) time series tests and illustrative plots of female-to-male trends covering the full 1980-2003 period. Steffensmeier et al. find that the male and female rates move largely in tandem: female rates of assault rise when male rates rise, and they decline when male rates decline.

### 2.3 Police practices and mandatory arrests

O'Brien (1999) suggests that changes in police arrests and practices are a major cause of the increased display of female-perpetrated criminal behavior. They report increases in female arrests that are associated with increases in policy formation targeting offenders of IPV, rather than increases specific to the use of violence by women. Although the intent of policies on domestic violence is to protect women, Chesney-Lind (2002) demonstrates that the policies encourage police to arrest all persons involved in domestic disputes.

Buzawa and Buzawa (2003) note that mandating arrest is patronizing to victims of violent abuse. However, victims have little control over the outcomes of police intervention and policies (Zorza 1992; Koss 2000). Ward and Muldoon (2007) argue that recent exposure to the criminal justice system raises concerns that female IPV offenders may be criminalized, mistreated, and demonized. Researchers are concerned that mandates to arrest female IPV offenders represent a reoccurring attempt to portray women as increasingly violent (Brownstein 2000; Wolff 2004; Pollock and Davis 2005). State-level statistics on domestic abuse in Boulder, Colorado reveal a gradual increase in reported female domestic violence offenders. Records show that percentages of women domestic offenses increased from approximately 12% in 1997

to 14.2% in 1998, and climbed to nearly 25% in the first 6 months of 1999 (Boulder County Domestic Abuse Prevention Project 1999:13).

In a county-level study in Minnesota, Saunders (1995) reported a 13% arrest rate of female perpetrators in the first year and 25% in the second year. Data on domestic violence arrests of women in Connecticut showed a steady rise from 11% in 1987 to 18% in 1997 (State of Connecticut 1998) and 31% in 2002 (Hirschel and Buzawa 2002). The percent of male victims increased from 16% in 1987 to 21% of the total of victims of IPV (State of Connecticut 1998). In 2002, women represented 17% of all domestic violence arrests in Rhode Island and 28% in Arizona (Hirschel and Buzawa 2002).

Some violence data show an increase in dual arrests and arrests of women only for domestic assault (Martin 1997; Miller 2001a). As of 2002, 23 states operated with mandatory arrest for some assault-and-battery domestic violence offenses. For example, the state of Washington implemented mandatory arrest in 1984. Hirschel and Buzawa (2002) reported that dual arrests increased to one third of all domestic violence arrests after 1984 (Zorza and Woods 1994; Martin 1997). DeLeon-Garnados et al. (2006:359) examined growth rates of arrests for male and female perpetrators of IPV in California. They found that women comprise 5% of arrests in 1987 and 18% of all domestic violence arrests in 2000. By 2000, in California, female arrest rates for domestic violence increased more than 500% for adult women, while male rates increased 136%.

Officers use their discretion to mandate arrests of both partners. Thirty-three states mandate arrest for restraining order violations (Hirschel and Buzawa 2002). Each of the 50 states uses at least one of these arrest types (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003). Following the dual arrest, the victims are encouraged to press charges against the aggressor of domestic violence. The legal

system might label a woman as the aggressor or perpetrator of IPV because she has failed to press charges before her male abuser. In particular, the unintended consequences of mandatory arrest policies disproportionately affect low-income, immigrant, and communities of color (Chesney-Lind 2002; Houry and Kellermann 2005).

Blumer (1999) attributes the increases in female arrests in California to the implementation of mandatory arrest. Following the statute, the percentage of women arrested for domestic violence crimes escalated from 5% in 1987 to about 17% in 1999. In Concord, New Hampshire, percentages increased from 23% in 1993 to 35% in 1999. Conversely, data from Lincoln and Lancaster County in Nebraska between 1996 and 1998 show a decline in both dual arrests and female-only domestic arrests (Family Violence Council 1998).

### *2.3.1 Homicide*

The most severe form of IPV is homicide. Fewer than 15% of arrestees for homicide in the U.S. are females (U.S. Department of Justice 1982, 1984). Using homicide records in Dayton, Ohio, Campbell (1992) found that, prior to the lethal event, 79% of male victims of intimate homicide abused their offender, and the male partner physically abused 64% of female victims of homicide. Rosenfeld (1997) conducted a study in St. Louis between 1980 and 1993. Rosenfeld notes that racial patterns of female-perpetrated homicide among African American women have increased while those for White women have remained constant. Rosenfeld finds that female-perpetrated homicide among married women is decreasing while instances of homicide resulting from IPV among non-married women are increasing. Rosenfeld presents the concern that studies traditionally focusing on married, heterosexual women falsely claim that female-perpetrated homicides are decreasing or remaining constant with violence perpetrated by

men; on the contrary, the studies classify female victims and offenders into other homicide categories.

Women involved in the intimate homicide of a spouse, lover, or child tend to kill during noncriminal activities such as domestic quarrels (Steffensmeier, Kramer, and Streifel 1993). The official data on female-perpetrated murder reveal that only a small proportion of these domestic quarrels result in killing the male abuser (Herzog 2006). Men are more likely than women are to engage in felony murder and contract killings of acquaintances (Steffensmeier et al. 1993). Dugan et al. (1999:190) argue, “Women are much more likely than men are to kill out of a perceived need or desire to protect themselves from a violent or abusive partner.”

### CHAPTER 3: REVIEW OF THEORY, MODELS, AND TYPES OF IPV

This chapter surveys theories, models, and types of IPV. Since I examine women as both aggressors and victims of IPV, the review begins with an overview of women’s motivations for IPV. I offer comprehensive descriptions of types of terrorist violence, situational violence, and gender inequality. I also include theories and types of female-perpetrated IPV such as resistance, feminist theory, exposure reduction, and models on self-defense.

#### 3.0 Models on female violence

Russo and Pirlott (2006) argue that gender shapes the meaning of violent acts differently for women and men. Criminality is still assumed to be a masculine attribute and women criminals are therefore perceived to be either “not women” or “not criminals” (Worrall 1990:31). Many regard criminal activity performed by women as at least partially consequent on their gender and excused by it (Worrall 1990:64).

Society criminalizes women for engaging in criminal behavior. Norms of traditional gender roles generally prohibit women from using defiance, resistance, aggression, or violence

against their male partners (Renzetti 1994; Dasgupta 2002). Studies find that, in trials of battered women who kill their abusers, prosecutors tend to highlight the woman's failure to fulfill culturally prescribed gender role norms (Jenkins and Davidson 1990). Indeed, Barber, Foley, and Jones (1999) find that female victims of IPV who use physical aggression on their male partners encounter more negative judgment than females who resort to the use of verbal aggression. In these instances, victims who provoke their batterers by engaging in mutual combat may be blamed more than non-provoking victims (Pierce and Harris 1993).

### *3.0.1 Models on women's motivations for IPV*

Fear with an accompanying sense of vulnerability is one of the responses to violence expressed by women, particularly those who have experienced a type of long-term violence intended to control behavior rather than conflict-oriented violence, which occurs more spontaneously. As women perceive themselves as being unlikely or unable to escape or resist the attack of intimate partners, they become more likely to be fearful (Killias and Clerici 2000). The *fear-victimization paradox* supports the notion that women's fear is less connected with frequency of victimization and more related to fear of severity of violent male aggression (Pain 1997). Some researchers suggest that "women are more likely than males to respond to violence with depression rather than anger; when women express anger, it is accompanied by anxiety, guilt, hurt, and crying" (Kopper and Epperson 1991).

Unlike the fear-victimization paradox, which describes fear as a reaction to violent abuse, other theories connect fear with constructions of masculine control. Holtz-Munroe (2005) finds that male-perpetrated IPV is more likely than female-perpetrated IPV to produce greater amounts of fear, increased instances of abuse, and increased probability for homicide and violent assault. Hence, concern for some researchers rests with the level of threat to safety and the extent by

which the victim lives in constant fear. Worchester (2002:1403) argues that regardless of how women exert emotional control, it is crucial to ask, “Who is afraid and who is not safe?” Ferraro (1996) offers *shadow theory* to situate the invulnerability of men at the center of women’s fear of violent domestic crime. Since women are less likely to victimize men, the shadow of the abused victim often resembles the image of a woman.

Yodanis (2004:669) describes fear and vulnerability as unconscious behavior that is a social construction of masculine control. Examining the impact of social structural gender inequality in a male-dominated society, her explanation of women’s fear explains only 50 percent of the variance in women’s fear relative to physical violence. When findings show that increases in sexual violence equate to unconscious perceptions of fear, Yodanis urges scholars to reexamine ways that women understand experiences of physical violence. She examines notions of women’s unconscious fear, or fear embedded in the female mind as a form of masculine power; Yodanis explores a reason why society often anticipates the abuse of women.

Studies on how women perform physical aggression find a positive relationship between performing aggression and loss of power or control (Archer and Haigh 1999; Astin et al. 2003). Several studies demonstrate how men and women describe their experiences of violence in different terms. They find that men are more inclined to view their physical aggression as a socially useful source of control over others and express less guilt about physical aggression than women (Campbell, Muncer, and Gorman 1993).

Nearly 21 studies find that the relationship between low self-control and antisocial behavior ranks as “one of the strongest known correlates of crime” (Pratt and Cullen 2000:952). Gottfredson and Hirchi (1990) conceptualize self-control as a combination of impulsivity, risk seeking, present orientation, temper, and carelessness. Using psychometric instruments, the

component scales of risk seeking and impulsivity have been used to measure gender differences in self-control (Tittle, Ward, and Grasmick 2003). Ultimately, gender differences in self-control may also give rise to distinctive experiences and representations of physical aggression among women and men.

Driscoll et al. (2006:142) argue that individuals with better inhibitory control express their anger when it is at a relatively high level. In consequence, they experience a high level of emotional arousal and are less able to monitor or control their behavior. For example, when women cry, scream or throw things, these expressions of physical and emotional violence suggest that anger discharge, rather than tactical domination of another person, is the aim. Driscoll et al. (2006:148) maintain that this process is experienced as expressivity, or losing control of oneself. In this study, men scored higher in their willingness to hurt others, and women scored higher on demonstrating tendencies to be nervous and vulnerable. Their findings suggest that women show lower spontaneity and greater planning, but they are not necessarily better at inhibiting the expression of anger. At the end of the day, women build expressions of anger on an infrastructure of fear, which is most important in explaining gender differences in social representations of violence.

Aggression describes power in intimate relationships. For example, women are likely to act out power by threatening to leave, or with name-calling and other psychological tactics. Merritt-Gray and Wuest (1995) argue that women demonstrate power in violent relationships when they actively counteract abuse from the first appearance of violence. Campbell et al. (1998) refer to this power seeking as a “process of achieving nonviolence.” Battered women also relinquish themselves, minimize abuse, and fortify their defenses as a part of breaking free from the abusive relationship. Campbell et al. (1998) redefine active survival strategies as passive or

self-erasure methods in past research. They argue that women apply their agency or power when they halt, change, or cope with their partner's violence. For instance, battered women might watch and wait by being vigilant about his behavior, or they might keep it under control by maintaining the emotional connection with their partner while being aware that if abuse worsened, the relationship would have to end (Campbell et al. 1998).

Dobash and Dobash (2004) find that few women use serious violence against their male partner. Frieze and McHugh (1992) argue that feminine sources of power include personal, referent, and performances of helplessness where power tactics such as indirect and manipulative forms of power are exerted in relationships. Other examples of female power tactics might include cheating in the relationship or ignoring the partner. Nonviolent acts may be consequential. However, it is important that this type of research does not conflate verbal acts with physical and sexual acts (Dobash and Dobash 2004).

Margolin (1987), literature on representations of anger and power in couple violence, discovers that assessments of violence should include perceptions of the victim and intentions of the attacker. Margolin argues that a man is likely to laugh at a woman's hardest punch, while a husband's hardest punch would count as abuse (Margolin 1987:83). When women and men are asked about their perceptions of the seriousness of their partner's violence to them, 82% of women and 61% of men describe men's violence as "serious or very serious," whereas 36% of women and 28.5% of men describe women's violence similarly (Dobash and Dobash 2004:338).

### 3.1 Theories on IPV

As noted above, Johnson and Leone (2005) contend that past theorists have failed to make a distinction between different types of IPV, which they call IT or patriarchal terrorism, VR, MVC, and SCV (Johnson 1995; Johnson and Ferraro 2000; Johnson and Leone 2005). Their

classification scheme is a typology of a two-dimensional relationship between physical aggression and control. Unlike Johnson's typology, which omits all forms of non-physical aggression, Graham-Kevan and Archer (2004) offer a typology for IPV that includes the use of non-physical aggression. Graham-Kevan and Archer argue that studies on IPV should include two separate typologies: one to classify the respondent and partner, and the other to classify the relationship that exists between the partners (Graham-Kevan and Archer 2004:10). There are three classifications for the respondent and partner: no physical (emotional) aggression, non-controlling physical aggression, or controlling physical aggression.

Graham-Kevan and Archer (2004) classify five types of IPV relationships. The classifications include: non-physically aggressive, SCV (non-controlling physical aggression is used by one or both partners), IT (respondents use physical aggression and partner uses no physical aggression or non-controlling physical aggression), VR (respondent uses non-controlling physical aggression and partner uses controlling emotional or physical aggression), or MVC (both spouses use controlling physical aggression). The analysis of this study considers Graham-Kevan and Archer's examination of typologies, Johnson's among them.

Like Graham-Kevan and Archer, other current theories address different types of IPV, and thus, theories of male violence are organized by two types, IT and SCV (Johnson and Leone 2005). Additionally, this section discusses general theories of gender equality with hypotheses that apply to both types of violence. Although studies organize theories into types, many of these theories are not mutually exclusive, having considerable overlap among the concepts and explanations.

### 3.1.1 Theories on coercive controlling violence

Johnson and Leone (2005) argue that types of violence have different social and psychological roots, interpersonal dynamics, and consequences for the victim. Johnson and Leone conceptualize terrorist violence, or IT, as fundamentally perpetrator-motivated; the perpetrator desires control that is rooted in patriarchal traditions of male dominance in heterosexual relationships, especially marriage (Johnson and Leone 2005).

Johnson (2008) identifies two types of intimate terrorists: *dependent intimate terrorists* and *antisocial intimate terrorists*. The dependent intimate terrorist displays high measures of emotional dependency and jealousy. They are obsessed with their partners, desperate to hold them, and therefore, are jealous and controlling. They are not violent outside of the family (Johnson 2008:38). Johnson also finds that dependent intimate terrorists exhibit measures of borderline personality organization, dependency, and jealousy, and need general control to lessen a fear of losing their partner (Vangelisti and Perlman 2006). Gottman and Jacobson (1998) refer to dependent intimate terrorists as pit bulls who verbally lash out in anger. The antisocial intimate terrorist ranks high on antisocial personality measures and is generally violent outside as well as inside the family. They control their partners because they want to have their own way, by any means necessary (Johnson 2008:39). Johnson argues that antisocial intimate terrorists are involved with delinquent peers, substance abuse, and criminal behavior. Since they are generally violent in many contexts, antisocial intimate terrorists are broadly willing to employ violence to have their way (Vangelisti and Perlman 2006). Gottman and Jacobson (1998) refer to antisocial intimate terrorists as cobras who are calm on the inside who appear to lose control on the outside.

Some researchers explore traditional gender attitudes and misogyny in their research on IT. Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (2000) find that male perpetrators of IT have significantly more

misogynistic attitudes than do nonviolent men. However, some men and women perform their pent-up emotional and physical aggression on others. These bullies or *intimate terrorists*, perform general patterns of controlling behaviors, which indicates that the perpetrator is attempting to exert general control over his partner (Johnson 1995). Researchers argue that it is through fear that men confine and control the behavior of women (Ferraro 1996; Pain 1997; Killias and Clerici 2000; Yodanis 2004).

This intimate domination or controlling behavior encompasses the use of a wide range of power and control tactics (Kirkwood 1993; Pence and Paymar 1993; Stark and Flitcraft 1996; Ferraro 1997; Campbell et al. 1998; Lloyd and Emery 2000). Researchers also allege that the violent male aggressor best predicts differences in the course of violence (Holtzworth-Munroe 2005). These studies suggest that the local strength of a traditional masculine culture conditions the magnitude of female victimization (Gibson 1994; Hurlbert and Bankston 1998; Pridemore and Freilich 2005).

Hence, the conversation on IT refers mostly to violence committed against women. Johnson and Leone (2005) argue that intimate terrorists attack more frequently; women who experience IT are more likely than men are to experience injuries, to exhibit symptoms of posttraumatic stress, to use painkillers, and to miss work. Studies find that IT is less likely to stop, and women experiencing IT are likely to leave their partners (Johnson 1999).

Kishor and Johnson (2004) find that risk for violence increases directly with the number of controlling behaviors performed by the husband. Kishor and Johnson (2004) find that abusive husbands are likely to become jealous or angry when the wife communicates with another man. Kishor and Johnson find that abusive husbands frequently accuse their wives of being unfaithful. Furthermore, these abusive men are not likely to permit their wives to meet female friends, and

they may limit their contact with members of the family. Finally, an abusive husband may insist on knowing where the wife is at all times.

Research also examines marital violence committed by husbands. Johnson and Leone (2000) present an analysis of data on only IT and SCV from the National Violence against Women Survey (NVAWS) (Tjaden and Theonnes 1998). They find that 35% of husband violence is IT, which are considerably high compared to rates of 10% in Johnson (1999). Graham-Kevan and Archer (2004) argue that the high number resulted from the way the questions are framed in the NVAWS regarding women's safety. Since SCV involves conflict rather than control, Graham-Kevan and Archer find that the rates of physical aggression and information on different types of controlling behavior must be included to distinguish between IT and SCV.

In relationships characterized by *mutual violent combat*, both partners may be violent and vying for control (Miller and Meloy 2006). Using data on husband and wife abuse, Johnson (1999, 2000) identifies patterns among couples in which both the husband and the wife are violent and controlling. Johnson and Ferraro (2000) define MVC as a battle of control between two intimate terrorists. Although they report that the pattern is rare, the type of abuse raises questions about the importance of distinctions between types of violence. Until recently, research has framed MVC in terms of either "self-defense or mutual combat" (Saunders 1988).

The little data that studies report on MVC suggest that, even in these cases, some gender differences in frequency of violence. Most studies define gender symmetry in terms of the percent of men and women who have perpetrated at least one act of violence in their relationship. Although studies typically classify MVC as gender symmetrical, the type of IPV often ignores different male and female frequencies and physical consequences of violence. For example,

Johnson (1999) explains that in 31% of mutually violent couples the male initiated more violence, as opposed to 8% of female initiated violence. Johnson and Ferraro (2000) note that in numerous studies showing where violence is initiated “50-50” by males and females, women are more likely than men are to suffer harm that is more serious. It is difficult to distinguish between MVC that is “intimate terrorist” or “situational.” Johnson and Ferraro (2000:949) report that SCV, when compared to IT is much more likely to be mutual. Hence, findings on instances of MVC are inconsistent, and there is a strong need for much more focused research on defining IPV that occurs when both partners in a relationship are violent.

Tolman, Edleson, and Fendrich (1996) examine the *theory of planned behavior* (TPB), which explains how men become accustomed to violent behavior (Ajzen 1988). TPB suggests that a man’s intention is to abuse his female partner and, therefore, his behavior, expectations, and control determine subsequent abusive behavior. The male abuser evaluates possible outcomes of abusive behavior or attitudes toward behavior. He perceives expectations of others around him concerning violence; violence is contingent upon the degree to which he believes he can control his abusive behavior. Tolman et al. apply variables such as intentions and expectations to use violence, attitudes toward behavior, social norms, and perceived behavioral control to determine whether the perpetrator plans the violent behavior.

Ways in which *fear and aggression* emerge and encourage violent responses are critical in understanding motivations for committing violent offenses. Participation in violent behavior does not always equate to accepting the portrayal of being the aggressor. In a study on female-perpetrated violence, it is valuable to the data to understand who the alleged aggressor is in the relationship.

### 3.1.2 *Theories on situational conflict*

SCV examines situational conflict. Rather than focusing solely on control, Johnson's typology also introduces an element of situational conflict. Among incidents of SCV, there is no relationship-wide pattern of controlling behaviors among incidents of SCV (Johnson and Leone 2005:324). Instead, Johnson and Leone argue that many of instances of violence arise from conflicting situations in the relationship. Johnson (1995) suggests that terms such as domestic violence, wife beating, and spousal abuse typically refer to SCV. SCV occurs when specific conflicting situations escalate to violence. The causes of SCV vary from couple to couple and across different incidents of violence experienced by the same couple. Johnson (1995) finds that SCV is a more common form of abuse experienced by both men and women perpetrators. Further, Holtzworth-Munroe (2000) finds that women perpetrators of SCV have similar attitudes toward women as do nonviolent men. Unlike IT, which the perpetrator attempts to exert general control over their partner, SCV is a much less coherent phenomenon.

Another theory that addresses situational violence is *family conflict theory*. This feminist theory argues that the process of socialization increases the likelihood of men's use of violence in stressful situations. This theory pays particularly attention to economic hardship as a major source of stress within families. Family conflict theory pays special attention to family role conflict and strain. More specifically, when a person crosses over their assigned role or takes a different role, crossing boundaries challenge their roles expectations (White and Klein 2002). Although every member takes different roles at certain times in the family life cycle, family members may experience intrarole conflict, interrole conflict, and personality role conflict. Intrarole conflict occurs when a family member receives different ideas or direction from many people on how they should act within their role; interrole conflict occurs when a family member

attempts to fulfill multiple roles at once; personality role conflict occurs when a partner asks a family member to fulfill a role in which they do not wish to partake. During the interview process, I inquired about cases of conflict-oriented violence and stress as they related to the economic stability and status of both partners in the abusive relationship.

Family conflict theory differs from theories on status differences in families because of its focus on stress and family hardship rather than controlling or hierarchal relationships in the family. Data generated by general surveys supports the conceptual framework of family conflict theory (Straus and Gelles 1990; Bradbury, Rogge, and Lawrence 2001). Family conflict theory describes stress in the family during periods of economic hardship as a motivation for the use of violence (Straus and Gelles 1990; Bradbury et al. 2001). I explored potential economic motivations for violent behavior; the interview included questions about financial stability of their families and stress levels as they related to finances. Since instances of SCV may not involve consistent motivations overtime, I used these probes to uncover various motivations for abuse.

Other studies on situational violence examine how family conflict is mediated through broken down emotional processes, stress, and adverse decision-making in relationships (Jewkes 2002; Hindin and Adair 2002). Hoffman, Demo, and Edwards (1994) find that IPV is strongly associated with the frequency of verbal disagreements and high levels of conflict in relationships.

Retzinger (1991) introduces a theory of emotional processes and conflict escalation in intimate relationships. Retzinger suggests that social bonds are at risk when partners do not build, maintain or repair them. A perceived attack by one partner on the bond between partners causes rage and shame and hence conflict escalation. Retzinger argues that an important source of conflict and physical aggression between intimates involves reactions to lapses in important

social bonds. The study finds that dysfunctional communication patterns in relationships lead to conflict and IPV.

Jewkes (2002) reports instances when partners perform IPV as expressions of stress, frustration, and anger that stem from a lack of control. Hindin and Adair (2002) argue that conflicting patterns of household decision-making are strong predictors of IPV committed against women. They find that the greater the number of decision-making domains dominated by men, the more likely they are to use IPV; when women dominate household decisions, they are also more likely to experience IPV. This pattern clearly suggests that for couples who experience less family conflict and make major decisions jointly, women are less likely to experience IPV. Their findings also show that women who dominate household decision-making are more likely to be violent in relationships. Hindin and Adair recommend that future research examine relationships between household decision-making, conflict, and female-perpetrated IPV.

### *3.1.3 Separation-instigated violence (SV)*

Separation-instigated violence (SV) is the most recent addition to Johnson's typology of IPV. Established in 2008, SV describes violence that first occurs in the relationship at separation (Kelly and Johnson 2008). SV relates to heightened risk of female homicide following a separation; studies have not reported evidence on violent outcomes of SV for men (Hotton 2001; Johnson and Hotton 2003). SV has special relevance for studies compiled by organizations working with separating and divorcing families. SCV is less likely to escalate over time and is more likely to stop after separation (Johnson and Leone 2005). Perpetrators of SV are not described as intimidating or fearful and do not have a history of uncivilized or uncontained behavior. Separation and shock are motivations for SV. Acts are likely to include lashing out and

destroying property, yet are not likely to occur frequently. These acts of SV are said to be unexpected and non-controlling (Kelly and Johnson 2008:487).

Similar to IT, SV is also a gender specific, male-to-female perpetrated type of IPV. However, its two-dimensional representation is an exact opposite of IT. A perpetrator of SV performs non-controlling physical aggression against a victim who in return, responds violently. Unlike SCV, which has two perpetrators of IPV, SV described distinct experiences of a perpetrator and a victim. Unlike a victim of IT, a victim of SV is neither fearful of nor intimidated by the ex-partner. Her attack is shocking and severe, occurring after the victim exits a non-violent relationship. In contrast, a victim performing VR experiences ongoing and predictable attacks in a relationship that is allegedly difficult to leave.

Although Johnson describes differences among perpetrators and victims across various types of IPV, there remains much ambiguity in the conceptualization of SV. For example, SV does not offer a two-dimensional relationship of physical aggression and control. Johnson also fails to mention the type of control performed by the victim. For example, a perpetrator of SV performs violent aggression, but the victim is not characterized as being controlling or non-controlling; there is no specified type of control listed to completely conceptualize physically aggressive conduct. Hence, these conclusions are limited to an unknown performance of physical violence that is provoked by the aggressor. The researcher must question whether the victim uses any degree of control to resist, fight back, mutually attack, or murder her perpetrator. Hence, the two-dimensional conceptualization of physical aggression and control in SV is incomplete as compared to VR, SCV, MVC, and IT (Leone, Johnson, and Cohan 2004: 606-607):

SCV couples show low levels of both physical abuse and controlling behaviors (low severity) and both partners engage in similar levels of violence (high symmetry). MVC is typified by high severity as well as high symmetry. Both partners tend to be highly violent and both are controlling. SCV and MVC describe both partners' behavior. In contrast, IT and VR are defined

as low symmetry but then focus on the behavior of just one partner. Along with low symmetry, IT is defined as high severity of violence and control by only one partner. Like IT, VR couples show low symmetry, high severity of violence, and control by one perpetrator, with the addition of the other partner using violence (but not control) in self-defense.

A practical aspect of SV is its inclusion of an external motivation. Kelly and Johnson (2008) hypothesized that a victim of SV should have no history of violence. Yet, “history of violence” is only one of many other external motivations that influence partner responses to IPV. Furthermore, given the use of this external motivation in SV, Johnson ignores the violent experiences of a large selection of victims. Hence, this category of IPV used to describe violence occurring after separation offers no consistent explanation of a victim’s use of control when she has experienced traumatizing, ongoing patterns of abuse throughout her lifetime. In this instance, SV disregards the significance of properly assessing how and why women perform physical aggression. Furthermore, SV does not fully credit women with agency or capacity to successfully control their partners during male-to-female violence.

Very few studies use SV and little is known about its applicability in depicting current types of domestic assaults. However, SV is useful in understanding female victimization. In particular, social psychology studies on male jealousy and physical aggression confirm its relevance (DeSteno and Salovey 1996). The main tenets of SV are also supported in family violence data on male-to-female perpetrated homicide. Furthermore and most importantly, the mere idea of including the history of violence into SV implies that Johnson understands that violence and control, the central features of his typology, are not always the most essential variables for describing women’s responses to violence. The addition of SV is a sign that Johnson may expand the typology to include characteristics of female perpetrated IPV.

### 3.1.4 *Models on gender equality*

Research has not easily classified the gender equality theories as addressing either IT or situational conflict violence. As noted earlier, a considerable body of sociological and criminological literature examines crime as it relates to women's status attainment relative to men (MacMillian and Gartner 1999). Some researchers suggest that greater inequality between men and women mark women as "suitable targets" for male violence (Vieraitis and Williams 2002). Wesely (2006) argues that gender inequality and oppression in a patriarchal society parlay into individual, institutional, and structural marginalization that contribute women's risk of violence. Wesely relates unequal amounts of economic power and social capital to risks of sexual, physical, and emotional degradation of women. Wesely finds that restrictive institutional access to resources causes hardship for women. Hence, economic deprivation, social exclusion, desperation, and sexual vulnerability become part of the context of lived experiences that may generate further criminal activity against women (Wesley 2006:304-305).

While some theories suggest that female wage disparities make violence more of an option, other studies show that men respond violently to women's economic advancements; studies also show increases in male-female perpetrated IPV when there is greater equality between men and women. *Backlash hypothesis* relate an unintended consequence of increases in gender equity to violence against women, particularly in the area of economic equality. Employment plays a central role in constructing masculinity and there are expectations for men to be breadwinners (Thoits 1992; Connell 1995; Migliaccio 2002; Anderson 1997). Studies also find that perceived advances of women as a threat to their economic advantage leads to frustration for some men. In response, men respond violently to their decreased dominance and

engage in violence against their female partners (MacMillan and Gartner 1999; Pridemore and Freilich 2005).

Recent research provides support for the backlash hypothesis. Studies report that the when women comparably equal to men, men are more likely to be violent toward them (Messerschidt 1993; Whaley and Messner 2003; Yodanis 2004; Pridemore and Freilich 2005). When studies disaggregate these data by race, the positive relationship holds only for White women (Ousey 1999:36). As one example, Pridemore and Freilich (2005) examine gender income equity and female homicide victimization rates across ethnicity, class, and gender. In tandem with other researchers, they find a strong relationship between loss of male status and victimization of a partner. Pridemore et al. (2005) confirm a positive cross-sectional relationship between gender income equality and White non-Hispanic female homicide victimization rates. The findings show that among the group of White men with the most to lose economically, there appears to be a backlash effect of gender income equality on female homicide victimization.

Vieraitis and Williams (2002) also argue that violence against women is an extension of the division of labor: lower class men who struggle to maintain their breadwinner status may hope to maintain control over their lives by victimizing their partners. Yodanis (2004) implicates a wide variety of economic conditions and suggests that status compatibility between partners in the areas of employment, income, and education shapes the risk of physical violence and emotional abuse.

Roles of women in the paid labor forces and financial contributions for family are increasingly important in the study of IPV (White and Rogers 2000; Amato, Johnson, and Booth 2003). A unique relationship between power and violence exists in the private sphere. Studies report the notion that increased female power threatens men, and men are less likely to accept

women as competent decision makers and equal financial contributors. Yodanis (2004:668) reports that occupational and educational status of women, along with control variables, explains 41% and 40% of the variance in sexual violence.

Over the last 40 years, researchers paid considerable attention to violent behavior of White men (Gibson 1997; Mason 2002). These studies examine white privilege and power to describe how White males encounter perceived status loss despite the reality that power exists across other groups. Given an ideology that endorses White male status, power, and violence, it is not surprising that financial independence of women is likely to threaten a man's sense of authority, control, and masculinity. Alongside increases in cultural diversity, non-White political power, gender equity, and other civil rights advances, a violent outlook characterized by conservative gender role expectations has emerged.

*Status reversal theory* also focuses specifically on violence committed against women who exceed the economic status of men. Status reversal is a deviation from typically gendered configuration of the masculine role of economic provider that results in violence against the new breadwinning partner. McMillan and Gartner (2006:948) find that "a man's loss of the role as the sole breadwinner coupled with the economic independence of his wife is most detrimental to his mental health." Ultimately, this type of violence against wives reflects a patriarchal emphasis on men's domination over women (Martin 1981).

Findings provide tentative support for the view that employment, education, and financial resources are symbolic in intimate relationships. Kaukinen find that when the financial contribution of a woman exceeds that of her intimate partner, the risk of male-to-female perpetrated spousal abuse increases. However, Kaukinen (2004) argues that research involving a small sample size prevents a full examination between income equality and risk of IPV, and

proof of the extent to which these variables increase the likeliness of violence against women is inconsistent.

Another theory that stresses employment is *occupational spillover and compensatory violence*. The theoretical arguments are that men with stressful occupations are more likely to use violence against female partners. There appears to be a spillover of violent behavior into the home, which indicates that “work” is one of many variables that affect rates of violence against women. Although some researchers find that men do not repeat workplace violence at home (Flannery 1995), occupations are both an impingement on family life and a potential influence on family violence (Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, and Crouter 2000). Numerous variables influence relationships between work and family violence. For example, Melzer (2002) focuses specific attention to physical violence in female-dominated occupations because men in these occupations are more likely to use violence against women. In the 1970’s, studies suggested that segregated work contributed to violence in the workplace and at home (Dobash and Dobash 1979).

Research that is more recent suggests that gender segregated work leads women and men to establish conflicting attitudes, skills, and behaviors (Melzer 2002). Using resource theory and a feminist lens, Melzer (2002) revealed that physically violent, female-dominated, professional specialty, and dangerous occupations trigger a spillover of behavior that is potentially dangerous for the intimate partners of male employees. Johnson (1995) and Johnson and Ferraro (2000) suggest that underreporting disproportionately reduces estimate levels of violence committed by men in physically violent occupations. Furthermore, the data in Meltzer (2002) does not consider how instances of assault are likely to lead to suspension or termination for military personnel or police officers.

*Gendered performance theory* explicitly articulates the relationship between gender and violence. Recent studies of violent victimization focus their attention to constructions of masculinity within men's accounts of committing IPV (Butler 1990; West and Fenstermaker 1995). Through men talking about the violence they commit, batterers construct gendered identities through these violent actions (Anderson and Umberson 2001). Although limited data is available on constructions of femininity within women's accounts of IPV, Allen-Collinson (2009) develops qualitative literature on male victims' accounts of IPV, exploring the of experiences congruence with elements of IPV within contemporary frameworks of masculinity. Research on gendered performance of violence show that gender is the central variable that dictates the authority and responsibilities assigned to men and women (Dobash and Dobash 1998). Ultimately, violence becomes a resource for demonstrating manhood, and batterers construct masculine identities through committing this violent behavior (Anderson and Umberson 2001).

When researchers survey masculine behavior, the focus is primarily on differences in violent behavior projected by both partners. It is important to understand how control is determined and applied in the relationship. Gendered performance theory contends that violence is a resource for demonstrating and constructing masculine identities (Anderson and Umberson 2001). Many apply theory on control because they are concerned that women use violence to imitate masculine behavior (Fiebert 1998). I examined types of aggression performed against each participant in comparison to their performed aggression to assess the similarities and differences.

## 3.2 Theoretical models on female-perpetrators of IPV

Women's violence is rooted in the structural contexts and the desperate realities that shaped their lived experiences (Alvi et al. 2005). Research offers considerable attention to self-defense as a key variable in depicting women as perpetrators of IPV. Additionally the VR category in Johnson and Leone's (2005) typology of IP also describes women perpetrators who resist IPV performed by their male partners.

### 3.2.1 *Self-defense*

Research suggests that when women use violence against their partners, it is usually in response to ongoing battering or violent abuse (Miller 2001; Dasgupta 2002; Hamberger and Guse 2002; Osthoff 2002). Findings suggest that during ongoing victimization, women engage in IPV to either discontinue or escape abuse (Miller 2001; Dasgupta 2002; Miller and Meloy 2006). Recent data confirms that male-perpetrated intimate terrorism differs from that committed by women. Female perpetrators of intimate terrorism typically perform minor acts of violence rather than homicide (Johnson 1999). Hines and Saudino (2003) argue that female intimate terrorism offenders are likely to resemble their male counterparts who perpetrate violence because they are performing violence to express forms of revenge. Steffensmeier and Alan (1996:480) suggest that women generally kill when they perceive their situation as life threatening, or affecting the physical or emotional well-being of themselves or their children.

Researchers assert that women offenses differ from those committed by men because women primarily resist or retaliate against violent partner abuse (Hamberger 1997; Kernsmith 2005). Rather than using violence to exert power or control over partners, women are likely to respond to conflict in defense of continuous loss of power (Miller 2001:1368). A woman's role as both a victim and assailant identifies a potential site of struggle; it is a contradictory position

that requires an understanding of defense and resistance, yet it is a position that also threatens the territory of social control and male power.

Various researchers studying women's use of physical force link their ongoing victimization to their male partners' coercion, intimidation, and violence (Barnett, Lee, and Thelen 1997; Hamberger et al. 1997; Dasgupta 1999, 2002; Miller 2001). Some women report self-defense or retaliation as a motivation for their physical aggression (Sugarman and Hotaling 1989). Most often, studies on female violence characterize self-defense as a practical choice made by women within the context of their violent gendered environment (Miller and White 2004:186).

Since self-defense is a reaction to masculine abuse, studies find that such violent behavior may add to a woman's vulnerability rather than increase their safety (Bachman and Carmody 1994). Miller and White (2004:186-187) argue that women apply self-defense as a "negotiation of gendered power imbalances, stereotypes of weakness, and sexual availability."

Many advocates privately acknowledge that women who are battered may hit back, most often in self-defense. Miller and Meloy (2006) argue that public discourse shies away from such admissions as fear of being misunderstood, and apprehension that the private will apply data on women's violence outside of its original context. Further, Schuller and Hastings (1996) attribute negative evaluations to perceptions claiming that violence victims who utilize resistive strategies are less psychologically stable than passive women are.

Current research suggests that laws and policies may not regard all resistance as types of self-defense. Dasgupta (2002) urges scholars to use the term self-defense with discretion because its legal definition may not explain all instances of a woman's use of resistant violent physical force. Further, traditionally defined conceptualizations of self-defense may not support woman-

centered narratives of VR (Barnett et al. 1997). For instance, if resistance to violence entails no apparent imminent threat to a woman's bodily integrity, by law, it is not self-defense.

Studies on self-defense find that women are more likely to commit IPV during instances of severe abuse or during their escape (Hines and Saudino 2003). I examined participants' previous exposure to violence and their responses to unhealthy behavior exercised by partners. Similar to studies arguing that intimate abuse can be physical, sexual, and psychological (Coker et al. 2000), I examined responses to violence that are not solely related to violent physical abuse such as emotional violence and external motivations of IPV.

### 3.2.2 *Theories on resistance*

Johnson and Leon (2005) argue that women engage in VR. VR is reactive violence in forms of physical abuse, emotional attention, and reactions to frustration and stress. In addition to self-defense, VR might include retaliating or punishing their partners for past abuse to gaining emotional attention, expressing anger, and reacting to frustration and stress (Follingstad, Wright, and Sebastian 1991; Faith 1993; Bachman and Carmody 1994). VR is not a consistent or frequent form of violent abuse. As a form of retaliation, resistance is not motivated by control. Definitions of VR differ from traditional definitions of self-defense. Rather than focusing on the presence of bodily harm or nature of violent abuse, VR is a reaction to any form of ongoing domestic abuse. Although VR is a form of female-perpetrated violence, findings on resistance do not correspond with literature that describes female-perpetrated IT (Sorenson and Taylor 2005).

Using the *behavior change hypotheses*, researchers predict three dominant changes in female behavior. Studies find that these changes account for increases in female-perpetrated violence (Steffensmeier and Demuth 2006; Hall 2004; Fox and Levin 2000). The first transition is a competitive behavior among women that challenges the violent behavior of men. The second

movement includes increases in coping strategies for confronting female victimization (Sullivan, Meese, and Swan 2005). The third behavioral change overlaps the abovementioned two. The behavior change hypotheses focuses on a combination of old and new types of strain experienced by women.

Popenoe (1996) suggests that women's psychic and economic well-being is more dependent on the domestic sphere than is that of men. Behavioral change centers a breakdown in the effectiveness of social control mechanisms in the family, church, and community. These mechanisms act as buffers against conditions that lead to involvement in violence (Almgren et al. 1998; Steffensmeier and Demuth 2006). According to Popenoe, instances such as high divorce rates, growth of female-headed families, and shifts in community social organization influence increase in acts of female violence. Research finds that women are likely to use violent offending to deal with abusive homes and interpersonal conflict with partners, children, and other family members (Ness 2004).

Research also argues that changing gender role expectations allow for greater female freedom and assertiveness. Hall (2004) finds that through messages and images that portray women as violent, women perform actions that *celebrate* gender-equal violence. Media images such as *Charlie's Angels* and *Kill Bill* present these portrayals. The images reiterate male violence, yet in female form. Fox and Levin (2000) refer to these behaviors as imitative male machismo competitiveness, which masculinize female behavior.

### 3.2.3 *Feminist theory*

Although a mass of feminist theory defines IPV as a matter of control rooted in patriarchal conditions of male dominance in heterosexual relationships (Stark and Flitcraft 1996), feminist criminologists argue that female crime is also rooted in the oppression of women (Gilfus

1992). Since the late 1990's, feminist debates on violence have centered scholarship concerning extended and emancipated household responsibilities of women (Wilson 1993; Groves 1996).

Consistent with general strain theorists, critical feminist literature argues that oppressed individuals may turn to crime in an effort to reduce strain or manage negative emotions associated with their strain (Broidy and Agnew 1997). Freda Alder's *theory of female emancipation* positively associates forceful offenses and impoverished conditions of employment, a lack of educational opportunity, domestic violence, and divorce or separation (Berger 1989).

In the 1970's, several feminist criminologists suggested that increases in the female share of arrests were attributed to gains in gender equality and the women's movement (Adler 1975). Others have suggested that hierarchal changes in the home were a starting point for future violence outside of the home (Kandel-Englander 1992). Even beyond hierarchal changes, studies also predict changes in gendered expressions of verbal aggression. Feldman and Ridley (2000) find that relationships with male violence have more male and female unilateral verbal aggression, more mutual physical aggression, and withdrawal than do their nonviolent counterparts. Furthermore, these violent relationships also entail less constructive relative to destructive communication and less mutual problem solving. These findings suggest that emotional and psychological abuse is common in violent relationships. More research on female-perpetrated IPV should investigate relationships between emotional and physical violence.

#### 3.2.4 *Theory on exposure reduction*

Data on female-perpetrated homicide find that time trends within studies of intimate killings differ by marital relationship and gender of the victim (Browne and Williams 1993). Using *exposure reduction theory*, Dugan et al. (1999) examines the relationship between changes

in economic status among women, reduced exposure to ongoing violent relationships, and availability of domestic services. The theory on exposure reduction focuses primarily on averting male victimization and ending violent relationships. Researchers hypothesize that the greater the marriage rate, the higher the rates of both husband and wife-perpetrated homicide (Dugan et al. 1999:208).

In a longitudinal study of 29 large cities in the United States from 1976 to 1992, Dugan et al. (1999) explain a decline in the rate that married women kill their husbands. They find that declines in domesticity, improvements in female status, and new domestic services avert intimate homicides of husband. The data demonstrate that improvements in female economic status and presence of domestic violence services provide escape measures that influence the rate at which women kill their abusive partners. Simon et al. (2001) produce similar findings using a nationally representative sample of 5,238 US adults.

A gender identity conflict may exist between how women believe they should act and how society assumes all women should act. Using data from Simon et al. (2001), Sorenson and Taylor (2005:79) find that women's violence against men is a lesser violation than violence performed by male intimates. Sorenson and Taylor also find that women's violence is less likely to require intervention by formal social agencies than men's violence against female intimates. They report that 8.5% of respondents believe it is acceptable for a man to hit his wife or girlfriend if she has hit him first, and 1.7% believes it is acceptable for him to hit her to discipline her or keep her in line. However, 30.4% report that is acceptable for a woman to hit her husband or boyfriend if he hit her first, and 4.7 report that it is acceptable for her to hit him to discipline or keep him in line.

Research in George (1994:148) proposes that the degree of gender symmetry in any area of study is likely to spawn resistance among academic researchers. In particular, there are large gaps in academic research on female-perpetrated IPV, especially using data showing unilateral male victimization. These data on gender equality contradict the normative gender order; from this same perspective, Allen-Collinson (2009) notes that men have historically resisted recognition of these data. Allen-Collinson accords research on female-perpetrated IPV as relatively scarce in academic because the knowledge poses a threat to masculine self-images and patriarchal authority, especially in academe.

### 3.3 Johnson's typology

Johnson's typology examines severity and symmetry of physical aggression and control. Moreover, the typology only conceptualizes experiences of IPV using a dimensional method. The typology has many unique elements. For example, each type of IPV included in the typology does not use a one dimensional, or an additive approach. Instead, the typology uses an intersectional approach that examines the cumulative outcomes of physical aggression and control. Johnson's typology assumes that physical aggression and control entail a synergistic operation; physical aggression and control interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels, contributing to specific patterns of IPV. His two-dimensional conceptualization of physical aggression and control, which he refers to as a "dyad relationship" incites viewpoints on IPV that are otherwise ignored in other analyses on IPV.

Johnson's typology is also more current, recognizing more than one type of domestic violence. He claims the typology is gender neutral unlike more traditional standalone explanations on perpetration that typically focus on crimes committed by men. Instead, studies report that Johnson's typology dethrones the traditional analyses of domestic violence. The

following sections exhibit (1) Johnson's interpretation of the two-dimensional relationship between physical aggression and control, (2) use of the relationship in types of IPV, (3) specific criteria of each type of IPV, and (4) ways to distinguish between each type of IPV.

### *3.3.1 Two dimensions of aggression and control*

Johnson's typology classifies men and women's use of controlling physical aggression and non-controlling physical aggression (Johnson 2006). His two-dimensional relationship between aggression and control includes a three-step process: (1) He categorizes types of violence, (2) interprets types of control, and (3) compares violence and control to form the two-dimensional relationship, which is an individual level classification of each partner by the types of control and violence performed.

In the first step of interpreting the two-dimensional relationship, Johnson describes each partner as violent or nonviolent. A violent partner uses any type of physical aggression. A nonviolent partner uses no acts of physical aggression (Johnson 1995). However, since the type of IPV is a two-dimensional relationship, it does not assess physical abuse as a single characteristic. The relationship must assess the relationship between violence and control.

In the second step of interpreting the two-dimensional relationship, Johnson examines the level of control. Johnson measures the extent of violent behavior using a low-to-high scale of controlling physical aggression. Non-controlling physical aggression is violent behavior that is unrelated to a control motive; violence does not involve control of the other partner's actions, relationships or activities. Previous research does not entail any specific subscale to identify various types of non-controlling aggression. However, at the least violent extreme, some studies examined avoidance as a type of nonviolent mode of suppressing aggression (Sullivan et al. 2005). At the most violently aggressive extreme of non-controlling behavior, studies on female-

to-male homicides examine self-defense (Glass et al. 2004). It is important to note that non-controlling aggression entails performance of emotional or physical behavior in the same way that coercive controlling aggression involves controlling and manipulative emotion-driven abuse and physical abuse.

On the opposite end of the control scale, Johnson introduces the term “coercive controlling aggression.” Coercive controlling behavior includes pattern of physical violence, intimidation, isolation, control, and manipulation (Kelly and Johnson 2008). Coercive control is behavior that violates physical integrity and deprives rights and resources of a partner. Coercive control is well researched in literature on anger management treatment programs (Graham-Kevan and Archer 2003). There are specific subscales used to measure controlling behavior, such as the controlling behavior scale (CBS). Most control subscales examine five types of control: economic abuse, coercion and threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, and isolation (Pence and Paymar 1993). Within these control subscales, there are more than 20 items of behavior. As mentioned previously, some types of coercive control entail a combination of physical and emotional behaviors; a partner can use coercive control that is predominantly verbal, with limited use of physical violence. Some research makes the mistake of assuming that patterns of general control are indexed simply by high rates of violence (Johnson 1995:287; Kevan-Graham and Archer 2008:540).

After assessing a partner’s use of violence and their level of aggression, Johnson pairs the findings, which establishes performance types of control and types of violence per partner, which creates the third step of the two-dimensional interpretation. This final step establishes his conceptual framework of the two-dimensional relationship, which Johnson designs to demonstrate the interconnectivity of violent (physical) or nonviolent (emotional) aggression.

### 3.3.2 *Aggression, control, and types of IPV*

Johnson's typology on types of IPV assigns a two-dimensional relationship to both members of the violent relationship. Johnson has added, revised, re-conceptualized, and renamed types of IPV as research on IPV has expanded to include analyses on both male and female perpetrated violence and victimization. Johnson (1995) assesses only patriarchal terrorism (renamed IT) and common couple violence (renamed SCV) to distinguish between ongoing controlling battering and situational conflict-oriented disputes. In Johnson (2006), he expanded the typology to include VR and MVC because new data found that some women exercised control in violent relationships, while others did not. Johnson and Kelly (2008) added SV to the typology to consider intimate violence committed by ex-partners, which attempted to close a gap in research on assaults by strangers and domestic violence. Currently, Johnson's typology consists of five types of violence: VR, SCV, SV, MVC, and IT. More recently, the typology attempts to encompass all possible combinations of controlling physical aggression, non-controlling physical aggression, and non-violence (Kelly and Johnson 2008).

According to Johnson's typology, when a couple's experience fits into, or is described using Johnson's typology of IPV, each partner in the relationship must perform a distinct type of physically aggressive behavior, extent of control, and frequency of violence. Leone et al.

(2004:606-607) offer a description of Johnson's framework:

CCV couples [renamed SCV] show low levels of both physical abuse and controlling behaviors (low severity) and both partners engage in similar levels of violence and controlling (high symmetry). MVC is typified by high severity as well as high symmetry. Both partners tend to be highly violent and both are controlling. CCV and MVC describe both partners' behavior. In contrast, IT and VR are defined as low symmetry but then focus on the behavior of just one partner. Along with low symmetry, IT is defined as high severity of violence and control by only one partner. Like IT, VR couples show low symmetry, high severity of violence, and control by one perpetrator, with the addition of the other partner using violence (but not control) in self-defense.

Among VR couples, the aggressor can be violent and non-controlling in a relationship while in a violent and controlling partner. SCV couples entail a perpetrator who can be violent and non-controlling and in a relationship with a partner who is either nonviolent or who is also violent and non-controlling. Among couples that perform MVC, a violent and controlling perpetrator is paired with another violent and controlling partner. During IT, the perpetrator can be violent and controlling and in a relationship with a partner who is either nonviolent or violent and non-controlling. Although SV partners are no longer involved in their intimate relationship, they are certainly not strangers who hit each other. Kelly and Johnson (2008) report that the perpetrator can be violent and controlling with a violent ex-partner, but SV is incomplete because the study does not examine the two-dimensional relationship between physical aggression and control for the victim (See Table 1: Types of IPV, acronyms, and descriptions). Hence, this study did not include a complete analysis of SV because there is no conclusive data on its two-dimensional relationship between aggression and control. Moreover, SV has received little attention in research on IPV.

Table 1: Types of IPV, acronyms, and descriptions

<b>TYPES OF IPV</b>	<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Violent resistance	VR	Perpetrator can be violent and non-controlling but in a relationship with a violent and controlling partner
Situational couple violence	SCV	Perpetrator can be violent and non-controlling and in a relationship with a partner who is either nonviolent or who is also violent and non-controlling
Mutual violent combat	MVC	A violent and controlling perpetrator may be paired up with another violent and controlling partner
Intimate terrorism	IT	Perpetrator can be violent and controlling and in a relationship with a partner who is either nonviolent or violent and non-controlling
Tempered violent resistance <sup>1</sup>	TVR	Perpetrator can be violent and controlling and in a relationship with a violent and less controlling partner

### 3.3.3 *IPV types and themes*

I closely examined the following four types of IPV in Johnson’s typology: VR, SCV, MVC, and IT. Each IPV type entails specific themes for couples’ behavior; I used Johnson’s criteria for a two-dimensional relationship between physical aggression and control to identify for the thematic analysis of female perpetrated-IPV and victimization. My criteria for themes in each analysis of types of IPV also included four tenets: (1) motivations for performing violent physical aggression, (2) descriptions of physical aggression performed by partner one, (3) descriptions of physical aggression performed by partner two, and (4) descriptions of violence perpetrated and experienced by each partner. The following paragraphs explain Johnson’s two-dimensional criteria.

---

<sup>1</sup>This current study introduces TVR. TVR is not a type of IPV included in Johnson’s typology. There is no other data available to explain and describe this type of IPV. Although this study considers TVR as a type of IPV that may explain participant experiences, there is no separate analysis on participant experiences of TVR in this study.

VR examines partner one, who is violent and non-controlling and partner two, who is violent and controlling. According to Johnson's narrative interpretation of VR, motivations to exercise VR are determined by partner one's violent response to partner two; VR describes resistance performed following experiences of ongoing victimization. Johnson (2008) proposes that anger, fear, ongoing victimization, among other impulses are motivations for VR.

An analysis of VR must first examine partner one's motivations to perform resistance. However, most research on resistance combine types of self-defense and VR, which results in inconsistent findings of partner one's motivations to respond to IPV. Second, the analysis includes an overview of types of non-controlling physical aggression, which is performed by partner one. Third, an overview of types of coercive controlling behavior is included, which partner two performs. Finally, a section on violence and resistance examines the frequency, duration, severity of IPV and injuries experienced by both partners. In this section, rather than using the term "IPV" as the title of the criteria for violence, I use the term domestic abuse. The term domestic abuse includes emotional (harassment) and physical abuse (attacks, violent assaults, IT abuse). I also examine the escalation of abuse in each relationship, understanding that in cases of VR, IT abuse (ongoing coercive controlling aggression and physical violence) may not be the only type of IPV performed. The analysis criteria for VR includes: (1) resistance and motivations, (2) non-controlling aggression, (3) coercive controlling aggression, and (4) domestic abuse and resistance.

SCV examines two partners who are violent and non-controlling. According to Johnson's narrative interpretation of SCV, motivations to exercise SCV are determined by the situational context of conflict experienced by both partners; SCV describes non-controlling physically aggressive violent behavior performed by partner one or partner two on account of unresolved

diverging viewpoints. Lindhorst and Tajima (2008) notes that contextual factors shape how couples define physical aggression and these factors also influence couples' responses to victimization.

An analysis of SCV must first examine both partners' motivations to perform IPV. Motivations of SCV are nested in surveys of both the immediate (situational) and broader (cultural and historical) contexts of the two-dimensional relationship between aggression and control. Second, the analysis includes an overview of types of non-controlling aggression, which both partners perform. Finally, a section must examine domestic abuse and situational violence; the frequency, duration, severity of IPV and injuries experienced by both partners. Domestic abuse includes emotional (harassment) and physical abuse (attacks, violent assaults, IT abuse). The analysis on SCV must include harassment because emotional responses escalate into physical disputes in most cases of SCV. The analysis criteria for SCV includes: (1) immediate context and two-dimensional relationship, (2) broader context and relationship, (3) non-controlling aggression, and (4) domestic abuse and situational violence.

MVC examines two partners who are violent and controlling. According to Johnson's narrative interpretation of MVC, motivations to exercise MVC are determined by controlling behavior performed by both partners during mutual battles and conflicting situations; MVC describes ongoing mutual controlling and violent behavior that couples perform to regulate opposing viewpoints. Limited data exists on samples of MVC. Among samples of mutually violent couples, partners rarely perform exact or comparable measures of control, especially using data on emotional physical aggression (Miller and Meloy 2006). Furthermore, the operational definition of control in Johnson's typology is both inconsistent and misleading

because MVC alludes to a partner's ability to control either the partner or the situation.

Situational control and general control are two distinct types of control.

An analysis of MVC must examine the partners' motivations, control, and aggression simultaneously. The motivations for mutual violence are embedded in the examinations of control and conflict. Second, the analysis includes an overview of types of control exerted when the partners perform IPV. Third, the analysis includes an overview of controlling behavior performed during situational conflict. Finally, a section on domestic abuse and mutual violence must examine the frequency, duration, severity of IPV and injuries experienced by both partners. Domestic abuse includes emotional (harassment) and physical abuse (attacks, violent assaults, IT abuse). Like SCV, the analysis on MVC must include harassment because ongoing physical disputes involve coercive controlling verbal and physical abuse. The analysis criteria for MVC includes: (1) battle for control, (2) situational conflict, and (3) domestic abuse and mutual violence.

IT examines partner one, who is violent and controlling, and partner two, who is violent and non-controlling. According to Johnson's narrative interpretation of IT, motivations to exercise IT are determined by partner one's control and victimization of partner two; IT describes patterns of ongoing, coercive controlling physical and emotional abuse. Johnson (1995) predicts that violence is only one tool used by patriarchal terrorists; these abusers use a combination of controlling behaviors during domestic abuse. However, Vangelisti and Perlman (2006) and Johnson (2008) identify distinct behavior types of IT abusers. The dependent intimate terrorist, only violent in the intimate relationship, is emotionally dependent, jealous, and controlling. The antisocial intimate terrorist, violent both inside and outside of the family, broadly exercises controlling behavior and violence to have their way.

An analysis of IT must first examine partner one's motivations to act out controlling and violent behavior. Although the behavior type of the intimate terrorist determines their motivations for IPV, these relatively new concepts are poorly researched; aggressors of IT may not fit every feature of each IT behavioral type. Second, the analysis includes an overview of types of coercive controlling conduct, which is performed by partner one. Third, an overview of types of psychological abuse and threat experienced by partner two is included. Finally, a section on domestic abuse and coercive controlling violence examines the frequency, duration, severity of IPV and injuries experienced by both partners. Domestic abuse includes physical abuse and emotional responses. The analysis criteria for IT includes: (1) IT behavior types, (2) coercive controlling aggression, (3) psychological abuse and threat, and (4) domestic abuse and coercive controlling violence.

### 3.4 Conclusion on theories, models, and types of IPV

Chapter 2 presented data on women and men as victims and perpetrators of IPV. Then, chapter 3 reviewed a series of theories that purportedly describe IT, SCV, MVC, and VR. The chapter included present theories on gender equality and hypotheses about women as perpetrators of violence. Chapter 3 also included a description overview of components of the typology. The description offered a context for understanding how Johnson conceptualizes each type of IPV. For example, Johnson identifies concepts such as non-controlling aggression, coercive controlling aggression, conflict, control, and others. The chapter explained how each concept applies to the typology.

Claims that women commit violence as a form of self-defense dominate data on IPV. According to the review of literature, studies have well established that self-defense plays a major role in IPV by women. However, research has much to explain about why women commit

IPV. Moreover, since female gender roles, socialization patterns, and institutions often forbid women's expressions of violence, some researchers have argued that IPV "must be" viewed as emerging from more intricate motivations (Dasgupta 2001:4; Wesely 2006). Part 3 describes ways in which this study extends findings in research on women's experiences and perceptions of IPV. I discuss the methodology employed to examine the research questions of this study. I also introduce the conceptualization of Johnson's typology, which is applied to depict female-centered narratives on IPV.

### **PART 3: METHODS AND EVALUATION**

Part 3 introduces the methodological approach of this qualitative analysis of IPV. The research questions of the study are described, as is the methodology used to address the questions. I explain the process of recruiting participants, the interview process, and the question guide used during the interviews. I also describe the centered analysis of the interviews and the coding process used to determine how Johnson's two-dimensional relationship between aggression and control describes participant experiences of IPV.

#### **CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY**

In chapter 4, I introduce the methodological approach of this qualitative analysis of IPV. I begin by describing the research questions of the study. I also explain the methodology used to address the research questions, which is a centered approach and thematic analysis. I also explain the process recruiting participants, the interview process, and the question guide used during the interview.

##### **4.0 Research questions**

The overarching research question of this study was, in what ways does Johnson's typology (VR, SCV, MVC, and IT) fit women's experiences as a perpetrator and victim of IPV?

This question distinguished Johnson's typology as a tool for uncovering the unique patterns of IPV that women encountered as both perpetrators and victims of IPV. I used the typology to classify current patterns of violence using a qualitative analysis that offered a rich interpretations of perpetrated violence, control, and types of victimization.

A primary goal of this study was to examine women's motivations for IPV. The first sub-question was: what are external motivations for IPV among women who are perpetrators and victims of IPV? This question aided in an evaluation of each participant's vulnerability to abuse. It also explored the reasons why women exercised control and violence. Women's accounts of their situational, cultural, and historical contexts of violence also further explained emotional dimensions of IPV. Moreover, an analysis of women's perceptions of external motivations for IPV helped provide a deeper understanding of their expressions and types of violence committed. The second sub-question was: What role does control play in women's experiences of IPV, and how do they express and experience control? This addressed women's non-controlling and, or controlling behaviors when they perform physical violence and experience victimization. I also examined whether women's control during IPV is similar to previously examined types of control introduced in studies on IPV perpetrated by men.

#### 4.1 Centered approach and thematic analysis

This section describes the feminist and centered (Kershaw 2003) approach and thematic analysis used in this study to examine the applicability of Johnson's typology. I selected the feminist and centered approach because "centeredness" situates research and theory in the life chances and experiences of the subject. Within a broader historical and cultural context, this framework positions women as subjects of inquiry and as active agents in the gathering of knowledge. In this study, the voice of the participant is the primary data (Kershaw 2003).

Previous studies using centered research have reconceptualized basic understandings of race, class, gender, and politics. This women-centered study of IPV makes women's perceptions visible, reveals potential male biased assumptions, and uncovers women's unique experiences (Stacey and Thorne 1985).

Anderson and Umberson (2001:362) apply a centered approach in a study on masculine performance of IPV. The dialogue in their study includes forms of communication, explanations of physical attacks/injuries, and contact with others during and following instances of violent conflict. They ask participants to identify if they consider themselves as victims, perpetrators, both, or none of the above. Anderson and Umberson uncover male participant interests to minimize and deny violence, depict and interpret of violence, and designate who is responsible for the violence. This study explored women's centered perceptions of IPV.

The thematic approach included analyses on VR, SCV, MVC, and IT. I organized the examination of Johnson's typology around thematic units within the analysis of types of IPV. The themes represented specific two-dimensional relationship criteria that were the focus of each type of IPV. Theme topics pertained to four criteria: (1) intent to commit IPV, (2) use of physical aggression, (3) use of control, and (4) performance of physical and emotional abuse. By pre-selecting topics that were directly associated with Johnson's typology, this analysis offered both an active investigation of the usefulness of Johnson's typology and an analysis that examined women's experiences of IPV. Organizing this data around themes allowed for a survey of existing types of IPV and presentation of new data within a meaningful context of female-centered stories.

This research used interviews to gather detailed stories of violent events as female perpetrators and victims of IPV experienced them. The centered dialogue entailed themes that

provided comprehensive explanations of how women made sense of IPV (Dobash and Dobash 1984).

#### 4.2 Access and recruitment

As a coordinator of social sciences, I have served as a liaison on a comprehensive committee of social service programs, and have developed several relationships with directors and representatives of local programs and organizations. During a presentation on dating violence, colleagues had introduced me to a network of employees at local women's groups, centers, shelters, and government organizations.

In a meeting with colleagues, the group discussed their thoughts on current IPV response programs. In attendance were a representative, two constituents of the women's center who were also victims of IPV, and a parole officer who is also a part-time counselor at a partnering site. Following the dialogue, the center's network agreed to identify women to participate in this study.

The women's center is a tri-county nonprofit network that offers comprehensive resources and counseling to women, men, and children who are affected by intimate partner or sexual violence. The organization provides confidential support, counseling, and emergency shelter. The center provides educational domestic violence programs to women; these women are court mandated to participate in a battering program or are referred by other programs. Women's center programs include direct services such as outreach, police-partnered programs, monitored visitation, and legal aid. They also provide working groups such as domestic task force and sexual assault response, and community education including professional training and school-based programs. The primary goal of the women's center is to work for the major societal changes necessary to eliminate both personal and societal violence against all people. The

representative of the women's center agreed to participate in this study to use its findings for generating effective social programming for female aggressors in intimate relationships.

Due to confidentiality policies at the women's center, there was no public advertisement of this study. Most interview participants were members of a women's center network who were mentored or counseled by trained staff. However, the sample in this study was not randomly selected from confidential lists of constituents at participating women's centers. To protect the confidentiality of their constituents, the women's center referred participants who were comfortable participating in the interview process. Each center representative asked these women to participate in an interview and had them to contact me directly. Then, potential participants decided whether they wanted to participate. Although there were limitations to this approach, one benefit was that these women were comfortable with providing the kind of detailed information and rich data that was so necessary for research such as this.

During the referral process, one staff person, parole officer Davis, shared comments that influenced the direction of the literature review of this study. During a conversation, Davis stated that most women who are involved with the women's center are victims of the relationship, but also "victims of dual arrests." During dual arrests, Davis has found that some lower-income women who resist abuse and experience dual arrests cannot afford quality representation in court. Davis explained that the family court judge designates the label of "aggressor" and "victim" after arrests occur. Hence, some programs refer women to group programs as a form of rehabilitation for their role as aggressor in the abusive relationship. Davis expressed his frustration with the court system, which he notes, "misuses power and discounts the true position of some women who fight for their lives every day."

The partnering women's center network referred 10 women for this research project. However, four women were inaccessible and two were unable to meet in the safe-space designated by the center. Because I could not guarantee their safety, those women did not participate in the study. Directors of women's groups in the states of Maryland and Virginia also referred three participants who were able to complete the interview process.

Given the limited availability of participants, I also used snowball sampling, a method that uses information from one participant to identify additional participants who are community networks affiliates. The participants identified three women. However, I did not contact these women directly. Rather, the referring women contacted the potential participants and offered my contact information. Hence, three of the 10 participants had not sought formal support.

It became evident that given the frequency of women perpetrators also being victims, participants in this sample would be both victims and perpetrators. The limited availability of women who were only perpetrators was a limitation of this research and is discussed in chapter 12 (See 12.3.1: Biases and single informant studies).

#### 4.3 Interview

I conducted each interview. The interviews took place at each of the facilities. The interviews offered qualitative data, which provided an understanding of participants' perspectives on their experiences of IPV (Weiss 1994). When the women were interviewed, most of them had already disclosed their stories in a trusting network. Hence, Johnson's terminology helped guide a better understanding of their experiences. The stories of women attending the women's center counseling sessions were less jumbled and easier to code. However, among the three participants who were referred, most were telling their full stories for the first time.

Although participants also referred subjects, I was the only person who connected any data with the names of each participant. However, due to the nature of this study on violence, I did not include member checks. Some qualitative studies incorporate the use of member checks into their analyses. Member checks may include such things as narrative accuracy checks and interpretive validity. It was not possible to schedule multiple appointments with participants following our interview. In addition, the women's center only agreed to participate as a referral service; hence, the representatives were not available to validate the anecdotes offered by participants. No one other than the administrator at the centers and I could identify the seven center-referred interview participants. Although my dissertation chair and committee members were able to access to the study data, they did not have access to the personal information of the participants.

The participants reviewed the consent form prior to the date of the interview. Each participant also completed a 10-minute introduction session and a one to two-hour interview. During the introduction sessions, the purpose of the study, content of the consent form, and use of the note pad were explained and described. Each participant created pseudonyms for themselves, their partners, and others who were involved in their experiences. Following the session, each participant read and signed the consent form if they planned to proceed with the interview. No participants declined after they signed the consent form. Copies of the consent forms were in a location separate from the data. There was no information such as an identification number or a pseudonym listed on the consent form that linked the data with the women's names.

Introduction sessions and interviews were audio recorded to ensure accuracy of the data. The recordings were transcribed immediately following each interview. Each audio file was

stored on an external hard drive located in a locked file cabinet. I did not refer to participant names in oral or written reports, link the data, or publically identify the subjects as participants in the project. A pseudonym replaced all participant names and those pseudonyms identified each transcript. Any written reports of the research also included the use of those pseudonyms.

Given the diverse experiences of the women interviewed, different questions arose during each interview. As the interviewing process progressed, I used additional topics raised during previous interviews. The wording and order of questions was not the same for all participants. By using open-ended questions, participant talked freely about issues without having their responses constrained by a structured set of questions.

#### *4.3.1 Interview guide*

The actual interview allowed for an examination of the three research questions of this study. The overarching research question of this study were as follows: in what ways does Johnson's typology (VR, SCV, MVC, and IT) fit women's experiences as a perpetrator and victim of IPV? There were two sub-questions: what are external motivations for IPV among women who are perpetrators and victims of IPV? What role does control play in women's experiences of IPV, and how do they express and experience control?

Interviews consisted of questions about positive and negative aspects of the participants' relationships with partners. The structure of questioning during an interview was important. To maintain a comfortable progression of dialogue, I inquired about issues that progressed in discussion on severity of violence from the beginning to the end of the interview; content related more specifically to instances of violence and injury as the interview progressed. Because semi-structured interviews were used, it was not possible to specify all of the questions in advance. Each interview proceeded like a conversation rather than an interview. There were many

opportunities given to allow the women to tell me their stories and highlight what was important to them. What follows are key interview questions, with the qualifier that I adjusted these questions based on the participant responses:

1. What was the relationship like when you first became involved with X?
2. What was the relationship like before the first instance of violence in your relationship?
3. When did the violence first occur?
4. What happened right before the first instance of violence?
5. Can you describe what X did?
6. Will you please describe what you did?
7. What made you decide to hit X?
8. Were either of you hurt?
9. What happened afterwards?
10. What was the relationship like after this event?
11. Were there other times when your relationship turned violent?  
Previous questions will be asked as relevant.
12. Will you please describe another instance?  
Previous questions will be asked as relevant.
13. What was the most recent incidence like?
14. Have you requested or received support?

Although it is not generally recommended that questions such as “why do you think he hit you or why did you hit him” were asked, these inquiries reassured that participants provide data useful for understanding their motivations and justifications for performing IPV. Follow-up questions offered elaboration and clarification when it was appropriate. Whenever I felt uncertain about a response, I re-worded responses and asked if my perception was accurate. Then, participants restated the meaning in their own words to clarify their thoughts.

## CHAPTER 5: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES

This chapter explains the participant’s experiences of IPV. I include narrative descriptions to demonstrate the individual perspectives of each participant. I also introduce the coding process that was used to determine each participants experience with IPV and examine whether partner violence escalated over time. Finally, I introduce the thematic analysis, which

was the research method that categorized participants' unique experiences into the conceptual schemes of each type of IPV. Some subject matter was new to the study of female perpetrated IPV, while others were consistent with patterns introduced in other studies on IPV. The thematic analyses of VR, SCV, MVC, and IT addressed the first two research questions in this study.

## 5.0 Centered analysis of interviews

This section includes a complete synopsis of each participant's experience of IPV. These narratives were my interpretation of each participant's experiences and were not word for word transcriptions. Since each narrative was an analysis of the interview, I did not refer to the illustrations as the "women's stories." The narratives included a combination of data such as findings selected from the coding process, ideas collected in field notes, and scenarios derived from the interview.

The narrative interpretation was consistent with the women-centered methodology employed in this dissertation. The centered, multidisciplinary approach used ascertained how the context of participants' experiences gave shape and meaning to research on IPV. The "interdisciplinarity, as an organizing framework," focused on how historical, psychological, sociological, and economic forces shaped IPV (Kershaw 2003:43). This approach also highlighted the important links between the participant, other perpetrators and victims, and the history of IPV.

### 5.0.1 *Brittany Jones*

Brittany Jones is a 23-year-old African American woman who has been dating her abusive partner for the past five years. They do not live together. Brittany hit back for the first time when she was 21 years old. On that day, on two occasions, she scratched and kicked her partner to prevent further injury. Prior to that day, when her partner was abusing her, Brittany

was afraid to tell him to stop. She claims that speaking or acting against his violent actions only provoked more violence. Brittany's responses to IPV are similar to the ways she responded to her experiences of childhood molestation from ages 4 to 9 by an adult female cousin. She allowed the abuse to occur. Although a women's center referred Brittany to this study, she has never sought refuge from IPV. Brittany met the women's center counselor during an anger management consultation for an altercation she had with her mother a year after she hit her partner. Aside from that class, Brittany has disclosed her experiences of IPV to only one friend.

Brittany's partner is a 26-year-old African American man. Brittany describes him as an experimental drug user who mixes Ecstasy and combinations of prescription narcotics while he drinks alcohol. These combinations are so lethal that Brittany has admitted him to the hospital's intensive care unit on multiple occasions. Her partner is under the influence often and his varied drug intake has different effects on his personality. As a result, he displays inconsistent emotions. He often swears and yells, and criticizes Brittany's decisions. On other occasions, Brittany describes him as kind, considerate, and passionate. Brittany believes that her partner's violent behavior is associated with both his drug abuse and his father's excessive use of severe beatings as the primary form of discipline. Brittany states that physical, emotional, and verbal abuse occurs only while her partner is under the influence. His anger climaxes when he cannot control Brittany.

This aggressive behavior such as slapping, punching, and kicking, has occurred throughout their five-year relationship. The physical abuse occurs frequently and has not caused long-lasting physical damage. When Brittany is "out of line," her partner responds quickly with violence, and then, they continue their day as if the violence had not occurred.

Brittany's partner has victimized her on multiple occasions. For example, she described him punching her in the nose for no reason, resulting in massive swelling and two black eyes. Brittany's partner has choked her until she could not breathe because she chose to go out with her friends without asking for his permission. He kicked her to the ground, stomped on her, and locked her in the closet as punishment for answering his telephone. In one instance, her partner attempted to force Brittany to obey him by repeatedly punching her in the head. Since the couple sat in a car, the momentum caused Brittany's head to hit the passenger side window with every blow.

Brittany's partner monitors her behavior and prevents her participation in activities outside the home. He threatens to leave the relationship when Brittany fails to provide for him financially. He also threatens her and displays unpredictable and extreme responses to what he perceives as her unacceptable behavior. Since Brittany is afraid to speak up, she has not addressed any critical issues with her partner. In effect, they do not have whole conversations about his violent attitude and behavior. He controls the tone and extent of their conversations. In addition to the physical abuse, Brittany suspects that her partner is unfaithful. Her reaction to him when he lies or disappears for weeks at a time is passive; she neither comments on his activity nor questions him. Most of the time, Brittany allows him to act as her superior. As if she was his child, he slaps her for misbehaving. When she disagrees with him, he does not allow her to respond. Brittany is afraid to joke with him because he hits when he mistakes her humor for sarcasm.

Despite her experiences of physical and emotional abuse, Brittany does not want to leave the relationship. She is not willing to give up the years of time she has invested. She understands that her relationship is not perfect and she works diligently to improve the conditions. She

motivates her partner to be successful and productive. For example, she encourages him to become sober, complete his General Education Degree, and maintain employment. Brittany is his caretaker. She spends most of her income on him and cares for his children. She is committed to doing what is necessary to keep him in the relationship.

After two years in the relationship, Brittany confronted her partner for the first time. She accused him of lying about his involvement with another woman. He responded to Brittany's accusations by calling her worthless and screaming other inflammatory statements. This was the first time he behaved disrespectfully toward her; drunk or sober, it was unlike him to attack her contribution to the relationship. This altercation also marks the first time she struck him. Brittany slapped him across the face and began to swing her arms wildly, unabashedly scratching and kicking her partner. It was a milestone in her life; not only was it the first time she hit her partner, but it was also the first time she had ever hit anyone in her life.

Brittany's physical attack launched a brutal retaliation from her partner, turning the episode into a full-fledged fight. As he fought, he spouted insults. Brittany fought back, kicking and scratching out of anger; his statements were so cutting that they infuriated her. Brittany referred to the incident as a "fight" rather than a "beating" because she hit to let him know she was angry. He threw her into his closet and kept her locked in the dark space for several hours.

Later that evening, the IPV reached its most violent and severe stage. After threatening to leave when he opened the closet, he attacked Brittany again. He trapped her on the bed by digging his knees into her chest. He pushed his forearm and elbow against her mouth to silence her. Brittany fought back again by kicking him and scratching his arms, chest, and face. She struggled to keep her legs closed as he tried to pry them open. He punched her legs until there

was no feeling left. Eventually, she had no more energy to push him off; she let him engage in sexual intercourse for nearly an hour.

The next morning, he did not recall any events that had occurred the previous day. He and Brittany blamed the drugs for his behavior. Brittany was embarrassed to go out in public following the brutal fight; the bruising was too harsh for Brittany to conceal with make-up. She remained at his home for two weeks, only leaving when her bruises had healed enough to mask. Recalling this incident brought Brittany to tears. She began to shake as she explained how frustrated, furious, and disappointed she was when he spoke to her in such a demeaning way. Brittany did not comment about the severity of the beating and the rape when she became upset; she was frustrated only because she was demeaned.

#### *5.0.2 Ann Wardrop*

Ann Wardrop is a 22-year-old African American woman who has been involved in an abusive, non-exclusive relationship for three years. Ann does not label their relationship as dating. She considers them as “just friends” who also engage in intimate activities. Her partner lives 45 minutes away and visits Ann two or three times per week. Violence is a normal part of Ann’s intimate relationship. Although Ann experiences physical violence at least one time per week, she never tells him she is unavailable. Ann hits back at least one time per month.

However, she prefers not to because her violent responses intensify the abuse.

Ann’s partner is a 28-year-old African American man who has three children, one biological and two adopted, and is currently married to another woman. However, Ann and her partner claim his marriage is not legitimate because they did not file a legal marriage certificate. Ann acknowledged her uncertainty of Muslim marriage ceremonies. However, she accepted his nuptials as a religious ritual rather than a legal marriage. Ann has never met her partner’s spouse

and she has no reason to believe this other woman knows of their involvement. Ann's partner is unwilling to end his current relationship. Ann understands his commitment to his children.

Ann refers to their relationship as a "spontaneous and fun" friendship. In the beginning of their friendship, Ann and her partner enjoyed watching movies, going out to nightclubs, and shopping together. When her partner visits, they frequent public venues for entertainment. After the entertainment, he treats Ann to dinner at a local restaurant of her choice; they typically eat at restaurants that Ann cannot afford to patronize alone. Throughout the relationship, Ann has also enjoyed receiving lavish gifts. Ann explained that he buys her clothes, food, jewelry, or anything that she wants. Most of the time, her partner makes purchases as a way of apologizing for the beatings. Although she always accepts the gifts, Ann claims she does not forgive him and remembers it all.

Ann's partner also motivates her to accomplish and seek out new professional goals. For example, he enrolled her in beauty school and she received a certification. He paid for the supplies and tuition for the program. Ann says his support of all of her goals and aspirations makes her feel like he cares about her.

Ann regards her partner as a "good man" because he is a great financial provider. Since he is her sole financial provider, it is common for Ann to adjust her weekly schedule to satisfy him. However, when her partner cannot control a majority of the decision-making, he hits her. For instance, he visits when he wants, only sometimes taking her request for a visit into considerations; he abuses Ann physically and emotionally when he is unable to dictate her schedule.

In the beginning of their friendship, Ann's partner found her promiscuous outfits and exotic make-up attractive. A year into the relationship, his impression of her attire changed. Now

when Ann dresses, she is sure to “cover up.” When they are in public, he blames Ann when other men look at her. If the couple is in a club setting, it is likely for Ann’s partner to drag her to the ground and beat her after noticing another man staring at her.

Her partner responds aggressively; he has hit her so often that Ann has grown tired of the beatings. Ann began to hit her partner back and, within a year, she actually initiated fights. However, Ann says it is pointless to hit back because when she retaliates, he hits harder. On occasions where she resists physically, Ann fears that she might pick up an object and hit him with it because his retaliation such as punching, kicking, and choking is unstoppable. When Ann responds violently, she slaps, shoves, scratches, or kicks her partner. Her responses do not deter her partner’s hitting, nor do they injure him. Whether she hits or not, after most fights, Ann has to wear a lot of make-up to cover scratches on her face, neck, and other parts of her body. She also styles her hair in creative ways to hide scars.

Ann’s victimization is more severe and most embarrassing when her partner hits in public, which occurs monthly. In private, she does not fight back. However, Ann is always likely to hit back when her partner initiates fights in front of others; this is the only time that Ann feels she can defend herself. Ann depends on bystanders who are willing to obstruct his actions in the midst of an attack. For instance, Ann will only hit back when friends or male cousins are present because she is confident that they will stop the fighting.

During one incident, he fought Ann inside a nightclub. Ann explained how she sat at the bar, had a couple of cocktails, and danced calmly in her seat. Her partner became furious because her actions enticed other men and encouraged unwanted attention. He also claimed Ann does not know how to act in public. Like similar violent episodes, the fight commenced after her partner threw a beverage in her face. He became angry because another man commented on how elegant

Ann was. All of a sudden, Ann's partner grabbed her, dragged her into a corner, and punched her face several times. When security personnel ended the altercation, Ann's eyes were black and blue, there was blood everywhere, and her face was unrecognizable. This type of severe altercation happens about six times per year.

Another incident occurred in his car. About a year ago, Ann moved back in with her parents after three years of living on her own. Ann described her mother's house as a safe place for her because Ann did not believe her partner would hit around her mother and stepfather. Nevertheless, one day, he forced Ann into his car and began striking her as the car pulled off. He accused Ann of visiting another man. Ann vowed that he was mistaken because she had not left the house in days. After this episode of abuse, her face was black and blue; Ann mused that it looked like she had gone "rounds in a Mike Tyson fight."

Ann no longer tells other friends when her partner visits because they fear for her safety. She is very careful about her interaction with others. Most of her decisions are made in response to this belief and her fear that her behavior is unacceptable to her partner. Ann also believes she can prevent fights. To make sure her partner does not hit her, Ann tries not to do anything her partner does not approve of. Ann has also terminated her cell phone contract to prevent conflict. Ann prefers that he is not able to reach her via telephone. However, she informs him before she goes certain places, and if he does not approve, she stays home. When Ann fails to listen, she blames herself for the domestic abuse and physical injuries. Ann will not leave the relationship because she is afraid that her partner will stalk her or try to kill her for abandoning him. Ann has never attended counseling or sought help. Her best friend, who experienced domestic violence as well, is also a participant in this study.

### 5.0.3 *Susie Jordan*

Susie Jordan is a 47-year-old African American woman. She was 23 years old during her only experience of physical abuse. Susie claims she hit in self-defense of her husband's physical abuse. During the experience, she hit her husband with a weapon until he was physically unable to hit her anymore. Susie attributes her severe reaction to 11 years of molestation by her father when she was young.

Susie's ex-husband, a 57-year-old African American man, was 34 when he first expressed emotional and physical abuse in their marriage. He was a construction supervisor and owner of a small business. Before the abuse began, her partner was very kind, compassionate, relaxed, and passive. He was also a protective parent. He and Susie had a trusting relationship and were very transparent with each other.

The turning point in their relationship occurred the day Susie found out her husband used drugs. Her husband's occupation required travel to various out-of-state locations and it was common for Susie to pack and unpack his bags. First, she found syringes. Susie knew he was not taking any medication. She also found condoms in the bag, which they had not used for 10 years. Rather than confront him immediately, Susie waited. Instead, she observed the situation to see how it progressed. At that time, she believed he could be using heroin and, or seeing another woman who used drugs. He became angry once he began using heroin, Valium and crank. While under the influence, he was likely to yell and throw objects with intent to injure Susie.

After Susie found the drug paraphernalia, she noticed changes in her husband's attitude. Although he directed anger toward Susie, he was not hostile toward their two- and six-year-old children. He became short-tempered and would become angry quickly. In response, Susie was sarcastic. Susie admitted that when he directed aggressive behavior at her, she followed suit. She

had a no-nonsense attitude. She urged that timing was everything. If her husband initiated an argument at the wrong time, Susie did not argue fairly, and she was likely to offend him with her comments.

Susie believed the drugs changed his personality. In only two weeks, her husband's degree of anger progressed to a point where minor situations would aggravate him. Nothing had to provoke his anger because he was already perturbed when he came home under the influence. Her husband's first acts of violence were not physical. Instead, his first signs of aggression were argumentative responses that led to yelling and destruction of their personal property. For instance, if either of their two children broke something, he would snap at Susie. Then, he would punch a hole in the wall. His physical displays made Susie nervous.

On another occasion, Susie's husband threw a coffee cup at her head. She ducked and the cup shattered the kitchen window. Susie walked away because his behavior had become more peculiar and inconsistent with any past conduct. At that point, she was afraid he would hit her next. One week later, Susie and her husband sat down to talk about his outbursts. However, he became angry again, and this time, he punched a hole in a cabinet.

When Susie first suspected his addiction, she telephoned a toll free number to inquire about the signs of addiction. Her husband showed subtle signs such as abandoning responsibilities, mood swings, and causing arguments. Although Susie's suspicions about his drug abuse were true, she never found out if he had extramarital sex.

On Susie's last attempt to converse with him about the condition of the relationship, she asked, "Is there something you need to tell me? Are you seeing someone else?" She felt he should be able to confide in or talk to her if he was involved in something that he did not normally do. Susie also inquired about his changes in attitude and behavior. In response, he told

Susie her accusations were inaccurate and questioned her trust. Susie laughed and told him she no longer trusted him.

After Susie confronted him, he also began to question her whereabouts, which was not typical for him to do. She also regulated the home and set many household rules. Prior to the drug use, Susie's partner did not discipline her. Subsequently, Susie did not like to report her whereabouts. When prompted to, she responded sarcastically and let him know he should not care about her location when it was not a concern in the past. For instance, if he did not want to shop for food or cook, he should not be concerned with the time it took for her to return from the market.

Susie and two other wives suspected that their husbands were using drugs together. Sometimes, the three men would leave together on Saturday and each would return to his home later in the day on Sunday. The three women met to discuss the many trials and tribulations each experienced at home. Later, as planned, each wife confronted her husband. Each husband blamed another for returning home late, missing money, and possessing drug paraphernalia. The inconsistent conversations confirmed that the three men were all in it together.

Susie was a stay-at-home mother and she handled all of the family finances and business expenses. Her husband began destroying their property during arguments. Soon after, Susie set money aside for herself and the children. Every time her husband gave Susie money to deposit, she also put money into her personal savings account. He never questioned Susie about her management of their finances. After one month, Susie and the children moved out. Susie felt threatened by her husband's attitude and behavior. After she was certain of his drug addiction, she believed it would not be long before she or the children were hurt during one of his violent episodes.

Susie found an apartment and the family court system granted her temporary custody of their children. One month later, her husband picked up the children for visitation and did not return to the designated neutral drop-off location. Later that evening, her elder son, who was six at the time, guided her husband to her home. When she opened the door for the children, the husband pushed his way inside. He began yelling at Susie, accusing her of having an affair with a Caucasian man. Once the children were out of the room, Susie responded to the accusation. The husband did not believe her and began punching her repeatedly.

Susie could not talk during the fight because at some point, he dislocated her jaw. He also ripped her clothes off as she tried to get away. She crawled naked in an effort to reach an axe handle under her bed. She grabbed the handle and swung at his head repeatedly. She missed his head and managed to break both of his arms. By that time, her elder son had climbed out the window to find help.

Susie hit her husband until he stopped moving because she was afraid for her life. Had the police not arrived, Susie is certain she would have killed him. She believes he would have kept hitting her if she had not reached the axe handle, possibly killing her. Since Susie did not start the fight, she argues that she fought in self-defense. Susie retaliated to let her partner know it was not right for him to hit her. She fought back as hard as she could.

The incident occurred in 1985, and laws on domestic battery are different at the time of this writing. Instead of a dual arrest, the police told Susie they would not arrest either of them because both were injured. The police put her husband into an ambulance and drove her to the hospital. Two weeks earlier, Susie had gone to the police department to file an order of protection against him. The police told Susie she could only file an order if her partner had physically abused her in the past. After the incident, she filed the order of protection and pressed

charges. The police issued a warrant for his arrest, but he never appeared for court. Susie also attended counseling sessions at a women's center. Susie claimed she was smart enough to leave the relationship within one month of his first physical outburst. She did not want her children exposed to domestic violence.

After describing the way that she had injured her husband during their fight, Susie confessed that she had tried to stab her father to death when she was a child. Susie's father molested her from ages five to 14. She ran away from home at 14 after the police arrested her mother as a co-conspirator of molestation. Susie explained that her mother had "turned a blind eye" to her abuse. In the eyes of the court, her mother was as responsible for child abuse as her father was. Susie received counseling from ages 15 to 19.

Neither Susie nor her children ever saw her husband again. Subsequently, Susie found out through a substance abuse counselor that her husband was addicted to heroin, crack, and Valium. Susie later heard that a truck had hit him. After some time, her children began to collect social security payments because of their father's disability.

#### *5.0.4 Aaliyah Kanter*

Aaliyah Kanter is a 26-year-old Caucasian woman who was 16 years old during her first experiences of domestic violence. When she and her boyfriend first started dating and her boyfriend became physically violent, Aaliyah fought back to defend herself. As time progressed, their mutual violence became more frequent and more severe. Later, Aaliyah provoked physical fights. Hitting became consistent and predictable. Aaliyah hit because her boyfriend refused to share money and bring food home to their apartment, mimicking behavior her stepfather had used on her when she was a child. It was also common for Aaliyah to curse and yell at her

boyfriend as well as place him in various chokeholds. Each violent incident occurred during Aaliyah's pregnancy.

Aaliyah's partner is a 31-year-old African American male who was 21 years old when he dated Aaliyah. He worked at a power plant and sold drugs out of their apartment. He generated a considerable income, but Aaliyah did not have access to his money. While Aaliyah was pregnant, he forced her to stay inside their apartment and starved her by refusing to bring home groceries or meals. It was common for him to kick, push, and punch Aaliyah. On occasions, she was able to resist his physical force because she was strong.

Aaliyah became pregnant within three months of beginning to date her boyfriend. When she informed her parents of the pregnancy, her mother and stepfather asked her to either abort the mixed-race infant or immediately leave their home. Aaliyah's parents loathed the idea of having an African American grandchild as a part of their family. Once Aaliyah decided against aborting her child, she had nowhere else to go. Prior to her pregnancy, Aaliyah's knowledge of her boyfriend had been limited to drinking, partying, and their shopping extravaganzas at expensive department stores. She opted to move into his apartment.

Given Aaliyah's knowledge of her boyfriend's lavish lifestyle, she anticipated that her new home would be an upscale atmosphere. However, she experienced domestic violence shortly after she moved into his apartment. For nearly two months, Aaliyah's partner abused her frequently. He also isolated her from friends, monitored her private correspondence and her movements, and prevented her access to money and material resources. He also threatened to kick her out and fought her when she tried to leave.

During their first altercation, Aaliyah and her boyfriend argued because he did not want her going out with her friends. It was common for her boyfriend to socialize with his friends,

both male and female, when he was not working; however, the same courtesy was not extended to Aaliyah. He also frowned upon Aaliyah's speaking to or looking at another man. When her boyfriend went out with friends, sometimes he returned one or two days later. Although his visits with friends often spanned days, he preferred that Aaliyah stay at home. When they argued about Aaliyah's friends, he pushed her into a wall. She immediately pushed him back, which became a fighting trend in the relationship. When the fight was over, her boyfriend made up by buying her designer outfits and expensive sneakers. Aaliyah says the gifts did not make her forget about his abuse. When the abuse became more intense, she refused his gifts.

Aaliyah described her boyfriend as "grossly sexually active in a way that he would touch anything in sight." For example, while Aaliyah lived with her boyfriend, she learned he had sexual intercourse with a 10-year-old neighbor and several other young women who had sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Aaliyah contracted an STD during her first month of pregnancy. After learning of her boyfriend's behavior, Aaliyah refused to have sexual relations with him.

In addition to emotional and physical violence, Aaliyah's boyfriend also began to abuse her sexually because she refused to have a sexual relationship with him. While Aaliyah was pregnant, he would sneak behind her, grab her arms, and hold her down to force sex. Aaliyah was extremely strong for a woman her size. However, when her partner forced his weight on top of her, it was not easy for her to push him off. When he finally pinned Aaliyah down, all that she could do was cry until he was finished.

After two months of victimization, Aaliyah became actively violent. She often yelled and hit her boyfriend when she became angry. When Aaliyah initiated arguments and fights, her topics of concern were typically the shortage of food in the house, her boyfriend's drug dealing, and her alleged inappropriate communication with other men and women. She claimed her

boyfriend showed little or no concern about her health and safety. Aaliyah could not understand how a drug dealer who worked at an industrial manufacturing plant did not have enough money to bring home food for her to eat, especially since she was pregnant with his child. She remembered his coming in and eating a hamburger after she had eaten from a single can of corn for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Aaliyah did not feel like herself after the fourth month of her pregnancy. Instead, she felt angry and had trouble redirecting her rage. By this time, Aaliyah was as likely as her boyfriend was to instigate arguments and hit with intent to injure. Sometimes, Aaliyah attempted to walk away from a fight. However, her boyfriend made offensive comments about her or their child to aggravate the situation. His most common remark was “I hope you and the kid die.” Similar comments encouraged Aaliyah to strike him or burn him by throwing large, lit votive candles at his head. Aaliyah also slapped, punched, and choked him after he made abusive comments. She choked so hard that she left hand imprints around his neck. She also scratched his skin and left noticeable bruises after punching him.

By Aaliyah’s fifth month of pregnancy, her level of violence transitioned again. At this point, she was not afraid of him any longer. Aaliyah realized that, physically, he could not get the best of her. She did not want to fight, but she was proud of her ability to beat him up occasionally. Aaliyah described their fights as boxing matches where the winner took all. By the sixth month of Aaliyah’s pregnancy, she was 5’-11”, 175 pounds, and robust. For instance, during a fight, he kicked Aaliyah into a door. Then, she stood up, turned around, and hit him in the face so hard that he fell down. She continued to kick him until he could not move. During fights, Aaliyah’s goal was to gain control in the relationship by inflicting harm on him. For a few

days after his defeat, the offending behavior and her violence subsided, only to resurface after a short period.

Most of her friends thought the fights were comical because Aaliyah injured her 6'-2", 250-pound boyfriend several times during fights. Aaliyah often used holds and law enforcement techniques during fights with her boyfriend. Self-defense tactics were not new to Aaliyah because she had learned many pain compliance holds and techniques from her parents, who were Corrections Officers and Marine Guards. At times, Aaliyah would place her boyfriend in a chokehold until he literally foamed at the mouth. To impede attacks initiated by Aaliyah, her boyfriend resorted to running away or sitting on her in an attempt to pin her arms down.

By the end of the relationship, Aaliyah's boyfriend was still physically violent. However, Aaliyah was more effective in restraining him. Their relationship ended after their most severe fight. When asked who was more violent in the relationship, Aaliyah said, "If I had not moved in with my sister after I had the baby, eventually one of us would have killed the other." Although Aaliyah's son receives child support, neither of them interacts with her ex-boyfriend.

#### *5.0.5 Sarah Jenkins*

Sarah Jenkins is a 31-year-old African American woman who dated an abusive partner for three years. When Sarah was 25 years old, her partner relocated and left his job to move into a condominium with Sarah and her two-month-old daughter. Her partner verbally abused and threatened her for the first year of their relationship. When Sarah's partner became violent enough to hit her, she responded fiercely; sometimes, Sarah hit first. During the relationship, there were 10 major arguments that involved severe verbal attacks and physical threats. Of the ten, four arguments escalated into physical brawls that involved punching, grabbing, and choking by both partners; physical violence was limited to pushing and shoving by Sarah during two of

the 10 arguments. After each occurrence of physical violence, Sarah declared that her partner was unwelcome in her home and that their relationship was over. However, each time, she reconsidered and took him back because she claimed that she was unable to tear him apart from their son and her daughter, whom he had adopted.

Sarah's partner is a 31-year-old African American man. He was 25 years old when they were in a committed relationship. Sarah described him as "a loyal and committed boyfriend and father on weekdays and a drug addict, alcoholic, and gambler during the weekend." Each of their violent exchanges occurred within 24 to 48 hours of his alcohol consumption or drug use. Their disagreements entailed three topics. First, her partner felt in danger of losing his manhood. Second, Sarah was the financial caretaker of the household who established rules and guidelines for her partner and children. Third, after she confessed past experiences of infidelity, he constantly accused Sarah of cheating.

Her partner's family history entails a wide range of gambling, alcohol, and drug dependence. His mother suffers from HIV/AIDS and narcotic addiction; his brother died recently of a drug overdose. Each weekend, his family rallied together to gamble their earnings. Some relatives left the gatherings upset and there was always a quarrel; altercations typically involved fights over stolen drugs or money lost by gambling. Sarah learned of her partner's gambling habit early in the relationship. He gambled away the little money he had to contribute to their family.

Sarah's partner had trouble maintaining employment, not because he lacked potential, but because of his addictions. On several occasions, he failed to pay bills that were originally in his name. Once he failed to take initiative, Sarah followed in the footsteps of her mother, who was a single parent. Sarah adamantly pronounced that she was in charge, and began setting guidelines

and standards in the home. She remembered her partner saying, “You stripped me of my responsibilities and would not let me be a man,” despite the fact that he was not a reliable financial provider for her and the children. Sarah claimed she did not want to control anything. However, she felt compelled to take the lead role for all financial responsibilities. For that reason, the mortgage, utility bills, and any financed household property were in her name; Sarah referred to all property as “mine.”

About two months into the relationship, Sarah confessed to cheating in previous relationships. Sarah’s revelation changed her partner’s innocent perception of her. Even though Sarah attempted to deal with her partner’s financial instability, he could not overlook her history of infidelity. Sarah was faithful, but her partner did not trust her. He often searched her belongings and perused her cell phone logs. Any time Sarah left the condominium and failed to return home within a time he deemed reasonable, her partner became enraged.

About two months after they began living together, Sarah and her partner joined his friends for an evening out at a nightclub. Sarah’s immediate observation of his friends led her to believe none had gone to college; most of his friends worked low-paying jobs and maintained a blue-collar lifestyle. Sarah and her friends worked for corporations or engineering firms. After about an hour, Sarah’s partner walked toward the restroom with a friend. As they walked out of the men’s room, Sarah noticed powder on her partner’s face; he left cocaine spread around his nose. Learning of his drug addiction was a pivotal point in the relationship because at that moment, Sarah knew he was someone with whom she did not want to be in a relationship. Later that week, Sarah learned she was pregnant.

A second incident occurred in a bar setting. She learned that his addiction was not limited to cocaine. This time, her partner behaved aggressively while he was intoxicated. Since they

were out with Sarah's girlfriends, Sarah had opened a tab at the bar to avoid embarrassing her funding-free partner. He was unemployed again and could not afford to purchase cocktails for Sarah and her friends, which according to Sarah, is something that a man should be able to do. After he had taken several shots of hard liquor, Sarah learned that his idea of having fun was a little different than hers was. Within an hour, her partner performed provocatively with another woman on the dance floor. Rather than watch the disrespectful show displayed by her partner and his new friend, Sarah walked away fuming. When the lights came on in the bar to signal closing time, Sarah and her partner crossed paths. He was noticeably intoxicated and staggered toward her wearing a vomit-covered tee shirt. He stood on the dance floor yelling and directing explicit language at her until the bouncer escorted them out. After they left the venue, he continued to curse and yell at Sarah for about 20 minutes in the car before he slouched over and passed out. Following that incident, he continued to drink every weekend. It became apparent to Sarah that he was an alcoholic.

Her partner's first sign of physical aggression occurred one year into the relationship when Sarah was six months pregnant with their son. Sarah described it as her first publicly embarrassing incident of domestic violence. While Sarah was driving, he grabbed the steering wheel, took her purse, and threw the bag out of the window. Then, he reached over to grab and squeeze her face. Her partner pulled his hand back quickly and did not hit her. He apologized for accidentally scratching Sarah when he pulled the purse out of her hand.

Their first physical fight occurred after Sarah's partner needed a ride home after a social event at his mother's house. At 4:00 a.m., Sarah rushed out in her pajamas because he had caused a physical altercation with his mother. On their way home, Sarah asked her partner to walk into the restaurant to pick up French toast slices that she was craving. As had occurred after

other times he drank, he began calling Sarah derogatory names and explaining how much she got on his nerves. Instead of ignoring him, Sarah snapped. Sarah's response to his post-drinking behavior was not typical. Sarah explained that she was not sure if her rage stemmed from prenatal emotions.

As they reached home, he opened his door to exit the vehicle. Rather than get out, Sarah tried to jump back into the car in effort to leave him. Sarah's one-year-old daughter was sitting in her lap. He pulled the door open and climbed over her daughter. Sarah assumed he was about to choke her. When he came close, Sarah punched him in the face. Without contemplating a response, he swung a closed-fist punch and hit Sarah in the face. Neighbors ran to the car and someone called the police. Although his lip was bleeding, Sarah said she had not hit hard enough to startle him or make him fall. Sarah had no noticeable injuries. The police officer arrested him for public intoxication, a disorderly conduct offense, since Sarah was not injured. Her partner's response the next day was consistent; he did not remember the altercation.

After the first instance of domestic violence, Sarah contacted an anonymous counseling service offered through her workplace. During a telephone consultation, the clinician requested her personal information to file a child abuse report because her daughter had been involved in the dispute. Disappointed because she was unable to seek help without having Child Protective Services involved, Sarah immediately hung up the phone. Sarah and her partner also paid for a private relationship counselor. Their goal was to introduce various issues and to find methods to resolve conflict. Instead, the counselor encouraged Sarah and her partner to end the relationship, which prompted them to end the sessions.

Another physical fight occurred in their vehicle. Prior to the incident, Sarah's partner invited a "random" friend over to have beer and play video games. Sarah was furious because

“He had the audacity to have someone in my home, lying in my bed, without asking my permission.” She did not confront her partner in front of his friend. The next morning, while Sarah drove her partner to a haircut appointment, she ignored him because he had stayed up the entire night drinking. She told him she “was tired of his childish behavior.” He responded by smacking, scratching, and digging his nails into her arms and neck while she was driving. Sarah pulled over to a gas station and called the police. This time, the police formally arrested and charged her partner with domestic abuse. Her partner accepted a plea bargain that required him to take anger management classes. He never completed the classes.

When the police arrested her partner for the second time, he accepted a plea bargain to attend anger management classes and probation rather than incarceration. During his three-year probation period, police could not charge him with another domestic dispute. Sarah explained how she had used his probation against him during arguments. She began provoking him to hit her and told him that she would press charges against him if he hit. During these instances, she pushed and taunted him because he had little power to respond.

According to Sarah, her early response to his gambling addiction was non-confrontational. Sarah was usually standoffish, but periodically, she tried to communicate her discomfort about his misuse of money. After she learned of his cocaine habit, Sarah explained her discontent with his drug use. However, she failed to verbalize any opposition to his conviction that “cocaine use is normal.” Sarah detested her partner’s disillusioned belief that experimenting with illegal drugs “on the side” was not an addiction. Sarah was unable to convince her partner that he had a problem.

Sarah associated the fighting in the relationship with her partner’s problems: alcohol abuse, drug addiction, and gambling. Sarah’s partner was most aggressive while under the

influence of alcohol. He was irate and belligerent, and his behavior was rude and disrespectful. Once he became sober, he denied his violent episodes; his kindness was re-energized and he offered apologies even if he did not remember the incidents. However, during Sarah's explanations of violent episodes, he blamed Sarah or insisted that he would never partake in such behavior without being provoked. He also accused Sarah of causing relationship conflict when she was critical or when she asked questions about his leisure activities. As the violence progressed, Sarah also pushed and shoved her partner while she spoke negatively about his conduct. Although they are no longer in an intimate relationship, Sarah's partner is currently seeking help for his drug addiction. He is actively involved as a father for both of her children.

#### *5.0.6 Veronica Holmes*

Veronica Holmes is a 41-year-old Caucasian woman. She was physically violent for the first time at age 36 during a six-year relationship. Veronica was violent on two occasions. The first time, she hit her partner because he had misused the family's money to support his drug addiction. On the second occasion, she hit because he accused her of cheating. Veronica's partner also victimized her. However, she failed to respond each time her partner hit her because his abuse was not severe compared to her past victimization. Veronica experienced beatings by her father, battery by other boyfriends, and rape by a stranger.

Veronica's ex-boyfriend is a 46-year-old African American man. He was 41 years old when Veronica hit him for the first time. He was more likely to curse and yell than he was to hit. While under the influence of crack cocaine, he often verbally attacked Veronica and their two sons. Veronica and her partner hit each other on separate occasions and neither of them hit each other back or experienced physical injury.

The violent conditions in Veronica's relationship were unique because her partner was addicted to crack cocaine and heroin. To avoid conflict, Veronica tried her best to control his access to money; as a result, it was not common for him to "beg" for money. When Veronica failed to surrender money at her partner's first request, he yelled and argued until she gave him the funds. During her partner's verbal attacks, he spoke negatively about her role as a mother and belittled their children. Although she could predict his response, Veronica never gave him money earmarked for bills.

Veronica hit for the first time after she noticed that her partner's experimental drug use had become an addiction. Their first physical confrontation resulted from a financial dispute that occurred because her partner had used rent money to purchase drugs. Veronica had recently given birth to their youngest son; she had been home from the hospital for three days. Her partner had received a check on Friday and their rent was due. When the property owner came to their apartment to collect the payment, Veronica asked her to wait patiently for her to go to the ATM down the street. Veronica expected there to be sufficient funds in the account to cover their \$700 rental payment, but there was only \$125 in the account. When Veronica returned home, she walked into their bedroom and hit her partner in the face. Because she had never hit a man before, she ran; however, he neither chased her nor hit her back. Veronica explained how embarrassed she was to face the property owner without having the rental payment. She was furious because her partner had prioritized drugs over the health and safety of her and their children. She did not fear for her safety. In general, Veronica addressed issues that she could resolve, and if she could do nothing, she kept quiet.

Following the first incident, their relationship shifted from a boyfriend-girlfriend dynamic to more of a roommate situation. Veronica continued to work long hours, while her

boyfriend and their other roommate babysat the two children. Given the limited time Veronica had outside of her employment responsibilities, it was unlikely for her to find time to converse or spend time with her boyfriend. She preferred to spend her spare time with her children. Once her boyfriend's drug use became habitual and noticeable, Veronica had three options: she could decrease her work hours, find another home for herself and the children, or stay. It was a complicated decision for Veronica to make. Veronica felt at fault for her partner's addiction because she introduced him and the roommate to hard narcotics; Veronica stopped experimenting with drugs, and her partner and the roommate became addicts.

Periodically, Veronica became frustrated with her partner's addiction and lifestyle. When she tried to leave, local shelters would not allow her to take residence since she worked the night shift. Sometimes Veronica left with the children for weeks at a time. Unfortunately, she quickly learned there were no local affordable housing options for her and the children. When they returned home [for their last time], Veronica discovered a dating relationship developing between her partner and their male roommate. In the past, they had all been good friends. She described the relationship as "best friends who spent too much time together doing drugs and drinking." However, it became obvious to Veronica that something intimate had occurred between the two men.

Veronica's partner enacted the second occurrence of violence. One day, the children were at school and Veronica did not have to work. It had been a while since Veronica and her partner were intimate. When they made another effort, in the middle of their interaction, Veronica heard the front door open. She assumed it was their roommate. All of a sudden, her boyfriend jumped on top of her. He started beating her and yelled "White trash!" She insisted that partner's violent behavior came out of nowhere. After he finished slapping Veronica around, her partner put on

his clothes and left the house. Veronica cried because she was embarrassed and humiliated. Veronica was under the impression that her partner had not wanted the roommate to know they were intimately involved. When her partner returned home with the children, Veronica said nothing to him. The incident confirmed Veronica's allegations of the father of her children secretly dating their roommate. Her partner hit again on three similar occasions. Each time, she believed her partner hit her during sex in his effort to hide his homosexual relationship. Since she and the children had nowhere else to go, Veronica learned how to respond to avoid arguments and conflict.

Veronica continued to ignore implications of her partner's homosexuality. Nonetheless, one year later, her boyfriend accused her of having a physical relationship with another man. Veronica became furious about his accusations. She proceeded to draw out a pellet gun with full intentions of shooting her partner. She sat on the couch watching him hide behind furniture as she fired the gun at him. Veronica put several holes in the wall. She did not injure her partner. During the incident, he threw a beer bottle in the direction of Veronica's head, but it did not hit her. Veronica said, "He was simply trying to accuse me of cheating, which was something he is guilty of." Veronica believed his accusations of her cheating were his way out of the relationship. Following this incident, Veronica quit her job and took the children to a local women's shelter, never to return to her partner.

#### *5.0.7 Debra Smith*

Debra Smith is a 52-year-old African American woman. She was 20 years old when she first experienced domestic violence. She had been married to her husband for two months before their relationship became violent. Debra's husband initiated most arguments. The arguments led to physical fights, which lasted approximately 45 minutes. Debra overpowered her husband

during the fights. She had more weight than he did and believed she was stronger than her husband was. Debra was 5'-8" and 230 pounds; her husband was 6'-1" and 160 pounds. When fights ended, Debra had scratches on her arms. Her husband had huge knots on his head and face because Debra had kicked him several times.

Debra's partner is a 55-year-old African American man. He was 23 years old when he first hit Debra. He was a factory worker who worked full-time during the week and partied on the weekend. Debra's husband expected her to complete all of the housework such as cooking and cleaning. Debra claimed to be the more responsible partner, making sure that all bills were paid in full and on time. If she did not pay the bills, her husband would spend most of their money gambling and drinking. When things did not work as her husband planned them, he became angry and hostile.

Debra and her husband had different perspectives on a woman's role in the family. Her husband had a Southern traditional background, while Debra was a city girl from the North. He was accustomed to women's staying home with their children or working in full-time hospitality-oriented occupations, whereas women in Debra's family were accustomed to industrial labor and factory positions. Most men in the South supported their families, but were not likely to earn more than minimum wage. Women in Debra's family always earned more than minimum wage.

When they met, Debra's partner lived in a southern state in close proximity to her father and Debra lived in the North. When Debra traveled to visit her father, she spent time with her would-be husband, enjoying activities such as sightseeing and dancing. They enjoyed laughing and listening to music together. Two weeks after Debra met him, she learned he was in a relationship with another woman. After she learned about his relationship, he continued pursuing her, but she was very cautious. Debra described feeling like a lost puppy for a while, so she

returned home. However, she continued to speak to him on a daily basis. She returned to visit again two weeks later because he had apologized, and Debra was convinced of his love for her. He said the woman with whom he was in a relationship had been cheating on him and he was trying to get out of the relationship. During her second visit, she met his family. Because the visit was so positive and her feelings for her would-be husband were growing, she stayed in the South for four months.

Debra had a child from a previous relationship. Debra's stepmother cared for him when she came to visit. Being married was important to her because she wanted to build a familial foundation for her son. She wanted to marry her son's father, but he was unwilling to make the commitment. Debra believed she had found a partner who accepted and wanted her for who she was in her would-be husband. In previous relationships where Debra was the aggressor, she forced the relationships to progress although the people were not interested in her for the long term. On Debra's third visit south, they were married; Debra and her partner had known each other for only five months.

After they were married, a construction company hired Debra as a flagpole attendant. On each job, there were five or fewer women. The site locations varied. Sometimes Debra traveled to towns and cities that were 20 miles away from their home. The company provided transportation to each site. Debra left home at 6 a.m. and returned at 7 p.m. The job was seasonal, but Debra's salary greatly exceeded her husband's pay. When Debra first accepted the job, her husband was excited about the increase in their income. However, once he noticed the ratio of men to women, he became angry about the conditions of her employment. At that pivotal point in the marriage, his attitude changed.

Debra's husband believed the entire construction company wanted to harass her sexually, which was a common stereotype about the treatment of Southern women on construction sites. Each day, he waited outside for her to arrive home. As the commuter van pulled up, he screamed nasty comments from their porch. He yelled for Debra to hurry into the house before he came to get her off the van. He called her co-workers derogatory names and yelled for them to leave his home. He accused Debra of flirting and having intercourse with her male co-workers. Since Debra's co-workers heard yelling and saw him grabbing, pushing, and shoving her as she walked closer to the door to her home, they asked if she needed assistance. Her husband's outbursts are embarrassing. She always told her co-workers she could handle the situation alone. When her husband pushed her into the house, Debra always pushed him back, giving back what she received. Whenever her husband accused her of having an affair with a co-worker, she denied the accusations. Debra also accused her husband of cheating, retaliating more out of a need to prove pattern than true belief.

One evening, in Debra's second month of employment, the commuter van arrived at her home after 9 p.m. Her husband stood outside in his underwear and a tee shirt with a butcher knife in his hand. He wanted to cut Debra's throat because he did not believe she worked late. Instead, he thought Debra had gone on a date with the driver. He pushed Debra and swung the knife throughout the duration of their argument. Once the knife fell out of his hand, the fight began. When he slapped Debra's face, she punched him in his face. Debra also threw him onto the ground while they both punched each other. They broke windows and threw porch furniture at each other. Then, they migrated inside to continue fighting. Inside, they knocked over lamps, couches, and tables. The neighbors were too afraid to interfere. His brother lived across the

street. The sister-in-law came over to stop the fighting, but the brother had to escort Debra's husband across the street to separate them. Debra refused to stop yelling and hitting.

After a few physical fights, Debra began to call home during the course of her workday to check in. Debra called voluntarily to try to keep the peace in their marriage. However, one month later, they argued on a Sunday morning after her husband had been drinking beer at a club the previous night. As Debra prepared dinner, her husband drank more beer and complained about her working with the van driver. He began cursing and calling Debra derogatory names. She was chopping onions and green peppers at the time; she turned around with the knife in her hand and told him to stop and leave her alone. He snatched the knife out of her hand and the blade cut his fingers. He ran around the kitchen accusing Debra of cutting him, but she walked away to wipe blood off the counter and refrigerator. He received 20 stitches in his hand. These types of arguments occurred often.

When her seasonal job ended, the construction company offered Debra a similar position in Florida. However, Debra's mother became ill. Debra insisted that her family relocate to care for her mother. Debra believed a change in location might save her marriage, but Debra's mother disagreed. Since city life was more expensive in such a setting, a husband needed to be accustomed to sharing financial responsibilities. Considering their past fights and quarrels, Debra's mother believed the husband was unprepared for the drastic lifestyle change. During this transition, Debra learned that her husband could not read and write. She filled out job applications for him at a temporary agency and found him a job with less strict qualifications. Debra found a job for herself at a local medical equipment factory. Both were to start work in two weeks.

The Friday night before they began work, Debra's husband went out to a nightclub with her male cousins. Debra asked if she could spend time with her girlfriends on Saturday night, to which he agreed. Debra's husband drank beer on Saturday leading up to Debra's outing. She noticed his attitude changing as it came close to the time for her to leave. For the first time, Debra's son was home because her husband had agreed to babysit while she was out for the evening. As Debra started to get into the car, her husband walked onto the porch and yelled, "You are a whore just like your mother." Debra came back into the house with her girlfriend because she was aggravated, and she decided not to leave her son alone with her husband. When she walked in, he threatened to beat her. Debra snapped. She pushed the kitchen table all the way across the room and started attacking him. Her son grabbed her because he was afraid. Her husband tried to move her son, but Debra threw her son out of the way and continued to swing at her husband. Later, Debra packed her husband's belongings, threw them down the stairway, and left her husband sitting on the porch. Debra's mother paid his way south.

Debra attributes her violent responses to her mother's victimization at the hands of her father. Debra's father was abusive to her mother. He was 7 feet tall with a very large build. Debra remembered seeing him pick her mother up and drop her, breaking her legs. Often Debra and her two siblings witnessed the abuse. Because of her experiences, Debra's mother taught her never to let men take advantage of or mistreat her. After her marriage ended, Debra's mother dated many men in search of a perfect husband. Debra watched her mother excel as a beautician, police officer, and military officer. Because she worked hard to care for her family, Debra's mother would sometimes leave her children in the care of others, often a current boyfriend. Debra remembers that one of those men stripped her and her siblings naked and tied them up to their bunk beds and spanked them. Her mother responded by fighting the man. Debra witnessed

several different relationships, arguments, and fights while her mother struggled to take care of her children. Debra's older brother married at age 15 and beat his wife. Debra wanted a happy marriage that entailed no violence, but instead, her relationship followed similar patterns.

The Mississippi courts finalized Debra's divorce in 1982. The grounds of the divorce favored her husband. The court charged Debra with inhumane cruelty because of the injuries she caused during their fights. Since her marriage, Debra has been in four serious relationships. She has hit her partner and experienced domestic violence in each of those relationships.

#### *5.0.8 Renee Garcia*

Renee Garcia is a 37-year-old African American woman. She was 25 years old during her relationship with the father of her first son. After four months of dating, they had their first physical fight. Renee described their relationship as intense, controlling, and lacking trust. Most arguments arose when Renee accused her boyfriend of cheating, or when he accused her of acting jealous. In fact, throughout the relationship, their disagreements were largely about Renee's need to control his behavior. Nearly all of their arguments escalated into physical fights. During altercations, Renee shoved, slapped, punched, grabbed, and kicked her boyfriend; however, because of his size, he was often able to limit the impact of her attacks. It was also common for Renee to ruin his personal items or to throw glass objects at him with intent to cause injury.

Renee's ex-boyfriend is a 40-year-old African American man. He was 28 years old at the time of their first fight. Renee was likely to attack him when he acted nonchalant about lying and cheating. Renee was 5' -5" and 140 pounds and her boyfriend was 6 feet tall and nearly 310 pounds. During attacks, he was likely to push, kick, and throw objects at Renee. It was common for him to pick Renee up and throw her onto the ground, a couch, or a wall. As time progressed,

he became more violent. After disputes, he literally threw Renee out of his front door onto the concrete steps of his porch.

During the first few fights, Renee's boyfriend used force to restrain her, but as the violence became more common, he hit back. On one occasion, Renee came to his home to cook dinner for his friends. Her boyfriend's telephone rang and rang, but he ignored the calls. He told Renee not to answer because he did not want Renee to interrupt him while he and his friends watched football. However, Renee wanted to be certain that there was no emergency. When she answered the telephone, there was another woman on the line who described her new relationship with Renee's boyfriend. With the woman still on the line, Renee walked into the living area to inquire about the woman. Renee's boyfriend told her to stop being nosy and he accused her of making up the story. Renee began screaming and pointing in his face. After she pushed and shoved him, Renee's boyfriend started to push her and drag her toward the door, blocking her attempts to strike him in the face. She resisted leaving as he shouted for her to get out. Renee kicked him and swung at him as he forced her out. Eventually, he picked Renee up and threw her out of the door. She continued to bang on his door, but he refused to let her back in. Renee's clothes were torn and they both had bruises and cuts on their bodies. Similar incidents occurred each time Renee caught him cheating. They would argue and fight, and after about one week, they would reunite.

Renee was well aware of his infidelity, but she felt attached to him. She was in love and infatuated with her boyfriend. Renee referred to the attachment as "a sickness or drug addiction of some sort." When he called to apologize for his bad attitude or for cheating, Renee always took him back. Rather than leave an unfaithful partner, Renee chose to stay in the violent relationship. She hoped they would rebuild trust in their relationship. He never apologized for

hitting Renee because she always initiated physical violence. Renee did not believe she was at fault for the violent outcomes.

As the relationship became more violent, the occurrences of violence became life threatening for both partners. It reached a point where Renee provoked violence whenever she did not believe her boyfriend's response to a question. Renee assumed he was lying about his whereabouts and with whom he was spending time. Even when they were in public, if Renee noticed him looking at another woman, an incident would occur. Immediately following her accusation, a brawl would start. At this point, rather than hitting, they threw hard objects at each other. On many occasions, Renee and her partner threw glass picture frames, shoes, and anything else that was within reach. Renee also cut him with glass fragments from broken frames. One time, during a fight outside a restaurant, she hit him with her car.

The last time Renee accused her boyfriend of cheating, she had the worst experience of domestic violence. Before the fight began, Renee poured bleach into his salt-water fish tank and watched his fish die. During the fight, he threw her onto the floor and began kicking and punching her. Renee could neither fight back nor cover her face. Usually, her boyfriend held her to prevent her from scratching or hitting him. This time, he fought her without restraint. Renee was shocked, confused, and had no idea when her boyfriend would stop hitting her. He threw Renee out of the house, but she cried on his porch until he let her back in. Renee could not face her family members. He blackened her eyes and split her lip. Her boyfriend came outside crying with a rag in his hand to clean her blood. She was petrified but still believed her boyfriend had a loving side of him.

The fish tank incident was the last straw for her boyfriend. He told his mother to come and get Renee because he was afraid that he might kill her the next time they fought. The

relationship ended two months after the birth of their child when Renee was 29 years old. Two years later, Renee married, and her husband adopted the child. Renee is currently 37 years old and her 8-year-old son does not interact with his biological father.

#### *5.0.9 Sasha Davis*

Sasha Davis is a 24 year-old, mixed-race (African American and Caucasian) woman. Sasha and her husband fight approximately one to three times per month. When Sasha becomes angry, she curses, yells, and destroys expensive items in their home. When physical fights occur, Sasha always hits first. Their disputes are likely to end after she cuts or stabs him with a knife or other sharp objects. Since relationship counseling and child visitation have recently been court-ordered by Child Protection Services, they have monitored and restricted the extent of Sasha's violent behavior. Sasha no longer has custody of one of her children. Sasha was 9 months pregnant during the interview.

Sasha's husband is a 22-year-old African American man. During physical fights, his main goal is to contain Sasha's violence. Her husband only initiates verbal attacks. He becomes angry when he believes Sasha is cheating on him. He throws and breaks their property and then, he threatens to leave the relationship. Sasha's husband has only initiated physical violence once. During that fight, he was noticeably drunk, but Sasha blamed herself because she caused the incident.

Violent behavior in their marriage began following one defining incident. After Sasha's first daughter was born, Sasha learned that her husband was not the father. Three months later, her husband "accidentally" injured the infant during one of their violent episodes. Her husband punched three holes in a wall as he held her 3-month-old daughter in his arms, and he nearly dropped the baby. His tight hold on the baby ruptured a blood vessel in her head. Soon after that

incident, Sasha convinced the infant's biological father to attack her husband, nearly killing him. After the attack, Sasha and her husband reconciled their differences and re-entered the relationship. However, when Child Protective Service removed the injured infant from their home, they filed criminal charges for child abuse against Sasha and her husband.

Nearly three weeks later, after becoming intoxicated, Sasha's husband woke her from her sleep and battered her "for no apparent reason," Sasha says. Sasha's had broken ribs and disfigured facial features. There was swelling in her eyes and her jaw was broken. Sasha could hardly move her arms or legs for weeks after the incident. However, after taking time to think about the situation, Sasha remained in the relationship because she felt guilty about having her daughter's father brutally attack her husband. They forgave each other again.

Since those three incidents, arguing and hitting have been synonymous forms of abuse in Sasha's marriage. Sasha and her husband argue one to three times per month. Each time, Sasha hits him or throws large or sharp objects to guarantee injury. Sasha's husband has more physical strength than she does. He is nearly 260 pounds and over 6 feet tall, while Sasha is 165 pounds, 5'-6", and currently is 9 months pregnant. Given her husband's size, when she slaps, punches, or kicks, she is also more likely to injure herself than she is to inflict harm on her husband. When Sasha punches her husband, she leaves little to no signs of victimization. Sasha scratches or gouges her fingernails into his cheeks, neck, or any reachable exposed part of his body. Sasha says, "Scars and scratch impressions are visible all over his body." Sasha does anything "necessary" to punish her husband when she is compelled to use violence, such as pouring bleach on his skin or in his eyes, burning his clothes, or damaging expensive electronics and personal items.

When Sasha is physically violent with her husband, he attempts to restrain her. This effort sometimes causes Sasha to suffer sprains and noticeable bruises. Sasha says he does not intend to cause severe injuries. When her husband contains her hitting, he is able to control the length of the fight and magnitude of injuries.

Sometimes, but not in every instance, Sasha's husband provokes her violent behavior. Sometimes he laughs or ignores her, which makes Sasha think he does not care about the situation. When Sasha is angry or hits, her husband always thinks it is funny because he knows he can restrain her. However, when he laughs, Sasha becomes more violent and attempts to injure him. Sasha detests her husband's nonchalant responses during conversations. When a topic is important to Sasha, she demands that they address it immediately. Her husband prefers to converse after he has had an opportunity to think about the situation. When he refuses to talk, she is likely to hit him.

Sasha feels she deserves a better man because her husband is incapable of meeting their financial needs. Sasha considers herself the primary breadwinner in the family because she maintains and secures their current financial position. Sasha attacks her husband when he spends money without her permission. In most cases, Sasha dictates her husband's financial choices, habits, and the conditions in their marriage. However, he does not always acquiesce to Sasha. Her husband usually trusts her judgment, but when he disagrees, he overrides Sasha's financial decisions.

When Sasha is crossed or made to feel like she is of less value, she responds aggressively. Sasha hits and yells in response to comments that aim to diminish her self-worth. For example, instead of hitting Sasha, her husband uses "fighting words," which are derogatory and disrespectful comments directed toward Sasha. He insults Sasha by highlighting her past

mistakes or shortcomings. When he insults her, his words offended her and she feels slighted. Sasha believes he owes her; when he acts like he is above her or she is beneath him, she loses control of her emotions. The above circumstances are examples of the most consistent patterns of anger and hostility in their marriage. However, Sasha's rage and violent behavior are inconsistent. Sometimes, Sasha controls her temper, and other times, she is unable to suppress her anger.

Sasha feels they can punish each other for failing to act out what she has defined as "normal roles in the relationship," especially because they are married. She condones hitting as long as it is enacted in response to disrespectful behavior or hitting exercised by the other partner. For instance, when she slaps her husband during an argument, she understands that he may "tussle [her] down to the ground" to limit harm invoked in response to her violence. However, if her husband were to cheat, she says, "I can cut him or impose physical harm because I will have suffered emotionally as a result of the cheating."

When Sasha communicates with the father of her youngest daughter, her husband becomes irate. He yells, throws objects at the wall, and breaks their property, but he does not hit Sasha. Sasha does not consider his behavior or comments as abusive. She justifies his actions because of her intimate involvement with her daughter's father in the past. As a consequence of her actions, Sasha blames herself for cheating and for her partner's violent displays. She understands that her husband is still healing from that situation. As their marital relationship matures, Sasha believes that she will sympathize with his jealousy and he will make an effort to understand her anger issues.

#### *5.0.10 Saridy Wilkins*

Saridy Wilkins is a 29-year-old Americo-Liberian woman. Saridy was 21 years old when she hit her fiancé for the first time. Saridy described her relationship as humiliating, frustrating, and unbalanced. Since Saridy was born into an elite Liberian family, she felt her partner's behavior was primitive and beneath her. At least once per day, Saridy yelled or commented to silence him because she felt he was unable to respond rationally. Her first physical responses included shoves or flings of her hand onto his head, but physical abuse escalated over time. Over a two-year span, Saridy often hit her partner with objects and slapped him in the mouth.

Saridy's ex-boyfriend is a 39-year-old Liberian male. He was 30 years old when Saridy hit him for the first time. When Saridy became verbally and physically violent, it was common for him to cry. Typically, he tried to calm Saridy and pled for her to stop screaming and to find a more healthy method of communication. He wanted her to stop hitting and screaming profanities. He responded violently one time.

Saridy was aware of her boyfriend's eighth-grade level of education early in the relationship. Saridy expected her fiancé to meet physical and mental criteria such as being self-sufficient and intelligent. Saridy wanted her partner to excel, but she was unaware of the best method of supporting him. For example, since his educational skills had not surpassed those of her seven-year-old son, Saridy bought her partner elementary school workbooks. She also filled out job applications for him and coached him to prepare for interviews. Though she supported her partner in the best way she could, Saridy felt uncomfortable nursing a man into adulthood.

Unlike the father of her child, this partner is a member of the same kinship lines as her mother. It is important for a Liberian woman to marry into a good family network with the same cultural background. Saridy became involved with her partner to please her mother. Saridy made

an effort to tolerate her partner, but over time, she became frustrated with him. He was unable to engage in any intellectual discourse on critical topics and most of the time. It was common for him to agree with Saridy when he was unable to assess difficult predicaments critically. During conversations, Saridy asked him to stop talking because his remarks did not make sense.

On one occasion, Saridy hit her partner because she failed to control him. When Saridy woke up on Christmas morning, the children had thrown gift-wrap throughout the house, dishes and plates remained on the table from dinner, and boxes of new toys were all over the living room floor. Two friends of the family were visiting, and Saridy expected her partner to help clean up and be hospitable to her friends. She wanted him to assemble her son's new toys by dawn so that their friends could relax. Instead, Saridy's partner procrastinated and relaxed while she cooked and cleaned. To lend a hand, Saridy's friends entertained her son while she prepared desserts for a large family dinner. As Saridy watched her partner walk around the house helplessly, she became angry. Eventually, she walked up behind him and hit him on top of the head with a frying pan. Since he was 5' -7" and 170 pounds, Saridy felt he could handle her physical aggression.

It was also common for Saridy to hit her partner when he failed to follow her instructions. For example, she exercised the Liberian way to clean [cleaned the home thoroughly], whereas he cleaned the country way [left their home untidy and failed to put items where they belong]. When he did not clean properly, Saridy yelled, hit, or threw something at him. She attributed his minimal knowledge of proper house etiquette to his childhood experiences. He had been born into a prestigious family name, but during the Liberian war, his family lost him. It was not until his teenage years that he was able to reconnect with his parents, but because of the time apart, his development did not reflect his family's wealth or cultural practices.

On another occasion, Saridy's partner hit her back after she assaulted him. Their finances were unstable, and her partner was not proactive about seeking employment. When Saridy learned that her partner did not know how to write his name properly, she decided to fill out job applications for him. Once she had completed 10 applications, Saridy walked outside to meet her partner, but she could not find him in the parking lot. He explained that he had left to assist Saridy's mother and had gone to get food. During the argument, Saridy hit him, he threw a beverage into her face, and then, he smacked her. They began fighting in the car.

After Saridy's fiancé hit her, she wanted to leave the relationship. She lost 100 pounds and gained more confidence in her appearance. At that point, she felt she was too beautiful and intelligent to stay in the relationship, and she began to cheat on him. For example, as the couple sat on the bed together, she called another man to tell him she was on her way to his house. She eventually left her fiancé for a co-worker.

Saridy felt she was an angry person because she had witnessed several forms of abuse during her adolescent years. She grew up in a violent, territorial plantation. The violence is traceable back through her family lineage. Saridy's grandfather founded and established a plantation in Liberia. Her grandfather was a laborer. In return for his work, natives offered their daughters to him. For nearly thirty years, her grandfather married and impregnated women from ages 14 to 40. Her grandfather was also sexually, physically, and verbally abusive to his children and wives. It was also common for his wives to have children by his sons. Saridy's father mimicked her grandfather's behavior. Of all of her siblings, Saridy responded most aggressively to his abuse. Saridy recalls acting like her father during her relationships. She has cheated on and abused her partners during each relationship.

Saridy also witnessed a culture of violence among women in her family. Men abused many of her female relatives and their children. Contingent upon the degree of their prohibited actions, men are likely to tie women and children or hit them with sticks and belt buckles. Some of the women behaved worse than men did; women were likely to be physically abusive towards other women. Although female victimization is a normal part of her culture, the strong-willed women controlled the villages. Furthermore, when husbands failed to perform their responsibilities, women were likely to be disrespectful toward them. Saridy believes most of her aunts are no longer married because they failed to control their husbands.

### 5.1 Assessing participant experiences

Johnson's typology distinguishes between the different types of IPV and the associated causes, as well as describes development overtime and consequences of IPV. Johnson says, "A theoretical framework used to recognize these differences and consequences requires a complex scientific process of theory development and empirical testing, followed by theory revision and further testing" (2008:4). In Johnson's recent text, *A Typology of Domestic Violence: Intimate Terrorism, Violent Resistance, and Situational Couple Violence*, he offered overviews that described potential experiences of men and women in relation to IPV. Descriptions of types of violence in this study were similar to those used in Johnson's text. However, Johnson's research did not provide a specific or consistent method of analysis to distinguish between the types of IPV. For instance, Johnson used the following example to describe an anecdote that was associated with VR:

Violence in the face of intimate terrorism may arise from any variety of motives. She may, at least at first, believe that she can defend herself, that her violent resistance will keep him from attacking her further. That may mean that she thinks she can stop him right now, in the midst of an attack, or it may mean that she thinks that if she fights back often enough, he will eventually decide to stop attacking her physically. Even if she doesn't think she can stop him, she may feel that he shouldn't be allowed to attack her without getting hurt some himself. This desire to hurt

him in return even if it won't stop him can be a form of communication... Sometimes, after years of abuse and entrapment, a victim of intimate terrorism may feel that the only way she can escape from this horror is to kill her tormentor. (Johnson 2008:11)

Although Johnson identified general outcomes of violence and control for each type of IPV (Johnson 2008), he did not identify *how* each participant fit into the five types of IPV. For my analysis, the process was much more complicated than distinguishing between interpretations of each two-dimensional relationship. For instance, if a subject was both victimized and controlled by their partner, using Johnson's general outcomes, one could assume those experiences fit into VR. However, victimization and control alone did not assess how occurrences of IPV fit into Johnson's types of violent relationships. I also had to consider the broader context of the violent relationship such as external motivations, previous victimization or abuse, and so on. For each unique scenario of IPV, various patterns of behavior, motivations, and contexts for IPV emerged. While some patterns were easy to discern, others required a specific process of evaluation.

Assessing patterns of IPV among participants in this study involved a four-step process. First, using data from interview transcripts, I evaluated experiences of IPV to identify patterns of behavior for each participant (See Table 2: Participant experiences and IPV). Second, to explore intersections of violence and control, I examined these patterns to distinguish use of controlling behaviors, physical aggression, escalation of violence, and severity of violence. Third, I categorized similar patterns that arose into thematic schemes to explore similarities and differences across each participant experience. The themes for VR included resistance, non-controlling behavior, IT victimization, and physical abuse. Themes for the analysis of SCV included conflict in the immediate and broader contexts, non-controlling behavior, and domestic violence. Themes for MVC included battle for control, situational conflict, and physical abuse.

Themes of IT violence included coercive controlling behavior, psychological abuse, and physical abuse. Finally, using each theme to organize the details, I compared, contrasted, and examined participant experiences to assess their applicability to Johnson's types of IPV.

## 5.2 Two-dimensional relationship and participants

This section is a breakdown of my coding process used to determine two-dimensional relationships of physical aggression and control between participants and their partners. This process involved an examination of participant responses to specific interview questions that related to control, domestic abuse, escalation of violence, and physical injuries. Coding included an examination of interview transcripts and patterns that emerged in each narrative. Coding of control also involved the use of a list of controlling behaviors from Kevan-Graham and Archer (2004) (See Appendix B: The revised controlling behavior scale). The two-dimensional relationships helped to determine the type of IPV only for six participant experiences, which were classified comprehensively using a single type of IPV. Findings from the coding processes for each relationship were non-conclusive when participants or their partners performed mixed uses of control. Participant experiences were also assessed using multiple types of IPV when participants used different types of controlling behaviors throughout the duration of their violent relationships.

### 5.2.1 *Control*

Although the interview questions were open-ended, they garner specific information regarding control and conflict in the relationship. For example, interview questions used to evaluate control included: "What happened right before the first instance of violence? Can you describe what your partner did, describe what you did, and what made you decide to hit your partner?" Once each participant explained the circumstances, they provided further details about

the types of controlling behaviors exercised during IPV. I used a revised control scale offered in research by Kevan-Graham and Archer to assess participants' controlling behavior (See Appendix B: The revised controlling behavior scale). I examined the following items to determine the degree of controlling behavior performed by each participant: use of economic abuse, coercion and threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, and isolation (2004:10). The assessment evaluated participant responses to assess how often they exercised control.

### *5.2.2 Violence*

Participant answers to the following two interview questions were used to examine the occurrence and frequency of physical aggression: "Were either of you hurt during instances of IPV? What was the most recent incident like?" When each participant responded to these questions, they described how often they and their partners used various acts of physical aggression throughout their relationships. The assessment of individual items of violence included incidents of attacks, violent assaults, and IT violence. This data also included harassment, because more than half of the participants reported that emotional responses escalated to physical aggression. The frequency and severity of this data were components for each analysis. Findings on physical aggression performed during VR, SCV, MVC, and IT were also present in themes titled "physical abuse."

### *5.2.3 Escalation of abuse*

It was also important to note whether violence decreased, increased, or stayed the same for participants and their partners. Hence, I examined many key indicators of violence and control, particularly important of which was escalation of abuse. Other key indicators included in this study were level of control, conflict, and violence, which illustrated the participants' experiences of IPV. Physical aggression and control in intimate partner relationships were rarely

constant. Hence, this examination on escalation of abuse was important because changes in performance indicated shifts of power. These dynamic findings examined whether IPV was self-defending, situational, mutual, or terrorist. To that end, the following questions assessed the degree of violence and control throughout the relationship: “What was the relationship like when you first became involved with your partner? What was your relationship like before the first instance of violence in your relationship? And, what was the most recent incident like?”

#### *5.2.4 Severity of violence*

Severity of violence data derives from the question, “Were you or your partner injured?” Participants offered specific details about how injuries occurred and how each participant responded to being injured. Participants indicated how often during conflicts they and, or their partners had been injured. Responses varied for each participant. Details included actions such as restraining, bruising, scratching, cutting, breaking of bones, and shooting of a gun at their partners.

### 5.3 Participants and IPV patterns

During each 10-minute review session, participants shared basic demographic information about both themselves and their partners including age, race/ethnicity, personal income, and occupation. They defined the status and length of their relationship with their partners, and if applicable, disclosed how long ago the relationship ended. They also announced whether any children were involved or present during IPV.

Participants in this study predominantly identified as being Black or African American, with two identifying as White or Caucasian (Aaliyah; Veronica). One woman identified as mixed race (Sasha), and another as an Americo-Liberian (Saridy). The women ranged in age from 22 to 52, with the average age being approximately 34 years old.

During experiences of IPV, nine women were involved in an intimate relationship and one participant (Susie) was separated from her marriage. Two participants were married (Debra; Sasha), four were in a cohabitating dating relationship (Aaliyah; Sarah; Veronica; Saridy), and three were dating and not cohabitating (Brittany; Ann; Renee). Three participants were pregnant during instances of IPV (Aaliyah; Sarah; Sasha). Three participants are presently intimately involved with their partners (Brittany; Ann; Sasha).

Participants in this study were both perpetrators and victims of IPV. Each of the women perpetrated the following types of IPV: VR (Brittany; Ann), SCV (Sarah; Veronica), MVC (Renee), and IT (Saridy). Each of the women experienced the following types of IPV when their intimate partners victimized them: VR (Saridy), SCV (Sarah; Veronica), MVC (Renee), and IT (Brittany; Ann).

Some participants and partners performed mixed uses of control or experienced interrelationships between the different types of controlling behaviors (Kevan-Graham and Archer 2008:542). I described these interpretations of violence and control by establishing multiple mixed IPV types. Mixed types of IPV described nearly half of the participant's experiences of female-perpetrated IPV: Susie (VR; TVR), Aaliyah (VR; TVR; MVC), Debra (SCV; MVC), and Sasha (MVC; IT). Participant experiences of victimization described by mixed types included: Susie (IT; SCV), Aaliyah (IT; TVR; MVC), Debra (SCV; MVC), and Sasha (VR; MVC) (See Table 2: Participant experiences and IPV).

Table 2: Participant experiences and IPV

ID	NAME	AGE	STATE	RACE/ ETHNICITY	STATUS	DEGREE OF IPV PERP.	IPV TYPE PERP.	DEGREE OF IPV EXPER.	IPV TYPE EXPER.
1	Brittany Jones	23	MD	African-American	Dating and non-cohabiting	Scratch, kick	VR	Slap, punch, kick, verbal abuse	IT
2	Ann Wardrop	22	WV	African American	Dating and non-cohabiting	Scratch, kick	VR	Slap, punch, kick, verbal abuse	IT
3	Susie Jordan	47	VA	African-American	Married	hit with weapon	TVR/VR/SCV	Punch, throw objects	IT/SCV
4	Aaliyah Kanter	26	WV	Caucasian	Dating and co-habiting	Verbal abuse, push, punch, choke, restrain	VR/MVC/TVR	Verbal abuse, push, kick, punch, suffocate, deny food	IT/MVC
5	Sarah Jenkins	31	VA	African-American	Dating and co-habiting	Punch, throw objects	SCV	Punch, throw objects	SCV
6	Veronica Holmes	41	WV	Caucasian	Dating and co-habiting	Punch, Gunshot	SCV	Verbal abuse, push, shove, kick, throw objects	SCV
7	Debra Smith	52	MS	African American	Married	Punch, throw objects	SCV/MVC	Punch, throw objects, verbal abuse	SCV/MVC
8	Renee Garcia	37	MD	African-American	Dating and non-cohabiting	Push, punch, grab, hit with car, throw objects, break objects	MVC	Push, shove, kick, throw partner, restrain	MVC
9	Sasha Davis	24	WV	Mixed-race	Married	Verbal abuse, slap, punch, stab, kick, throw objects, break objects	MVC/IT	Punch, restrain, break objects	MVC/IT
10	Saridy Wilkins	32	MD	Americo-Liberian	Dating and co-habiting	Slap, hit with objects, verbal abuse	IT	Slap	VR

#### 5.4 Participant experiences and thematic analysis

The thematic analysis involved coding patterns of violence and control, selecting major themes, and developing specific patterns within themes to examine control and external motivations that contributed to women's performance and, or resistance during experiences of IPV. The themes were derived from specific patterns of couple behavior that were embedded in each of Johnson's types of IPV (See 3.3.3: IPV types and themes). Not all participant experiences fit neatly into each type of IPV. However, they fit into the themes because some experiences were similar or comparable to Johnson's documented performances of violence and, or control. By combining similar patterns of violence and control offered by each participant, topics emerged for themes in each type of IPV.

The purpose of the thematic analysis was two-fold. First, the thematic approach was a method for distinguishing similarities and differences across IPV experienced by each participant. The discussion flowed differently for each type of IPV because the conceptualization of violence and control in each type of IPV varied; the thematic analyses differed depending on the explanations of contexts of violence in SCV, notions of physical aggression and control in MVC, and examinations of victimization in VR and IT. To express their perspectives, the analysis included direct quotes and paraphrased statements from the participant transcripts. This method of analysis offered the deep description that was necessary in "centered" qualitative research (Weiss 1994; Kershaw 2003).

Second, themes examined the two research questions: In what ways does Johnson's typology (VR, SCV, MVC, and IT) fit women's experiences as a perpetrator and victim of IPV? What role does control play in women's experiences of IPV, and how do they express and experience control? The themes examined whether Johnson's types of IPV described the

experiences of women who are perpetrators and victims of IPV. Each themed analysis examined intersections of violence and control as they related to the physical and emotional abuse performed and experienced.

The following is a brief summary of results from the coding process and the analyses of participant experiences: The results of analyses presented in detail in chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9, found that Johnson's typology fully described six participant experiences (Brittany; Ann; Sarah; Veronica; Renee; Saridy). In chapter 6, I introduce a new type of IPV, tempered violent resistance (TVR) to address limitations in research on types of resistance. Results of these analyses also found that Johnson's typology offered a partial explanation of the other four participant experiences. These four participant experiences were not applicable to a single type of IPV. Instead, they were described using mixed interpretations of Johnson's types of IPV (Susie performed versions of VR, TVR, and SCV; Aaliyah used VR, TVR, MVC; Debra performed SCV and MVC; Sasha performed types of MVC and IT).

I included findings on these four participants as their experiences applied to themes in each type of IPV. Information about those participant experiences recurred across themes. However, each conceptualization differed according to the specific type of IPV. This method offered a more in-depth interpretation of the usefulness of Johnson's typology in analyzing how and why women perpetrate and experience IPV, even when the participant experience did not neatly fit his types of IPV. The analysis of mixed types of IPV included theoretical explanations of why the experiences of Susie, Aaliyah, Debra, and Sasha did not fit neatly into one specific type of IPV. A separate discussion on mixed type interpretations is included in chapter 12 (See 12.2: Mixed type interpretations).

## **PART 4: ANALYSIS**

In part 4, I identify common themes for VR, SCV, MVC, and IT, Johnson's types of IPV. A separate thematic analysis of each type of IPV explains how conflict, control, and motivations influence participants' performance of physical and emotional forms of IPV.

### **CHAPTER 6: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES OF VR**

Johnson and Ferraro (2000) define VR as non-controlling physical aggression used in response to a range of ongoing forms of physical and, or emotional abuse. I refer to those who perform VR as victims rather than perpetrators because they experience IT violence, defined by Johnson and Ferraro (2005) as an extreme continuum of controlling behaviors. During these occurrences of controlling victimization, participants who perform VR often experience stress and frustration, physical tormenting and, or emotional abuse; these experiences are typical triggers of VR.

Two of the four resisting participants in this study had experiences of IPV that were not fully applicable to VR. However, this analysis of VR uses a thematic approach, which includes each facet of the four experiences that are applicable to a corresponding theme in the analysis of VR. Incorporating relevant data for each resisting participant further extends findings on resistance performed by women who perpetrate and experience IPV. Hence, this analysis of VR includes patterns of violence and control performed during resistance among Brittany, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah. VR fully describes Brittany and Ann's experiences; only some facets of VR describe the experiences of Susie and Aaliyah.

Select dimensions of IPV performed by Susie and her partner are not applicable to the tenets of VR. For example, Susie performs inconsistent degrees of control. In addition, her partner performs situational violence rather than ongoing patterns of IT victimization. However,

VR and TVR (tempered violent resistance) describe some aspects of Susie's IPV. For instance, Susie responds using self-defense, a type of resistance. She also experiences threat, fear, and psychological abuse that correlate with experiences reported in studies on victims of IT abuse. Additional findings on Susie's experiences of IPV are present in Chapter 7, participant experiences and SCV.

Aaliyah exercises dimensions of control that are not applicable to tenets of VR. For example, Aaliyah's experiences of IPV are distinct because her levels of physical aggression and control escalate across three types of IPV. VR and TVR describe how Aaliyah resists during the first stages of violence in her relationship. Detailed explanations on Aaliyah's unique experiences of IPV are present in Chapter 8, participant experiences and MVC.

The following sections describe Brittany, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah's experiences of resistance as they fit into four themes. The first theme, *resistance* describes use of protective violence in response to an emotional or physical violence. The second theme, *non-controlling behavior* depicts participants' submissive conduct rendered during their physical responses to IPV. The third theme, *coercive controlling violence* presents the partners' controlling psychological and physically abusive behavior. The final theme, *domestic abuse* describes the frequency, duration, severity, and injuries occurring during individuals incidences of IPV such as harassment, attacks, violent assaults, and IT violence. Previous studies also use similar themes, or patterns to describe resistance during domestic disputes (Kevan-Graham and Archer 2004; Johnson and Leone 2005, Johnson 2006a; 2008).

## 6.0 Resistance

Most studies on female-perpetrated violence find that resistance is the primary type of IPV committed by women (Johnson and Leone 2005). The analysis on resistance describes how

participant's respond to power and control and, it distinguishes how and why they defend themselves. The analysis also examines the extent of control exercised by their violent partners and the ways that each participant resists in the context of controlling aggression.

### *6.0.1 Types of resistance*

Resistance is the key concept in VR and other types of IPV that depict withstanding, striving against, or opposing a violent partner. However, resistance has different dimensions that need to be distinguished for fuller understanding. This analysis indicated that there are three dimensions of resistance: self-defense, violent resistance (VR), and tempered violent resistance (TVR). Work on self-defense is based upon a legal conceptualization of protective violence, or resistance. Johnson's typology conceptualizes resistance as VR, but does not adequately conceptualize resistance. Thus, I developed TVR, a different conceptualization of resistance. TVR is a new dimension of female-perpetrated IPV that considers inconsistencies in the dimensions of VR and self-defense.

I included these dimensions in this study because research on domestic violence, family violence, and IPV offers diverging operational definitions of the concept, "resistance." For instance, researchers use a two-dimensional relationship between physical aggression and control to describe VR (Johnson 2006), and a disjointed legal definition to classify types of self-defense (Saunders 1986). Furthermore, the use of control is essential to explanations on VR. However, the use of control is not central for classifying self-defending violence. Ultimately, the new dimension of resistance, TVR allows for an examination of women's control when they use protective violence to resist ongoing forms of physical and emotional abuse. The following paragraphs describe distinctions between VR, self-defense, and TVR.

The major difference between self-defense and VR is the conceptualization of the terms. “Self-defense” is a common label for battered women’s use of violence; self-defense transpires when victims use physical force for protection after the partner hits her first. Saunders (1986) argues that self-defense is a violent response to a physical attack. A victim of self-defense must *show signs of physical abuse*. Resistance during a violent attack fits the legal definition of self-defense as long as the force used by the victim does not exceed the amount needed to stop the attack. Johnson characterizes VR as violence that occurs when a participant uses non-controlling forms of physical violence in response to controlling, verbal, or emotional abuse. VR is a violent response that can exist when there is *no apparent imminent physical threat* to a woman’s bodily integrity. Although the conceptualization of these two dimensions of resistance differ, Kelly and Johnson (2008:484) maintain that VR meets the common-sense definition of self-defense, which is “violence that takes place as an immediate reaction to an assault and that is intended primarily to protect the victim or others from injury.” However, Johnson and Ferraro (2000) regard the term self-defense as being too restrictive in studies on resistance because the definition confines and limits the context of violence (i.e. the legal definition of self-defense does not consider emotional violence as a motivation for resistance).

According to Johnson, women who perform VR do not exercise control. A performer of VR hits her partner back as they confront a matrix of emotional, psychological and, or mild to extreme physical violence. In contrast, most legal reports on self-defense examine severe responses to life-threatening violence, which are mostly female-perpetrated homicides. Rather than focusing on the dual dynamics of violence and control, as demonstrated in VR, IPV data on self-defense examines the victim’s situational violent response to domestic abuse. Supporters of Johnson’s typology introduce the conceptual limitations of legal models on self-defense. It is

critical that research on resistance recognize the conceptual limitations of VR. VR does consider emotional, psychological, and physical victimization. However, its specific interpretations of violence and control limit the agency of victims by disregarding their ability to control.

Ultimately, VR classifies IPV by patterns of violence and control exercised in the relationship. In the typology, the amount of violence and control exercised by both partners determines the aggressor (oppressor), victim (oppressed), and the type of IPV. VR is located at the bottom of Johnson's continuum of violence and control; it rejects accounts of resistance that entail a victim's performance of coercive controlling behavior. In cases of VR, the oppressed partner is a victim of IT violence "lacks control" of the violent partner because that partner uses coercive control to restrict the victim's ability to execute control (Johnson 2008). However, Johnson does not consider dimensions of resistance that occur when the oppressor has performed coercive violence unsuccessfully.

Although self-defense and VR offer great insight for the study of resistance, there are limitations in both conceptualizations that detract from a careful examination of female-perpetrated IPV. The term self-defense is a legal concept that has a very specific meaning. The definition of self-defense is only subject to change as laws on domestic violence change. Victims of domestic violence must rely on other laws such as harassment and stalking to combat emotional violence. Moreover, as additional research on female victimization has surfaced, various classifications of VR have also emerged such as avoidance, retaliation, and vengeance. However, recent studies find that classifications of VR have little to do with legal meanings of self-defense (Johnson 2008). Nonetheless, data on resistance fail to consider varying types of control exercised during female-perpetrated resistance. These data also do not consider external motivations such as history of violence that are often positively associated with the tactics that

women use to resist both physical violence and emotional abuse displayed by their violent partners. I find that women with histories of violence are likely to exercise control in two ways: as an aggressive strategy to exit the situation and a mode of coercive aggression. Ultimately, no current type of IPV considers a victim's performance of situational controlling resistance, a brand of control that is distinct from the patterns of coercive control described in Johnson's typology of IPV.

I introduced TVR as both a dimension of resistance and a new type of IPV. During resistance, victims of TVR exercise situational control, which is a premeditated source of controlling physical aggression. During TVR, the victim takes control of the situation, rather than taking general control of their partner. They also experience ongoing patterns of IT victimization, which includes myriads of psychological and physical abuse. However, they employ situational, rather than controlling tactics of violence during self-defense to limit the partner's coercive control. TVR differs from VR because participants who perform VR use non-controlling physical aggression to resist a dominant partner who demonstrates ongoing forms of victimization. Like self-defense, TVR also focuses on reasonableness, motives for resisting violently, and the extent of victimization (Lee 1996). In contrast to self-defense, TVR examines a specific type of control exercised by the victim within a context of emotional, psychological, and physical violence. Aaliyah and Susie perform TVR. For example, Aaliyah performs TVR in the second stage of her experience of domestic violence. IPV in her relationship transitions from VR to TVR to MVC. Susie performs TVR as an immediate response to her husband's shifts in violent conduct. A more detailed examination of TVR is presented in the concluding chapter.

### 6.0.2 Behavioral patterns and resistance

Research on domestic violence often refers to women who use protective violence as battered women. The following findings describe how Brittany, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah resist IPV. Throughout the duration of their violent relationships, some participants perform multiple forms of resistance. Participant experiences appear in this section as they relate to each dimension of resistance. They perform resistance (VR, self-defense, and TVR) as expressions of sentiment such as, (1) anger, (2) fear, (3) self-defense, (4) premeditated physical aggression, (5) retaliation, and (6) controlling aggression, which are also alternative concepts.

Participants performed VR as an expression of anger. However, the resistance was often strategic as well. When Ann and Aaliyah resisted, their partners became more violent. For example, Ann's resistance angered her partner, which augmented the severity of her victimization. She hits him back only because family members were there to intervene. His attack escalated to a violent assault and Ann was no longer able to protect herself. Ann said:

In public, I would basically do the same things he was doing to me [such as] slapping, punching, and kicking. But, it did not get him off of me or nothing like that. The only reason why I probably hit was because his brother was there and my cousin was there. You know, because I did not want to hit him ever before because if I hit him, he is just going to hit me harder. But, I just knew that his brother and my cousin would intervene. When we are alone, I try not to do it again if he hits me for it. (Ann, participant 2)

Emotional and physical responses to exploitation were often expressions of anger as well. In this case, IPV was a response to a partner's degrading or insulting behavior. Most physically violent relationships imply the presence of verbal abuse. Brittany noted that verbally aggressive exchanges were most memorable of all types of abuse. She suspected that both her and the partner's feelings were hurt during each verbal episode. For example, her partner's use of life threatening verbal communication motivated her VR. Brittany described her partner's latest response to IPV:

He punched and hit me until I had no feelings in my body. I remember crying for him to stop, but I think I blacked out. Whatever drugs he did this time made him act like somebody else. At some point, he dragged me in the closet; I guess, because I would not stop crying. We were at his mom's house. I never thought he would do that there. After I was locked in the closet for [she pauses], I do not know how long, he opened the door. He started screaming at me, calling me terrible names, and saying he would kill me. I started scratching and kicking him off me. There was blood on my clothes and everywhere. I yelled something like, 'why are you saying that?' I could not believe what he was saying, but I couldn't move anymore. (Brittany, participant 1)

Due to the immediate context of abuse, the "words" spoken by Brittany's partner signified a clear sign of danger. Furthermore, studies on domestic homicide find that partners threaten to kill participants during verbal attacks (Glass et al. 2004). Brittany actually believed that the abuse would continue until her partner killed her.

Victims often feared their partner's aggressive behavior. Brittany, Ann, and Susie alleged their ability to predict that they were in immediate danger of bodily harm. As they became cognitively aware of these patterns, Brittany and Ann used coping mechanisms to avoid violence. However, Susie and Aaliyah exerted physical force to counter victimization that was violent, aggressive, and life threatening. Susie and Aaliyah believed their partners were plotting to kill them and both hit back because they feared for their own safety. According to Johnson (2008:10), some victims do not resist until it seems as if their partner is going to continue assaulting them forever.

Saunders (1986) contends that victims who perform self-defense are legally justified in using a reasonable amount of force against the adversary. Self-defense performed by Aaliyah and Susie exceeded the force executed by their attackers. Both women delivered an amount of force that they believed were necessary to end the violent incident. However, Aaliyah admitted that she attempted to reciprocate pain and injury during resistance.

When victims became fearful of IPV, some performed premeditated resistance. Aaliyah mentioned that she planned to hit her partner back only when he least expected it, or during

times when he was unable to restrain her. For example, Aaliyah waited until her partner had turned away before she was physically violent. When their partners struck them, Aaliyah and Susie were prepared to fight back, and they refused to let their partners dominate them. Hence, Aaliyah's resistance also resembled an attack because her self-defense was both premeditated and controlling.

While performing TVR, Susie and Aaliyah used weapons or other defense tactics to gain control over the situation during violent incidents. Like Ann, they fought their partners back when they were certain that the partner would experience some types of injury. In such cases, the participant almost automatically fought fire with fire (Johnson 2006:20). However, they believed their violent performance was "self-defending" rather than a "mutual fight." For example, Susie depicted herself as "undeserving victim" who was forced to use self-defense:

I kept trying to get away and he kept pulling my clothes. If he had not hit me, I wouldn't have hit him. (Susie, participant 3)

In his explanations on VR, Johnson rejects a victim's use of controlling physical aggression. Johnson (2006b:75) argues that a resistor of IT attacks fights back without an intention of taking "general control" over the abusing partner, and may attempt to seriously injure them. Both Susie and Aaliyah urged that they only hit because their partners hit. They preferred to escape, eliminate abuse, or dissolve unhealthy circumstances. When unhealthy circumstances and violence subsisted, the couples embarked upon a battle to see "who would survive the attack." Johnson's closest example of resistance depicts a premeditated attack as resistance. He frames "escape" as being the motive for resistance (Johnson 2006b). For example, a victim obtains a weapon for their protection and escape plan, and she exerts extreme physical violence during a planned attack (Cook 1997). When the victim performs violence, they intend to injure the aggressive partner. However, the partner is unaware of these strategies and does not

expect retribution. By using premeditated violence, extremely aggressive forms of self-defending retaliation are often successful. It also becomes likely for the victim to inflict injuries and exert limited control over the partner. Hence, true revenge occurs when the victim applies restraints appropriately and forestalls the anticipated victimization.

Some forms of resistance are acts of retaliation against a partner for past and previous conduct (Saunders 1986:51). Johnson (2006a:3) finds that women who use self-defense may have a primary goal of retribution and vengeance. In this study, participants wanted their partners to pay a price for conduct. According to Aaliyah and Susie, domestic violence was not a one-sided phenomenon. Aaliyah said, "He will not attack me without experiencing an injury. I try to get him when I can." Susie's response was similar. She said, "Had the cops not shown up, he would be dead. That's how scared I was." Accordingly, Graham-Kevan (2009:560) notes that physical aggression is sometimes in self-defense. However, female perpetrators may perhaps use descriptions that are more consistent with retaliation, retribution, and vigilantism. Although they are highly victimized women, their accounts of TVR are not *purely* defensive, but rather combative.

Resistance can also serve as empowerment when the victim wins a battle (Hamberger and Potente 1994). In cases where violence contained the situation and the participant did not overly exert control over a partner, the participant actually felt empowered. Although Aaliyah, Ann, and Susie were in pain after fighting, they felt content and relieved. They gained confidence when resistance was successful. In particular, Aaliyah was sometimes able to use enough force to scare her partner, which deterred his violent conduct. On a few occasions, Aaliyah's resistance had been so violent that she had left her partner unconscious. When given an opportunity to diminish her partner's physical violence and emotional abuse, Aaliyah felt energized. Aaliyah built her

confidence when she performed TVR, and reported feeling like a stronger woman because her partner had allegedly lost a physical battle.

Contrary to data reported in Johnson (1995) some resistance entailed controlling aggression. More violent and damaging defense techniques were also common when violence escalated in the relationship. For example, during VR, Aaliyah confessed that she used holding techniques that restrained her partner without hurting him. However, when her violence transitioned from VR to TVR, her IPV escalated to an unremitting brand of self-defense that turned controlling and mutually hostile. The response was emotional, psychological, and physical. Aaliyah performed TVR as she limited her partner's physical aggression and maintained controls of her own violent behavior. Aaliyah said:

He picks me up and throws me head first into a wall. Then, I just laid there. He started to walk away and I got up and jumped on his back and put him in a sleeper hold. I know a lot of prison holds so I lodged on a sleeper hold onto his back until he dropped and started foaming out his mouth. His eyes started rolling in the back of his head and I freaked out and let go. By that time, I am collapsed on the floor crying [having contractions and feeling if she is in labor]. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

Aaliyah reported that she used arm locks that injured him, swept him off-balance, and took him down. Given her formal self-defense training, the second stage of violence was not purely defensive. Aaliyah attributed her heightened violence to the threat of her partner attacking again.

#### 6.1 Non-controlling resistance

Non-controlling resistance, an alternative concept for resistance, was hostility performed with the primary goal of safeguarding rather than commanding. The second theme in the analysis of VR, non-controlling resistance, answered the question, "what motivates the participant to resort to physical violence?" The section examines the following types and frequency of aggressive tactics used by Brittany, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah: restricted control, dependence, and non-controlling retaliation throughout the duration of their relationship. Each theme examined

the classifications about participants who performed VR such as, the types of control performed, and participants' aggression relative to their partners' alleged controlling behavior. This set of classifications is similar to an inquiry in Kevan-Graham and Archer (2004:5).

### *6.1.1 Restricted control*

In research on battered women's syndrome, Dutton (1993) introduces the concept, "learned helplessness," which explains a victim's inability to guard against violence that develops after repeated, but failed, efforts to resist. Brittany performed learned helplessness because she had no control of herself or her partner. Women surviving life-threatening abuse often perform passivity as an adaptive strategy of survival, resistance, and strength building (Lempert 1996:281). Saunders (1986) posits that cooperative, reserved, or obedient responses to violent abuse are as signs of battered women's entrapment. Similar findings on behavior conditioned by fear are present in Barnett et al. (1997) and Graham-Kevan and Archer (2008).

Performers of VR used several tactics to avoid conflict. Most participants described occasions when they suppressed their own physical violence and emotional responses; the conduct was common among Brittany, Ann, and Susie. This more creative version of non-controlling behavior entailed participants' ability to achieve self-control. These participants were likely to minimize their victimization and enhance partner satisfaction by managing their own expressions (Ooms 2006:3). For example, disciplinary action was a routine process that conditioned Brittany's responses to her partner's control and authority. When Brittany's partner slapped and choked her as adult-discipline and his aggressive plea to improve her behavior, she did not resist physically or violently. Instead, she tempered emotional responses and outward displays of violence. Brittany could account for the number of times her partner had hit her in the mouth to contest unwanted comments. Brittany never responded in a cynical way:

Sometimes, he slaps me in the face when I am out of line, but I don't say anything. It reminds me of when I talked back to my mother or father. He doesn't like it when I am sarcastic. I never yell, but when he says something that makes no sense to me, I make comments. Then, I get a swift slap in the mouth. I try to be mindful of my comments. But, if he did something wrong, I would either pretend it never happened or just keep it to myself. (Brittany, participant 1)

Participants also tended to cope with their victimization. Coping included downplaying occurrences, apologizing, or ignoring violent behavior. For example, Brittany and Ann become so fearful of their partners' behavior that they turned to coping with violence. Coping was a method that these resisting participants used to escape their own behavior; they transformed themselves into another person, women that their partner preferred. Coping mechanisms limited the actions that attributed to the severity of their victimization (Sullivan et al. 2005). Brittany, Ann, and Susie performed psychological forms of coping. For example, Brittany and Ann performed out-side-of-the-box remedies to alleviate violence in their relationships. Instead of her usual remedies such as self-control and willingness to endure pain, over time, Ann established trial-and-error philosophies or social learning mechanisms. A trial-and error-philosophy might have involved the use of overly supportive behavior. In such cases, Ann did anything she could to please her abuser. Aaliyah also used a social learning mechanism, which prompted her to be attentive to every move made by her abuser. Aaliyah recorded and analyzed circumstances that caused distress. However, Aaliyah used these methods when she countered her partner's attack.

Aaliyah said:

He'd come home and yell every day that I saw him. He's one of those people that are going to follow you and keep edging you on. With our little arguments, he would try and get all in my face. I'd just try and get away from it. I would always try to walk away because I know when I'm getting too mad, things are not going to end up good for him. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

As they coped with the violence, Brittany and Ann failed to frame these practices as temporary remedies. Instead, overtime, their lifestyles resembled a culture of violence.

In some cases, the type of victimization determined the response. Each participant classified abusive behavior differently; they did not recognize all occurrences of physical violence as “abuse.” Few relied on the partner’s convictions, while the majority formed their own judgments of improper behavior. Hence, a fearful participant may have minimized the intensity of her attack. For example, Brittany would say, “oh stop” and hug her partner to offer a calm gesture. As a stress reliever, some participants conveyed, “pretending as if had never happened.”

Stamp and Sabourne (1995) reveal that victims of IT violence report identifying themselves as the aggressor of IPV when the victims’ alleged behavior is inappropriate. In these cases, the instigator is more or less the aggressor, and the partner who hits is a victim. Brittany and Ann were convinced that their partners had hit them because they provoked violence; during the interview, they constantly positioned themselves as responsible for each incident of IPV. Similar findings are present in Gottman and Jacobson (1998). Accordingly, when Ann responded aggressively to her partners or aggravated him, Ann assumed that she had provoked his violent behavior. In similar cases, she held her abuser relatively innocent, assumed blame, and attributed her victimization to his reaction to her behavior or personality. Rather than speak out, Brittany silently accepted responsibility for any conflict that allegedly incited her partner’s aggressive conduct. Sometimes, she admitted guilt when an apology was not necessary. On a few occasions, Brittany also took full responsibility for the faults of others, especially if the partner appeared angry. In cases of her partner’s drugs or alcohol abuse, Brittany suggested that her abuse was either accidental or unconsciously performed.

Accepting blame for IPV is often a psychologically damaging process for battered women. When Brittany accepted blame for her partner’s abuse, she internalized her victimization

and began to think in a similar vein as her partner. She belittled her own behavior constantly. Nonetheless, her thought processes did not reflect a realistic interpretation of the situation. Her submissive behavior and negative self-image succumbed to her partner's violence. Making excuses was a common way to avoid conflict; she even lied or blamed others to prevent an attack. Brittany justified her partner's behavior and was no longer able to decipher between the truth and a lie.

Although they often accepted blame for violence, the participants also reported feeling trapped in their violent relationships. In cases where the partner would attack if a participant left the relationship, the participant's control was often restricted. In her text, *Leaving Abusive Partners*, Catherine Kirkwood uses the concept of a "web of emotional control" to convey experiences of women who are trapped and held within a relationship that threatens to destroy their emotional and physical safety (Kirkwood 1993:58). Ann experienced emotional, mental, and physical patterns of abuse, which entailed aspects of the web of control such as degradation, fear, objectification, deprivation, and distortion of subjective reality. Ann was convinced that the abuse would continue if she left or stayed in the relationship. Ann explained danger that might have occurred after leaving the relationship:

In the beginning I did [try to stop communicating with her partner], more so, for the first year. But he'd never put his hands on me. But every since then, I never stopped trying to be his friend [dating]. Some of my guy friends told me, 'if you leave him alone, he'll probably stalk you.' I don't think he'd do that, but I'm not sure. (Ann, participant 2)

She felt entrapped by thoughts of escalated violence during separation, but she remained in the relationship.

### 6.1.2 Dependence

Ann and Aaliyah experienced types of dependence such as relying on their partners for economic stability, offering variations of compassion, and refusing to sever the social bond.

Studies document the importance of economic resources for battered women's decision-making (Bauer et al. 2002). Control of material resources creates obstacles that limit lifestyle choices. Ann and Aaliyah mentioned the social values, opportunity structure, and service provisions that they received while in their relationships. They also recognized that they were dependent and powerless when their partner dictated these conditions. For example, at times, Ann's partner drew her back into the relationship because she had become accustomed to her partner's lifestyle and was unable to obtain similar resources without his support. Without him, Ann was financially unstable, and with him, she was a commodity. Peled et al. (2000:11) reports similar findings.

The circumstances in the relationships of Ann and Aaliyah can be depicted as a "Heckle and Jeckle" act, both treated with threats and rudeness, or politely prized, and given a false sense of security prior to the partners' unleashing of violence. Given the participants' willingness to stay, these inconsistent behavioral patterns were performed habitually. A "cycle of patterned violence" emerged when each partner's behavior transitioned from displays of kindheartedness to displays of antagonism (Dutton 1993). They released anxiety and pressure, and experienced a honeymoon period, during which the partners were apologetic and, or remorseful. Although Ann and Aaliyah did not always recover, unpredictable episodes of battering reemerged, and the cycle continued. Ann stayed in the relationship when her abuser was contrite and attentive following accounts of violence:

After he hits, he'll leave. Eventually, he'll call and visit. Then, he'll take me out to go do something. He'll buy anything like clothes or food or jewelry, anything. He doesn't make it seem like he's doing it to say sorry, but that's probably why he's doing it, to say sorry. Then, when I least expect it, he'll hit again. (Ann, participant 2)

Battered women who experience ongoing patterns of violence often stay in the abusive relationship (Dunn 2005). Research presents multiple reasons why they stay, such as limited

resources, which may strip them of their will to leave (Walker 1979). In this study, Brittany and Ann were unwilling to leave their partners. They spent much time avoiding the impacts of psychological abuse because they stayed. Examples of abuse included being manipulated into feeling as if they were not worthy of other relationships, or were unable to survive without the abuser. Brittany described her attachment:

I fight tooth and nail to get him to stay with me. When I upset him, I do just about anything to convince him not to leave. I connect it definitely with my insecurities... finding anybody [to date] just to say that I have a man or having that title of having a boyfriend because I always wanted to have somebody around. So, settling for less is what I did a lot.

Unwillingness to leave was a form of non-controlling behavior. Battered women often convey reluctance to break the social bond with their partners (Retzinger 1991). Ann described her justification for remaining in the violent relationship:

It upsets me. I don't like it [abuse], but I like him. I know it shouldn't be going on and I shouldn't let someone do that to me. (Ann, participant 2)

Brittany, Ann, and Sasha, who currently remain in their abusive relationships, reiterated this sentiment. In particular, Brittany said, "I really want someone to love me." Brittany often confused her partner's abuse with his love for her. For example, when Brittany attempted to leave the relationship, her partner attacked her. She said:

He got so angry and started to hit me because I told him I was leaving. He started yelling at me and daring me to walk out of the door. I think he acted like that because I finally stood up for myself and tried to walk out. I never tried to leave before. I always fought [non-physical] for the relationship. I was scared but, when it was over, I was glad that he cared enough to fight for me to stay in the relationship. (Brittany, participant 1)

The above statement about "love" is a commonly expressed phenomenon in research on battered women (Dutton 1993). Brittany confessed that abuse was her partner's emotional expression of love because "a man would not become angry if he did not care." Following disputes, Brittany was convinced that her partner hits her because he loved her. Moreover, she believed that she

had damaged him with the thought of losing her. She opted to alter her conduct and stay in the abusive relationship because her overall happiness was contingent upon the love that they shared.

### *6.1.3 Non-controlling retaliation*

Retaliation was likely to occur in response to partners' emotionally destructive behavior. Participants expressed feelings of discontent when their partners insulted them or called them derogatory names. Similar verbal attacks prompted emotionally violent or aggressive responses by Brittany and Aaliyah. Aaliyah reciprocated foul language and insulting slurs during non-physical, verbal disputes with their partners. Conversely, Brittany was unwilling to project similar conduct. She hits her partner back because he spoke disrespectfully to her. His inflammatory statements communicated, "I do not love you or respect you." In Brittany's eyes, past abuse had been disciplinary. However, this brand of violence was both unusual and unbearable. Brittany's retaliation was limited to one statement regarding retaliation. She said, "Why are you saying this?" and violence continued. During the attack, Brittany braced herself while he raped her:

At first, I just figured that he wanted me to be quiet so we can go have sex or something... I wasn't even mad that he was hitting me. He was drinking, but he was speaking sober thoughts. I knew then he was lying to me when he was not drinking. I scratched him and tried to pull him off of me. He finally made me lay down in the bed with him [perform intercourse]. (Brittany, participant 1)

Brittany's resistance was ineffective because she was unable to protect herself or counter his physical strength.

Retaliation also occurred when Ann recruited others to fight for her; however, this behavior was not an example of non-controlling physical aggression. Most participants performed or experienced IPV in isolation. In contrast, Ann retaliated while others were present. She considered the correct time, place, and unique circumstance to hit back. Ann only attempted

to stop her partner from hitting when he attacked her in public settings. She had deliberately relied on family or peers to perform controlling physical aggression, which contained her abuser's violence temporarily (Johnson 1999). Social support and close family relationships were useful, but not consistent for Ann's successful resolution of IPV (Rose and Campbell 2000). When fights occurred in public, she said, "I just knew that [someone] would intervene." Ann performed another form of control when she was willing to endure harsh beatings. Despite knowing that her partner would hit harder, Ann sent the message, "I will not do as you say and we will not let you get away with this."

## 6.2 Coercive controlling behavior

This analysis of coercive controlling behavior examines patterns and contexts of physical and, or emotional control performed by the partners of women who perform resistance (Leone, Johnson, and Cohan 2004). Brittany, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah resisted their partner's physical aggression but they were also victims of IT violence. Hence, the partners performed both controlling verbal and physical abuse (Kevan-Graham and Archer 2004:20). Hence, the partner's control was the defining feature of IT victimization. Although each participant experienced control differently, short-term control was the partner's primary goal in each context of IT (Vangelisti and Perlman 2006); partners of Brittany, Ann, and Aaliyah enacted coercive control to maintain control their everyday actions. The analysis of IT victimization assesses three types of coercive controlling behavior: (1) fear or submission inducing behavior, (2) isolation and possessive behavior, and (3) humiliating and degrading behavior. This framework is also present in Leone et al. (2004).

### *6.2.1 Fear-inducing behavior*

Partners produced and maintained fear in a variety of ways. For example, each participant was a victim of emotional, psychological, and physical violence. On countless occasions, they recounted receiving threats of violence that were as intimidating as physical violence. Susie's husband threw and destroyed objects to assert physical aggression. Susie said:

He punched a hole in the wall and he started throwing things. I just walked away from him because I knew something was going on. He was never that way before. He became more annoyed by my rude attitude but he calmed down I guess maybe a week or so later. (Susie, participant 3)

Susie perceived the broken objects as a warning of a future attack. Her partner's behavior confirmed that IT abusers do not always have to hit to scare their victims.

Partners' verbal abuse was also fear-inducing behavior. Research by Infante and Wigley (1986) supports the conclusion that verbally aggressive partners diminish the victim's self-concept. Brittany and Ann reported that they internalized their partner's verbal abuse. In particular, the partners of Brittany, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah displayed violent derogatory outbreaks, otherwise known as "psychological battering," which in that moment entailed a credible threat of violence. These participants reported psychological abuse including character attacks, demeaning their competence, and degrading their physical appearance.

Before Susie's partner became verbally intimidating, there was a short period of time when she delivered reciprocally aggressive responses. On two occasions, she conveyed verbal responses that exceeded responses performed by the partner. However, she silenced herself when she became fearful of an attack. Susie asserted that her partner's conduct was threatening and psychological damaging.

Aaliyah recounted hostile verbal abuse displayed by herself and her partner in the form of offensive words and sarcastic remarks. Although Aaliyah initially feared her partner's physical

abuse, she used several strategies to resist his exploitative verbal conduct. For example, Aaliyah defended her position, which increased the limited degree of agency that she possessed. In effect, her agency materialized as she used verbal abuse to express her refusal to submit to the victimization. Regardless of the threat and fear of her partner, Aaliyah resisted when her partner performed psychological battering; this response differed from passive responses performed by Brittany and Ann.

Partners often performed attacks that triggered the participants' fear and submission. Lempert (1996:281) argues that passivity is an active strategy of survival for battered women and reports that battered women are less likely to respond aggressively during physical, psychological, and verbal attacks. In this study, the extent to which women performed submission resisting their partner's fear-inducing behavior varied across participants. For instance, prior to her husband's aggressive episodes, Susie's demeanor was obedient and submissive. Susie vowed to seek wife-husband consensus. Analogous with Brittany's current emotional responses, Susie often used conforming behavior to meet her partner's demands:

I was a very passive person. You know, he might say ignorant things. I would just look at him and just walk away, because sometimes, a response is not always necessary. Back then, I was into church too. I was the submissive wife; he was the head of the household. Not like what he says goes but since he was the man of the house, I just kind of took it and prayed on it. I did not do anything wrong. (Susie, participant 3)

Ignoring the partner's aggressive behavior was another way that participants submitted. Brittany and Ann often remained quiet, rarely combating the actions of their partners. In effect, Brittany instantly agreed to a subordinate role in her relationship to avoid further intimidation. Johnson (2006a:9) describes a response to unremitting abuse that is consistent with Brittany's perspective on resistance:

As long as he or she accepts a subordinate role in the relationship, there is no need for coercion. Thus, we would expect to see control that is more coercive from those who are motivated to

attempt to control an uncooperative partner.

Ann was also submissive to her partner's needs. Regardless of how much she adjusted or conformed, she experienced extreme punishment. Many times, Ann's partner hit her until she was no longer conscious.

Before acting, Brittany showed submission by soliciting her partner's satisfaction and unconditional consensus. Brittany acknowledged her compliance:

If he did something wrong, I would either pretend it never happened or just keep it to myself. If I saw something wrong or if I didn't like something, I would just act like it never happened so my relationship could stay intact. So, if I pretend like I don't see it, everything's fine. (Brittany, participant 1)

On the other hand, Susie experienced child victimization and molestation by her father. Her father was an addict. When her husband performed similar signs of behavior, Susie predicted potential victimization and became petrified. She became silent and complaisant when her partner displayed violence such as throwing and punching objects. As time progresses, she recanted her cynical conduct and mentally abandoned her partner. Susie silently tolerated his intimidating routine and redirected her focus to leaving the relationship.

Susie referred to her actions as a "smart response," to her partner's unwanted conduct because she believed her approach avoided physical abuse. When she could no longer tolerate the hostile conditions, Susie completed a self-empowering routine: she contacted an addiction counselor and filed for temporary custody of her children through the Department of Social Services. Susie borrowed thousands of dollars from their family savings account for her exit. Susie attempted to file an order of protection against her husband. However, her effort was premature because the police did not authorize an order because her partner had not physically attacked her. She rented her own apartment as a safe space for herself and her children as well. Susie left her relationship because she sensed a fatal outcome.

Some partners were so violent that participants felt compelled to hide. Isolation and avoidance were also examples of tolerant behavior. Ann also isolated herself from others.

However, she felt obliged to have her partner's approval. She said:

Being social, I think that would be healthy; for me to have friends and stuff like that and go out and enjoy myself sometimes but I don't do it as much. To make sure that he does not hit me, I just don't do the things that he doesn't want me to do. I'll make sure that I let him know when I'm going certain places or I won't go certain places because I know that he might not want me there. I do a lot of things to prevent fighting. Even when I dress, I try to cover up some. I don't even have a cell phone no more because of him. I'd rather him not be able to get a hold of me. (Ann, participant 2)

In the analysis of SCV participants, I report that Susie, Sarah, and Debra also performed avoidance to relieve stress.

Sullivan et al. (2005) report that women who experience previous victimization use greater use of avoidance measures than those who have no prior exposure to violence. For example, Brittany's past violence was also psychologically damaging. Her responses to violence were withdrawn and she often exercised self-control and submission to avoid conflict. When her partner displayed verbal, fear-inducing conduct, she shied away. She was instinctively obedient and submissive when her partner behaved waywardly or kind. Hence, violence was not necessary for him to remain in command because she avoided private and public displays of physical violence.

Rogers et al. (2003) state that when participants have very complex circumstances, some need help recognizing the dual peril of victimization and exploitation. Brittany believed that she and her partner suffered together as victims of his drug dependence. During or following her partner's excessive narcotics and prescription drug use, Brittany did not blame him for actions that occurred when he was under the influence. Brittany said, "When he is high, I try to stay away from him because no matter what I do, I know he will hit me." Whether temporarily or on

a long-term basis, Brittany and Aaliyah had also believed they could treat their partner's addictions or violence. In contrast, Susie saw herself and children as victims of her partner's violence. While Susie recognized her partner's intentions to exploit her and her inability to prevent victimization by altering his conduct, Aaliyah and Brittany did not come to a similar conclusion.

### 6.2.2 *Possessive behavior*

Dependent intimate terrorist abuse involved motives of personality organization, dependency, and jealousy. Ann's partner was a dependent intimate terrorist abuser. A dependent intimate terrorist is obsessed with the partner, desperate to hold her, and therefore jealous and controlling (Johnson 2008). Ann's partner ranked high on measures of emotional dependency and jealousy. Emotional obsessions often drive the intimate terrorist's need to control the victim (Johnson 2008:32). Ann contended that he had two distinct personalities. One persona was private, outgoing, supportive, and motivational. He was a caring person and a responsible provider for his children. However, the other persona had aggressive outbursts that were impulsive and unpredictable. When he became angry, he acted as a dependent intimate terrorist. Out of nowhere, he threw objects, and when he became dissatisfied with Ann, he hit her:

He says I don't know how to act [in public settings]. But, I usually just sit there and I drink and listen to music. That's it! We were in a club and I walked to the bathroom. I don't know if another guy said something or looked at me, but he [the partner] started to fight me in the club. (Ann, participant 2)

His expressions of jealousy, obsessions, and emotional victimization also governed Ann's financial life choices and her conduct.

Susie's childhood victimization was critical for developing an understanding of her responses to IT victimization. Susie's responses to abuse largely reflected her interpretations of childhood abuse performed by her father, who was an addict. Susie's descriptions of her partner

resembled Johnson's interpretation of an intimate terrorist abuser: The intimate terrorist wants general control over the victim, and he acts out in threatening ways (Johnson 2006a). Susie's partner expressed anger or frustration to generate fear and gain control. However, he did not isolate Susie from others, threaten to harm the children, or regulate use of their cash flow.

Like Ann's partner, Aaliyah's partner reeled her into the relationship using excessive gift giving and leisure spending habits. Once part of the relationship, Aaliyah's quality of life augmented and she felt empowered as did her partner. Once her partner accepted the role of sole provider or primary breadwinner, the partner became more controlling, sometimes restricting her whereabouts or behavior. The following scenario portrayed submission-inducing behaviors used to isolate Aaliyah from others:

He knew I had nowhere to go. It was cooler outside on the porch than it was inside. And, I would sit on the front porch and my female friend and his cousin would come by talk to me. When he would come home, he would accuse his cousin that lives around the corner. He'd say, 'their sleeping with me and doing all this other stuff.' That cousin could have been at the beach for the week, but he still would have said it. He would actually go out and do the things, but accuse me of doing the things I wasn't doing. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

Aaliyah felt entirely dependent on her abuser for food, clothing, and shelter. The partner intentionally withheld necessities, only providing them at his convenience.

### *6.2.3 Degrading behavior*

Participants characterized key experiences as humiliating or degrading. Domestic violence was also a humiliating experience. Participants depicted living a life of perpetual denial, hiding the reality of their victimization. Participants could not face friends and members of their church congregations. Some also disclosed humiliation when, unexpectedly, the family account had insufficient funds.

The practice of receiving money and gifts for sex was one consequence of the risks and costs of women's economic survival. For most participants, the initial acceptance of money was

not necessarily disempowering. Instead, in a wholesome relationship, that exchange served as a validation of their worth from the partner. Nonetheless, as a relationship became violent, money was also a dynamic motive for staying in the violent relationship. For some, economic conditions predicted overall health and wellness (Schechter 2008).

Participants tolerated physical aggression in exchange for a secure financial position. This finding expressed by Ann, Susie, Aaliyah, and Veronica is consistent with hypotheses on domestic violence related financial issues in Weaver et al. (2009). Typically, the partners tended to the participants' financial security and counteracted those proceeds with verbal abuse and fear-inducing conduct. According to Swan and Snow (2002), money is a common tool used to dictate roles and decision-making. Participants also reported that money issues dominated conflict.

According to Anderson (2005), men involved in the organization of the drug world have been able to exercise more structural power over women through possession of resources, enhanced domination and control, and empowerment of self. Aaliyah's partner's beautiful apartment, expensive clothes, and nice cars mesmerized her. However, Aaliyah said, "I was bamboozled," when she learned that the temporary lifestyle did not translate into a healthy long-term relationship:

I was really young and very naive. I was 16, he was 21. And, I think it was more infatuation with somebody buying me all kinds of cool things and partying and drinking. That was kind of the only relationship I knew of. I'm arguing over him working and being a drug dealer on the side. Literally for a day, I would have like a can of corn and I'm sitting here pregnant with his child. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

Research on similar dualistic constructions of hegemonic masculinity and femininity are present in Anderson (2005) and Johnson (2008), studies examining economic control, isolation, and behavioral restrictions.

Victims of IPV also complied with unconditional sexual compliance to uphold positive consequences, such as promoting partner satisfaction and avoiding relationship tension. Brittany offered her partner unconditional sex. Katz and Tirone (2010:730) offer a similar description as “unwanted sexual penetration without sexual desire in the absence of immediate partner sexual pressure.” Brittany was certain that her partner would hit her if she did not perform. O’Sullivan and Allgeier (1998) report a similar finding in research on feigning sexual desires of men who battered their intimate partners.

Other research on battered women find that emotionally abusive relationships can destroy the victim’s self-worth and lead to anxiety and depression. Kirkwood (1993) notes that abuse often makes a victim feel helpless and alone. The severity of the violence, duration of exposure, early-age onset, and the victim’s cognitive assessment of the violence exacerbate the symptoms of PTSD (Hughes and Jones 2000:5). I determined a similar correlation between domestic violence and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Following violent episodes, victims of wide-ranging violence encountered persistent re-experiencing of trauma and psychic numbing. At the present, Susie feels less urgent compassion toward others and devalues their worth during courting. Susie stated that she would never be in another intimate relationship, a response that was not reported by any other participants in the study.

Landenburger (1989) finds that battered women relinquish once-valued parts of their identities, such as physical attractiveness and intelligence in interactions with the violent partner, and eventually in their own self-estimations. Ann experienced a loss of self-confidence and self-esteem when her partner accused her of dressing and caring acting inappropriately. Moreover, her black eyes served as a public display of her inability to act appropriately.

### 6.3 Physical abuse and resistance

This analysis of physical abuse examines types, frequency, duration, severity, escalation of physical assault, and injury during VR. This section frames the participant depictions of their appearance following instances of IPV. The participants reported that their relationships involved escalated levels of aggression, disproportionate levels of violence between partners, and more injurious physical aggression than displayed in other types of IPV (Kevan-Graham and Archer 2004; Johnson and Leone 2005). Most of the victims experienced high levels of controlling behaviors and one or more physical attacks (Johnson 1999). While some participants shared graphic details, others limited descriptions to “how deformed or unrecognizable” they were following an attack. During the interviews, physical abuse appeared to be difficult to discuss; Brittany, Ann, and Aaliyah began to cry at that point in the conversation.

During each interview, participants described their violent intentions. Although Brittany, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah resisted, their intentions for hitting differed. Brittany was the only participant that did not hit with intent to injure or hurt her partner. Instead, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah were likely to hit as a method of retaliation for abuse. Participants used a variety of strategies to retaliate, one being preparation.

Participants were also better able to retaliate because they relied on lessons learned during their past exposure to violence. Susie and Aaliyah were able to retaliate immediately. Susie described using a weapon to respond to her partner’s violence:

If I hadn’t gotten away from him to get that axe handle, he would have kept hitting me. I just happened to get away. I’m buck naked at this particular point, trying to crawl and if somebody is literally attacking you, you’re going to do everything you can to get away. (Susie, participant 3)

As methods of protective retaliation, Susie had a supply of mace in her purse as protection from strangers and stored an axe handle under her bed to secure safety in her home. Aaliyah used a

different method of protection. She applied chokeholds and other responsive methods of protection during violent situations.

Participants were also vigilant and keenly watchful to detect danger. They developed sophisticated knowledge about abusers and their responses to patterns of behavior. Brittany, Ann, and Susie used more strategic methods of self-defense by becoming familiar with both triggers for abuse and their partner's justifications for hitting. Langford (1996) refers to this method as predicting partner violence within the context of battering. For example, participants learned specific patterns such as changes in their partner's eyes, speech, and tones of voice as signals of caution and warning for potential violence. Women who hit back often used this method; these motivations were also present among women who perform SCV, MVC, and IT.

Aaliyah and Susie felt that, "Whenever a woman uses physical violence against her partner, she is performing self-defense." Although Aaliyah as the aggressor of physical violence on occasions, she perceived her physical aggression as self-defense. Many women who performed self-defense also responded to physical violence, emotional, and mental forms of victimization (Saunders 1986). Aaliyah felt that physical violence was the only way to counter her partner's violence. She did not think she was the aggressor during those encounters. Furthermore, experiences of past victimization also reflected participants' characterization of self-defense. Susie was unable to retaliate in the past during physical and sexual abuse performed by her father therefore, regardless of the degree of her physical aggression, Susie regarded any physical resistance as self-protecting defense.

There was also the question of whom the fault lied with. Blame was a common explanation for why some participants hit their partners back. In most relationships described, partners victimized them because the participants allegedly performed actions that incited the

partner to abuse them. However, the participants in this study were likely to blame the partner. Some suggested that their partners overreacted, instigated arguments, or were in general, angry men.

Studies also report that verbal abuse may be even more violence provoking than a physical attacks (Straus 1993). In particular, Aaliyah viewed her own transgressions as less serious than physical attacks initiated by her partner. Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah failed to accept blame for any type of aggression performed in their relationship. Brittany was the only participant that blames herself for occurrences of IPV.

### *6.3.1 Frequency and duration of resistance*

Occurrences of frequent victimization were common among participants who performed VR. Brittany, Ann, and Aaliyah experienced ongoing physical abuse. For these women, victimization accounts converged to paint a picture of frequent physical aggression and substantial risk of injury. Brittany experienced physical assault on a weekly basis and like Ann, she was not likely to retaliate. Brittany only responded aggressively one time when she believed the assault was life threatening. Ann responded to violence when others were available to restrain her partner. Susie experienced violent aggression that led to one case of IPV. Aaliyah hit back whenever she was not physically constrained by her partner. Following most attacks, Aaliyah left, only to later return and have a similar fight occur again.

A majority of the women who perform VR believe violence can decrease over the course of the relationship (Morse 1995). Brittany and Ann believed they could decrease violence over the course of their relationships. Susie as confident that she could not alter her partner's violent conduct. As their partners' violent conduct increased, Brittany, Ann, and Susie conditioned their behavior to avoid resistance. Conversely, Aaliyah became more violent as her partner's

aggression increased. During VR, some couples performed patterns of violence that materialized into a cycle of abuse (Holmes and Murray 1996). For example, during a cycle of abuse, the partner hit, Aaliyah resisted, and fighting continued until one partner was injured and, or unable to retaliate. Brittany and Ann remained in their relationships and Susie and Aaliyah did not.

### *6.3.2 Severity of resistance*

Most feminist accounts on IT violence find that violence between intimate partners often gets worse. However, samples in family violence research find no patterns of severity and frequency of violence and abuse (Walker 1989:697). Among this sample of women who performed VR, physical abuse was common. However, in this sample, the severity of abuse was not predictable (Walker 1989, Johnson 1999). There was no way of predicting whether IPV would get worse for Brittany. On an occasion where Brittany was afraid of her partner's likely response and lied to him about her whereabouts, he choked her. In another circumstance, Brittany's partner was dissatisfied with the way she looked at him, and Brittany experienced a similar type of abuse. His aggression as predictable and the severity of her victimization were random.

Brittany, Ann, and Aaliyah commonly experienced physical abuse. Ann expressed fear for hers and her partner's life. In effect, she had altered her behavior to limit the frequency and severity of IPV:

I was trying to protect myself whenever I hit back but it is pointless to even hit back because he hits harder. I hit back just to show him I'm tired of it basically. I would want to pick up something and hit him with it to tell you the truth. Like, I swear, I would probably be in jail or in prison right now. I don't want to hurt him because that's what I really feel like I would do, is hurt him. (Ann, participant 2)

Fearing for her life as well, Susie left her emotionally violent marriage. However, months later, Susie's husband assaulted her after a scheduled visit with their children. She described her

partner punching her repeatedly. Therefore, Susie noted that she used a weapon in response to resist her husband's physical strength. Brittany and Aaliyah's victimization entailed constant physical and sexual assaults within a context of coercive control. Brittany's abuse remained consistent. In contrast, Aaliyah's abuse escalated from minor abuse such as slapping, pushing, and shoving to extreme physical and sexual assault.

Some participants performed physical resistance regularly, while others had only used physical violence one time. Brittany and Susie hit to impede their partners' physical force. For example, Brittany swung her arms and slapped her partner's hands to push him away and prevent injury. Susie proudly described her performance of IPV:

I finally crawled to an axe handle under my bed. So, I grabbed it and decided to play major league baseball. I was aiming for his head, but I missed. (Susie, participant 3)

Ann and Aaliyah performed physical aggression on multiple occasions. Ann resisted during nearly half of her partner's attacks. Ann imagined that she would resist more often if hitting him back did not increase the severity of her injuries. Ann described the severity of a fight:

Fights in the club [bar fights] start with him throwing a drink in my face. One time, we were in the club and I walked to the bathroom. And then, I don't know if this other guy said something or was looking at me. I tried to protect myself when I hit back, but it is pointless to even hit back because he hits harder. After I hit, he made my face look like something in the movies, deformed. I still have bruises and scratches dug on me. (Ann, participant 2)

Nevertheless, Ann proceeded to fight as a form of protection. When she attempted to block a punch, her partner controlled and rejected her resistance. The duration of her victimization and severity of injuries also increased following any display of resistance.

It was common for participants to resist when they believed victimization was unacceptable. Ann was not as likely as her partner was to hit. For example, Ann explained how

she covered her face and sometimes scratched or tried to slap the partner's arms down when IPV occurred in public. Ann says:

Before, I would slap and kick or do the same things he was doing to me, but it didn't get him off of me. I didn't want to hit him much because when I hit him, he just hit me harder. (Ann, participant 2)

Conversely, Aaliyah hit back each time her partner attacked. Although Aaliyah was pregnant during each attack, she was less concerned about being injured. She made her own judgments regarding the amount of violence that was reasonable during resistance. She performed a full range of severity, from slapping to using objects to inflict injury. If Aaliyah was able to grab his neck, she used a chokehold to strangle him. Initially, when her partner hit, Aaliyah's goal was to end the fight as soon as possible:

I remember the first time. He pushed me and pushed me. So, I pushed him back and that was pretty much it on the first time. I told him, 'don't mess with me because I'm not the one.' And the next time, he kicked me out of the door and I turned around and socked him in his face. He didn't do anything back because I knocked him over when I socked him in his face. And, it was all over general stuff like cleaning the house, or why he hasn't been home for 3 days, or I'm pregnant and can't eat; just general things like that was what it would all start over. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

Aaliyah experienced a cumulative impact of multiple victimization experiences such as a history of child sexual abuse, adult sexual assault, and physical abuse by a partner as an adult.

According to Campbell and Soeken (1999), repeated instances of forced sex and physical victimization increase both the severity and frequency of a victim's responses to IPV. Unlike her partner, Aaliyah never continued to hit when her partner was physically unable to fight back.

### *6.3.3 Injury during resistance*

Women in this study performed IPV and were victims of ongoing victimization.

Although the partners experienced some injury, participants were more likely to experience injury when they fought back. Of the participants who performed VR, Susie and Aaliyah demonstrated the most relentless forms of physical aggression. Susie and her partner were both

injured and he was hospitalized following the event. Aaliyah was also likely to injure her partner. Although women who resisted did not lack fighting experiences, their hardest punches typically did not have the same impact as those thrown by their abusive partners (Saunders 1996:50). Instead, Aaliyah strangled her partner until visible marks were present and he was nearly unconscious. Compared to other women who performed VR, Aaliyah experienced a higher risk of sustaining severe injuries during domestic assaults.

Although participants attempted to hit back, size differences attributed to the increased risk of the safety of for each participant. Partners of battered women often have the ability to dominate these victims physically (Ooms 2006:3). For that reason, most of the partners' injuries did not exceed the participants. Brittany's partner struck her frequently leaving few signs of the attack. During more severe attacks, she had bruises that were easy for her to hide. Brittany remembered removing what she believed to be chunks of his skin from her fingernails. Her eyes were nearly sealed shut from his punches and she could feel swelling and bruises. However, Brittany could not see her injuries until a week later. Similarly, when Ann resisted, she did not injure her partner because the few punches and slaps that land were not likely to cause injury. Susie, however, resorted to using a weapon to resist:

He put his arm up and I broke both of his arms. I think they were both broken in several places because every time I swung, he put an arm up and I cracked the one. He put the other one up and I cracked that one too. I was getting ready to really wear him out and the cops came. (Susie, participant 3)

IT victims were significantly more likely to have suffered an injury and to have suffered post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, disruption of daily activities. They were also more likely to have left their partner because of violence (Johnson 1999:7). Research finds that exposure to multiple types of trauma may affect a victim's rate of recovery from subsequent traumatic events (Follette et al. 1996:33). In this study, levels of trauma-specific symptoms were

significantly related to the type of victimization experienced. Susie experienced trauma without her partner having to resort to physical or controlling aggression; her partner used intimidation to traumatize Susie. This finding is consistent with research on battered women's syndrome by Walker (1979).

Victimization of women was more common for participants who performed VR than women who performed any other types of IPV. Brittany was not likely to experience severe injuries. However, she said, "Minor bleeding has occurred so often that I carry items from a first aid kit in my purse." Brittany confessed multiple experiences of physical abuse in the following excerpt:

I have been blind-side punched in my nose for no reason, leaving massive swelling and two black eyes. I have been choked until I cannot breathe for going out with my friends without permission. I have been stomped to the ground, kicked, and locked in the closet as punishment for answering his telephone. He's punched my head into the glass of the car window over and over again because he thought I was not listening. (Brittany, participant 1)

During at least one account of physical violence, Brittany, Ann, Susie, and Aaliyah captured an identical theme, "I cannot believe it is possible for my face to look like this." Ann described extreme injuries:

He hit me like it was professional boxing. It was real bad hitting. It was not like a slap. I had scratches all dug on me. Look, [shows scar tissue on her arms and neck] I still have the bruises on me now. (Ann, participant 2)

Ann and Aaliyah were the most likely to experience noticeable bodily injury during each instance of IPV. At any given time, Ann's partner choked or punched her until her face is left disfigured.

## CHAPTER 7: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES AND SCV

Studies on IPV refer to SCV as "conflict-oriented violence" or abuse that arises solely from disagreements in the relationship (Johnson and Ferraro 2000, Bradbury et al. 2001). SCV

occurs when one or both partners use non-controlling physical aggression during a physical dispute. SCV is not committed as a way of controlling the other person and it is not likely for the victim to feel threatened by their partner. Johnson and Ferraro (2000:949) report that SCV is performed mutually and during conflicting situations where one partner feels privileged. SCV usually occurs one time, or infrequently, but studies show that cycles of SCV occur as well (Johnson and Leone 2005).

Family violence studies tend to argue that SCV is the most common type of IPV performed by both men and women. Family violence theorists working with samples dominated by SCV have argued that theories of interpersonal conflict, not those on controlling behavior, must be central in an analysis (Johnson 2005). In this study, the theoretical framework of SCV differed from the analysis of VR, IT, and MVC because those participants who hit were violently aggressive solely in response to family conflict.

Susie, Sarah, Veronica, and Debra performed physical abuse that occurred when specific conflict-oriented situations escalated to violence. In their analysis of the Canadian Violence against Women Survey, Macmillan and Gartner (1999:954) find that “SCV is more likely to occur in cohabiting relationships.” In the current study, Sarah and Veronica, cohabiting partners, experienced patterns of IPV that were applicable to Johnson’s interpretation of SCV; both Susie and Debra were married to their partners. They both experienced violence motivated by conflict and control. As matters of conflict multiplied, Debra and her partner displayed excessive measures of physical abuse and coercive control that did not neatly fit into SCV, but rather correlated with tenets of MVC. As explained in the analysis of VR, Susie’s partner performed non-controlling physical violence, yet also demonstrated mild patterns of coercive control. Susie’s experiences of IPV were consistent with a mixture of criteria in VR and SCV.

This analysis situates participant experiences of SCV into four themes: (1) immediate context of aggression and control, (2) broader context of aggression and control, (3) non-controlling behavior, and (4) domestic abuse. The themed topics in this analysis are also present in studies on family violence and research on patterns of situational conflict in intimate relationships (Bradbury et al. 2001, Miller and White 2004).

Some participant experiences of SCV were similar, but the context and specific details regarding conflict differed. These experiences often interacted to shape multiple dimensions, or intersectionality of IPV experienced. The themed analysis of SCV also discerned the distinctiveness of each participant experience. By looking at each theme separately, the analysis did not capture each participant experiences from beginning to end. However, the four themes identified patterns of participant experiences that were subsumed within the boundaries of SCV.

This chapter explores conflict-oriented social interactions that spawned non-controlling, physical aggression. It provides an understanding of how couples acted out hostility when trying to resolve conflict or in defense of their differing goals. The current conceptualization of SCV-conflict is consistent with the interpretation of marital conflict in Bradbury et al. (2001:59), which is defined as “social interactions in which the spouses hold incompatible goals.” Consistent with Bradbury et al., goals did not need to be conscious and/or articulated by either spouse. In fact, the goals were specific disagreements such as disputes regarding what one was allowed to do. Goals were also general such as how much independence each partner had. I supported the notion that conflict arose when one partner pursued a goal or talked about pursuing a goal, but in doing so, interfered with the goals of the other partner. Hence, conflict-oriented IPV is violence that arose as a result of these incompatibilities. Similar examinations of

relationship conflict are present in research on family violence, marital conflict, and feminist studies on conflict theory (Straus 1980; Bradbury et al. 2001).

As suggested in other studies on conflict and IPV, there is little reason to assume that all couple conflict occurs in similar settings (Swan and Snow 2006; Simpson et al. 2007). To grasp the immergence of conflict perceived by each participant, this section assesses the immediate context such as relationship history and emotional responses. This section also examines the broader context of SCV such as cultural history of violence and other external motivations.

## 7.0 Immediate context, aggression, and control

A wide spectrum of conflict occurred within the “immediate context” of SCV. By examining the immediate or situational context of IPV, this section simultaneously explores each partner’s motivations to perform IPV. The immediate context shaped how participants and their partners defined both aggression and control (non-controlling violence), and influenced how each partner responded to SCV. The following types of relationship conflict were present for Susie, Sarah, Veronica, and Debra: substance abuse, financial stability, trust, and child abuse. Some were experienced by multiple participants, while other types of conflict were unique to only one participant.

### 7.0.1 *Substance abuse*

In this study, partner’s substance abuse was a common predictor of SCV. Moreover, participants were likely to associate drugs or alcohol with IPV contingent upon factors such as their partners’ quantity and lack of control, pre-existing violent tendencies, and attitudes regarding stressful circumstances (Galvani 2004:362).

Debra, Sarah, and Susie reported that their partners were confident about their degree of self-control while intoxicated or under the influence. Supposedly, partners accepted scenarios

regarding their violence, but were likely to believe the participants had provoked their behavior.

After episodes of drug use and heavy drinking, partners were often unable to recall previous violent episodes and other events leading to their conduct. Sarah described a similar circumstance:

When he finally wakes up and comes down into the living room. He says ‘good morning, you want any breakfast? What’s going on? Are you mad with me?’ And, I was like, after last night? You went way too far. He says, ‘what are you talking about?’ So, I started reminding him of everything that went down. He was like, ‘I did that? What? Man, I am so sorry!’ Then, he says, ‘I’m sure I just reacted. I would never do anything like that to you.’ (Sarah, participant 5)

Several studies in the literature show that drugs and alcohol can induce a temporary, reversible, and dose-graded amnesia (Steele and Josephs 1990), and have substantial effects on short-term processing and retention of information (Erblich and Earleywine 1995). These findings are consistent with research on induced myopia, which states that alcohol decreases attention capacity and reduces the range of cues that are attended. Steele and Joseph (1990) submit that alcohol limits the degree to which items are encoded for recall. Their findings suggest that although alcohol impairs memory, it does not alter feeling-of-knowing judgments or confidence judgments about retrieved memories.

After drinking excessively, partner behavior was also antisocial and distinctly abnormal. Sarah and Veronica depicted their partner’s displays of physical aggression while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Veronica voiced her account of an experience following her partner’s drug use:

He needed to go down to the VA [Department of Veteran Affairs], but I had somewhere else to go. He got mad [because she ignored him]. I was just driving where I had to be, paying attention to the road. Then, out of nowhere, he just backhanded me on the side of my face. Me and the kids just looked at him, but I kept driving. (Veronica, participant 6)

Moreover, for Debra and Veronica, there was no common behavior attributed to the partner’s social drinking. Even when sober, partners acted as maladjusted individuals with tendencies to

respond aggressively during conflict. Conflict actually influenced behavioral patterns of the partners of Debra, Susie, and Sarah.

Emotional abuse tactics were also performed when partners became intoxicated.

Nonetheless, when intoxicated and sober, Debra and Sarah's partners experienced personality shifts and became violent. Debra described her husband's drinking patterns:

I considered him an alcoholic, but that's my opinion. He didn't drink during the week. We're talking on the weekends, like two six packs of beer or more per day nonstop from Friday night until Sunday. (Debra, participant 7)

Correspondingly, studies that attempt to measure acute alcohol use find that domestic violence is not directly linked to drinking (Leonard and Quigley 1999); the current sample and relative findings indicated that alcohol-related conflict rather than the level of alcohol consumption are the more relevant factor to consider (Caetano et al. 2000, Cunradi, Caetano, and Schafer 2002:498).

As per alcohol-induced conflict, Debra affirmed her acceptance of physiological and disinhibiting effects of alcohol performed by her husband. Parallel with Susie and Veronica, Debra did not fully attribute her partner's aggression to drinking; in contrast, Brittany and Sarah affirmed a direct association between IPV and substance abuse. Rather than intertwine the two factors, Debra testified that alcohol augmented his tenacity to instigate and amplified his rage regarding random cases of dissatisfaction and their inability to develop a consensus. Debra blamed her husband for his behavioral choices when alcohol abuse occurred. Galvani (2004) offers a complementary analysis using the *responsible disinhibition model* to explain how the context of alcoholism can heighten two culturally male and culturally tolerated behaviors, heavy drinking and violent behavior. As demonstrated by Debra's partner, Galvani (2004:364)

confirms that alcohol has disinhibiting effects, but it is the individual's choice how to behave under its influence because alcohol does not remove personal agency.

### *7.0.2 Financial instability*

Another common form of conflict was financial instability. Financial instability was directly associated partners' addictions. For Susie, the husband's income was the primary source of revenue; hence, drug spending depleted the family income.

All the pieces started to fall into place; the behavior, the syringes, the condoms, the couple times money was missing, the strange phones. He was taking checkbooks out of the box and writing checks out for 5, 6, and \$700 that I didn't know about. Then, I get a phone call and the bank manager tells me that that I got a \$2,000 debt because all my checks bounced, the mortgage, electric, car payments, car insurance, everything. (Susie, participant 3)

Debra, Sarah, and Veronica declared themselves as breadwinners by default. Their partners exhausted income on gambling, drugs, or alcohol:

He would mess them [jobs] up. He would get that check, go to his family's house, have gambling night, lose all his money, get mad, not show up to work, and get fired. (Sarah, participant 5)

Money was a symbol of success, power, and control. However, money issues also led to violence.

Conflict surrounding much male to female perpetrated IPV in relationships was also associated with the partner's patterns of unemployment and failed contributions to household expenses. Caetano et al. (2005) also acknowledges a prevalence of male to female perpetrated IPV among Black couples in which the man is unemployed. Participants and their partners were likely to argue about financial goals. Correspondingly, participants mentioned disputes regarding limitations of their financial stability due to unemployment and failed contributions of their partners. Sarah explained financial conflict and her refusal to share since her partner did not contribute financially:

That is my house and everything is mine. He was working off and on. In the three years that we dated, he had at least a total of 15 to 20 jobs and that's not an exaggeration. He would work, get that good check, go to his family's house, have gambling night, lose all his money, get mad, not show up to work, get fired, and go get another job. He worked jobs from a pharmaceutical technician to mailing clerk at a law firm. He had all the potential in the world, but his addictions and his problems set him back. So, I paid for everything in the house. He was just living there as far as I was concerned. (Sarah, participant 5)

These conditions are consistent with research in Vogler (2005:3) that identifies financial decision-making as a causal pathway leading to violence for cohabiting couples. Vogler describes how nontraditional uses of money cause relationship conflict:

We enter the labor market as individuals who are in some sense deemed to 'own' the money we have earned. It is ours and we are seen as having a legitimate right to both have more say over how money is used and to have more money for our own use. Money is a vehicle for unconscious emotional dynamics around control and dependency.

For example, the lack of financial sharing in the relationship of Sarah enhanced the emotional and deeply symbolic salience of money.

### *7.0.3 Lacking trust*

Trust, challenged by infidelity, past dishonesty, and disloyalty, was another common type of family conflict and a common predictor of SCV. When the participants or their partners hit each other, their violence existed within the context of disputes about cheating. The partner attacked Susie after he accused her of committing adultery prior to their separation, which prompted the violent attack. Debra's partner accused her of cheating because the construction company employed her as a construction flagpole attendant, a coveted position and one rarely appointed to a woman in this male-dominated occupation. Sarah's partner was unable to forgive her infidelity in past relationships. Sarah offered a scenario to describe high levels of mistrust and conflict:

In all my other relationships, when I cheated, those people trusted me and now I'm in this situation where someone doesn't trust me. When we are out and he is drinking, it gets even worse. One night, he was obviously drunk. He had had been looking for me. He says, 'you were probably somewhere in this club whoring around.' The last time I checked, he was dancing on the

floor with a girl like he didn't have a girlfriend. He called me every explicit name under the sun. (Sarah, participant 5)

As hypothesized in research on personality and relationship experiences, negative interpersonal interactions such as rejecting intimacy and arguments about trust result in high levels of conflict (Robins, Caspi, and Moffitt 2002). In this study, arguments also arose because of infidelity or disloyalty. Partners allegedly second-guessed the participants' integrity and behavior. Sarah and Debra were often the aggressors in physical violence attributed to their partners' lack of trust. Sarah relayed the statement, "He acts like he doesn't trust me."

He was invading my privacy and it was a little weird for me because in all the situations where I did cheat, those people didn't go through things. Now, I'm in this situation where someone doesn't trust me. I'm not doing anything but trying to make what we have work. (Sarah, participant 5)

Debra, Susie, and Sarah expressed their failure in understanding why the partner perceived them as cheaters. Veronica declared that her partner was cheating, Debra's partner had been dishonest in the past, or and Sarah's partner was unwilling to forgive her past experiences of infidelity. In response, Debra and Sarah's partners claimed they were emotionally disconnected from their previous partners. Susie's husband denied any disloyalty.

DeSteno and Salovey (1996) propose that jealousy depends on the context of individual beliefs concerning the difference between sexual and emotional infidelity. In this study, the emotionally violent responses resembled patterns of male-to-female jealousy offered in evolutionary psychology research. Sarah expressed feelings of alienation from her partner because he found fault in her because of jealousy, which led to confrontation and arguments. Sarah described her frustration:

He wasn't the type that would be like calling me up to say, 'where are you or what you doing,' but he was the type that would go through my telephone or call me [derogatory] names when he thought I was lying. (Sarah, participant 5)

Although findings are inconsistent, most studies argue that men are especially bothered by cues indicative of possible sexual infidelity because they possess greater sensitivity than women (Buss et al. 1992). Widerman and Allgeier (1993) find that men are more likely than women are to place value on a woman's sexual involvement with another man; women are more likely than men are to place value on emotional intimacy in response to involvement with another woman.

Another source of conflict was lack of loyalty. Debra and Veronica maintained that their partners had accused them of cheating to instigate an argument, or to persuade the participant to leave the home and relationship. Veronica offered an example of her own violent response to her boyfriend's transition to a homosexual lifestyle. During IPV, Veronica expressed her frustrations living as a heterosexual woman dating a gay man; she was a financially unstable mother residing with the father of her children and his other partner. The emotional response displayed by Veronica and her partner are parallel with findings in Bozett (1982), which entail in-depth interviews on disclosing homosexuality, partner responses, and interactional effects among heterogeneous couples in heterosexual marriages. As documented by Bozett, Veronica's homosexual partner disrupted the relationship when he was unsuccessful disclosing his sexuality.

#### *7.0.4 Child abuse*

There were many links between domestic violence and abuse of the children of the participants. IPV had long-term consequences to the victim and all family members involved. As verbal abuse and, or physical episodes became more severe or more frequent, there was an increased likelihood that children who were involved would eventually become victims. Child victimization was a common source for family conflict. Veronica and Debra claimed that their children had experienced neglect or been threatened by their partners; Sarah and Veronica's

children had experienced attacks and unintentional injuries. Even when Susie and Debra's children were not the intended targets, they were at-risk.

Studies find that children exposed to violence are likely to have both externalizing or aggressive behaviors, internalizing and fearful behaviors (Mitchell and Anglin 2009). In this study, Sarah and Susie were primarily concerned about long-term emotional effects of family violence. Susie and Veronica, participants who had experienced previous child victimization, believed their partners recreated the culture of violence. They urged that their children learned directly from the actions of their parents. Veronica said:

He [son] would literally look at me and tell me, 'well, I'm gonna rip your face off.' But, that is not cute, it's scary. It starts from childhood. I don't want my five-year-old coming in my room trying to stab me. I don't know if it's genetic or if it's because of the arguing he has seen between me and his father. (Veronica, participant 6)

Fear of their children's safety motivated Debra, Susie, Sarah, and Veronica to leave their intimate relationships. Susie stated the following, but Sarah and Debra also articulated the idea:

I don't necessarily think it [violence] causes them [children] to be a violent person, but I think it makes them susceptible to violence. It becomes an acceptable part of their lives. It's almost like a culture. If parents argue or act disrespectful toward each other, their children are likely to be that way during their adult relationships. (Susie, participant 3)

Throughout the duration of each violent relationship, participants also exposed their children to multiple effects of IPV:

Two people were trying to break in the house. This guy was threatening to shoot me and my kids because my husband owed them money. (Susie, participant 3)

Furthermore, on multiple occasions, Veronica found no reasonable explanation for her son's physical injuries. She described a potential incident of child abuse:

I grabbed his [youngest son's] cup to take him something to drink, but he had this knot sticking out from his head. I don't know exactly how it happened, because there was nothing else in the apartment that could hurt him like that. (Veronica, participant 6)

Children also witnessed severe violence and sometimes experienced intentional and unintentional injuries as described in the below account:

He pulled the car door and literally climbed over her [toddler]. He was trying to choke me and rage came over me. I was six months pregnant and daughter is smashed between the middle the front seats. I just throw a punch and I hit him and he just swings back without a reaction hitting me. (Sarah, participant 5)

Ultimately, Susie and Veronica became terrified, leaving the relationship when they believed their children were at risk of victimization. Susie commented:

I think it terrified them to see it, because he ended up locking them in the bedroom, in the closet, because they kept trying to come out and help me. I'm talking about a 3 and a 6-year-old saying, 'daddy, stop beating my mommy.' Because they're hearing me scream as I'm getting the heck beat out of me. (Susie, participant 3)

#### 7.1 Broader context, aggression, and control

Each type of conflict reported by Susie, Sarah, Veronica, and Debra was subject to an immediate dynamic of cause and effect. While most of their conflict was situational, violent outcomes also reflected participant responses to stressful circumstance. Participants reported a range of communication responses and violent outcomes for both themselves and their partners. Most participants described relationships having poor resolutions to problems and emotional distance after problem arguments and discussions (Feldman and Ridley 2000). This analysis of SCV recognized issues of conflict, partner responses, and the larger relationships between past events and contemporaneous issues as they unfolded over time. This section widened the scope of the investigation to establish a broader context of couples' motivations for non-controlling emotional and physical violence. The most common of all broader experiences was history of violence and issues of gender inequality. Multiple partners experienced some situations, while other forms of conflict were unique to only one participant.

### *7.1.1 History of violence*

A large body of literature notes that exposure to violence is associated with long-term health problems, increased risk of re-victimization, and intergenerational violence. Consequently, participants in this study voiced ways that their relationship conflict reflected past victimization and exposure to violence. Participants experienced family violence (Debra), child abuse (Debra, Veronica, and Susie), molestation (Susie, Veronica), and previous experiences of domestic violence (Sarah, Debra, and Veronica). One participant also disclosed the partner's history of family violence and child abuse (Sarah).

Past observations of parental violence and childhood physical abuse often influence the use and experiences of violent behavior (Caetano et al. 2005:103). In some cases, physical aggression becomes a tradition and a continuous cycle of violence in the adult lives of those who experience a history of violence. Three participants recalled child victimization dating back to adolescence (Susie at 5 years old, Debra at 7 years old, Veronica at 12 years old). Susie's IPV was only one of many violent episodes experienced during her lifetime:

I was five years old when it [sexual assaults] first began. I tried to stab my father to death when I was 14 [during last occurrence of molestation]. I tried to tell my mother. She told the police she didn't know. So, they arrested her also. They felt she was just as responsible as he was. I ran away from home; had a nervous breakdown. I stayed in counseling until I was about 19. (Susie, participant 3)

Participants also experienced ongoing victimization that was emotionally traumatizing, sometimes involving their entire known social network. Veronica and Debra carried on without supportive, nurturing relationships to help repair or prevent damaged parent-child relationships. Susie said, "Even after a victim of child abuse obtains counseling or support, the trauma is often inescapable."

When exposed to further violence, participants were also subject to perform violence that was socially learned and familiar. Susie offered thoughts about a similar violent approach that she applied during her only adult experience of domestic violence:

I probably would have beaten him until he stopped moving. When you're that afraid and someone has beat the living [silence] out of you, you're thinking survival at that point. So, if they're left standing, you're like no, no, no. (Susie, participant 3)

Debra and Veronica, other victims of child abuse, were also exposed to family violence. In this next example, violence was simultaneously aligned with the participant's past and current perception what it means to be "a strong woman," and was her only real-life depiction of female empowerment:

My mother just wanted the best for us. She would have different male friends and we would see where they would have arguments that escalated. And she had this one boyfriend that tied us to the bunk bed, made us take off all our clothes, and beat us. I kept seeing that constantly, my mother, different relationships, arguments, fighting, and her steadily striving to take care of us alone. (Debra, participant 7)

Debra and her husband experienced similar patterns of IPV:

He was walking through the house ranting and raving, cursing, and calling me names; picking more so than anything because I was not responding to him. And right then and there, I said to him, if you say another word to me, that's it. He told me to shut the [silence] up. And I pushed the table clear across the room and I jumped up and I just started attacking him. It escalated so far that my son was grabbing onto me because he was afraid. He grabbed my son and picked my son up and I was trying to grab my son from him and we were literally tussling with my son. (Debra, participant 7)

Debra's patterns of violence were associated with relatively clear and distinct lifestyles, social networks, and values, which seemed to reinforce the violence pattern. Such experiences provided insight into the problem of understanding violent partners.

### 7.1.2 *Gender inequality*

Some causes of violence were influenced by the way society is organized: for instance, domestic violence was also gender-based, serving by intention and effect to perpetuate male power and control. Atkinson et al. (2005:1139) apply *gendered resource theory* to explain the

effects of relative resources in employment, education, and income, and husbands' traditional gender ideologies (Kaukinen 2004). In this study, Debra and Sarah experienced and perpetrated IPV that was motivated by the partners' discontent with their share of relative income. These findings are consistent with research arguing that, as per the standards of masculine culture, financial contributions are important means for the construction of traditional masculinity (Tichenor 1999). Hence, aggressive partners were more likely to perform IPV when they earned less pay than their partners (MacMillian and Gartner 1999).

Sarah and Debra claimed that their partners' masculine identity was threatened by their financial status. Sarah said, "He always complains that flaunting my money threatens his manhood." Debra was disappointed by her partner's violent responses, but appeared to understand that socially accepted gender roles differ widely between different cultures:

Their [Black men residing in the South] lifestyle is just living for the weekend, partying on the weekends and different things like that. Their sense of values really is more so the woman being at home. (Debra, participant 7)

When the partners were financially dependent upon participants, their roles in decision-making often became limited. For example, Sarah was disturbed by her partner's lack of self-sufficiency. She attributed his violent conduct to their sharing of the title, "head of household."

In this case, family role conflict and strain materialized:

In the beginning, I didn't want to have any control. In my eyes, he was the man and he needed to be a man, like a man is supposed to be the head of the household. I would say, 'I have no problem sharing our roles and responsibilities and letting you take the lead as long as you're a leader.' (Sarah, participant 5)

White and Klein (2002) argue that women may opt to take over the role of "breadwinner" because the partner's financial contributions are inconsistent and sometimes nonexistent. Sarah's partner refused to share paid and unpaid caring of the children and household tasks. She stated, "If he cannot make the rules, he will not participate." These findings support a hypothesis from

Kaukinen (2004) that men who lack access to economic resources, as compared to their wives, reassert their control through a variety of emotional abuse tactics.

Susie exerted control in her relationship by leaving the relationship when her husband no longer met her expectations. The findings are consistent with research on gendered expectations in Silverstein and Auerbach (1999) where wives report that they leave the marriage when their husbands no longer meet their expectations for child development, finances, and the relationship. Prior to the violent shifts in her partner's behavior, Susie anticipated that her husband would remain loyal to his "fixed" social roles and caretaking responsibilities, which resembled Silverstein and Auerbach's proposed essentialist perspective on traditional nuclear family. Consequently, the first acts of hostility occurred in their marriage when Susie's husband overlooked, or in Susie's words, "abandoned his responsibilities." Instantaneously, she became irritated and argumentative, issued verbal attacks, and threatened to leave the relationship. Susie's patterns of behavior were no longer submissive.

Relationship conflict also stemmed from differing perspectives on gendered occupations. For instance, emotional responses to conflict and coercive violence were prompted by Debra's participation in the blue-collar labor force as a construction worker:

I got a job working on construction as a flag girl. It was only five females and all men. I thought he was all for it, but he was angry because I was always around a bunch of men on the job. Everything started changing. His attitude started changing. (Debra, participant 7)

According to Goldenhar et al. (1998:21), women working in construction jobs are likely to experience sexual harassment such as unsolicited and unwanted verbal or physical sexual behaviors and nonsexual, demeaning, and discriminatory behaviors. Debra's husband responded to her employment in a similar fashion:

He would call me names in front of my co-workers and say, 'you're with all those whoremongers. These were men that just wanted me to be out there on the job so they could sleep with me and

different things like that. And these are things he would be exploding about and it wasn't the truth. They were just work people. (Debra, participant 7)

Debra experienced emotional abuse such as jealousy, social isolation and control, property destruction, financial control, put-downs, and, or threats. This finding is consistent with abuse reported in Kaukinen (2004:458). Debra's partner continued to initiate conflict until she secured employment that was conducive to his perceived idea of a "culturally acceptable" lifestyle:

I was working around females and males, it wasn't outside, it was a set time, and it wasn't those long hours. He appreciated that. We were actually really happy because he felt like we were going to get our life on track. We had money, but I could manage my responsibilities at home a lot better. (Debra, participant 7)

Hence, her husband's response reverted when she secured a new position and earned lower wages.

## 7.2 Situational conflict

This section explores female perpetrated, non-controlling physical aggression as it occurred during situational conflict. Most studies on intimate terrorist abuse indicate that women aggress primarily due to self-defense or fear (Johnson 2006). Those studies address women's victimization rather than their physical violence. On the other hand, studies on SCV are designed to be gender neutral, which should allow for the study of female perpetrated physical aggression. This assessment of SCV examined the context of violence, which reflected women's motives to commit IPV. The context of IPV was critical because research on female violence needed to move beyond the victim-framework. Instead, this section offers explanations that regard women who have been the aggressors in violence relationships.

Each participant experience entailed an identifiable pattern of abusive, non-controlling, and, or conflict-oriented behaviors. One purpose of SCV was to describe how the participant expressed, acted out, and affirmed the validity of her viewpoint. For example, sometimes Sarah

“desired to be right.” When her partner disagreed with a viewpoint, both performed occasional outbursts to prove a point. When verbal abuse failed, Sarah used control tactics to mute her partner’s violent responses. Like Sarah’s response, Susie and Debra were “frustrated” by unhealthy conditions in their relationships. In some cases, aggressive dialogue surfaced when participants blamed their partners for these unhealthy conditions. While some “refrained” from violence to settle family conflict, others behaved aggressively or sought out revenge when the relationship was not working out. When they lost total control of the situation, they may have had no other choice but to “defend” against an abusive partner. The following specific patterns were offered to describe participants’ displays of aggressive behavior: wanting to be right, using control to resist, becoming frustrated by unhealthy conditions, refraining from violence to minimize anger, and defending themselves against a partner’s physical violence and emotional abuse.

### *7.2.1 Control of decision-making*

In many cases, couples became violently aggressive in the process of household decision-making when they engaged in non-cooperative bargaining. It was common for this type of violence to stem from several areas of conflict that continued to be unresolved; consistent with findings in Johnson and Leone (2005:325), one or more partners in this study regularly chose to resort to violence in the context of those conflicts:

We have this drug and addiction piece [partner’s addiction], but we have this trust piece [partner questioning her sexual loyalty]. I think agitation on his side comes with my questioning him or telling him what he should do. I’ve stayed in the relationship and we’ve tried the best we can to work out the conflict (Sarah, participant 5)

A greater extent of conflict in participant relationships pertained to partners’ perceived undesirable behavior. Susie, Sarah, and Debra often applied dissimilar philosophies to regulate the partner’s negative behavior performed. Debra and her partner had fights regularly and rarely

reached a consensus. Partners were also likely to engage in behaviors that were inconsistent with those performed by the participants:

Arguing is normal but it would be more embarrassing to me for him to be doing that [slap her] in front of my co-workers. (Debra, participant 7)

He just started staying out until God knows when. He'd go out on Saturday night and come home Sunday at some point in time. (Susie, participant 3)

When they get together, everybody's drinking and drugging it up. It's payday. They sit down at a table and start gambling their money away. When people start leaving, they get upset and then they always fight over it. (Sarah, participant 5)

Often times, participants had specific goals that were not fulfilled because their partner was preoccupied. Participants believed these goals were central to the financial success or health of their families. For example, convinced that her decision-making process was not faulty, Sarah said, "achieve these goals, or else." The "or else" did not always work in her partner's favor. Sarah relinquished her partner's ownership of family property and constantly devalued both his self-worth and masculine identity:

So after a certain point, it was like okay, if you're not going to take initiative and do what you need to do, then I'm going to set the guidelines and the standards in 'my' house because 'I' pay for everything. It's all mine! I made that clear. (Sarah, participant 5)

When partners failed to respond at a pace that was conducive to the family plans, participants also reasserted their power in the relationship. Each time her partner failed, Sarah became furious, responding aggressively or violently to his underachievement. Conversely, Susie was embarrassed by her partner's conduct, and ashamed of her own self for participating in such a relationship. Although she resented his decisions, Susie opted to express anger silently while preparing an exit strategy.

As supported in research on responses to conflict, distress often results from participants' aversive and ineffectual responses to conflict (Koerner and Jacobson 1994). In this study, when confronted with a conflicting circumstance, the participant's initial response usually included

nagging, complaining, distancing, or becoming violent. In effect, the partner became violent as both contributed to and maintained a coercive cycle of violence. Debra and Sarah illustrated a continuous progression of violent behavior involving antagonistic comments, arguments, destruction of property, and physical violence.

### *7.2.2 Control of behavior*

On rare occasions, participants deliberately used physical aggression as a form of control over their partners. Control existed in the form of “being in charge” of something: controlling decision-making, intercepting assumed masculine responsibilities, and setting household rules. Sarah and Veronica initiated only a few physical confrontations. Over time, hitting periodically, or yelling profanities and directing insulting statements was no longer effective. Nevertheless, participants began using the legal system as a weapon for defense:

I did a federal offense. I threw court papers away. He was to get out of jail on Christmas Eve. Court papers come in, but I through them in the trash. I didn't want him out of jail. (Veronica, participant 6)

Similarly, Sarah intimidated her partner by threatening to call the authorities if he retaliated physically to contest her belligerent behavior. However, the violence erupted as a response to a particular conflict. As noted in Johnson (1999), while control was the participant's temporary motive, the violence was not enacted in the service of a general interest in controlling her partner. Sarah claimed that use of this method was essential and necessary because every violent argument had resulted in physical violence. Contacting authorities was merely a measure of diminishing her fear in response to his possible retaliation. Sarah suggested that her actions were manipulative, but not controlling. Sarah also alleged that he downplayed her threats and hit her at any rate, even when she issued these warnings. This method of resistance is reported in literature on self-defenders who provoke the difficulty in Dugan et al. (1999).

Sarah and Debra, women who had experienced physical violence in previous relationships, were more likely than others to use physical violence against their intimate partners. When their partners acted aggressively, they let these men know “they were not going to hit without paying for what they were doing.” Debra declared that she had not ever believed in a man handling her in a rough manner; however, after ending the marriage, she continued to re-enter similar relationships.

### 7.2.3 *Frustration*

Women are likely to perform situational violence because they are angry or frustrated by their partner (Follingstad et al. 1991). In this study, communication problems also arose from feelings of frustration with one’s partner. Participants attributed each instance of violence performed to a specific element of conflict. On occasions, deep frustration resulted in an impulsive, violently aggressive response. For Veronica, a violent response was atypical. However, when her partner accused her of cheating, she was extremely angry and frustrated. In response, she drew a weapon and aimed the gun at his head:

I was going to shoot him in his other eye and make him go blind in that eye too but re ran.  
(Veronica, participant 6)

During SCV, conflict is typically a cause and consequence of distress (Bradbury et al. 2001:68). For instance, Debra and Sarah described their relationships as tense and frustrating.

Sarah said:

I think agitation on his side would come with the questioning. ‘Are you drunk, what have you been doing?’ Eventually, I’d say, ‘I’m sick of this. I’m always trying to do for you thinking that I can kill you with kindness and maybe the love will help to win you over and get you back to where you should be like a normal person, but you’re not going to just keep talking to me just any kind of way. (Sarah, participant 5)

As her frustration surmounted, Sarah expressed sentiments of additional grief because her frequent questions agitated her partner.

Embarrassment and regret, two intertwined emotions, were also sources of frustration among participants. Debra was often an aggressor of IPV, but she preferred not to make her violent experiences public information. Given her exposure to family violence, she perceived arguments as normal dialogue, but stated that enacting abuse in the public was a merciless crime. When her partner hit in public, she grew frustrated and decided to take revenge for her humiliation.

Easily frustrated, Debra also expressed disappointment and rage about unhealthy conditions. When faced with obstacles that impeded their progress, Sarah and Veronica also expressed their frustration. Debra and Sarah said:

He came outside, he stood out on the porch, and he said you hoe...like your whorish mammy and I was so aggravated because she was bending over backwards to do the things for him and to accept him. I felt like all of that was violated. (Debra, participant 7)

When they get together, everybody's drinking and drugging it up. It's payday. They sit down at a table and start gambling their money away. When people start leaving, they get upset and then they always fight over it. (Sarah, participant 5)

Money was also a constant source of stress and frustration for Sarah. She judged her partner by the financial successes of their family; Sarah claimed to have no problem with him as long as they were financially stable. While Veronica admitted her struggles with saving money and living pay check to pay check, she also described being frustrated when her partner misused money that she earmarked for bills:

He made me look like a fool in front of my landlord. The landlord was downstairs. I said ma'am, I'll be right back. I went to the machine and instead of there being like \$700. There was \$125 in there. I'm thinking, how am I supposed to go back and let this lady know? Our son was a week and a half old and he had already disappeared the last two or three times a paycheck come in. (Veronica, participant 6)

Although he earned the minimum wage or less, Veronica's frustrations were compounded when he was unable to contribute.

#### 7.2.4 *Minimization*

Participants also employed various tactics to minimize anger. They reported alleviating frustration, minimizing violence, remaining quiet, and downplaying hostility by leaving or asking their partner to leave. In some cases, participants alleged that either alone or together, they made an effort to alleviate frustration or stop the escalation of violence.

Susie and Veronica, who were victimized as children, admitted suppressing their anger and remaining quiet. Although Veronica confirmed her unhappiness, she rarely voiced distress:

We were in the middle of having sex that night and he jumped up and left the room because our roommate came in with a friend. I could grasp from the situation that the roommate and him had been messing around. Either he was jealous because somebody was smoking crack without him or he got mad because he [roommate] brought a man in. I felt very unwanted and very angry, but I would just bite my lip and go to work. That's the only thing I could do. (Veronica, participant 6)

Neither Veronica nor her partner responded violently to the other's violent outbursts. Veronica said:

We were more silent than anything. I wouldn't talk to him. I tried to do what I could to put a smile on his face. The only time any communication had happened was like, 'hey, I'm going to the grocery store.' But as soon as he got the drink in him, the verbal and emotional happened. Then, I just ignored him completely. I honestly didn't know what he was going to do or how he was going to react. (Veronica, participant 6)

Similarly, when the partner was aggressive, Susie also walked away immediately following the verbal attack. Susie noted that she rarely provoked aggressive conduct. Instead, on some occasions, she consoled him:

I was confronting him about his behavior. I was like, 'you're always mean. You're always angry. What's going on?' I wasn't trying to accuse him of anything specific. I wanted to lead him up to at least knowing he could be honest enough to just tell me what it was. I didn't want to say, 'you're cheating on me!' That's why I said to him, 'if you are drinking or whatever it is that you are doing, just tell me what it is.' (Susie, participant 3)

Other participants proclaimed that they refrained from using or minimized the intensity of physical violence committed in the relationship. Sarah downplayed her husband's physical

aggression by claiming that “they” were working to make the situation better. In actuality, she was diligently coaching her partner on ways to self-correct his supposed shortcomings:

We’re just going to do this together and try to figure out the best way to go about fixing and mending our relationship to raise the kids. I told him ‘there’s no way that I can do this again. You really need to get counseling if this is going to work’ and, he was like, ‘I’ll get counseling.’ He never finished his classes. I don’t even think he started them actually. (Sarah, participant 5)

Sometimes, participants were less compromising. They asked the partner to leave for a few days, or they may have left themselves and returned several times before leaving for good.

He had to have taken his [toddler’s] head and rammed him into a door or on the wall. When he did that, we left. We went to a battered women’s shelter, but we went back home after a month. (Veronica, participant 6)

When Veronica returned, she confessed that she needed to monitor her children because her partner did not recognize the severity of the situations due to his drug addiction. Similarly, extreme verbal abuse prompted Sarah to leave her relationship:

I’ve been called every name in the book to the point that it’s just numb to me now. When I hear it, it doesn’t have any effect on me because I’m used to it. He put his hands on me and now he’s wishing death of me. So, what’s the next step? I figured, ‘if I don’t get out of this relationship now, then I probably will be dead.’ (Sarah, participant 5)

Susie’s husband displayed his capacity to do physical damage, and she refused to stay to witness additional violent conduct. He directed anger toward objects, which was a sign of intimidation that did not involve a direct threat:

Somebody punches a hole in the wall and you’ve never seen this person even yell. He wasn’t even a screamer at the time. I was like oh he is really [going crazy]. I was scared. I wasn’t going to say nothing. Stuff like that just makes you nervous. He’s doing that to avoid hitting or he’s doing it to show you that this might be you next time. It’s a definite message in itself. It’s a guaranteed fact. I’m going to be next. (Susie, participant 3)

Since Susie regulated their family finances and set many household rules, she was better able to accumulate money for her departure. Susie secured an apartment promptly and the family court system granted her temporary custody of their children. According to Graham-Kevan and Archer

(2008:542) and Kirkwood (1993), leaving an abusive marriage before the husband's violent behavior progresses is an aggressive, controlling response.

### 7.2.5 *Self-defense*

Swan and Snow (2006) argue that male partners victimize most women who perpetrate violence. In similar cases among women in this study, when the victimization occurred, some women expressed violent and controlling physical aggression, while others were more diplomatic, performing protective responses to IPV. Before Susie detected the drug problem, she admitted that her verbal responses were likely to be “more emotionally insulting or harmful” than the emotional violence performed by her husband. For instance, on one occasion, he asked Susie, “Why did you stay at the supermarket so long?” Susie quickly ended that conversation with a sarcastic response: “you don't even like grocery shopping and now, all of a sudden, you want to know how long it takes me to do the shopping. Get out of my face and find something to do.” As time passed, Susie prepared for his lies and “predictably guilty” behavior, but was furious because she had invested 11 years in this failed marriage. Although Susie depicted tolerant responses to his aggressive mood swings, her comments during the interview clearly pronounced that she would respond uniformly to any type of physical violence acted against her. When her husband attacked, Susie performed a planned retaliation and defended herself against his violent physical aggression. Similar descriptions of planned retaliation are present in Tolman et al. (1996).

Among their study sample, Tsang and Stanford (2007) report that vengeance is positively associated with anxiety and responses to their partner's drug problems, suicidal ideation and stress. Other studies on IPV report that female partners who use retribution are not intimidated or scared in their relationship (Barnett et al. 1997). Similarly, during a violent incident, Debra put

forth a no-nonsense attitude, instantly engaging in 30 to 45 minute long brawls with her partner in response to his hostile verbal abuse.

### 7.3 Domestic abuse and situational violence

Some similarities existed across the range of violence reported by each participant. However, participants' intent or purpose for responding aggressively was likely to differ. As stated earlier, the process of SCV involved an assessment of the participant's history of violence and the context of perceived causes of IPV (Simpson et al. 2007). Consistent with other studies on SCV, this examination of domestic abuse also referenced these contextual variables to provide a complete understanding of the physical, emotional, and verbal abuse performed during SCV (Bradbury et al. 2001:76).

In the analysis of SCV, I did not refer to all forms of aggression as "violence," which is a common way to operationalize IPV in studies on family conflict. Rather than using the same word for different phenomena, multiple concepts offered a better understanding of the severity of violent behavior. The following section describes a range of expressed physical violence and emotional abuse including: harassment, attacks, violent assault, stalking, and IT violence. Harassment was least aggressive and IT violence was the most severe type of aggression performed. A similar classification is offered in Anderson (2008).

#### *7.3.1 Frequency and duration of situational violence*

Simpson et al. (2007) find that acts of situational violence occur at relatively equal rates for women and women. This study's findings on the frequency and duration of SCV confirmed that participants who perpetrate SCV were as likely as their partners to perform physical aggression. However, as noted in Coleman (1980), verbal abuse often escalated into physical abuse in a way that women were more likely to exercise verbal abuse and men were likely to

respond using physical violence. In most cases of SCV, participants alleged that their partners blamed them for the fight. Ultimately, women's expressions of verbal abuse were a common predictor of female-perpetrated and male-female perpetrated IPV. I recommend that more studies on SCV examine factors that affect men's perceptions of women's verbal abuse to better understand its implications.

Each interview included detailed questions about the frequency and consequences of IPV such as: When did the violence first occur? What happened afterwards? Were there other times when your relationship turned violent? Susie's case of IPV was the shortest and least frequent among the segment of women in this study. However, over a span of five months, Susie reported an escalation of aggressive exchanges such as expressions of harassment, frustration, verbal attacks, physical harassment, and a final occurrence of IT violence. Susie recounted two instances when her partner was under the influence, carrying out behavior that was inconsistent with his normal responses to family conflict. She alleged that rather than coming to a consensus, he became instantly frustrated, provoking three arguments that tempted her to respond aggressively. However, she did not respond. On two occasions, Susie responded verbally, but she resisted when her partner performed physical harassment by throwing and breaking their property. Days later, he fixed the property and behaved appropriately. The escalation of violence prompted Susie to leave. After they are separated, Susie's husband initiates IT violence.

Sarah and her partner were more likely to harass and threaten to attack each other than they were to engage in a violent assault. Sarah reported that five out of 10 arguments over a span of three years escalated to physical attacks. After becoming frustrated or angry, each partner initiated the attack at least two times. Consequently, instances of IPV were predictable because each incident involved her partner's addiction. Sarah urged that while she agitated or harassed

him following his intake of alcohol, their most serious attacks occurred approximately 24 hours later.

Physical abuse did not occur frequently, but it was a reoccurring condition for Veronica and her partner. The state of their relationship was by no means healthy during a one to two year spans. Veronica reported more instances of harassment, primarily yelling and name calling, by her partner only while he was under the influence. The harassment increased after Veronica admitted that she had cheated. Over a span of six years, Veronica attacked her partner once and initiated IT violence one time, attempting to shoot and kill him. On separate occasions, the partner attacked Veronica four times and committed one violent assault. Unlike any other participant in this study, Veronica never retaliated when her partner attacked. For that reason, she never performed VR. Veronica believed violence had not escalated because rather than retaliating, she reported abuse to the authorities, which resulted in her partner's arrest. Veronica commented:

There was times where it [physical violence] would go by, and if he wasn't hitting, he was yelling or he was doing it [being violent] emotionally. I wasn't one of them ones that ended up in the hospital. It could have went that way but it didn't. I think from the times that I threw him in jail that might have saved me from going the way [being violently assaulted and abused] I've met other women. (Veronica, participant 6)

Debra and her partner were the most violent among the relationships where occurrences of SCV were present. As conflict multiplied, both acted out toward each other using emotionally hostile abuse, which quickly led to SCV. Over a seven-month period, Debra attested to harassing her partner at minimum, one time per week. She alleged that at least every other day, her partner agitated and annoyed her merely to a point of attacking him. She depicted what it was like "holding in her frustrations just to keep peace." Debra and her partner experienced nearly seven instances of SCV per month; five were attacks and the remaining two were often violent assaults.

Debra was more likely to initiate and end violent assaults. The frequency of their violent acts was more consistent with record performances shown in VR and IT. However, there was no consistent two-dimensional interpretation of aggression and control available in those types to classify Debra's performance.

### *7.3.2 Severity of situational violence*

During SCV, one partner is violent and non-controlling, and the other is either nonviolent or violent, and non-controlling (Johnson 2006). Milardo (1998: 425) reports that SCV performed by either male or female partners is typically not life threatening; violence may also occasionally erupt into more serious episodes, but in most cases, it does not. Milardo argues that cases of SCV relate to personal factors like stress, poor social skills, substance abuse; Simpson et al. (2007) includes frustration, poor problem-solving skills, and arguments that get out of control as distinct patterns of violence that emerge during SCV.

Current research also finds that occurrences of SCV are characterized by relatively infrequent acts of mild-to-moderate aggression such as pushing, shoving, slapping, kicking, and hitting with a fist (Johnson and Leone 2005; Johnson 2006; Simpson et al. 2007); typically, a smaller, but significant sample reports serious SCV such as beatings, or threatening with a gun or knife.

In this study, verbal and psychological aggression were employed as forms of harassment either during or prior to a dispute. They were not examples of physical abuse of which women suffered more frequent and severe injuries; participants declared that verbal and psychological abuse were sometimes more damaging, or were the cause of physical altercations. Examinations of these additional types of aggression were critical to drawing a comprehensive understanding of how and why each partner experienced and performed physical abuse. For example, Sarah

performed behavior that agitated and frustrated her partner. She harassed him by expressing hostile verbal and physical aggression regarding his inability to contribute financially. Debra's acts of verbal harassment included use of coercive language; although she accepted a construction position, her husband allegedly perceived the job threatening to the success of their marriage. The partners of both participants often engaged in aggressive or rude behavior in settings that the women perceived as being inappropriate. Susie's husband harassed her as well. While under the influence, he broke objects, or as perceived by Susie, he hit these objects to threaten her:

The kids broke something. I was like, 'wow, did you have to punch a hole in the wall because they broke something?' We tried to talk about it [his violent behavior] and he snapped out again. So, he punched the cabinet. (Susie, participant 3)

Another form of physical harassment occurred when one partner subjected someone else to threaten or attack the other partner. Sarah described how she gained control in her relationship by threatening to contact authorities even when her partner had not hit her:

In the state of Virginia, you get charged once and they give you the opportunity to take some classes on whatever leads you to do this violence. If he ever got charged with another domestic dispute violent charge within a three-year period, then he would have to do like five years but what that allowed me to do is use that on him a lot. So, when we would get in arguments, I would dare him to hit me and then I would tell him that I would press charges. He knew what that meant. (Sarah, participant 5)

Participants performed some aggressive behaviors repetitively. Debra's partner engaged in continuous patterns of irritating or trying conduct that caused her, a reasonable person, to suffer emotional distress:

Because I worked from like 6 in the morning until like 7 o'clock in the evening and when they would bring me home, which was their time, he would be standing out there at the door hollering and screaming for no reason. (Debra, participant 7)

Debra's partner waited impatiently by the door, sometimes in his underpants, to insult and threaten Debra and her co-workers. Sarah's partner often invaded her privacy, searching through

her telephone logs and monitoring her whereabouts. He often accused her of cheating. Similarly, Veronica reported that she eavesdropped on her partner's conversations with their roommate, who was also his significant other.

Acceptance of one's position as a "stalker" was often contingent upon a dual understanding of acceptable or unacceptable conduct; Veronica did not admit to stalking because she alleged that the unhealthy conditions placed her children in danger because they also resided there. Similarly, Susie and the wives of her husband's co-workers rummaged through their husband's bags, finding syringes, condoms, and drug paraphernalia. They also met secretly to discuss the whereabouts of their husbands, each reaching unfounded conclusions regarding their disloyalty and addiction. Susie said:

I caught him in a lie with another one of his buddies. All three of us, the wives, sat down and had a talk one day. Each one of us confronted each one of them; that was our plan. We knew they were lying, because they were all in it [drug using] together. (Susie, participant 3)

Participants claimed to want to help their partners. However, they also investigated the situation because their partners were unwilling to disclose information. Hence, some stalked their partners unconsciously, or without the intent to aggravate the partner.

An attack is a physical or verbal assault that occurs when the other partner enters the dispute without mutual consent. In this study, most SCV attacks were intentional; some attacks were provoked depending on the context of IPV. For example, Veronica punched her partner after discovering insufficient funds in their family account. Veronica also experienced random attacks when her partner was in search of ready money to purchase drugs. He slapped and pushed her during these attacks. Similarly, already under the influence, Sarah's partner was easily frustrated and attacked when he was displeased with Sarah's demands or suggestions. Fights consisted of mutual pushing, shoving, and scuffling. During attacks, if weapons were

involved, weapon-oriented injuries occurred negligently. In tandem, Debra did not intend on injuring her husband. During another argument, Debra accidentally cut her husband with a knife:

I had the knife in my hand and I told him to stop and to leave me alone. So, he grabbed the blade of the knife and I ended up snatching the knife. The blade cut his four fingers. He got to screaming around the house, 'Oh you cut me! I just looked at him, got the mop bucket, and started cleaning up the blood. (Debra, participant 7)

I define an assault as "violent" when one partner intends to cause serious bodily injury to the other partner. During an example of violent assault, Debra and her partner shove, kick, use strong body punches, and exchange upper body throws. Debra contended that her husband provoked these violent assaults:

No sooner as I get closer to go to the door he would be grabbing my arm and pushing me inside. He was pushing me and I would push him back to push him off of me. We would scream and holler at each other. By the end, the entire interior property would be out of order. His sister in law had to come across the street and stop us from fighting (Debra, participation 7)

However, most times, Debra was unable to contain her physical aggression following his continuous counts of harassment and embarrassing conduct. They argued first, but when physical aggression unleashed shortly after, she beat him and he found himself resisting her violent attacks. Only few instances of violent assault transpired among perpetrators of SCV. On one occasion, Veronica's partner used a weapon to threaten her. Veronica explained:

I bought him a three set of Samurai swords and he come in from work high. I went back into the bedroom and next thing I know, I turn around, he's coming swinging with the longest sword and like he wants to slice my throat. (Veronica, participant 6)

Veronica referred to her partner as "foolish" when he incautiously swung a large knife in her direction. Although he was under the influence, he had neither a justification nor a reason for his conduct. He later apologized.

Veronica performed IT violence one time when she threatened to kill her partner. She repeatedly shot a firearm, pointing it in the direction of her partner's head with full intentions of

injuring him. Similarly, after a day of work, Debra's husband greeted her at the door, but attempted to cut her with a butcher knife:

He was standing outside of our house in his underwear and t-shirt and he had a butcher knife in his hand. He told me that he was going to cut my throat because he didn't believe that I was working that late. He was pushing me and he swung. The knife fell out of his hand, I swung back, and we had a fight. (Debra, participant 7)

Susie's husband initiated a violent assault, attempting to cause severe injuries. However, her consent to perform IPV was not mutual but she reciprocated physical aggression. Susie described the severity of that attack:

I crawled to get the phone so he snatched the phone out of the wall and busted the TV. He ripped off all my clothes and just kept punching and punching and punching. I finally crawled to an axe handle under my bed. (Susie, participant 3)

Although Susie did not start the fight, her responses to violence were severe. Both partners yelled out of anger and fought each other until the police arrived to end the dispute. Unlike their past episodes of family conflict, this time there was no evidence that her partner was under the influence.

### *7.3.3 Injury during situational violence*

Although instances of SCV were more likely than those classified by VR, MVC, or IT to involve only isolated low-level violence, in some cases SCV was frequent or deadly. Sarah and Veronica reported minor injuries. They did not report any serious injuries. Sarah experienced aches and discomfort following assaults. However, she did not report any noticeable injuries. On one occasion, she punched hard enough to split the skin on her partner's lip. Sarah also said her partner experienced minor bleeding from her scratching. Veronica noted that their disputes were more upsetting than physically harmful. Veronica reported her lip bleeding one time after he slapped her but the injury occurred because she fell off their couch after he hit her. Her partner did not experience any physical injuries.

Injuries were more severe for Debra, Susie, and their partners. Debra recalled several scratches and bruising on her arms from wrestling during brawls with her partner. His injuries were more severe than hers were; Debra reported that her husband had knots on his head and bruises on his face from her kicks and punches. Susie and her partner experienced the most serious injuries. Susie reported that during their fight, she was unable to talk because her jaw was dislocated. Both of her husband's arms were broken during the assault. As predicted in Johnson and Leone (2005), the immediate injuries and other negative medical outcomes were more pronounced among women who perpetrated VR than they were for female-perpetrated SCV.

## CHAPTER 8: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES AND MVC

Johnson and Ferraro (2000) define mutual violent combat (MVC) as a battle of control between two intimate terrorists. MVC abuse is likely to be conditioned by situational conflict in the relationship. During these cases of situational conflict, mutual competition occurs via an ongoing conflict over decision-making. In MVC, two intimate terrorist abusers are likely to experience long-term abuse and severe injuries. These IT abusers are also likely to use a variety of controlling behavioral tactics and aggressive conflict resolution strategies. Current studies find that the frequency and severity of IPV are typically similar in cases of MCV and IT, but the MVC incidents are likely to be premeditated (Johnson and Ferraro 2000).

Although both mutually violent partners are often IT abusers, I identified two points of reference that identify the aggressor of IPV: (1) the manner of initiation for a battle for control, and (2) the actions taken by both partners to confirm their perspectives during a point of conflict. In this study, partners did not always initiate battles using physical violence. The current samples of MVC involved two intimate terrorists who performed both emotional and physical violence. Hence, MVC was provoked using hostile verbal expressions or by an immediate attack acted

against the other partner. In most cases, the most violent partner was the aggressor unlike other types of IPV where the partner who hits first is the aggressor. In some cases, both partners were aggressors of MVC.

Although data on MVC couples find that both mutually aggressive partners may be violent and vying for control (Johnson 1999, 2000; Miller and Meloy 2006), in this analysis of MVC, the word “mutual” did not imply gender symmetry of physical aggression and control. When participants and partners both performed control, the types of control often differed. In such cases, I posit that partners did not perform mutual IPV; the performance of physical violence was reciprocal, but the degree of control was not mutual. Hence, contingent upon the progression of IPV, three types of mutual violence existed in this analysis; mutual coercive control, mutual situational control, and a combination of the two. The second and third types were subjectively assessed, and may also be classified as extreme cases of SCV.

In the current study, MVC described unique patterns of IPV reported by four participants (Aaliyah; Debra; Renee; Sasha). MVC partially described three participant experiences (Aaliyah; Debra; Sasha). Both Aaliyah and Debra became more violent throughout the span of their abusive relationships. Aaliyah’s violent responses escalated from VR to MVC. Debra performed IPV that transitioned from SCV to MVC as she became less tolerant of her husband’s use of physical violence. Unlike the other participants, Sasha’s initial violent responses entailed IT assaults. Overtime, her husband performed MVC because Sasha failed to curtail her violent behavior. Ultimately, MVC only fully described Renee’s experiences of IPV. The analysis of MVC situated participant experiences of Aaliyah, Renee, Debra, and Sasha into three themes: (1) battle for control, (2) situational conflict, and (3) physical abuse. The themes are consistent with

findings in studies on patterns of mutual violence among dating, cohabiting, and married couples (Holmes and Murray 1996; Swan and Snow 2002; Rosen et al. 2005).

## 8.0 Battle for control

The MVC analysis examined violence in either of two roughly equivalent ways. The first was a violent collective bargaining process that occurred when couples became violent or threatened to hurt each other. The second was violent physical aggression that was a situational by-product of nonviolent contention. This section on “battle for control” reviews MVC that occurred during a collective bargaining process; mutual fights that resembled wars occurred during a process of negotiation between both partners to reach agreements that influenced critical conditions in the intimate relationship. The partners were typically unable to resolve these conditions by calming their anger or changing beliefs. They were not resolved through problem solving and, or pointing the finger at the troublemaker. When battles for control became extremely aggressive responses, they were typically resolved through interventions such as family members or friends interjecting or separation of partners.

The current depiction of “battling for control” was not relevant to every incident, but the description was a plausible explanation of MVC performed by Aaliyah, Debra, Renee, Sasha, and their partners. This section on the analysis of combative control includes five sections: winning, mirror punishment, coercion, premeditation, and emotionally reactive aggression. Some conceptions of MVC were unique to multiple couples, while others were only applicable to the experiences of one partner or one couple.

### *8.0.1 Gaining control*

In some cases, one partner attempted to gain control of the relationship through an argument, but suddenly, the argument reached a climaxing point and the other partner exhibited a

more expressive type of physical violence. As reported by Rosen et al. (2005), the “winning partner” exhibited instrumental motivation as a type of control over the situation. Their anger during a fight became an energizing emotion that pulled them out of their misery temporarily. The rush and arousal was satisfying. For some participants, winning a fight was equivalent to gaining control of the partner’s ideas, which exemplified one partner’s control over the other partner.

Aaliyah and Sasha used mutual combat to exorcise all of the rage, anger, or bitterness employed by their partners. For these participants, revenge was temporarily effective because winning served as a form of therapy or as a way to process their pain. Winning ultimately became a way to let their partners know that “they could not destroy their lives.” For example, Aaliyah seized temporary control of her boyfriend when she won a fight. Her control was temporary because its scope was limited to a physical defeat. In her cases, winning did not alter her submissive position in the relationship. In this case, she gained control of the situation and minimal control over her partner. For that moment, she felt authoritative. Using an assertive tone, she said:

He knows I would get the better of him. Even though he was bigger, the only thing he could do to stop me is to sit down on me and that’s the only way he could beat me. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

They engaged physical violence mutually but Aaliyah was not likely to hit him first. Aaliyah enacted most violence defensively but her violent performance was ruthless and mutually aggressive.

Whereas injuring her partner satisfied Aaliyah, Sasha was more concerned about her partner experiencing more pain. Sasha defined winning in a unique way. She performed any aggressive action necessary to be certain that her partner experienced more pain than she had undergone:

I would always hit him first or throw bleach on him or do something that would upset him. He wouldn't hit me back, but he would restrain me from doing the things that I was doing. (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha attacked her husband verbally, threw objects, destroyed his property, and hit. The attacks relieved tension and frustration. Like Aaliyah, Sasha's retaliation was also empowering.

However, it did not mark her partner's defeat. Sasha said, "I hurt him when I left and when he did not know where I went." Therefore, when Sasha wanted to upset her partner, she deliberately shouted inferences about her potential involvement with other men and used similar emotional control tactics to agonize her partner.

Debra believed that something special was lost in their marriage each time a fight occurred. To her, there was no such thing as a winning battle; however, Debra did express feeling humiliated when the courts granted him a divorce on the grounds of her violent acts. The court accused Debra of viciously attacking her husband during their fights. Debra expressed her disappointment primarily because she believed their fights were mutual:

I was very hurt about it because I felt like what we did was mutual and I was very upset about it but there was nothing I could do to change the order. My divorce was granted because of inhumane cruelty to my husband. (Debra, participant 7)

### *8.0.2 Mirror punishment*

Mirror punishment is first introduced in this study; research has not analyzed this unique circumstance as it relates to MVC and female-perpetrated IPV. Mirror punishment serves as retribution for harm inflicted. For example, one partner who strikes another is later stuck in the same way, or a partner who causes the other person injuries should experience similar injuries. In this study, during exchanges of physical violence, the prevalence of crime was partly a function of what each partner could get away with. Sasha and Aaliyah performed mirror punishment that

entailed one partner enacting the same action that their partner enacted upon them. For instance, Sasha described her “an eye for an eye” philosophy on domestic violence:

If a man is going to work every day and taking care of his family, not worrying about other women, basically a family man. But, when he’s gone, she’s out sleeping with other men and not taking proper care of the kids. What I mean is, ‘she deserves to get a beating.’ Whether it’s right or wrong in society’s eyes, I just believe that is how it is. (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha applied this philosophy throughout her real life experiences. Her husband perpetrated a vengeful attack, disfiguring her face, leaving her with two blackened eyes and a swollen nose. Sasha forgave her husband, because she believed that she deserved the beating. She offered an explanation:

I was packing the bags saying that I was going to go with her [3-month-old infant] real father. Then, I had some dudes beat him down after I left. (Sasha, participant 9)

### *8.0.3 Patterns of coercive control*

Perpetrators also used “ongoing” nonphysical tactics to maintain control over or dominate their partners. Coercive patterns were often interwoven during instances of MVC. The battle for control stemmed from cumulative effects of psychological trauma and coercive control tactics. In this study, coercive controlling routines included threats, manipulation, isolation, and emotional abuse. Literature on mutual violence also refers to coercion as coerced persuasion, emotional torture, or indirect abuse (Coker et al. 2000; Hughes and Jones 2000).

In some cases, isolation, as a form of psychological abuse, set up and maintained the overall abusive dynamic in the relationship. The act of socially isolating one partner increased the other partner’s control in the relationship. These responses showed the victim’s lack of independence, and ways in which the other partner discouraged social connections with others. Renee and the partners of Aaliyah and Debra performed patterns of isolation. However, only the partners’ responses were physically violent.

Aaliyah's partner left her home alone, coercing her to stay. In her efforts to reach out to others, he insulted or violently attacked her. Aaliyah reported that isolation gradually became a double standard in her partner's favor:

I could talk to females, but I couldn't talk to a male. If I talked to a male, I was sleeping with him, but he could have all these other female friends. He was extremely sexually active and would sleep with literally anything that walked down the street. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

Debra's husband attempted to dictate her patterns of communication also. He was dissatisfied with Debra's companionship with her co-workers. Debra admitted to calling home during the course of her workday to check in with her husband. She said, "I did it voluntarily to keep the peace." These findings are consistent with findings in Ferraro (1997) and Sullivan et al. (2005) on women's methods of coping with violence.

Renee exerted control in response to her partner's communication with other women. She attempted to manage his whereabouts and with whom he spent time. As reported in Caldwell et al. (2009), Renee was likely to show passive-aggressive signs of jealousy by becoming moody when her partner excluded her from his plans. While some of her controlling responses appeared to be irrational, she believed otherwise. Renee noted that she felt "shattered and in excruciating pain" following her partner's episodes of infidelity and abusive responses to her conduct. According to Renee, her partner was a compulsive liar, especially when he tried to conceal his whereabouts. As illustrated below, Renee no longer believed what he said:

He told me that he was going somewhere with his friend. I didn't believe him so I hid the keys so he couldn't go. And so now it becomes, 'you're not my wife so how you going to tell me what time I need to come in the house?' I'm like, 'okay, I understand that, but we are living together and in a relationship and that's disrespectful!' He said, 'well, I'll go anyway and I'll get back in too.' So, I locked the door so he couldn't get out and we started fighting because I wouldn't let him out the door. (Renee, participant 8)

Ultimately, Renee felt anxious and jumped to conclusions, which contributed to the destruction of her relationship and led to violent brawls. The brutal disputes typically involved destroying property and throwing items.

Another form of intimidation occurred when one partner directed violence toward an object. Like Renee, Aaliyah and Sasha threw items at their partners such as sneakers, plates, pictures, broken glass, and various objects that were likely to knock their partners unconscious.

Renee offered an example:

I would find myself being violent toward him. I tried to run over him with the car. I remember throwing a glass picture. The picture dropped off the wall and there were glass fragments. I threw them too and missed his head by like an inch. (Renee, participant 8)

Participants did not exclusively perform this behavior. When Sasha's husband became angry, he punched holes through their wall.

During violent exchanges, Sasha, Aaliyah, and their partners exchanged offensive comments, one often making the other feel lower than the other felt. The insults often sent signs of the other partner's lack of appreciation or respect. Sasha reported increases in her hostility when she was "violated" or downgraded by her husband's downtrodden comments. Aaliyah also alleged that her partner commented offensively about both her and her child such as, "I hope you and the kid die." Similar disputes escalated to violence, which overtime became more hostile. Aaliyah began to use physical restraints to injure her partner.

Aaliyah used life-threatening control and restraint techniques (C&R) that contain and cause injury. Security personnel and law officials use similar techniques, but most jurisdictions require personnel to use an open-minded assessment of the situation (Hamberger and Potente 1994). Although Aaliyah could predict that C&R techniques result in severe injury if applied improperly, she did not adhere to those recommendations while performing MVC. While

restraining her partner, she also yelled verbal mandates urging her partner to provide financial support to her and their unborn child, or die. In this case, she used excessive physical contact to intimidate her partner. When Aaliyah resisted, she attempted to reciprocate violence using a combination of defensive and aggressive moves to subdue her partner.

#### *8.0.4 Premeditated physical aggression*

Debra and Renee typically committed “reactive” MVC because they expressed physical aggression according to a specific circumstance that triggered a reaction such as rage and despair. For example, out of rage, Renee reprimanded her partner for cheating. Her response was a reactive expression of MVC. Similarly, Debra became furious when her partner insulted her in front of her co-workers. Whether he had a knife, or was unarmed, her responses were automatic, rather than premeditated. Moreover, Debra was sure that some type of violence would occur, but she did not conjure up potential defense strategies. Debra relied on her natural strength to defeat her partner. Contrasting physical aggression performed by Debra and Renee, Aaliyah’s MVC was more instrumental or premeditated. Aaliyah spent much time deliberating about various learned C & R holds. More specifically, she carefully devised ways to injure, but not kill her partner. Thus, when he hit, Aaliyah was readily able to “react” aggressively and performed “premeditated” physical violence to defeat him successfully.

For Aaliyah controlling plans of attack were deliberate and thorough. Aaliyah predicted situations that triggered her partner’s violent responses. She also prepared for inadvertent attacks. However, this distinct behavioral pattern was not indicative of every act of MVC performed by Aaliyah; she also exhibited impulsive behavior in other contexts. Her physical violence is best described as “premeditated physical aggression that was impulsively instrumental.” This finding

is consistent with evidence that IPV can be both premeditated and impulsive in Patrick (2006: 484).

#### *8.0.5 Emotionally reactive responses*

Emotional reactive violence is the actual aggressive reaction and emotion that occurs when an individual feels threatened, or as if the relationship is going to be broken. Such feelings cause frustration that leads to the satisfaction of harming their partner. As reported in Kishor and Johnson (2004) and Driscoll et al. (2006), participants in this study reported hitting or experiencing punishment for failing to follow relationships rules, or a perpetrator lost control when a partner was unfaithful. For example, two participants reported that hitting an unfaithful partner was “understandable violence” or a legitimate response. Sasha and Renee held firmly that there were unperceived rules or cultural scripts that condoned lashing out physically when they discovered infidelity.

Emotionally reactive responses were often violent, impulsive responses to a partner who was flagrantly unfaithful. Typically, these examples involved jealousy. One partner humiliated their significant other in front of others or took actions that interfered with the partner’s education, employment, family, etc. For example, Sasha initiated threats in the form of emotional manipulation. Sasha described how she caused brutal disputes:

I was playing with two men and that was a very dangerous. A triangle is very, very dangerous especially, when there’s a child involved. I had both of them taking care of my daughter and taking care of me. I was leaving him [husband]. (Sasha, participant 9)

She used sensitive issues against her husband, which aroused his destructive anger. Frieze and McHugh (1992) also present this finding on manipulation exerted by violent women.

Renee also acted jealous. Renee's partner yelled derogatory comments only when she admitted to going through his belongings. Renee accused her partner of flirting, checked up on him, and insisted that he was not being truthful:

I said, 'well if you were not cheating on me, then why was my stuff in your pants pocket?' So, he exploded: 'why would you be looking all in my pockets and stuff?' Next thing you know, he threw me up against the wall again, threw me on the floor, and he started kicking me and punching me. Eventually, it did come to me fighting where I wasn't scared of him anymore, and then, a point when I would find myself being violent to him. (Renee, participant 8)

Overtime, Renee was no longer afraid of her partner's violent responses. She became more insecure of his conduct, and in turn, he became more violent. Both Renee and Debra's partner displayed similar patterns of jealousy and possessiveness that incited physical battles. This finding is also present in McNeely and Mann (1990).

### 8.1 Situational conflict

Among intimate couples that experience MVC, situational conflict was more than a disagreement; situational conflict entailed threatening circumstances that each partner could not ignore. When MVC occurred, each partner responded based on his or her own perceptions of the situation. Hence, both conflicting responses entailed ideas and feelings that threatened the other partner's physical or emotional control. As noted in Holmes and Murray (1996), situational conflict gradually affected relationship satisfaction negatively through an accumulation of negative interpretations. Like controlling violence, situational conflict also led to severe cases of MVC.

When reported in family conflict studies, cases of situational conflict show relatively equal rates of assault performed by men and women (McHugh and Frieze 2006; Simpson et al. 2007). These findings are not applicable to all participants in this study who experience MVC. This section includes types of situational conflict that existed during MVC such as, strained

emotional attachment, multiple partner dating, alcoholism, financial constraints, and sexual abuse. These types of conflict only pertain to unique circumstances that involve MVC.

### *8.1.1 Strained emotional attachment*

Studies on MVC find that couples are likely to use their partner as targets to act out feelings of anger, confusion, and jealousy (Henton et al. 1983). In this study, these cases often reflected couples' inability to approach their problems through a common bond of affection. In the intimate relationships, the romantic attachment may not have involved sharing of emotions, which is an emotional attachment that entails two individuals having feelings for each other. Fiebert and Gonzalez (1997) find that women in their twenties are more likely to aggress than women aged thirty and above; the younger populations aggress because they want to incite their partner. Similarly, Renee and Sasha performed MVC when their partners did not express their emotions as expected, including adoration, loyalty, and a common bond of affection. Their partners displayed an insufficient emotional response rather than the deeper level of emotion that the participants expected. When Renee's partner was insensitive to her emotions, she felt defeated, and instantly became aggressive. She said:

It was my red flag that something was wrong if a person could be so insensitive or ignorant. He was very arrogant and nonchalant with a 'whatever type attitude.' I got tired of him crushing my feelings and always thinking he was with somebody else so I got mad and killed his fish. (Renee, participant 8)

Likewise, Sasha reported that her partner was calm and quiet, but also sneaky. Sasha referred to his mood swings as a "snapping problem" primarily because she could not predict the nature of his aggressive responses when she lost control. She described his standard response:

I always put my hands on him because of that I don't care attitude. I can't take it! I put so much effort into this relationship and you're not just going to act like you don't care. I have to hit you. I have to throw something at you. I have to hurt you because I'm hurting. I'm crying, I'm emotional, but you're acting like whatever. No! I'm going to throw, scratch, and cut you. I'm going to do something to make you as mad as I am. (Sasha, participant 9)

Studies have shown that men hold worryingly tolerant attitudes toward domestic violence. Perceptions of power and the performance of masculinity influence attitudes of both men and women (Grasmick et al. 1996). These studies offer theoretical explanations for how patriarchal ideologies influence accepting attitudes toward violence. Correspondingly, Sasha became physically aggressive because she was enraged about her husband's disregard for her feelings and the situation. She asserted her awareness that she could not change or control his conduct. In this case, the partner behaved as if men, not women, had a right to punish a partner during intimate disputes. The partner also failed to take Sasha's attacks seriously. He downplayed her physical aggression as if it was not a legitimate form of punishment.

#### *8.1.2 Sexual violence*

Sexual violence occurs when one partner commits physical assaults to the sexual parts of the other partner's body or makes sexual demands with which the other partner is uncomfortable. One partner performs these actions without the other partner's consent and carries them out with the intention of causing degradation that is emotional, sexual, and physical. In this study, Aaliyah reported experiences of sexual violence during which her partner overpowered her, leaving her defenseless. She said:

I would get bruises on my arms where he would hold me down to have sex with me when I didn't want to. I would have bruises all up and down my arm and people could see those. I would literally scream and cry the whole time. I'm pretty strong, but when you get a big huge man on top of you with all his weight on you, I don't care, unless you're a man of the same size, it's not very easy to get him off of you. I would cry and that's all I could do. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

The sexual violence performed against Aaliyah involved physical force, coercion, and psychological intimidation. Overtime, Aaliyah became fearless of his attacks and responded with brutal attacks. She said, "The hits hurt, but I didn't feel the pain until the fight was over."

However, for the reason that his abuse could have resulted in the death of their unborn child,

Aaliyah left the relationship. This finding is consistent with research in Yodanis (2004) on unconscious perceptions of fear and violence following multiple occurrences of physical and sexual violence.

### *8.1.3 The sexual “other”*

Alongside rape, another type of sexual abuse refers specifically to one partner having sexual affairs outside of their marriage. Consequences of this type of abuse vary. In this study, the “other” man was a threat to a current partner, which suggested that the partner did not fulfill the participant’s sexual expectations. In particular, when Sasha mentioned other men, her husband opted to degrade her self-image and highlight her failed role as a wife. Sasha reported that, given her mistakes, she attempted to make amends:

I left another guy to be with him [the husband] and in between, I had got pregnant. My husband basically stood by me but when it [the baby] came out not to be his, that’s when his anger started to emerge but I would buy him stuff unnecessarily that he wanted like a phone, or sneakers or a car just trying to mend the relationship. (Sasha, participant 9)

However, when Sasha became dissatisfied with the conditions in their relationship, she threatened to leave to be with the “other” man:

At that time, the house was in his [husband’s] name and he kept kicking me and my daughter out every time he got upset with me. So, my daughter’s father has a house and a car sitting here waiting for me whenever I’m ready to leave this man. I was threatening to leave him and that’s what made him start arguing with me. (Sasha, participant 9)

There was much anger in their household regarding her infidelity. The violence affected not only herself and the partner, but it also troubled members of both families, including the children.

### *8.1.4 Child abuse*

Children of participants in this study responded to IPV in varying degrees. As reported in Ness (2004), some children suffered immediate consequences or long-term medical consequences, while others were more likely to experience psychological effects of greater

severity than others. Although child maltreatment often warrants Child Protective Services (CPS) involvement, most cases of child abuse among couples in this study were unreported (Mitchell and Anglin 2009).

In one case, an infant was critically injured. During the hospital visit, the pediatric unit filed a report with CPS and refused to return Sasha's child. The disposition reporting the allegations held both partners responsible for the abuse. Sasha explained how she lost custody of her daughter following a dispute with her husband:

Her skull was so tender and soft. She had to go to the hospital and I just couldn't forgive him for that. Retinal hemorrhaging! Her body going back and forth caused Baby Shaking Syndrome. I had to sign my mother the custody of my middle child. They had to put me through all these tests at first to make sure that I wasn't the one that abused my child. They finally discovered that I'm the grieving mother. So, they started giving me visitations. My daughter doesn't really know me. She thinks my mother is mommy. (Sasha, participant 9)

Both Sasha and Aaliyah were pregnant during IPV, but neither infant experienced injury. Debra exposed her son to one violent attack, but he also was not injured.

#### *8.1.5 Substance abuse*

Each participant reported their struggle to understand pathways to IPV in their relationship. A few common observations emerged. The first, and most disturbing, was that participants and their partners were pervasively aggressive and violent toward each other.

Another involved the partner's alcohol consumption. Debra reported her husband's patterns of alcohol consumption:

He had been drinking. He always wanted to drink his beer all the time. After church, he went to the store and he was drinking beer again. He started the argument about me working. I told him I didn't want to talk about it, 'let it go.' I was feeling comfortable about being at Church and just wanted to cook dinner and just relax. He kept going on and on, calling me names. (Debra, participant 7)

Participants reported that their partners' alcohol consumption promoted aggressiveness and excessive violence. While under the influence, the partners of Debra and Sasha intentionally

inflicted, or attempted to inflict physical harm. The women alleged that their partners were also threatening, hostile, and damaging in a nonphysical way after drinking excessively. Sasha reported an incident of IPV that occurred while her husband was intoxicated:

That [alcohol] was the reason why [he attacked Sasha]. He wouldn't have did it sober. I know that a pint of Grey Goose to the head would probably have a cause and effect. He had drunk a bottle of Grey Goose. I guess something just triggered him and he just slapped me and punched me until I was bleeding everywhere. It looked like a homicide crime scene. He won't even drink white liquor at all ever since then. He said, it's like he blanked out. He didn't even remember what happened and I believe him because he was just so drunk and it came out of nowhere. (Sasha, participant 9)

#### *8.1.6 Financial conflict*

Participants indicated various forms of financial conflict as another pathway leading to MVC. Among the sample of participants who performed MVC, Sasha reported financial issues as a source of situational conflict, while Debra and Aaliyah noted that they and their partner's performed MVC during battles to maintain or gain financial control. Hence, the role of money varied during each participant experience.

In some cases, participants and partners used different forms of pressure to leverage their partner's behavior. During situational conflict, the threat of harm led to cooperation or obedience of one party involved. However, during a battle for control, there was often no point of consensus. In cases of MVC, physical pain or injuries may or may not have enhanced the validity of the threat especially during cases of ongoing abuse when violence was a normal practice in the relationship.

Debra performed economic coercion when her husband demanded that she share money in their family account. Debra gave her partner an allowance. Debra also refused to allot money to her partner for leisure spending. Instead, Debra she paid bills and accumulated their savings.

Although her husband complained constantly about her hoarding their money, Debra learned that he was academically illiterate and unable to manage finances:

We had looked in the paper and we saw a few jobs. We went out to a job to fill out an application for him and this is when I found out that his knowledge of reading was not up to par. He couldn't read the application so I was filling out the app for him. (Debra, participant 7)

Debra's weekly compensation afforded them to cover household expenses, which left her husband's income for food and other mandatory costs. Although Debra generated the majority of their income, her husband was displeased with his allocation of spending money.

Sasha also retaliated physically. However, financial conflict in her relationship involved her husband's ownership of material resources. Sasha reported that her husband used his rights to their rental unit to maintain power whenever he became angry; he threatened to kick her out of their home following arguments or disagreements, especially when he was unable to prove his case. Sasha said:

He was on the lease. I wasn't because I have a criminal record, a felony on my record. And, he has a clean record, so he put the house in his name. When I start arguments, he would kick me and my daughter out of the house. I really was the main provider at the time so it was like, how can you kick me out and I pay the bills here? (Sasha, participant 9)

Aaliyah's partner also exploited his economic position in their relationship. Pregnant and unemployed, Aaliyah depended on him for food and shelter. Rather than meeting her requests, he denied Aaliyah access to money and failed to tend to the maintenance of their home. Aaliyah said:

It's in the middle of the summer time, I'm still early in pregnancy but there are no air conditioners in the top floor of an apartment. He'd come home and yell because I opened windows. Just those random stupid things and it was everyday that I saw him. It was like that every single day. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

Role expectations varied dramatically between Aaliyah and her partner; what one partner deemed as appropriate behavior for their partner did not always reflect how the other partner

expected to conduct themselves (White and Klein 2002). For example, Aaliyah contended that caring for herself and the unborn child was the partner's responsibility. However, he treated Aaliyah as a nuisance and tended to her needs optionally, or at a time that was convenient for him. To relieve Aaliyah's stress and frustration associated with her lack of money, her partner purchased gifts in belief that money would improve their state of affairs. Aaliyah offered a statement:

You can't buy people things to make them love you. He is a very materialistic person so maybe he thought that, but in my eyes, you can't do that. I remember telling him that when he would bring me home fancy sneakers. One time he actually took them back because I was like 'you can't just bring me shoes and expect that everything's just going to go away because it's not.' (Aaliyah, participant 4)

The financial stress experienced by Aaliyah was a source of situational conflict that led to arguments and physical disputes. Correspondingly, Schechter (2008) argued that conflict during MVC often stems from the woman's lack of economic control, which is a serious obstacle that hinders her plan to escape the violent relationship.

## 8.2 Domestic abuse and mutual violence

In this study, intimate couples did not perform mutual acts of violence, because there was always a perceived winner and a loser of a fight. However, their cumulative performance of IPV was often mutually physical, severe, controlling, and, or emotionally aggressive; the conceptualization of "mutual" in MVC varied by couple. For instance, Aaliyah and her partner were mutually aggressive, but their expressions of control were inconsistent. Renee and her partner were mutually violent and controlling, but the severity of violence performed differed. Debra and her partner were mutually aggressive, but each performed a different type of control and they did not reciprocate violence mutually. Sasha and her partner were mutually controlling, but they were not mutually aggressive or equally violent.

According to Johnson's interpretations of MVC, one partner's pursuit for control over the other determines their intent or determination to commit MVC. However, he assumes that control is the motivating factor for MVC, but fails to distinguish between self-control, situational control, and complete control over the partner. Furthermore, this type of IPV examines the situational context of IPV, but it does not entail an adequate examination of external motivations and their influences on female-perpetrated IPV. Among participants in this study, expressions of physical violence and emotional responses were directly associated with both current and childhood exposure to violence, which is consistent with other studies that associate greater aggression with men and women's exposure to violence (Jacobson and Gottman 1998; Simmons, Lehmann, and Craun 2008). Hence, the analysis of MVC was sufficient for assessing current the severity and frequency of female-perpetrated IPV, but vagueness of control and context in the conceptualization of MVC limited findings on motives for female-perpetrated violent, controlling physical aggression. A more detailed analysis of participants' motivations is present in the section on external motivations of IPV (See Chapter 10: External context and motivations).

### *8.2.1 Frequency and duration of mutual violence*

Research on IPV finds that women are more likely than men are to use one or more acts of physical violence (Archer 2000). These findings on frequency of physical aggression were consistent with those in Archer (2000) during attacks only: women were more likely than men were to use one or more acts of physical aggression. Furthermore, findings in Straus (2008) revealed that among dating partners women were twice as likely as men were to initiate attacks. In contrast, women in this study only reported using physical aggression that was more violent when men deterred their previous tactics of abuse. For these participants, IPV was life

threatening after nearly 1½ years of abuse. Moreover, their partners were as likely to initiate attacks following arguments, but the women's attacks appeared to be more violent because the severity of their attacks had to augment in any effort to injure their partners.

Aaliyah and her partner argued on a weekly basis. Each argument escalated to a physical dispute. Attacks occurred for nearly four months. Aaliyah reported six incidents of assault, which the partner initiated two violent physical assaults and raped her four times. She fought back, but he often deterred her retaliation. During the final months, Aaliyah became more aggressive, and it was more difficult for him to curtail her violent responses to his abuse. Aaliyah performed two life-threatening cases of IT violence; she initiated one incident and her partner initiated the other. During her final experience of MVC, Aaliyah used coercive controlling physical aggression and a deadly restraint hold to intimidate her partner and modify his conduct, but he reciprocated her attack.

Renee and her partner experienced MVC at least one time per month. Renee reported approximately nine arguments that escalated into myriads of physical abuse. Renee recalled four physical attacks. Each time, her partner attempted to push her out of his home, she hit in her attempt to remain inside the home. During two disputes, both partners threw or destroyed household items. However, during two violent assaults, Renee's partner initiated attacks using objects as weapons rather than hitting her. In response, on one occasion, Renee damaged his personal property. IT violence occurred two times. The first time, his violence was so hostile that Renee could not fight back. The second time, Renee attempted to kill him.

Debra and her husband argued one time per week and arguments often led to physical altercations. During the first three attacks, her partner was more likely to hit her first, but Renee hit more frequently during these attacks. After two months of violence, Debra was more likely

than her partner was to initiate attacks. During these attacks, Debra was more violent than her partner was; she successfully knocked him unconscious three times. During physical violence, both partners abused each other until someone else stopped the fight. Debra described these disputes as “championship boxing matches,” where both partners hit at the same magnitude until one was unable to fight anymore.

Sasha and her husband had five arguments that led to physical abuse. They fought approximately once every three months. Sasha always initiated attacks. Sasha also cut him with a knife three times and destroyed his property during every attack. They experienced two incidents of IT violence. During the first event, Sasha had other men attack her husband; she watched, but did not participate. During the second incident, Sasha’s husband initiated the violence, and the assault was so severe that Sasha was unable to retaliate. Renee, Aaliyah, and Debra exited their relationships, but Sasha received anger management counseling and remained in her marriage.

### *8.2.2 Severity of mutual violence*

Each participant reported a steady progression of violence that led to various types of mutual abuse. For Aaliyah, Renee, Debra, and Sasha, patterns of controlling behavior remained consistent, but their violent responses to situational conflict varied. Hence, during the MVC stage of IPV, verbal abuse was predictable, but types of violent responses performed were random. For example, already tense about an ongoing situation, on one day, a participant would attack her partner, and on another day, she may have performed harassment or IT violence. This section examines the severity of MVC experienced when mutually violent participants and partners expressed the following types of abuse: harassment, attacks, violent assault, stalking, and IT violence.

Harassment was a common phenomenon among participants who were mutually violent. In the VR and SCV analyses, harassment often led to additional victimization, such as avoidance and self-control; in contrast, each incident of harassment during MVC provoked or justified perpetrated violence, which often engendered more severe forms of violent and emotional abuse. Among each couple that performed MVC, harassment was also a source of power. Harassment allowed one partner to manipulate the other's conduct by triggering violent or self-sacrificing behaviors. Two distinct depictions of harassment performed by participants and partners who perform MVC were: (1) harassment as a justification for engaging in violence with the agitating partner, and (2) harassment as added violent behavior inflicted by the aggressor.

For Aaliyah, harassment meant her partner "pushes buttons" to trigger her violent retaliation. To Aaliyah, her violent response to harassment resembled justice. Aaliyah's physical aggression was punitive and life threatening, but served as revenge for her previous experiences of rape and physical violence. Her goal was to force her partner to suffer or experience pain.

Aaliyah depicted her partner's methods of harassment:

He's going to just keep saying ignorant and off the wall stuff. Usually, he said something to me negative about my child that I was pregnant with. Then, he would push me and I push back.  
(Aaliyah, participant 4)

Aaliyah also commented on her partner's presupposed responsibilities, which led to debates and physical confrontation. Her constant badgering and yelling disrespectful slurs often provoked his ill comments. However, harassment performed by both Aaliyah and her partner reinforced the partner's bad behavior and encouraged further bullying. When physical harassment and bullying were no longer successful for him, her partner began performing sneak attacks, catching Aaliyah off guard to injure or hurt her.

In Debra's relationship, violence was obvious and direct. Debra believed that her partner's harassment was an appeal for a violent attack. Given her exposure to family violence and experiences of domestic abuse in previous relationships, violence had become an instinctive response to threats of violence. Hence, Debra's uncontrolled anger caused problems in her relationship. Although Debra's partner was under the influence during most violent disputes, both partners allowed their anger to turn into rage, which spawned verbal and physical altercations. Debra described a situation:

I was in the kitchen cooking dinner and he started the argument again, bringing up old stuff. But mind you, that night before he went out to the club and he had been drinking. He was drinking beer again. I told him I didn't want to talk about it and let it go. I just wanted to cook dinner and relax. He kept going on and on calling me names. I pointed my cooking knife at him warning him to stop... (Debra, participant 7)

Debra said, "I'm not gonna let him get me, I'm gonna get him." She pursued violent revenge in effort to replicate harm and humiliation. Debra was also the last partner to hit during any fight; she would not stop fighting until he was down or she had proven her point. It took hours to calm Debra following a violent incident. Even when Debra attempted to suppress her own angry responses, she was grumpy and moody. In these cases, Debra made cynical or sarcastic comments, which also kept their abusive cycle in motion.

Renee and her partner reciprocated harassment mutually. When the partner harassed Renee, his conduct stimulated her frustration and she committed impulsive violent attacks. The harassment was associated with other pre-existing psychological abuse initiated by her partner. On most occasions, Renee's outbursts were aggravated either by her partner or by illusions that her partner had misbehaved. Evidence of her partner's infidelity also provoked her propensity to harass him. This form of harassment resulted from her infatuation with him or her obsessions.

For example, Renee stalked her partner and invaded his privacy. Then, both partners executed random, violent attacks. Renee said:

I said 'who's Tiffany' and he said 'where is my phone?' I said 'I have your phone right here, and who's Tiffany?' So, he went off. He started cursing: "what the F you doing looking at my phone? You don't own me and you need to stop being so nosey. She's lying." I said "you don't know what she told me. What did she tell me?" He says 'you go ahead and believe her and you get the f out.' When he told me to get out, I hit him and we started fighting. (Renee, participant 8)

For both partners, perceptions of "blame" were inconsistent. However, regardless of the motivations for conduct, harassment disrupted their lives and threatened their safety.

Sasha had a difficult time controlling her anger. Whenever Sasha became irritated, especially following her exposure to verbal abuse or cynical comments, she expressed her anger. Sasha's harassing conduct was insulting and disrespectful. When Sasha hit, kicked, pushed, and damaged objects in response to her partner's discourteous behavior, she expelled energy and released her frustration. Sasha said:

He would just say things that would upset me. Honestly, I felt like I settled for him. It was more like he owed me and when he would put me down like, he was above me and I was beneath him, it would make me mad and I would just flip out on him. (Sasha, participant 9)

Many incidents called into question Sasha's incautious judgment, both for shouting impulsive remarks while angered and for assuming that she deserved better than what her husband had to offer. Furthermore, she often failed to apologize for the litany of cruel statements made when her anger became so hostile that she could not stop yelling. When Sasha's partner failed to attend to her needs, she exploded in rage. As behavior that Sasha deemed as being harassing emerged, more patterns of violence surfaced, which eventually instituted a battle for control in Sasha's favor.

A physical attack is the least violent type of physical abuse. During MVC, when one partner attacked the other, the attack often escalated into a fight. Among participants and

partners, attacks were physical only or verbal-physical attacks. However, participants showed consistent patterns of anger, frustration, and physical aggression. For example, Aaliyah, Sasha, and Renee were more violent toward their partners during physical attacks. This finding was strongly associated with differences in physical build and strength of each partner. Other than Debra, to overcome their partners' inertia, participants had to expend greater energy to throw and land punches. Participants also devised and applied intimidation tactics to scare their partner into submission; when performed by a participant, the tactics augmented the partner's anger and failed to produce fear. However, these actions presented a clear message that if the partner did not obey, there would be consequences. For example, a participant was likely to damage or destroy a partner's belongings during attacks when they were unable to defeat the partner physically.

Aaliyah was the participant least likely to strike her partner first. Aaliyah planned her role in each attack using knowledge and skills on how to handle his aggressive behaviors. When her partner was physically aggressive, she positioned herself in a proper stance to avoid his sudden attacks. Aaliyah readily identified types of threatening behavior exhibited by her partner and developed various reactions or escapes. During an attack, her partner may have pushed or kicked her. However, holding her balance, she struck him immediately.

On the other hand, Renee and Debra were just as likely as their partners to strike first. They believed that their partners' behavior was truly disrespectful; both reported that their partners were rude, deliberately hurtful, and condescending, which were signs of control and authority. For example, when Renee questioned her partner's behavior, he became moody, and attacks were more hostile. Renee said, "He's big so he blocks my hits and he just pushes me

back.” For every strong punch she executed, the partner used partial effort to respond, launching her across the room with a slight push. Renee said:

I was punching him in the face, jumping up, and smacking him in the face. I tried to grab at him, trying to hit him in the face, which is where I get him at. He pushed and shrugged me to escort me out of his door. It was back and forth; I’m trying stay, and he’s pushing me out. He finally picked me up and threw me out of the door. (Renee, participant 8)

Unlike Renee, Debra was larger and stronger than her partner was. Debra attempted to strip her partner’s authority away by fighting him; he was unable to resist Debra’s attacks. Debra said, “I didn’t want to fight, but I wasn’t used to a man treating me that way.” Fully aware of her physical strength, Debra perceived of the severity of her attack as, “just enough to prove that he was not in charge of me.” During fights, Debra and her partner accidentally destroyed their property; they broke windows, knocked over furniture, and ruined several household items.

Like Debra, Sasha used physical violence in response to her partner’s authoritative behavior. Sasha’s physical attacks were also aggressive, but the attacks were often ineffective.

Sasha said:

I punched him in the face and I’ve scratched him, but he always just restrains me. He’ll grab my legs to stop me from hitting him or he’ll grab my arms and hold me so I can calm down. (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha and Renee were livid and performed psychologically driven attacks when their partners demonstrated blatant acts of disrespect. They performed intermittent explosive behavior, episodes of aggressive outbursts, which resulted in either destruction of property or physical assaults on their partners. Renee offered an example:

He had a couple 50-gallon fish tanks with sharks, iridescent fish and all these exotic fish in them. I took bleach and I poured it in all of the tanks so when he came back in the door the fish were flipping all over the floor and they were falling to the bottom of the fish tanks. He called his mother to pick me up and told her he would kill me if she did not come. (Renee, participant 8)

This response was an emotional attack initiated to hurt the partner’s feelings. Renee’s conveyed her message successfully. During similar attacks, Debra and Sasha did not take responsibility for

their loss of control. Instead, they blamed the partners who had allegedly done something to cause their uncontrolled anger.

Ongoing patterns of violence emerged for each participant. Sasha responded more aggressively depending upon the amount of control necessary to regain power. Debra and Aaliyah's responses were more violent depending upon the negative outcomes of a situation. Renee responded aggressively depending upon the amount of control necessary in her efforts to control a situation. Moreover, each participant was likely to exhibit violent outbursts regardless of their association with the extent of violence enacted against them.

When anger flurried out of control, abuse was more violent, in some cases, resulting in injuries. During violent assaults, one partner intended to hurt the other. Participants and partners also used defensive strategies and weapons to produce great bodily harm. Violent assaults also included unsuccessful attempts to threaten the other partner's life. The participants and partners performed behavior such as throwing a partner to the ground, issuing blows to a partner's head, and choking or cutting a partner.

Male bodies were dangerous because of their potential use as a tool of violence. However, as stated in Pagelow (1985:179), women were likely to use objects as "equalizers" to attack their partners even when they were naturally stronger. During violent assaults, Aaliyah and Sasha threw items at their partners with intent to cause permanent impairment or disfigurement. Since Sasha was unable to use her own physical force to injure her partner, she used objects to decrease his physical mobility. She said:

I've thrown glass plates, just various objects that I think will knock him out. He ducks, he'll push it out his way, or he gets slapped with it. When he can, he'll throw me on the bed and pin me down until I stop throwing stuff at him or hitting him. (Sasha, participant 9)

Over time, Debra and Aaliyah's partners were fearful of their violent responses; they hit often, but shied away following the attack. Later in their relationship, Aaliyah actually threw objects at her partner as he ran dreading another fight. Aaliyah said:

I threw candles in little glass jars. I would mainly throw things at him when he was running from me because I was just so mad. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

Debra reported throwing punches that knocked her partner unconscious. To stop his punching, she also threw him to the ground and kicked him repetitively. Debra remembered her partner laughing while fighting back persistently in a losing battle, and saying, "You're not going to treat me like a bitch"; this gendered social construction was his rendition of being feminized, or victimized like a woman. This perspective of the social construction of gender is present in Dutton (1994). Debra's husband also denied the seriousness of her violent assault and its manifestations by exhibiting an outward disregard for the physical violence inflicted upon him. Allen-Collinson (2009) reports a similar finding in an interview analysis on men's accounts of female-perpetrated IPV.

Renee's partner did not retaliate in kind to Renee's physical aggression. Instead, he threw objects in response to her extremely violent conduct such as scratching with intent to gauge his eyes out. Renee said, "I think he threw objects because he would have killed me if he hit me as angry as he was." She also said:

He went off, throwing things. He would pick things up and throw shoes, or pictures or anything that was within his reach. (Renee, participant 8)

On most occasions, Sasha's husband responded similarly. Despite his injuries and damaged property, he invited her ongoing threats of imminent physical violence. Sasha's husband braced himself from her hitting because when he restrained Sasha, her light skin scarred easily leaving her bruised. She was the most violent partner in their relationship. Sasha said:

When my anger builds, I just scream I guess. Usually, I would start throwing his stuff out with him trying to find the bankcards. I scratch him, beat him up, and throw stuff at him. (Sasha, participant 9)

In Sasha's marriage, most assaults were one-sided. To demonstrate her anger, Sasha screamed at the top of her lungs, which was the first danger signal. Next, she gathered her husband's belongings and began to destroy them or throw them out of their home, which was the second danger signal. Then, Sasha began throwing household items at her husband. In the process, Sasha hit him.

The most hostile performance of IPV is IT violence, which mutually violent couples performed while attempting to control each other, or coerce changes in the other's behavior. IT violence did not occur often during MVC; however, these lethal experiences were unique and unforgettable. For instance, Aaliyah's partner picked her up and threw her into a concrete wall head first, because she complained that he had left her in their home without food to eat. Still dizzy, she jumped onto his back, placed him into a chokehold, and in a matter of seconds, caused him to foam at the mouth. Her fingers bit deeply and painfully into his throat, cutting off the flow of oxygen to his brain, and he had only seconds to react or die.

During their most intense moments of IPV, Renee and her partner battled about her public displays of mistrust. Renee reported attempting to run him over by her car. She threw glass at her partner, cutting him. However, she reported experiencing violence that was "shocking and overwhelming." Renee said:

I couldn't fight him back at this point because he was so overwhelming to me that I couldn't even get my hands across my face to stop him from hitting me. He kicked me in my stomach and he kicked me in my back and I finally managed to get up and get out of the door. I couldn't do anything about it except take it and wait for him to stop. (Renee, participant 8)

Debra's partner attacked her with a butcher knife and threatened to cut her throat. This event was a turning point of violence in their relationship. Although she managed to knock the

knife from his hands, Debra finally admitted that she was fearful that one might have eventually killed the other. Similarly, on multiple occasions, Sasha admitted cutting her partner with a kitchen knife.

Both Sasha and her partner also had near-death experiences. On one occasion, Sasha became angry after her husband harmed her infant child during an intense argument. Sasha sent a crew of men to attack her husband viciously; she watched them whip him with a pistol, stomp his body, and punch him repeatedly. Sasha left him lying on their lawn severely injured and unconscious. After this event, they reunited, but three weeks later, Sasha's husband physically assaulted her for the first time. After Sasha performed one of her typical irate responses, her husband snapped and began the attack. Sasha said:

Something just triggered him and he just slapped me and punched me until I mean, I was bleeding everywhere. It looked like a homicide crime scene. (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha returned to the relationship apologetically, convinced that she was at fault for every aspect of violence that occurred in their relationship. She attended an anger management course to improve the conditions in her marriage.

### *8.2.3 Injury during mutual violence*

Research on MVC finds that women are more likely to experience injuries (Archer 2000). However, the current findings showed that women were more likely to experience injuries during IT violence, and likely to suffer injuries that were comparable to those experienced by men during attacks and assaults. Aaliyah reported that her punches left scars and marks on her partner's skin. She remembered imprints left from placing pressure around his neck with her arm while choking him. Most bruises were visibly located in the middle front of his neck. However, Aaliyah remembered having bruises up and down her arms from him scratching and pulling them to minimize her strength. Both partners experienced comparable injuries.

Renee also reported having bruises on her arms. When her partner resisted attacks, he bent her arms and pushed her out of his door. Since Renee wrestled with her partner, on more than three occasions, Renee reported landing on her back after he threw her onto the concrete sidewalk. During a more violent attack, Renee's partner blackened her eye, leaving her mouth and face swollen. Renee noted that her punches bruised various parts of his body.

Debra reported less injuries and more physical exhaustion because during each fight, each partner's goal was to punch or wrestle the other down. Debra noted that, over 15 years later, she still has marks from scratches left on her arms. However, she reported that the scratches came from bumping into furniture or scraping her arms against the ground or floor during fights. Debra noted that her partner was unable to land punches in order to inflict injuries during the attacks. On the contrary, he often had bumps on his head and on his face from times when she kicked him after he was down. After being accidentally cut with a butcher knife on one occasion, her partner also had twenty stitches in his hand.

When Sasha hit as hard as she could, she was unlikely to inflict severe injuries. Sometimes, his body was mildly marked from Sasha's scratching or from cutting him with a knife. Sasha said, "He often complained about being sore." However, Sasha lifted her shirtsleeves during the interview to show discoloration; I witnessed permanent scar impressions and black and blue marks. Her legs also had scars and marks left from bruising that she incurred while she attacked her partner. Sasha explained that during their two incidents of IT, the bodily harm experienced was unsightly. When he attacked Sasha, she saw her blood splattered all over the walls. She had two black eyes, a broken nose, and swelling in areas of her face.

## CHAPTER 9: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES AND IT

During IT violence, power is expressed when a controlling partner is positioned as being naturally superior to the other partner. IT abusers often use control tactics to confine and control their partners, such as psychological abuse and explicit threats (Tjaden and Theonnes 1998; Yodanis 2004). As an IT abuser insults and degrades their partner, the victim may feel threatened or helplessness. However, the victim of IT abuse is not typically a man; in heterosexual relationships, women are typically the victims of IT abuse performed by men who are referred to as “wife beaters” (Johnson 1995, 2001). Data and findings on intimate terrorists have also had an exclusive focus on masculine behaviors (Vangelisti and Perlman 2006).

Research showing that women commit comparable rates of IPV as men is controversial, especially since theory on IT has framed coercive violence as a patriarchal construction (Schwartz 2000). Moreover, studies that depict IT as the domain of men have offered an impression that “all men have control and are able exercise control.” This study found that the current perspective of IT as a man’s violent conduct is a tautology because I posit that the cause and effect of the IT abuse is control, and it is not gender. The current depiction of IT examined control as the purported cause and the consequence of IPV. This finding is consistent with pro-feminist advocacy and research on scientifically unsupported in male domestic violence offender typologies (Cavanaugh and Gelles 2005:157).

Although IPV is a serious threat for many women, women are not always the victims of IT abuse. It was critical that the current framework of IT refocused its attention away from gender and considered that both men and women could perpetrate most severe forms of IPV. In this study, IT is no longer a one-gendered phenomenon. Moreover, two participants experiences revealed that coercive control occurred for reasons other than men’s general control over women.

In tandem with an argument posed in Hines and Douglas (2010), this study found that a women's control predicted her IT behavior, and masculinity was not central to women's display of coercive control.

This chapter carefully examines two participant's experiences that were described using tenets of IT. Saridy's experiences were fully described by IT, while Sasha's experiences were described using mixed types of MVC and IT. Sasha's partner became more aggressive over time as her level of violence increased, and explanations of their IPV shifted from IT violence to MVC. Furthermore, as Sasha's partner became more violence, he also disregarded her violent performance and was not afraid of her physically violent conduct.

Findings in Ehrensaft and Vivian (1999) reveal that men and women appraise coercive behaviors differently when they have performed or encountered domestic violence in a previous relationship. Similarly, the sample of IT abusers in this study also encountered a history of violence. Consistent with all-male subjects in IT samples, these women were aggressive towards their intimate partners; they restricted social interactions, monitored activities, and attempted to reduce their partners' decision-making power.

This chapter examines IT within the context of stereotypical masculine patterns of behavior that were embedded in the current revised framework of IT. The analysis described how the women performed dependent intimate terrorist and antisocial intimate terrorist abuse. Types of physical violence expressed by the participants and victimization patterns experienced by their partners were also critical in this analysis of IT. Hence, the chapter presents expressions of coercive control, psychological abuse, and threats issued by Sasha and Saridy. Finally, new patterns of coercive violence are introduced.

## 9.0 Behavioral patterns and IT

This section examines behaviors of women who used coercive violence against non-controlling, physically aggressive partners. Sasha and Saridy's behavior was analogous with violence known as, IT abuse. Female-perpetrated IT is an under-recognized problem and this study provides much needed information on these women, their relationships, and their behaviors.

Johnson (2006) confirmed his idea that men perpetrate IT. The findings also failed to consider the experiences of men who sustain severe IPV and controlling behaviors performed by their female partners (Hines and Douglas 2010). Contrasting findings in Johnson (2006), IT behavior performed by Sasha was associated with dependent terrorist abuse, and the anti-social IT type described Saridy's behavior.

### *9.0.1 Dependent IT abuse*

A dependent intimate terrorist is obsessive and emotionally dependent on their partner. This pattern of IT abuse often results in a loss of control when the IT abuser is unable to direct their partner's sentiments (Johnson 2008). The dependent intimate terrorist also criticizes and abuses strongly and violently. Sasha fit this profile:

It wouldn't be him lashing out on me, hitting me, or throwing something at me. I would always hit him first (Sasha, participant 9)

However, Sasha did not extend this conduct outside of her intimate relationship. Her obsessions with the partner influenced her physical violence and ongoing patterns of emotional abuse.

Motives of dependency and personality organization also defined the IT behavior performed by Sasha. Sasha claimed to have formed a deep emotional attachment to her partner. It was love and affection that she thrived to experiences. However, she became angry when he

did not flatter her, or failed to meet her criteria for emotional communication. Sasha referred to his noncompliance as an “I don’t care attitude.” She said:

I always put my hands on him because he has that I don’t care attitude and I can’t take it! ‘I’ve been through so much with him and I put so much effort into this relationship,’ and he’s not just going to act like he don’t care. I have to hit him! (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha had high expectations of her husband, and required that he express affection, his commitment, and unconditional appreciation for her contributions to his life and their marriage. Hence, her husband’s silence often convinced Sasha that he did not care. She became irate when she was unable to regulate his emotional responses.

As reported by Vangelisti and Perlman (2006), general control was a necessity for this dependent terrorist, especially when Sasha’s quest for control lessened her fear of losing her husband. Sasha’s happiness was contingent upon her ability to micromanage her marriage; less control of the marriage influenced upsurges of her physical and emotional violent conduct. Sasha mentioned repeatedly that she became aggressive to relieve her own frustrations. She said:

I had to chase off five women, women that couldn’t clean and cater to him. I couldn’t have that [other women]. I only did things to make him feel special, but also to keep him around (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha was resentful, jealous, and afraid of losing her husband; these sentiments motivated Sasha to act out coercive control.

### *9.0.2 Antisocial IT abuse*

Saridy, an antisocial intimate terrorist, manipulated conditions to have her way both in her relationship and outside of its context. Although she was typically calm and pleasant, when her ultimatums were disregarded or unmet, her demeanor shifted. Saridy reported her rage and disgruntled attitude when she was unable to win. Saridy displayed patterns of violence in the current relationship, with peers, and in previous dating relationships. She said:

Maybe four or five of my relationships turned out to be abusive. There was one good one, but it got physical at some point where there was verbal abuse or physical abuse. I think because I grew up fighting a lot and things like that. I didn't really look at it like, 'he's a man and I shouldn't be hitting him.' (Saridy, participant 10)

Most disagreements stemmed from her controlling standpoint. In Saridy's eyes, she was the head of household and queen of their castle. This type of privilege asserted an impression that her word was law; according to Saridy, her partner should have always agreed, she should have never felt compelled to explain herself, and he never should have talked back. Consequently, her rage augmented when he disregarded her wishes in a public setting.

Saridy was also particular and self-indulgent in her endeavors of academic success, professional achievement, and childrearing. She had a high regard for her accomplishments, and had high expectations for her immediate network of friends and family. However, she showed low regards for those who performed below her standards of achievement. She said:

He only made it to the eighth grade, but he really couldn't read properly. His common sense and his intellectual level was low. I felt like I was dealing with a dummy. (Saridy, participant 10)

When someone endangered her reputation, Saridy was broadly willing to employ violence.

Saridy was impatient and demanding; these sentiments motivated her to act out coercive control.

### 9.1 Coercive control

Coercive control often encompassed a range of strategies employed to dominate a partner's personal life. This aggressive and ongoing behavior impaired the victim's independence, violated their physical integrity, and deprived them of rights. One partner was likely to perform a variety of ongoing control tactics, which established an intersectional, interweaving, or cumulative effect of victimization. Labels for coercive control varied in this analysis of IT. Some alternative concepts included psychological language, IT violence, sexual mastery, and intimidation.

Participants in this study used threats and coercion (i.e. threatening to leave), emotional abuse (i.e. calling names and humiliation), intimidation (i.e. instilling fear by destroying property, and using weapons), blaming the partner for the violence, and controlling the household finances. The following section examines coercive controlling behavior performed in the four contexts: defining masculinity, devaluing cultural capital, economic control, and domineering control.

### *9.1.1 Defining masculinity*

This section on defining masculinity examines ways that traditional, patriarchal ideologies were prevalent in cases of female-to-male perpetrated IPV. Participants who performed IT had normative expectations regarding the appropriateness of their intimate partners' masculine behavior. Comments such as, "Men are not supposed to..." or "I expect more from a man" were depictions of these expectations. Participants' perspectives valorized masculinity and perpetuated sexist attitudes that persecuted men who did not fit the social construction. These gendered expectations were used to exploit nontraditional men.

Correspondingly, data in Johnson (2005) associates IT with strong masculine attitudes and patriarchal traditions of male dominance. Johnson finds that IT abusers score higher than other perpetrators on traditional gender attitudes. In tandem, Saridy also accepted traditional social constructions of gender. She exercised power and control by coercing her partner to abide by traditional masculine stereotypes. If he failed to meet her expectations, she issued beatings until he cried for her to stop hitting him. Although, Saridy did not acknowledge her chauvinist attitude (Johnson and Leone 2005), her actions resembled characteristics of masculine power and control reported in Sugarman and Frankel (1996).

Although men and women are capable of performing a full range of abilities and emotions, during each historical period, different ideas have emerged to constitute what masculinity and femininity mean. Participant experiences showed that women's acceptance of male domination precipitates IPV. Saridy formed her own definition of what it meant to be a "good man." According to her, a good man was independent, ambitious, educated, and suited to fit the breadwinner role. Saridy said:

I am trying to cook for my son and my mom, but there was boxes everywhere. He was being slow about putting things together. He is supposed to be a handy man so I expected him to play his role and do his job. Me and my friend are in the kitchen cooking and he's steady walking around acting stupid and not doing anything and it upset me. So, I hit him with a pan. I didn't realize how hard I had hit him. He didn't really seem to expect it. (Saridy, participant 10)

Sasha also described the type of man that she deserved. She trained and encouraged her husband to be economically responsible and career-oriented. However, Sasha's gendered biases also determined her own self-worth. According to Sasha, she could not be successful when her partner did not play his role accurately:

I feel unstable. I'm a stable person. I believe I deserve better. My value is worth way more than what he can provide for me. I make him be more independent because he was childish when I met him. (Sasha, participant 9)

Saridy and Sasha shaped their default understandings of men and women based upon basic tenets of masculinity. This analysis is most directly associated with literature on *doing gender* in West and Fenstermaker (1995) and Anderson and Umberson (2001).

This analysis mimics the "doing gender" argument because Saridy generated variability in judgments of her partner's behavior based upon the extent to which her ethnic culture valued the importance of educational and breadwinning-related activities. Saridy placed a high value on knowledge-based activities, which were strongly associated with masculinity among her Americo-Liberian ancestors. She said:

My man, any man, has to be self-sufficient. He has to be intelligent. He has to be able to survive in this world. He has to be able to hold conversations in group settings. Not just for talking about homies or talking about sports, but talking about things that matter in the world. He has to have an intellect. He has to be strong mentally and physically for me. (Saridy, participant 10)

Saridy pressured her partner to devote himself to knowledge-based activities. His lack of knowledge also threatened his own sense of masculinity and self-confidence. Saridy announced repetitively, “He is not a good man; he is worthless; I am with a dummy.” Moreover, his failure to fit into her expectations for masculine behavior motivated her acts of rage. Saridy also took personal responsibility for his failure. She said:

He didn’t meet a lot of those [manly expectations]. Honestly, at the time, I don’t think I had the strength and the ability to say it to him. So, I beat him. (Saridy, participant 10)

Saridy felt obligated to stay in the relationship and to re-educate her partner, since her mother recruited this man as her fiancé. Saridy explained that she did all she could to appease her mother, but the situation became too frustrating for her to handle. Sasha felt obligated to stay with her husband because she believed, “he remained in the marriage despite her shortcomings.”

Sasha described his commitment:

He cut the umbilical cord. He was there for my whole pregnancy and he accepted my daughter like his own knowing that she looked nothing like him. And, I got another man’s name that I was in love with tattooed on me four times. (Sasha, participant 9)

According to both participants, most instances of female-perpetrated IPV represented their failed attempts to “turn boys into men.”

### *9.1.2 Devaluing cultural capital*

Saridy attacked her partner’s academic failure, lack of intelligence, and incompetence, claiming that he inherited poor habits from his family. Saridy said:

He would do things what we call in Liberia, the ‘country way.’ It is what middle class African Americans would refer to as the ‘ghetto way’ here. Little things he would do would frustrate me. You could tell he lived in the indigenous part of Africa for many years hiding from the war. There’s just some things you don’t do and because my family is so high up there in status in Liberia, sometimes his behavior was very primitive. (Saridy, participant 10)

According to the *theory of cultural capital*, Bourdieu (1977:82) asserts that one's ability to achieve success is socially constructed and contingent upon access, time, and amounts of capital available to an individual. Bourdieu identifies three variants of cultural capital: mind and body, institutional, and cultural goods. Correspondingly, the social capital of Saridy's partner entailed limited competencies, flawed manners, poor decision-making strategies, and underprivileged demeanors. While Saridy regarded herself as a successful Liberian woman, she alleged that her partner had limited access to cultural capital, and therefore, criticized his status.

Situations such as poverty, unemployment, isolation, and a lack of social skills often took a toll on Saridy's daily quality of life. When Saridy came across these social conditions, she experienced stress. Not all the stress was serious, but the behavioral outcome was always controlling or violently aggressive. Saridy said:

It just upset me. I'd say, 'You can't bring that into my life. There are certain things you have to stop because your with me now.' I couldn't take it. I wasn't happy because of the fact that he didn't really measure up to what I wanted. (Saridy, participant 10)

At times, Saridy's efforts to build her partner's talents and promote his academic achievement were ineffective. Other times, the circumstances were intolerable and she was frustrated or embarrassed. Each time she struck her partner, violence was rooted in unequal cultural power and customs surrounding the fight.

### *9.1.3 Economic control*

As described in earlier, control of financial resources is an important indicator of the distribution of power among intimate partners (Straus and Gelles 1990). In her relationship, Saridy owned and managed their home and property. She dictated household decision-making and regulated their bank accounts. Saridy's control of financial conditions inevitably maintained her dominance over her partner. However, Saridy did not believe a woman should manage

family finances. Instead, she preferred to maintain the home and care for her son. Saridy alleged that limited control of her partner's household decision-making and responsibilities prompted her violent outbursts:

I tried to help him measure up. When it came to job applications, I would go to the jobs and if they had a kiosk, I would fill job applications out for him while he sat there looking dumb, as usual. I would coach him on how to do an interview. I was just all stressed out. Finances were horrible and he was not working. I was looking for work for him because he didn't even know how to write his name properly. Sometimes, I got so angry that I would just slap him. (Saridy, participant 10)

Over time, Saridy was less diligent about training her partner to manage money and assist with their financial obligations. However, she continued to insult him and perform violent slanderous acts in public. Saridy also disregarded his input or ideas. She said, "He was not business savvy and his comments were always said out of context." Throughout the relationship, Saridy chastised and abused him because he was financially unsuccessful. She also withheld credit information from her partner, and made him account for every dollar that he spent.

Willful and malicious destruction of personal property is also a source of economic control. Economic control also occurred when a partner dominated and controlled the other partner's property. Sasha damaged her partner's property when she became angry. She said:

I burn his clothes. I've broke his game system, I've bashed the windows in the car. I've thrown his Timbs [boots] outside. (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha also destroyed other expensive electronics and important court documents. The reckless destruction of her husband's personal property occurred because of the resentment she harbored. Unlike Saridy, who always used physical violence as an initial response, Sasha immediately commenced to damaging her husband's items.

Research on IT reports that destruction of property is also a form of intimidation (Fergusson et al. 2005). Although Sasha's physical outbursts did not threaten her partner, they

were a source of economic and behavioral control. Sasha alleged that her partner was often cautious about performing conduct that incited her rage toward his property. Her acts of vandalism were also an inconvenience; they required additional time to repair or replace, and the destruction lessened her partner's wealth.

#### *9.1.4 Domineering control*

A partner who is domineering and neglectful toward the other partner is regarded as “practicing a form of violence” against them (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005). Domineering control is absolute control over a partner; it is an extreme form of IT abuse. The domineering partner has a disposition that propels them to overpower the will of others. They are often micromanagers who dictate what their partner is allowed to see or to do. They use this personality to stifle and crush others. While attempting to take control over a situation, a domineering partner often loses control over himself or herself.

Saridy believed she was the boss of their relationship. The only time she felt secure was when she believed that she had made her partner feel self-motivated, focused, and ambitious. She set her partner's personal goals and objectives, and expected him to follow her instructions at all times. Ultimately, Saridy's need for control stifled her partner's freedom. Saridy used mental, physical, and monetary power to control and manipulate her partner's behavior. The physical repercussions associated with her overpowering personality were also highly addictive. When she felt threatened, violence occurred. Saridy hit when she felt her partner was out of line. Her comments were emotionally abusive, and she lost her temper by screaming and yelling. Saridy attributed her physical violence to immaturity and her inability to verbalize demands effectively; she found no fault with her appetite for control. Saridy said, “My anger is hard to control.”

Saridy reported that she and her relatives achieved results at almost any cost, but they became frustrated and irritated when others did not comply.

## 9.2 Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse is a distinct type of coercive controlling behavior. Psychological violence refers to acts that cause psychological harm, which occasionally entail symptoms of PTSD. This type of violence is insidious and often difficult to detect in intimate relationships. For example, one partner may disagree with a statement offered by the other partner, or a partner may not believe certain statements are harmful. Psychological violence has the greatest impact on victims when the abuse operates through forms of manipulation and insults; the impact of abuse is typically contingent upon the partner's acknowledgement of abuse.

Although psychological abuse includes, but is not limited to, verbal harassment, isolation, jealousy, threats, and abandonment, this section closely examines psychological abuse that occurred when the participants said something to humiliate or threaten their partners. Verbal attacks included ridiculing, verbal harassment, and name-calling. The types of verbal abuse depicted made the partners believe they were not worthwhile and were stated to keep them under the control of the participant. This section also examines participants' performance and attempts to perform threatening behavior. Threats were red flags that merit attention. Threats were warning signs that determined a partner's likelihood for danger.

In tandem with research in Stamp (1995), Sasha and Saridy abused when they were unable to control their impulses and emotions. Saridy insulted her partner in a way that made him out to be mentally unbalanced. Sasha discouraged her partner's communication with peers, forcing him to feel guilty about spending less time with her. Saridy demanded daily accounts of

her partner's day, but constantly critiqued his behavior when she disapproved. During IT, psychological abuse was a part of the cycle of victimization.

### *9.2.1 Verbal aggression*

An argument is a verbal interchange involving the presentation and defense of a position while attacking a position taken by another person. On the contrary, verbal aggression is an attack on a person's self-concept performed with the intent or perceived intent to harm their self-image. Research on verbal abuse distinguishes between arguments and verbal aggression; the primary difference between the two concepts is the intent to abuse, harm, or torture that defines verbal aggression (Infante and Rancer 1996). Verbal abuse does not leave evidence comparable to the bruises of physical battering. A victim is often the target of angry outbursts, sarcasm, or indifference. Verbal abuse takes on many forms such as, name-calling, criticizing, degrading, threatening, and using foul language.

Verbal abuse performed by Sasha was both overt and predictable. Her partner was not shocked or alarmed her sarcasm, especially when the remarks were hurtful. Sasha said, "I comment on his verbal abuse." As these back-and-forth verbal acts escalated, the intensity and variety of abuse also increased, which instituted an ongoing pattern of verbal abuse. On the other hand, Saridy's verbal abuse was manipulative because attacks were not always blatant; disparaging comments were articulated using an extremely sincere tone. These covert attacks were hidden forms of aggression, and her partner often misinterpreted them. However, when Saridy's verbal abuse was overt, her rage resembled an anger management problem rather than effective response to conflict. Every so often, Saridy's partner was stunned by the verbal responses that were immediately followed by slaps, kicks, or flying objects. Ultimately, Saridy's verbal aggression was not a side point of conflict; it was an ongoing constraint because

psychological abuse was an issue that Saridy was unlikely to resolve. To examine verbal abuse further, this section closely examines three types of verbal abuse: trivializing, discounting, and name-calling.

Verbal aggression was performed for many reasons, one being an avenue to gain superiority. Saridy used a method of verbal aggression called, trivializing. When a circumstance was trivialized, the partner's psychological victimization allowed the participant to ignore the conflicting elements of the circumstance. For example, Saridy belittled her partner by trivializing his accomplishments. Saridy conveyed her excitement about her partner obtaining a minimum wage job, while simultaneously insinuating that low wage employment was remarkable for men who had poor reading skills. Trivializing behavior tended to make partners feel uncomfortable or unable to cope with their circumstances. Hence, the partners' success became their own failure. Saridy used this type of verbal abuse to make light of the situation, which settled her mind because she convinced herself that the interrelated hardship was no longer a conflict, thus trivializing what was previously important to her. Saridy said:

I can have a conversation and he wouldn't really get it. I could be watching a movie and want to talk about it, and he would just agree with me. He only made it to the eighth grade so I pretend to listen when he makes no sense. (Saridy, participant 10)

Many forms of verbal abuse replicated the rash effects of trivialization. These verbal attacks also defined the lower status of an intimate partner. Saridy also performed discounting to prove that her partner was below her, which implied that his standards were less significant than hers were. She told him repeatedly that he was worthless, humiliating him, demeaning him, and emotionally abusing him in front of others. Saridy said, "He's ugly, he's stupid, he's a lousy boyfriend, and he's an incompetent person." She claimed that her partner only managed to survive because she took care of him. Saridy believed that he was helpless without her. This type

of discounting presented her partner as less than average. Very often, Saridy framed something that she wanted him to try as impossible for him to achieve. Then, she discussed the risks and potential losses that he might forebear. This form of verbal abuse deflated the abused partner's self-esteem, leaving the partner in a depressed state, or compelling him to internalize these demeaning judgments.

Sasha also discounted her partner, constantly recognizing his actions as “not good enough.” Simultaneously, she encouraged him to receive training, but was pessimistic about his completion of certificate programs in areas that did not meet her criteria for success. The reality was that Sasha's statements were backhanded. Training may have enhanced her partner's status and his skills. Sasha would say, “We're paying all this money for you to attending training, but at least you're not working two jobs like I am, caring all of our financial burdens on your back.”

Sasha also said:

Honestly, I felt like I settled for him. I believe I deserve better. I know I deserve better. The value of myself is worth way more than what he can provide for me. It was more like, he owed me.  
(Sasha, participant 9)

While trivialization and discounting were subtle forms of verbal abuse, name-calling was one of the most overt symptoms of a verbally abusive relationship. When Saridy and Sasha participated in name-calling, they were ultimately denouncing the ideals of their partners. This method of abuse made them feel immoral or otherwise undesirable. Partners were also likely to isolate themselves once they felt disempowered by the statements. For example, following name-calling episodes, Sasha's partner would leave the house for hours at a time, and Saridy's partner often stayed in the guest bedroom alone. However, there were more harsh consequences of name-calling. These regular insults also made the partner feel less adequate, less competent, and

less loved. According to Saridy, these types of labels were crippling for her partner. As time progressed, she watched his self-esteem diminish.

When name-calling occurred, one partner denigrated the other, but also sent a message about power and control. Name-calling often implied or blatantly demonstrated that the abusing partner was not afraid of the other, or that the partner was weak. Saridy said:

My son knew how to spell words better than him. I would tell him to shut up and stop talking. I don't think at the time I knew how to get him to think and use his brain. I would call him stupid. (Saridy, participant 10)

When Saridy continued to refer to her partner as “stupid,” the partner allegedly came to believe he was unable to do things and stopped trying to succeed.

### *9.2.2 Threats and fear*

Threats were typically forms of aggressive communication that intended to harm another person. Some threats included physical punishment, but most were also cognitive and social in nature. Marshall (1992:105) defines threats as words that are relevant to physical harm, rather than those related to the act of yelling in and of itself. Hence, not all arguments were threatening or fear inducing.

A threat did not totally alter the other partner's viewpoint, but the communication was often effective at changing how the other partner acted, especially their short-term behavior. Threat usually enhances the abused partner's fear of becoming a victim of violence. However, among participants who performed IT, threats and fear of experiencing violence were not directly associated. Sasha attempted to intimate her partner using various threatening acts and outbursts of rage such as swearing, breaking items, and other combinations of verbal and physical threatening conduct. Sasha issued threats to make her partner feel scared, controlled, or

intimidated. However, when she threatened him, her partner was unlikely to accept her threatening communication as a sign of danger. Sasha said:

I'll try to do something that books might consider as being violent if he pisses me off, but it doesn't affect him but it's helping me to feel relief or cope with my frustration. He will get frustrated if I do something with my body that he don't appreciate. (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha's partner downplayed her looks and gestures. When she performed threats with intentions of controlling or frightening him, he laughed and disregarded her behavior. The more he disregarded her, the more threatening methods she carried out until her partner showed signs of frustration. However, she lacked power to impose fear onto her partner. This finding is also present in Margolin (1987).

On the other hand, Saridy performed threats that were successfully intimidating, belligerent, and harassing. Saridy said:

I think he was afraid of ending what we had, so he stayed regardless of how nasty I acted toward him. I think if he wanted to tumble me down or beat me up, he could. (Saridy, participant 10)

Saridy performed the role of a bully. However, she was almost certain that her partner did not fear of her physical aggression. She claimed that he stayed in the relationship because he loved her and her son.

Threatening to leave the relationship also had psychological effects and physical outcomes. Threats of abandonment, divorce, or initiating an affair reoccurred when the men failed to comply with their women's wishes. For example, an explicit threat included, "If you don't do this, I'll leave." Sasha made a habit of telling her partner there were other good men who would love her. She also said:

I can have anybody I want. He's not an angry person until it gets to the point where I'm dealing with another guy. That's his weakness. (Sasha, participant 9)

Saridy also threatens to leave, but also flaunts her involvement with other men. She says:

It got to the point where I didn't have a sex drive for him anymore. I was just openly cheating on him. I'll call the guy and he's sitting in the bed and say, 'I should go see the other guy.' (Saridy, participant 10)

Threats were also performed as one partner's response to the other partner's conduct.

When Sasha responded to her partner's unwanted comments, she often expressed threats. Sasha's reply reflected her need for a sense of control. Given the hostility in their relationship, Sasha reported that her partner displayed sudden mood swings, which to Sasha, were signs of his depression. She said, "Out of nowhere, he just snaps." Nevertheless, she referred to his response as an unusual reaction because he usually was pleasant and reassuring following her acts of physical violence. Sasha noted that his behavior was threatening because it was impulsive and unpredictable, but she did not denote her behavior as being threatening. She said:

He'll show that he cares when he's pissed and gets emotional but other than that, he's not an angry person. (Sasha, participant 9)

Sasha presumed that her partner provoked her violence. Hence, she inflicted more severe physical threats such as waving kitchen knives and household items at him. Sasha rarely followed through with threats of serious physical violence because her partner usually seized the weapon and calmed her.

Acts of violence toward inanimate objects were also threatening. For example, Sasha damaged items that belonged to her partner. She threw piles of his belongings outside and placed them on fire, and threatened to burn him as well if he interfered. This type of threat and others often caused a tremendous backlash in terms of the anger and negative emotions that were aroused following that behavior.

Threatening behavior was also attributed to a person's history of violent behavior. Saridy depicted herself as an overly aggressive woman. She displayed her threatening conduct intentionally, but often performed indirect threats. For example, she often reminisced about

previous experiences of domestic violence, such as stabbing, choking, or mutilating her ex-partners during IPV. However, Saridy discounted her actions:

I think he probably felt like I had issues. He knew that I came from an abusive background with my father, and he knows that I had to fight a lot when I was living in New York. He knows that I came from a violent background so those things, he understood. (Saridy, participant 9)

Saridy demonstrated her fascination with violence and identified with incidents of violence in intimate relationships. It was unclear whether she approved of her use of violence to resolve problems.

Sasha and Saridy performed symbolic threatening violence and used acts of mild, minor, and moderate physical aggression as threatening behavior. Although most threats led to additional verbal attacks or physical abuse, the injury from this abuse was often long lasting. Ultimately, their irate behavior spawned ongoing victimization and a long-term call for vengeance, threats, and acts of revenge.

### 9.3 Domestic abuse and coercive controlling violence

Dasgupta (2001) suggests that men's violence towards women has much stronger effects than women's violence towards men. This finding is presented because instances of men's violence are more likely to strike fear in their partners. Furthermore, injuries incurred by women are more severe (Berk et al. 1993). Patterns of female-perpetrated IT were similar in this study. Although Sasha and Saridy were as hostile and controlling as samples of men in current studies on IT, these women feared their partner's potential retaliation. The victims of these IT abusers were also likely to experience long-term physical abuse.

Most often, the partners of Sasha and Saridy performed non-controlling resistance, but these women accepted that their partners had the physical strength to retaliate abusively at will if they opted to take such action; participants were also fearful of her partner's physical strength.

These women were aware of their limits. They could overpower their partners in many ways, but the partners were unlikely to internalize the threats of physical abuse. Additionally, the partners did not fear the participants. This finding is not unique to female-perpetrators. It is also consistent with male responses in Rasche (1995), a study on reasons for violence and female-male homicide. In tandem with Saunders (1988), Sasha's partner behaved as if her physical aggression was trivial, and his resistance became more violent when he was annoyed rather than amused by her conduct. Although Saridy committed IT abuse, her partner also performed instances of mutual combat as she became more violent. MVC also described patterns of domestic abuse exercised by Sasha and her partner.

Mills (1984) finds that women's violence towards men has no social or psychological effects on the men who sustain it. However, it was likely for Sasha and Saridy to instigate abuse by destroying property or demonstrating psychological abuse. These participants reported their partners' distress, depression, and stress following their attacks. The partners also experienced low self-esteem and lessened self-concept in response to verbal and psychological abuse. For the most part, female-perpetrated IPV in this study was situated around women's economic control and their powerful roles in household decision-making. Performance of this distinct type of coercive control was the differentiating factor between the powerful and powerless in their intimate relationships.

### *9.3.1 Frequency and duration of coercive controlling violence*

Hines and Douglas (2010:17) find that verbal abuse, sexual aggression, threats, and controlling behaviors are not the sole domain of men. In their study on IT violence, female partners are reported by the male participants to have used all types of IPV 1.72 times (insisting on sex) to over 6 times (physical IPV) the frequency of the male participants. Findings among

the sample of IT abusers in this study were comparable. Female perpetrators were more violent and verbally aggressive than their partners and women's abuse tended to increase in frequency and severity over time.

Saridy and her partner did not argue very often. Instead, Saridy physically chastised, calmly criticized, or yelled at her partner on a daily basis. Saridy's level of frustration always predicated the severity of her violent displays following an event that triggered a hostile response. However, patterns of violence escalated overtime. Saridy said:

First, it started off with just shoves and shut up, like little flings of my hand or just mashes in the head, and then, it just it turned to slaps. I hit him plenty of times. He used to just frustrate me so bad. He knew I was just an angry person. (Saridy, participant 10)

Saridy claimed that she attacked her partner three to four times per month. She said, "I attacked him about fifteen times." Her partner hit her back one time. Saridy said:

Once, he responded and in that situation, you really couldn't blame him. I hit him and then he threw some type of beverage in my face so I hit him again. Then, he smacked me and so we started scuffling in the car. What shocked me the entire time we were hitting was like, 'Oh my God, he is hitting me back.' I remember we got upstairs are there's this big because I'm like, 'How dare you hit me.' It was really crazy, but I started the fight and I think he was just tired of being beat on. (Saridy, participant 10)

Over a two-year period, Saridy assaulted her partner six times. On several occasions, Saridy inflicted harm comparable to experiences of IT violence. However, she claimed the injuries were unintentional.

Saridy performed violent acts more frequently than Sasha did. However, in Sasha's relationship, all arguments escalated to physical abuse. Hence, violent outcomes were often premeditated and they were predictable. Sasha was usually the aggressor of attacks. She said, "He's never hit me or lashed out me purposely first, except for once." IT violence occurred two times in Sasha's relationship. The analysis of frequency and duration for MVC offers a full

description of Sasha's performance of IPV (See 8.2.1: Frequency and duration of mutual violence).

### *9.3.2 Severity of coercive controlling violence*

Hines, Brown, and Dunning (2007) find that the most common physical acts performed by female IT abusers are hitting, pushing, kicking, grabbing, and punching. They note that callers on a helpline had to assist the abused partners with physical and psychological aggression from their female partners because the physical aggression performed against them was sometimes severe enough to warrant calling the police or getting medical intervention. Women in this study also used the above-mentioned types of violence, but they often used weapons and physical objects during violent events. The severity of IPV performed by Saridy was similar to findings in Hines et al. However, on most occasions, Sasha was unable to harm her partner because he restrained her during IPV.

Saridy and Sasha performed ongoing violence. Their patterns of controlling behavior were consistent, but overtime, participants were more violent. Saridy and Sasha performed random acts of violence. The degree of violence depended mostly on the partner and participants' levels of frustration. However, women's antisocial behavior was also a predictor of violence towards the partners. These findings are consistent with Kim and Capaldi (2004). In most cases, each partner responded submissively to the participants' enraged behavior to avoid further conflict. The following section examines the severity of IPV experienced when mutually violent participants and partners expressed the following types of aggression: harassment, attacks, violent assault, stalking, and IT violence.

Among participants who performed IT, harassment and IPV often occurred simultaneously; Saridy and Sasha exercised an assortment of harassing behaviors and used

coercive control to dominate conversations, household rules, and to control the partner's behavior. Verbal abuse and threats were two distinct depictions of harassment performed by Saridy and Sasha.

Saridy's harassing behavior included (1) teasing her partner after denying him access to resources, (2) insulting him and members of his family, and (3) complaining about his lack of progress. Saridy's demeanor was more hostile when these attacks occurred in the presence of others. Her goal was to express that her partner was useless and incompetent. Saridy and Sasha reported that they had trouble controlling their anger, which explained their lashing out at their partners when they were mildly distressed. Unlike Sasha, Saridy did not throw objects at her partner. Saridy said, "Everything in the house belongs to me and I am not breaking anything that he cannot afford to replace." Ultimately, both Sasha and Saridy reported that they harassed their partners to relieve their own frustration.

Similarly, Sasha and Saridy asserted arrogant interpretations of their status. Given their roles in their relationship, both women justified their abusive behavior as necessary and acceptable action. Following each verbal attack, Saridy calmed herself enough to explain why she hit him. However, Saridy rationalized her conduct and blamed him. On the other hand, Sasha never expressed regret and contended that her partner deserved the belligerent attacks. Since Sasha and Saridy were incapable of altering their partners' viewpoints and conduct, more patterns of violence surfaced. Saridy noted that, "He tries to do better, but he's just missing what he needs to be a real man. I just wasn't used to it and I couldn't change that I was angry." Sasha and her partner entered a battle for control, and Saridy's partner continued to resist her abuse. The analysis of MVC offers specific details on the escalation of violence in Sasha's relationship (See section 8.0: Battle for control).

During IT, physical attacks were intense, but the incidents did not last as long as violent assaults. Some attacks were verbal-physical attacks. However, Saridy usually hit her partner and walked away without commenting. Saridy was also likely to slap him with any durable object in reach such as pans, shoes, books, and many other items. In reports of mutual combat, participants in this study performed attacks as tactics of intimidation to scare their partner into submission. However, Saridy's attacks were expressions of control rather than strategies used to gain control. When Sasha performed similar tactics, her partner's became angry and she did not scare him. Regardless of the violent or non-violent outcome, Sasha and Saridy always initiated and employed coercive violence.

While some of Sasha and Saridy's violent outbursts were brief, others resembled a complete loss of control. Both participants noted that they attacked when their partners showed any signs of discontent. Saridy said:

He would cry. He would yell, 'Why you hitting me? Why you doing this? I'm tired of this. This is not what we are supposed to be doing.' I would be screaming at him while he was trying to calm me. (Saridy, participant 10)

During violent assaults, Sasha intended to hurt her partner, but the intent of his violent response was rarely mutual. Sasha used weapons such as knives, glass objects, and other household items during violent assaults, but she did not injure him. Similarly, Saridy attempted to place her partner in chokeholds, but she was not strong enough to execute the maneuver. She gouged her fingernails into his neck instead of choking him. It was significant that both women desired to severely injure the partners, but they were physically incapable.

The most hostile performance of IPV was IT violence. On several occasions, she yelled and waved a knife at her partner. She tried to cut him, but claimed that she never intended to stab him. She said, "The deep cuts were an accident." However, Saridy made excuses and apologized

for her loss of control. On the other hand, Sasha and her partner had near-death experiences of IPV (See 8.0: Battle for control).

### *9.3.3 Injury during coercive controlling violence*

Most data on hostile cases female-perpetrated violence examine female-male homicides. Of these samples, the vast majority of women kill men who have battered them over a long period. In research on mutual violence, research finds that women are more likely to experience injuries (Archer 2000). However, in this analysis of IT, findings showed that women were more likely to initiate violence, and men were likely to experience minor injuries.

Saridy's partner hit her one time, but his slap left no clear sign of physical abuse. Saridy described the incident:

In New Jersey, we went back to the hotel and he had like a towel on his head. He looked at it and there was blood. I did scar him often. (Saridy, participant 10)

Saridy was more likely to commit attacks than violent assaults. During attacks, her kicks, punches, and slaps were not likely to result in noticeable physical injuries. However, her partner bled on several occasions when she struck him with items. Sasha's partner brutally attacked on one occasion, leaving her severely injured. She also had permanent bruises from being forced down during her attacks.

## **PART 5: DISCUSSION**

Part 5 addresses the second and third research questions. The previous chapters examined the applicability of Johnson's typology, which surveyed the relationship between control and violent aggression to identify types of IPV performed. However, Johnson's theory did not fully depict participant's emotional responses when external motivations were the impetus for their subsequent reactions and escalation of IPV. Hence, in chapter 10, I re-examine participants' centered perspectives to assess how the context of external motivations framed their emotional

and physical responses and performance of IPV. I also examine the role of control in participant's victimization and perpetration of IPV.

## CHAPTER 10: EXTERNAL CONTEXT AND MOTIVATIONS

Although motivations for IPV differed from one participant to the next, each participant experience reflected past experiences in some way. This analysis of external motivations is an answer to the research question: what are external motivations for IPV among women who are perpetrators and victims of IPV? It allows for an additional analysis of IPV. This analysis of external motivations examines the specific contexts of IPV, which allow for a richer interpretation of participants' emotional motivations for IPV.

During the interviews, each participant described what their relationship was like before the first occurrence of IPV. They also recounted events that occurred prior to IPV and how they felt about the situation now and at that time. They offered interpretations of how they and their partners responded to conflict. They identified conflict or disputes leading to IPV, as well as the motivations or justification for physical aggression. Finally, the participants described treatment, incidents, and emotions that arose following violent incidents. Anecdotes about the behaviors enacted after each violent incident varied by participant. External motivations of IPV emerged as the participants described how they felt overtime about their experiences of IPV.

As participants described these emotional dynamics of their relationship, the potential causes of their violence experiences also materialized. As each participant shared their stories, they described how physical aggression, hostility, anger, and fear emerged and developed during their relationships. Some attributed IPV to current conditions, but others highlighted both current and past events as determinants for their performance of physical aggression. External

motivations that were most commonly articulated include addiction, exposure to violence, and support.

## 10.0 Addiction

Most studies on substance abuse and perpetrated violence find that incidences of IPV are significantly higher in substance abusers than are others (Bhatt 1998). In this study, there was no clear evidence that substance abusers were more aggressive than partners who did not consume a substance. However, these findings showed that women who did not experience substance-related abuse were more violent than women who were in relationships with substance abusing partners. In addition, I did not find a strong relationship between men's substance abuse and severity of male-female perpetrated IPV; participants who did not experience substance-related IPV reported higher levels of coercive control. The methodology of this study, reporting only from the female participant, limited this examination of partners' substance use and IPV to the perspective of the participant (Cunradi et al. 2002). Nonetheless, the findings supported the association between men's drug and alcohol use and risk factors for female-perpetrated IPV.

Five participants (Debra; Brittany; Sarah; Veronica; Susie) reported that their partners were under the influence of alcohol, illegal substances, or prescription medications during instances of IPV. Each participant recounted pre-drinking attitudes, drinking attitudes, and sober expressions. In doing so, they described their partners' extreme behavioral types as "normal or violent" (Susie, Brittany) and "quiet or fool" (Debra). In contrast, Sarah and Veronica's partners displayed mood changes that were situational, showing no consistent pattern of behavior. Sarah and Veronica reported that their partners' demeanor was nasty, violent, or foolish while under the influence or sober. Following signs of addiction, Debra and her partner were more aggressive. Susie and Sarah reported responding violently to experiences of humility and loss of

resources related to their partner's addictions. Conversely, Brittany and Veronica claimed that while under the influence, their partners initiated physical violence when they failed to meet the partner's demands.

Findings also differed based upon the type of drug or alcohol used by the abuser or victim. One partner consumed alcohol (of Debra); three partners abused drugs and alcohol (of Brittany, Sarah, Veronica), and one partner abused narcotics (of Susie). Debra and Veronica admitted their own experimental use of illegal substances. Although each participant experienced a wide assortment of violence, control, and contexts of IPV, their partners' substance use had adverse effects on each participant and partner.

#### *10.0.1 Alcohol consumption-only*

Leonard and Quigley (1999) find that there is no common behavior attributed to acute alcohol use. However, the probability that IPV will occur is greater when a partner has been drinking. Debra explained her partner's moderate drinking, stress-related dialogue, and simultaneous outbreaks of violence. Debra stated that her partner was already verbally abusive and violent when he was sober, but she alleged that he became more hostile when he was intoxicated.

Debra said her partner was more likely to express his anger by insulting her and initiating physical attacks. This finding is consistent with research in Galvani (2004). Galvani finds that partners often use psychological and physical violence to address problems, but their usual hostility and assertiveness augment while under the influence. Furthermore, literature in Bhatt (1998:S26) finds that aggressive men who resort to violence when they are intoxicated make unrealistic demands and have a low tolerance for stress. This finding is also consistent with

patterns displayed by Debra's partner. While under the influence, Debra's husband demanded that she quit her job and burdened her to give him money that she earmarked for bills.

#### *10.0.2 Abuse of drugs and alcohol*

Brittany, Sarah, and Veronica described their partners' use of cocaine, Ecstasy, prescription drugs, and alcohol. These partners consumed lethal variations of drugs, over the counter pills, and alcohol. Brittany's partner used violence to control her. Supporting research finds that violence occurs because inebriation institutes an inability to control their anger and frustration; hence, the abuser use violence to release suppressed feelings (Jones 1993, Stamp 1995). While intoxicated, partners of Sarah and Veronica also lost control due to volatile tempers. Learned behavior theories also explain partners' responses, and supports the premise that substance abusers are violent because the substance induces their loss of control.

Preconceived and socially learned effects of substance abuse also reflected participant responses to substance-related violence. Each participant recognized substance abuse as a disease. However, some believe it was curable and others opposed. Brittany referred to most incidents of substance-related abuse as unconscious physical aggression. She was vigilante with a goal of supporting her partner's recovery. Sarah became hostile and left the relationship, and Veronica did not respond. Each participant attributed their partners' violent behavior to their addictions.

Bhatt (1998:S25) finds that chronic use of these substances brings physical and mental deterioration. In this study, the addiction caused participants to forget previous discourse, which resulted in false accusations and angry attacks. For instance, partners of Brittany and Sarah often failed to recall violent episodes after drug use and heavy drinking. Participants witnessed their partners' altered cognition, noting that they often confused perceptions and interpretations of

their behavior. They were certain that this type of conflict did not occur when the partner was sober. The *disinhibition theory* suggests a direct link between alcohol and its pharmacological effect on cognition, in particular the brain centers that control inhibitions (Galvani 2004). The drug-altering behavior following chronic drug and alcohol abuse resulted in predictable, hostile, and controlling violence.

### *10.0.3 Abuse of narcotics*

Susie revealed her partner's abuse of narcotics such as crank, Valium, cocaine, and crack cocaine. During substance-related IPV, women were often mentally tortured, scolded, isolated, or silenced, among other portrayals (Bhatt 1998: S29). Susie noted that her partner was aggressive and intimidating while under the influence. Rather than responding aggressively, Susie ignored her partner's antisocial and distinctly abnormal behavior when the drug use became habitual and his behavior was oversensitive. Consistent with literature in Rogers et al. (2003), substance use was not likely to cause IPV. However, the distress relative to addiction did induce arguments that eventually lead to IPV. Susie attributed specific aggressive patterns of behavior to her husband's drug abuse such as violent disputes that occurred regarding financial instability, his disappearing acts, and alleged cheating.

Susie noted that her husband also engaged in frequent financially damaging and unlawful conduct. Similarly, Bhatt (1998) argues that abuse of highly addictive substances aggravate incidents and is closely associated with other types of crime and violence. Similarly, Susie reported that her partner's actions were psychologically damaging. She prepared to leave the relationship within one month of his violent conduct.

## 10.1 Child abuse

Some studies argue that previous victimization contributes to their current situation (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Neidig, and Thorn 1995; Swan and Snow 2006). However, there is no consistent evidence to suggest that previous victimization causes current victimization. Others suggest victim-blaming interpretations of this history (Enander 2010). Five participants experienced violence prior to their examined adult experiences of IPV: four participants experienced child abuse (Susie; Aaliyah; Veronica; Debra); two experienced child molestation (Brittany; Susie). The analysis of SCV also examined experiences of child abuse. However, Brittany and Aaliyah's experiences were excluded from that analysis (See 7.01: Child abuse). This section examines how participants' "multiple victimization" was directly associated with emotional responses, patterns of victimization, and perpetration of IPV (Johnson 2008:10). Swan and Snow (2006) predict that higher levels of childhood trauma predict greater propensity of female-perpetrated violence. However, in this study, child abuse affected participants in a variety of ways and their aggressive responses varied. In tandem with Simmons et al. (2008), I linked types, frequency, and degree of childhood abuse to the participant's current experiences of IPV.

When Brittany, Susie, Aaliyah, Veronica, and Debra were exposed to violence, the experience triggered warning signs for imminent exploitation. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is the most common diagnosis by mental health professionals for battered women. The extent, severity, and type of abuse of these participants were associated with PTSD. This response supports findings in Hughes and Jones (2000) on symptoms of battered women syndrome. Research in Jacobson and Gottman (1998) focuses on understanding the impacts of violence and PTSD. Although they assert that the purpose of all battering is to control and intimidate, Jacobson and Gottman suggest that frequency of violent acts may not be the

motivation for fear among participants who experience various degrees of PTSD. In this study, individual responses to violence had much to do with how they assessed the level of intimidation used when their abusive partners were physically violent.

In some cases, childhood victimization was positively associated with increases in violent behavior. Aaliyah experienced child abuse by her stepfather between the ages of thirteen and sixteen. She described the abuse as a form of punishment for dating outside of her race. She said:

There was good bit of physical abuse. We got beat with weapons that actually got broke on us. I've been punched. I been kicked in my private. I had a fork thrown at my shoulder and stuck in. (Aaliyah, participant 4)

Debra also experienced multiple incidents of child abuse, but the abuse began once her mother separated from her biological father. Between the ages of five and twelve, her mother's dating partners abused Debra, her siblings, and her mother. She stated that her mother's victimization shaped her adult perpetration and victimization:

My mother and father separated when I was five years old. My father was abusive to my mother. He picked up her up and dropped her and broke her leg. She had to move us away. The girls, she talked to us about men, and how not to let men take advantage of us or to use us or mistreat us and if we come to get in relationships like that. But, as adults, me and my sister have both been in really violent relationships. My sister has been beaten brutally and I have not. (Debra, participant 7)

Debra believed that she had a lesser tolerance for abuse than others because she refused to let another man abuse her. Susie exhibited similar violent behavior when she experienced IPV. For example, Susie's alcoholic father molested and abused her. Susie attributed her violent responses to past abuse enacted by her alcoholic father. Susie said, "I am slated for life":

It [abuse] just changes you as an individual person. So, I think that [victimization by an addict] already slated me at one point. So, when he [her partner]betrayed me the way that he did, I wasn't really shocked. Because you just expect people to do bad things. So, I was like, okay. Well, he's a male. He's a man. He's getting high. You know, my father was an alcoholic, so it kind of made sense to me. Addictions and violence seemed to have gone together for me anyway in that situation. (Susie, participant 3)

Susie said her perceptions of domestic violence were more traumatizing and psychologically damaging than her previous experiences of child victimization. These negative emotions were tremendously powerful in that they often led to suspicions or doubting the moral character of others. Throughout their interviews, Susie, Aaliyah, and Debra continuously compared their partners to the individuals who abused them in the past. However, participants' violent responses differed. Susie ended her twelve-year marriage to remove herself from the situation. However, Susie's hostility resembled Debra's incident of IT violence. On the other hand, Debra and Aaliyah expressed negative emotions such as in arrogance and anger as they attempted to prove that their partners were unable to take advantage of them.

Susie, Aaliyah, and Debra displayed responses that were associated with anxiety and impaired concentration. Each focused on the single task of self-defense. Susie, Aaliyah, and Debra became hyper-vigilant to cues of potential violence, which often resulted in an exaggerated startle response. This depiction resembled the "fight" response of the fight or flight model. The *fight or flight response* is the human body's primitive, automatic, inborn response that prepares the body to fight against or run from perceived attack, harm or threat to our survival (Mitchell and Anglin 2009).

Conversely, childhood victimization also showed a negative association with an increase in violent conduct. For example, an older female cousin sexually abused and molested Brittany between the ages of four and nine years old. Veronica reported multiple accounts of physical assaults and rape by teen-aged adolescent boys, and was molested by two male relatives. Both women had limited support from family members. Since childhood, these women alleged that family members denied, ignored, and overlooked their abuse. Since that time, Brittany and

Veronica experienced degrees of emotional imbalance. The interview dialogue with these two women was strikingly similar.

Findings also suggested that Brittany and Veronica's previous experiences of child abuse influenced a gradual decline in their thinking process regarding intimate relationships. They disclosed how expressions of negative emotions such as fear, shame, and guilt debilitated their lives; negative emotions triggered sequences of psychologically unhealthy behavior such as depression and ineptitude. Another similarity was that both Veronica and Brittany said they were attracted to men who behaved as disciplinarians. Their experiences of child victimization and responses to their partners' drug addictions shaped their passive responses to victimization and restricted performance of IPV.

Brittany and Veronica also reported forgiving violence during their search for emotional attachment. In particular, Brittany confessed that she searched for love since her early childhood. Hence, long-term abusive situations reoccurred because Brittany and Veronica claimed to be irritated by far less than other participants who experienced similar exploitation. Simultaneously, Brittany and Veronica became emotional even at the slightest pressure; both women cried as they introduced each sensitive topic during the interview process. It appeared as if these women accepted abuse as a routine function, often concealing or internalizing acts of mistreatment. Like her childhood reaction, Brittany was not likely to respond aggressively to physical and sexual victimization. For instance, when Brittany's boyfriend punched, choked, stomped, kicked, and threw her, she did not retaliate.

Another noteworthy similarity between Veronica and Brittany was that both women showed extreme psychological distress when they experienced verbal abuse. Studies argue that psychological abuse may be as damaging as physical violence (Alvi et al. 2005). Brittany's only

physical response to IPV occurred as a response to disrespectful name-calling. Other times, Brittany used coping mechanisms and avoidance strategies to avert her partner's violence. Brittany and Veronica each showed varying degrees of tolerance for victimization. Veronica often suppressed feelings about violence, adapting instead to situations of emotional and physical violence. She said, "It took a while for me to believe I deserve better treatment." Veronica insisted that she was "immune to physical violence." She also said:

With being hit so much in my life, I think I would rather him hit me than verbally abuse me. It's not something that everybody should look forward to, but the verbal abuse is what hurt me more than the physical abuse. (Veronica, participant 6)

Bhatt (1998) argues that abusive lifestyles spawn emotional consequences for everyone in the household. Parallel among all of the participants who experienced childhood victimization was evidence that previous violence impacted participants' self-esteem. Brittany, Susie, Aaliyah, Veronica, and Debra battled feelings of low self-concept. Susie said, "Abuse kills you as far as trusting men completely or to a certain extent. It changes you as an individual." Similarly, Snow and Anderson (1995) describe identity work, which entails an individual's capacity to maintain their social and personal identity. Brittany, Susie, Aaliyah, Debra, and Veronica also reported that they feared and, or expected rejection; they struggled with redefining who they were as women and partners in new intimate relationships. Susie reported that she would remain emotionally unavailable until she achieved trust and co-dependence.

## 10.2 Culture of violence

Ooms (2006:5) implies that research on domestic violence must take into account those historical and cultural differences, but do so with recognition that not all violence is the same. Most participants (Brittany; Veronica) experienced abuse during their childhoods, some witnessed various elements of community and cultural violence (Sasha; Saridy), and others

(Susie; Debra; Aaliyah) were exposed to both contexts of violence. For those who experienced community and cultural violence, the broader context of IPV entailed lifetime exposure to violent social networks that regarded physical aggression as a routine response to conflict. These social encounters were settings in which the participants first experienced violence as witnesses and other times, as victims. These participants observed violence enacted toward their siblings, family members, and peers. Exposure to violence was broad and encompassing, but often included use of weapons, assaults, and other forms of social disorder. The contextual and situational conditions of violence taught these participants how to hit as an adult. Participants learned that violence was an acceptable way to achieve a desired outcome.

This research considered a broad conceptualization of cultural violence as part of the analyses on women's experiences of IPV. This section describes participant's exposure to acts of interpersonal violence that were committed by relatives, individuals who were not intimately related, or both. Three participants were exposed to family or community violence (Aaliyah; Debra; Saridy), one was exposed cultural violence (Saridy), and three were exposed gendered perspectives of violence (Susie; Debra; Saridy).

#### *10.2.1 Family and community violence*

The analyses of MVC and IT overlooked relations between exposure to violence and IPV. Instead, these types of IPV adopted patriarchal traditions as the broader contextual motive for physical aggression. Findings in the SCV analysis reported ways in which increased physical violence and emotional responses may be closely associated with previous experiences of family violence. The SCV analysis examined family violence experienced by Debra and Sarah's partner (See 7.1.1: History of violence). This section continues the discussion on family and violence

and its influence on women's patterns of violence, extending the conversation to include participants who performed MVC (Aaliyah) and IT (Saridy).

Studies find that there is a link between different forms of family violence and later symptoms of psychopathology such as experiences of distress, depression and anxiety (Chester et al. 1994). Other research finds an increase in physical aggression and increased likelihood that children who are frequent victims of physical punishment will hit a spouse as an adult (Gorman-Smith and Tolan 1998:102). For Aaliyah, Debra, and Saridy, family was the setting in which they first experienced violence. Either as victims, or as witnesses, they learned that people with whom they were closest to would be the individuals who hit them. They also learned that using violence was an acceptable way to respond to conflict.

As a child, Aaliyah was disciplined with severe corporal punishment. As a teen, she did not cause fights, but when provoked, she behaved aggressively or violently toward others. She reported her stepfather's physical abuse toward her mother and siblings as normal behavior. He and Aaliyah's mother led self-defense courses and often practiced these methods in the home with their children. However, when Aaliyah's stepfather became angry, he applied these same techniques to abuse each of them. Aaliyah contended that she was not a violent or hostile woman. Nevertheless, it did not take long for her to replicate her stepfather's behavior in her own relationship.

Saridy experienced community violence and witnessed family violence. Saridy reported previous experiences of ethnic discrimination and neighborhood violence. She noted that her family resided in an upscale home that was situated in close proximity to city schools and an impoverished African-American neighborhood. She confessed that on a daily basis, she and her siblings were chased home and beaten up by Black children primarily because they looked and

spoke differently. She said, “I developed anger toward racial groups other than the West Indian people and those from the Islands who were the only people in our neighborhood who were kind to me.” Saridy offered an explanation:

We were good girls, but we had to develop this anger. Even though we probably already had it in us, we wouldn’t initiate fights, people would fight with us. We got followed home because we lived in a bigger house and didn’t live in the projects. Kids wanted fight us and they would beat us up or jump us. They [African-American children] called us names like African booty scratcher, they said we ate blood pies and smelled funny, just different cultural names. (Saridy, participant 10)

Saridy was not only angered by men, whom she was convinced were all abusive, but she also showed similar violent conduct toward other people who were ethnically diverse. As Saridy grew older, her behavior much resembled the conduct of an anti-social intimate terrorist abuser.

#### *10.2.2 Cultural violence*

Violence is often a reflection of basic values that shape the norms of family life, conflict resolution, and other daily practices. In particular, the cultural environment plays an important role in spousal violence when those value systems encourage the use of violence. Individuals who witness cultural violence often transfer those ideas from one generation to the next. In this study, knowledge, beliefs, customs, and habits concerning violence were learned and shared by members of cultural groups.

One participant, Saridy, belonged to a tribe in Liberia. She claimed that women in these tribes controlled the village. Saridy reported that, “Hardcore behavior comes from the mothers of their tribe.” Women’s expressions of power and authority were a response to years of violence and female victimization. Saridy explained past violence that encouraged violence among women in her family:

A lot of times in West African households, women are being abused by the man. You do something wrong, the man is just going to smack you, or he can say whatever he wants to you. You’re just supposed to take it. And, he can beat the kids. He can tie them up and do all kinds of

crazy crap all depending on the degree of what they do. That's normal, but on the outside looking in, our lives looked perfect. It looked normal. (Saridy, participant 10)

Saridy believed that a culture of violence trained the new generation of Liberian women to react and respond negatively to men. These women were defensive and callous, constantly reminding their partners of the historical injustices of Liberian women. They acted out the violent conduct that male slave-owners directed toward them in the past:

Women are worse than the men, and the women of my grandfather (his daughters) are 10 times worse. None of them are married. None of them can keep a man. All of them are very verbally and mentally and physically abusive. A lot of their men can be on a certain level and they're still not satisfied. They still don't feel like their man is masculine enough. One of my aunts had a husband who owned the ship and he named the boat after my aunt. He was a very well established man, but she was never comfortable and happy with him. She always talked down to him in public, treated him like crap. They say a lot of us, all of us, whether girls or boys, we all get that from that tribe. I think it all leads back to my grandfather. Girls were trained to fight violence. (Saridy, participant 10)

To regain their power, these Liberian women in Saridy's family deconstructed what it meant to be feminine. Ultimately, Saridy did not assume blame for her violent behavior. She attributed her instinctive and violent responses to her family history.

### *10.2.3 Gender and violence*

Gender ideology and gender categorization are highly complex cultural constructions. Although no society has a definitive gender ideology, this section introduces examples of behaviors that manifested an ideology of male dominance. The participants or their partners did not perceive of their intimate relationships as egalitarian partnerships. Instead, expectations of each partner entailed specific responsibilities that were linked to men's power and women's submission. As noted in Yodanis (2004), gender ideology functioned as a lens through which inequalities in the relationship were viewed. This finding is also present in Grasmick et al. (1996) and MacMillian and Gartner (1999).

These constructions also positioned women as the second sex; two participants (Susie; Saridy) supported the division of labor, while one (Debra) did not. In these cases, violence was embedded in conflict regarding the respective roles of men and women. Susie and Saridy did not perceive gendered divisions of responsibilities as unfair. They were socialized to value specific traditional standards and performance outcomes. Saridy's constructions of gender were closely tied to her tribe's beliefs. On the other hand, Debra had not internalized these social and normative principles of life. Although Debra did not disregard the legitimacy of traditional values, she refused to experience violence to learn a lesson. Explanations of the broader context of IPV in the analysis on SCV offered a detailed overview on participant experiences of gender inequality (See 7.1.2: Gender inequality). Saridy's experiences were not included in that sample.

### 10.3 Social support

Evidence shows that supportive networks are beneficial to women with abusive partners. Studies also show that social support networks are an important factor in battered women's ability to recover from violence (Mitchell and Hodson 1983). The amount, type, source, and quality of social support have also influenced their experience as well as their psychological health and well-being (Tan et al. 1995). However, it is crucial that the social networks be supportive. For this study, an interview question assessed participants' experience with social support or social networks. Specifically, I asked them, "Have you requested or received support?"

Domestic violence agencies typically provide some combination of the services such as crisis hotlines, counseling, advocacy, and emergency shelters (Bennett et al. 2004). The following section offers participant reports of their access to informal and formal networks.

For example, participants in this study sought assistance through counseling services (Susie; Sarah) and others were court-ordered to attend (Brittany; Sasha), shelter services (Veronica), domestic violence support services (Susie; Sarah), authorities (Susie; Veronica; Sarah), and family and peer networks (Ann; Aaliyah; Debra; Sasha). Two participants were volunteers for the women's center network (Renee; Debra), but neither received formal support regarding their personal experiences of IPV. Three participants were not affiliates of the women's center network, and they did not received formal services (Ann; Aaliyah; Saridy).

### *10.3.1 Counseling services*

Most counseling services are designed to provide opportunities to address the impact of violence on the lives of those experiencing IPV. These services are typically offered on an individual basis and group settings. The common thread across most counseling programs is examining IPV from the perspectives of power, control, and gender inequality (Bennett et al. 2004). Susie and Sarah received counseling services voluntarily, while Sasha was court-ordered to attend.

Susie attended counseling to grasp an understanding of what being a victim of domestic violence meant to her. During several sessions, she learned about the life of an addict and used that knowledge to rebuild her self-concept and identity as a single mother. Susie said:

When I went through counseling after that situation [domestic violence], I learned that the addicted person and the person that they're married addicted to behaviors, the ups and downs, the ebbs and flows of the addiction. (Susie, participant 3)

Sasha was court-ordered by Child and Family Services (CFS) to attend anger management and child safety counseling sessions. She participated in non-violence programs, took drug tests, and attended counseling sessions. She felt like counseling services were ruining her life. She postponed attending college, and could not pursue employment opportunities that

were not local. Sasha claimed that she understood the purpose of these sessions, but refused to alter her aggressive responses. Furthermore, she would not blame her partner for his episode of IT violence. Instead, Sasha took responsibility and as a result, was pressured by CFS to grant her mother custody of her daughter. Sasha said:

My psychological evaluation states that I'm a social problem and I'm far from normal. I don't look at things the way that other people look at things, I don't receive things the way that other people receive them, I don't understand things the way other people understand them. The system is so caught on one track. It's wrong for a man to hit you, but at the same time, what happened? What was the reason? (Sasha, participant 9)

Following an altercation with her mother rather than her abusive partner, Brittany was also court-ordered to attend anger management counseling.

It was with my mother who is an alcoholic. She gets in my face and tries to hit me with her shoe. I pushed her out the way. She threw a hot curling iron and it grazed my foot so, we're fighting, punching, shoving, pushing, and moving around from the apartment. Cops come and they see visible injuries on both of us, so we both got arrested. We went to court and they told us that we had to do anger management. (Brittany, participant 1)

Although she resisted her partner's abuse in the past, Brittany announced that it was her first fight. Brittany's memorable moment from counseling was a discussion about similarities in relationships choices between her mother and self. Brittany reported that her mother had also settled for less, dating a married man for 10 years.

Heyman and Schlee (2003) contend that the physical aggression couples treatment programs hold each partner accountable for recognizing cycles of dysfunctional interaction. In these programs, the partner must learn to respond with de-escalation strategies. Sarah and her partner attended physical aggression treatment sessions. Sarah said:

I let him come back under the presumption that he was going to get this counseling. We started going to a private counselor in our neighborhood for a couple weeks. It was like these sessions where you just sit and you talk, and you're spilling out all your things and it's like, oh well you need to get out of this relationship. Well, I know that. Help me figure out the unobvious. How could I force that on him? (Sarah, participant 5)

Sarah said the treatment was ineffective for her because she was paying for a service that should have provided instant solutions. Sarah discontinued the service because she preferred not to spend hours revisiting each occurrence.

Overall, counseling was beneficial for introducing or reintroducing the context of IPV or violent conduct. Participants had their own interpretations of victimization and abuse, which were not subject to change during counseling. Furthermore, the sessions did not alter participants' physical aggression or controlling behavior.

### *10.3.2 Shelter services*

Shelter services offer safe refuge for women and their children. Bennett et al. (2004) argue that shelter services are more helpful for battered women than traditional counseling services, and are likely to reduce the frequency and intensity of new violence. Shelters offer social, legal, and medical assistance to help women rebuild their lives following instances of IPV. Veronica was the only participant who used shelter services. She said:

They said if I did not change my [work] hours, we were not going to be able to stay there anymore. But, when you first sign the papers, you state if you have a job, and that's why they have a pass code for the door. I got angry and aggravated. A cop showed up. I said, 'You mean to tell me that I come here to get away from a man who abused me and abused my children, but we're getting kicked out because my job goes past 9 o'clock so I can provide for them. I asked, 'So, you're just pushing me back to the man that abused me?' He was law enforcement, so why is there nothing that he can do? So of course, I had to go back to the apartment where he was. (Veronica, participant 6)

After Veronica returned home, her partner frustrated her again. Regardless of his plan of attack, and without any hesitation, Veronica shot a gun at him. Veronica confirmed that, aside from the shelter, a weapon was the next viable alternative to subdue her victimization.

### *10.3.3 Domestic violence support services*

Domestic violence support services and hotline advocates provide crisis intervention, safety planning, information, and referrals throughout the United States. Most of these

organizations provide crisis services such as referrals for shelters, support programs, and legal advocacy. Susie called a hotline immediately following her partner's first instance of violence to clarify various signs and symptoms of addiction and domestic violence. Similar to other agency reports about heroin addicts, Susie learned that her husband also performed an addict's response to conflict, which was emotional victimization and accounts of violent behavior.

Prior to attending counseling sessions, Sarah also contacted a free counseling service offered through her place of employment. However, when they learned that her daughter was involved in the dispute, the service provider deviated from their confidentiality policy to process child abuse claim. Sarah said:

As I'm telling her the whole story, she asked for my name because there's a child involved. I was like, 'well I don't want to do that. I thought this was confidential. I ended up hanging up on this lady and I decided not to go that route. I stayed in the relationship and we tried the best we could to work out the conflict (Sarah, participant 5)

Similar to counseling services, crisis hotlines also offered participants explanations concerning the context of IPV. Sarah continued to investigate other services. In tandem, she prepared to exit the relationship.

#### *10.3.4 Authorities*

Participants contacted authorities following some cases of IPV. However, participant experiences reflected changes in domestic violence policies and legal practices for female offenders. For example, Veronica decided not to physically assault her partner. Instead, she abided by the legal process and had her partner arrested. Officers denied Susie assistance because help was only available after she had been physically attacked. Conversely, Sarah countered an attack and risked a dual arrest for her involvement in a domestic dispute.

When Veronica's partner attacked, she never retaliated. Instead, she contacted the police immediately. Veronica asserted that abuse would have been more violent if she had not had him

punished for his behavior. Veronica described one attack that occurred while her partner was under the influence:

I said, 'Is there anything you'd like for dinner?' He ran into the living room where I was sitting and hauled off and backhanded me and I fell [off the couch]. I didn't understand why [bursts into tears]. I called the cops. I asked the cops to please put him in jail. (Veronica, participant 6)

To keep her and the children safe from violence, Susie reached out to the authorities for help, but they were unable to assist her. Police explained the process for filling an order of protection after a physical assault. Susie said:

I originally had tried to file a protection order I think two weeks before that [violent incident] happened. They [officers] told me since I hadn't been battered, literally hit, they wouldn't give me one. So, I went back the day after he hit, flipped out, turned over some desks, kicked some chairs. I lost my mind. I was like, 'if you had gave me this restraining order, I wouldn't be in this situation right now.' They finally gave it to me, and we went to court, but he didn't show up. They issued an arrest warrant, but they couldn't find him. I never saw him again. (Susie, participant 3)

Officers also denied Sarah assistance. Sarah looked to police for support, but the officers refused to arrest her partner. Since his mouth was bleeding and she had no visible injuries, they claimed that the attack was mutual. She explained the circumstances:

'We [police] are going to arrest him for intoxication in public.' I said 'wow, are you kidding? You're not going to charge him when he just tried to choke me out in the car.' 'We're not going to charge anyone with domestic violence because you both put your hands on each other.' (Sarah, participant 5)

Using their discretion, the officers decided not arrest Sarah.

### *10.3.5 Family and peer network*

Mitchell and Hodson (1983) find that social networks encourage women to use particular coping strategies in dealing with domestic violence. They urge that types of coping also influence the likelihood of obtaining additional support. Furthermore, related studies claim that greater levels of IPV are associated with non-supportive responses (Bennett et al. 2004). In this

study, some victims and perpetrators of IPV sought counsel and support from friends and family. This section describes participants' informal support.

Sasha reached out to her parents, sisters, and friends. However, she explained that they did not understand her plight. She referred to herself as the “black sheep” of the family, being the only sibling who had not met any of her mother’s personal, academic, or professional expectations. Sasha noted that these individuals offered the best advice that “they” knew of, but their counsel was typically offered out of context for multiple reasons; Sasha did not share the complete explanations, and her family and peers were out of touch with issues of poverty. Sasha was certain that their recommendations were not reasonable solutions to her problems. Furthermore, leaving her husband was not an option.

Conversely, Debra turned to her mother for advice. Her mother did not advise that she leave the relationship. However, her mother explained the context of violence and emotional abuse. She attempted to lead Debra into submission, but Debra was determined to create equal footing in her relationship. Debra said:

She [Debra’s mother] felt like it was more of the fact that he was just a country boy and their sense of values and things were different than mine, from being a city girl. So, she felt like I might not be able to take the country out of the man. He’d never been to the city to know about city life. He did not want a working woman or to share the responsibilities. I thought about it and I told her that ‘we’ really wanted to give it a try and he really wanted to come [to NY] and restart all over again. I also had told her that I even gave him the option that we can go anywhere just to restart all over again to save our marriage; we didn’t have to come to NY. Well, we got to New York and my mom was open and she was willing to let us stay there and try to get things together. Our plan was to look for jobs to get ourselves established. (Debra, participant 7)

Debra’s mother supported her decisions. Furthermore, when Debra’s plans failed, her mother also financed the husband’s trip back to Mississippi.

## CHAPTER 11: CONTROL AND IPV

In this chapter, I answer the research question: What role does control play in women's experiences of IPV, and how do they express and experience control? I offer explanations on how women are non-controlling and controlling in the context of IPV performed before, during, and after occurrences of IPV. I also explain how control performed by participants in this study compared with outcomes for men who perpetrate IPV. I used Johnson's two-dimensional analysis of aggression and control describes how participants' experiences.

### 11.0 Participant experiences and control

In this analysis, I employed Johnson's scale of controlling behaviors, which ranges from non-controlling to coercive controlling aggression. I also applied Kevan-Graham and Archer's controlling behavior scale to classify behaviors as non-controlling or controlling (See Appendix B: The revised controlling behavior scale). However, I considered the participants varying motives of control. Since I applied a dual analysis of external motivations and the two-dimensional relationship between aggression and control, some participant experiences entailed rich descriptions that did not align with precedent findings in research on IPV. Hence, at my discretion, I assigned items such as premeditated physical aggression, predicting violent conduct, and distancing as either non-controlling or controlling. Furthermore, some explanations were non-traditional, including expressions of self-control as modes of control exercised as participant responses to violent abuse. Forms of control were also actions that limited the partner's performance of violent behavior such as avoidance. Types of coercive control also varied. They included isolation and fear-inducing behaviors, but they also entailed actions such as threatening to leave the relationship. I also included more traditional types of control such as asserting command and authority over a partner.

My analysis was parallel with Johnson's typology. I applied two-dimensional interpretations of control and physical aggression to each participant experience of IPV to assess the types of, extent, and motives for their use of control. Like Johnson's, this analysis of control did not examine control as additive function. Instead, control was operationalized using an intersectional interpretation of physical aggression and control. In the analysis of control, I examined non-controlling and controlling behavior to describe women's experiences of control during their experiences of domestic victimization and perpetration of IPV.

#### *11.0.1 Findings on non-controlling behavior*

During resistance, non-controlling behavior was exercised by using self-control, coping, and staying in the abusive relationship (See 6.1: Non-controlling resistance). However, non-controlling behavior was not always performed as resistance. Proactive and situational types of non-controlling behavior included predicting violent outcomes and retaliation. Other types of non-controlling behavior included suppressing anger, submission, and avoidance (See 7.2: Situational conflict).

Participants performed self-control as non-controlling behavior, which was a way of restricting their own propensities for violence. Other types of restricted control and self-controlling behaviors included learned helplessness (Brittany), enduring pain (Ann), and suppressing anger (Brittany; Ann; Susie; Veronica). Coping was another method of self-controlling conduct that included behaviors such as submission (Brittany; Susie; Ann; Debra), concealing abuse, ignoring a partner's violent behavior (Brittany; Ann), seeking consensus (Brittany; Susie), and being overly supportive of the partner (Brittany). By coping, participants limited their own actions, but their coping strategies were engaged to avoid and limit their

experiences of victimization. These forms of non-controlling behavior were also examples of victim's unique strategies to regulate the severity of violent situations.

Participants used other tactics such as avoidance (Brittany; Ann; Susie; Sarah; Debra) and accepting blame (Brittany; Ann) to minimize victimization. These types of non-controlling conduct were employed as indirect attempts to escape partners' behavior. Accepting blame entailed an internalization process that often compelled participants to belittle their own behavior (Brittany; Ann). Some participants also downplayed occurrences of IPV (Brittany; Sarah) and convinced themselves or their partners that conditions were improving. Downplaying typically involved suppression of behavior that allegedly provoked the partner's physical violence. Distancing (Ann; Veronica) was another form of avoidance. When other options were exhausted or participants grew tired of abuse, they spent less time with the partner to avoid abuse.

A participant's access to resources also resulted in their performance of non-controlling behavior. Economic dependence (Ann; Aaliyah) was a form of non-controlling aggression that often led to frustration and physically aggressive conduct. A more proactive type of non-controlling resistance entailed predicting the partner's violent outcomes (Brittany; Ann). When predictions were accomplished in effort to avoid violence, the action was non-controlling. However, when predictions were established to aid in premeditated resistance, the behavior was controlling. Unwillingness to leave (Brittany; Ann; Sasha) was also a form of non-controlling behavior (See Table 3: Controlling and non-controlling behavior).

### *11.0.2 Findings on controlling behavior*

Controlling behavior typically entailed acts of manipulation, intimidation, isolation, and violent physical aggression (Kelly and Johnson 2008), and was usually enacted to violate the partner's physical integrity or to deprive him of his rights and resources (Graham-Kevan and

Archer 2003). In search of control, some participants who sensed extremely violent outcomes (Susie; Aaliyah; Debra; Renee) often examined and predicted common violent behavioral patterns of their partners. This behavior was classified as controlling when their predictions were used to execute premeditated attacks. Premeditated physical aggression was a controlling act even when participants performed this aggression while resisting a violent abuser.

Participants also used hostile forms of physical aggression in battles for control. They (Ann; Sarah; Renee; Sasha) used physical violence to maintain control of themselves, their partners, and the situation. Some participants' (Aaliyah; Debra) perspectives on control during physical aggression were limited to beliefs that they gained control when they won a fight. For these participants, winning meant they gained control over the partner's ideas or impending behavior. Some participants injured their partners, which was a form of temporary control exercised during vengeful attacks (Aaliyah; Renee; Debra). Others participants felt empowered when they retaliated (Ann; Veronica; Sasha) with full intentions of inflicting pain.

On the other hand, when participants (Ann; Renee) were fully aware that they would lose the battle, they demonstrated control by expressing their willingness to endure pain. Other times, participants (Ann; Susie; Veronica; Sarah) were unable to defeat their partners alone. They used strategic controlling tactics such as seeking outside sources of power. They recruited others to defeat the partner, or contacted the authorities (Sarah) even when no harm had been done. Another manipulative but controlling expression (Aaliyah) was the performance of inadvertent premeditated attacks, which entailed catching the partner off guard to accomplish successful attacks. Participants also intimidated their partners (Brittany; Aaliyah; Veronica; Sasha) by threatening to leave the relationship. Some committed forms of sexual abuse (Sasha; Saridy) when they threatened to have or perform sexual intercourse with other men.

Controlling behaviors were not limited to physical aggression. All but three participants (Brittany; Ann; Veronica) performed forms of verbal aggression. Participants performed verbal attacks as attempts to assert their perspectives, which was a type of control. Verbal abuse was often performed alongside physical aggression. Given their histories of violence or extreme discontent with conditions in the relationship, some participants (Aaliyah; Debra; Sasha; Saridy) experienced mood swings, as they were quickly angered and responded to conflict using violence. These aggressive comments stemmed from anger and frustration regarding unhealthy conditions in their relationships. One form of verbal aggression expressed was sarcasm (Susie), but most participants (Susie; Aaliyah; Sarah; Renee; Sasha; Saridy) used insults that degraded their partners or countered various forms of hostility directed toward them. Insults were often used to counteract the partner's control.

Periodically, participants (Renee; Sasha; Saridy) performed verbal attacks that were triggered by impulsive responses to anger, frustration, and conflict, which resulted in lashing out verbally or physically. Participants who performed verbal and physical aggression simultaneously demonstrated a lesser degree of fear, which also displayed their unwillingness to experience victimization. During hostile verbal disagreements, some participants (Aaliyah, Sarah; Debra; Sasha; Saridy) threw or destroyed personal property, or hit their partners with this property, which exemplified control as threatening conduct. Others (Aaliyah; Veronica; Debra; Sasha) used weapons or restraint techniques to gain control of their partners or the situation.

Participants also exerted coercive control to threaten their partners. Obsessive behavior (Susie; Renee; Sasha) was an example of coercive controlling conduct. This behavior entailed conduct such as isolation (Renee) and stalking (Susie; Renee), which were both enacted to pursue control of their partners' whereabouts. Jealousy (Renee; Sasha) and emotional

dependency were similar types of emotional control exercised by participants. In contrast, some participants (Veronica; Saridy) were unfaithful in their relationships, which was a type of control that left the partners jealous or without a response.

Types of coercion were also performed using economic control. Control in the relationship and self-control were available when participants managed the family finances (Susie). Access to money afforded battered women the resources to exit the relationship. Some participants (Debra; Sarah; Veronica; Sasha; Saridy) were also the primary breadwinners. As breadwinners, participants (Sarah; Sasha; Saridy) opted to exercise power by using non-cooperative bargaining regarding household decisions and situations.

Leaving a violent relationship (Debra; Renee; Saridy) was also a form of control, especially when participants (Susie; Aaliyah; Sarah; Veronica) fled with their children. Some participants (Susie; Debra) divorced their partners. Both situational and external contextual experiences motivated partners to leave their relationships. For example, some held patriarchal ideologies concerning the division of labor for men and women. They (Susie; Saridy) confronted partners using this idea to dictate expectations of their partner's masculinity and gender roles. When partners failed to meet these expectations, the participants exited their relationships (See Table 3: Controlling and non-controlling behavior).

### *11.0.3 Findings on gender and control*

As mentioned earlier in this study, current literature on female-perpetrated IPV debates whether women are as violent as men are, or if current studies on female-perpetrated IPV offer an over-exaggeration of increases in female-perpetrated violence (Johnson and Ferraro 2000; Schwartz 2000). In this section, I examine whether women's control was similar to previously examined types of control experienced by men. Forms of masculine control in previous research

include (1) intimidation, (2) fear, (3) patriarchal attitudes, (4) coercive control, and (5) sexual violence.

Research reports men's use of intimidation and coercion during domestic disputes (McNeely and Mann 1990; Steffensmeier et al. 2001). In this study, both participants and partners exerted control by using forms of intimidation such as throwing or striking objects and verbally abusing their partners. However, the purpose of conduct differed among women in this study. This group of women was more likely to use objects as weapons while their partners used the objects to release anger. The participants also tended to use objects as equalizers to compensate for differences in physical strength. These findings are present in research by Pagelow (1985).

Past and current studies on male violence report that abusive men exercise threatening behavior to successfully provoke or encourage fear (Infante and Wigley 1986; Fergusson et al. 2005). Like studies on male-to-female perpetrated IPV, participants in this study also used threatening verbal and physical aggression in an effort to control, which has been traditionally classified as fear-inducing conduct. Conversely, these participants exercised controlling behavior to degrade their partners, but they did not provoke fear. One participant, Saridy, was successful in gaining control over her partner's conduct. However, findings in this study showed that no partners expressed fear of participants' physical aggression. Instead, partner's expressions of fear were limited to expressions of anxiety regarding the participants' exiting strategies or reluctance to stay.

Rather than expressing fear, partner behavior resembled findings in Margolin (1987) and Archer (2000), which depicted men's resistance that included laughing, joking, downplaying, and downplaying women's acts of aggression. No participants in this study performed a similar

response to their partners' aggression. Women expressed a similar negative response to men's marginal educational attainment and, or professional achievements. To gain comparable types of control, women issued character attacks and demeaning comments to belittle their partners and confirm their lesser position in the relationship.

In their roles as breadwinners, participants in this study also challenged masculine superiority and institutional control. Similar findings on men's control are reported in Pridemore and Freilich (2005). As predicted, men responded with hostility when their economic control and role expectations were diminished. However, in this study, both partners and participants held patriarchal attitudes that entailed gendered expectations. These controlling motives sparked verbal aggression and physical conduct. Furthermore, regardless of the degree of violence, participants were more likely than their partners to perform any type of submissive behavior. In one of the two explanations of female-perpetrated IT, only one partner showed patterns of submission.

Rather than performing submission, partners' alleged controlling aggression was reported as being impulsive and direct. In IT samples, men's violence is depicted as being controlling, impulsive, and tempered (Gottfredson and Hirchi 1990). In this study, three participants employed similar patterns of control. In contrast, it was common for participants to spend time deliberating various methods of attack. Their intimidating and violent tactics were often premeditated; many occurrences of female initiated violence were premeditated resembling findings in Johnson (2006b). Some participants executed premeditated attacks, but those acts were performed as responses to their partners' violent conduct.

Antisocial intimate terrorist abuse is controlling violence that is enacted so that one partner can have his or her way (Vangelisti and Perlman 2006). Only one participant performed

antisocialist intimate terrorist abuse, which was a type of abuse reported in male dominated samples of IT. When participants' behavior was impulsive and controlling, the conduct was often times an emotional response to the partner's unfavorable conduct. Rather than resorting to violence, most participants reported attempts to compromise or convince their partners to conform. Furthermore, women's motives for control were often attributed to lived experiences rather than the extent of the partner's physical aggression.

Miller and White (2004) and Wesley (2006) find that sexual vulnerability is a part of the context of lived experiences of battered women. In this study, sexual violence or rape was another form of control performed by partners. While two partners performed sexual violence, no participants in this study reported forcing sexual intercourse. Correspondingly, two participants performed sexual violence by having sexual intercourse with another man or cheating. Two participants reported deliberate and flagrant acts of infidelity.

Table 3: Controlling and non-controlling behavior

ID		CONTROL PERFORMED		CONTROL	EXPERIENCED
		NON-CONTROLLING AGGRESSION	CONTROLLING AGGRESSION	NON-CONTROLLING AGGRESSION	CONTROLLING AGGRESSION
1	<b>Brittany Jones</b>	Accept blame, avoidance, downplaying, predicting, ignoring abuse, coping, suppress anger, learned helplessness, overly supportive, belittle self, unwilling to leave, seek consensus	Threaten to leave	N/A	Discipline, insults, manipulation, mood swings, non-cooperative decisions, rape, verbal abuse
2	<b>Ann Wardop</b>	Accept blame, avoidance, coping, belittle self, suppress anger, predicting, economic dependence, unwilling to leave, ignoring, distancing	Recruit others, willingness to endure pain, fighting, retaliate	N/A	Breadwinner, intimidation, jealousy, manipulation, non-cooperative decisions, obsession, verbal abuse
3	<b>Susie Jordan</b>	Avoidance, suppress anger, coping, seek consensus	Take children, divorce, patriarchal ideology, sarcasm, enduring pain, premeditated violence, manage finances, obsession, verbal aggression, contact authorities, insults, violent assault, stalking	Distancing	Destroys objects, intimidation, mood swings, verbal abuse
4	<b>Aaliyah Kanter</b>	Economic dependence	Threaten to leave, leave, insults, enduring pain, premeditated violence, verbal aggression, take child, throw objects, revenge, restraint techniques, violent assault, winning fight, mood swings, inadvertent attacks	N/A	Breadwinner, inadvertent attacks, intimidation, isolation, non-cooperative decisions, rape, verbal abuse
5	<b>Sarah Jenkins</b>	Avoidance, downplaying aggression	Fighting, take child, leave, breadwinner, verbal aggression, non-cooperative decisions, insults, intimidation, contact authorities, manipulation	Financially dependent	Verbal aggression, intimidation
6	<b>Veronica Holmes</b>	Distancing, suppress anger	Threaten to leave, take children, leave, breadwinner, infidelity, contact authorities, retaliate, weapon, IT violence	Financially dependent	Infidelity, intimidation, threaten to leave with another man, mood swings
7	<b>Debra Smith</b>	Avoidance	Divorce, breadwinner, verbal aggression, revenge, weapon, violent assault, mood swings, premeditated violence	Financially dependent,	Isolation, non-cooperative decisions, patriarchal ideology, verbal aggression, weapon, mood swings
8	<b>Renee Garcia</b>	N/A	Fighting, leave, jealousy, obsession, verbal abuse, revenge, destroy property, isolation, premeditated	Lying	Infidelity, intimidation, mood swings, manipulation

			violence, lashing out, stalking, take child, willing to endure pain		
9	Sasha Davis	N/A	breadwinner, fighting, non-cooperative decisions, infidelity, retaliate, destroy property, leave with another man, lashing out, mood swings, obsession, threaten to jealousy, verbal aggression, weapon,	Avoidance, suppressing anger	Downplaying abuse, strikes objects, intimidation, mood swings, patriarchal ideology
10	Saridy Wilkins	N/A	Breadwinner, infidelity, hit with objects, leave, lashing out, non-cooperative decisions, mood swings, patriarchal ideology, threaten to leave with another man, verbal aggression, violent assault, winning fight,	Submission, accepting blame, suppressing anger	N/A

## PART 6: IMPLICATIONS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

I examined whether the categories of IPV in Johnson’s typology were effective tools for classifying experiences of women who were both victims and perpetrators of IPV. This study found that Johnson’s typology successfully described six of 10 participant experiences.

Conversely, four participant experiences were only applicable to tenets within multiple IPV types. In chapter 12, I articulate my recommendations for refining Johnson’s types of IPV. I begin with discourse regarding conceptual strategies that emerged when I applied Johnson’s two-dimensional relationship between physical aggression and control to participant experiences. In addition, I describe tempered violent resistance (TVR), a new and revised IPV category that was useful for describing women’s experiences of IPV. In chapter 12, I also introduce the limitations of this study.

### CHAPTER 12: TYPOLOGY, LIMITATIONS, AND SUMMARY

This chapter contributes to explanations in chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9 that also addressed the first research question of the study: in what ways does Johnson’s typology (VR, SCV, MVC, and

IT) fit women's experiences as a perpetrator and victim of IPV? In chapter 12, I describe the implications of applying Johnson's typology, as it applied to women's physical and emotional experiences of IPV. I also observe Johnson's unconventional conceptualizations of physical aggression and control that some participants performed, but others did not. Finally, I describe how these limitations prompted the use of mixed type interpretations of participant experiences in this study.

## 12.0 Conceptual challenges

Johnson examines physical aggression and control in intimate relationships. Although these concepts described relationships between control, physical aggression, and conflict, prior conceptualization of these terms was unclear and inconsistent in studies on IPV. In this section, I introduce conceptual challenges that arose using these concepts.

### *12.0.1 Conceptualizing non-controlling aggression*

Throughout the literature on IPV, I found that the conceptualization of "non-controlling aggression" was unclear and poorly defined. Family violence literature and feminist criminology research, which inspired my dissertation topic, also challenged Johnson's interpretation of "non-controlling violence." Much of my contention with the conceptualization of non-controlling aggression stemmed from its inconsistency with the Duluth model. *The Duluth Model* is an anger management treatment program that focuses on making the perpetrator fully accountable for IPV. Duluth forces the aggressor of IPV to understand that acting out ANY form of violence is a form of control. Conversely, Johnson's typology introduces the concept of non-controlling aggression into IPV literature, but in accordance with family violence and Duluth literature, my first thought was that the concept, "non-controlling aggression" can never exist because violence cannot exist without control. Hence, initially, I supposed that non-controlling violence could not

be quantified or conceptualized if it did not exist. However, after further deliberation, I concluded that the concept of non-controlling aggression was an oxymoron, but it was useful for the study of IPV.

Notwithstanding my own contention and notions in other feminist critiques, I carefully conceptualized the concept in this study, especially when I applied VR. Johnson's conceptualization combines two incongruous images, non-controlling (protective violence) and aggression (anger). In fact, I found that the non-controlling aggression did not pertain to the severity of violence performed; instead, Johnson used the term to categorize a "behavioral type" of perpetrator who was not an intimate terrorist. The concept needed a comprehensive definition, which had previously not been offered in research on IPV.

I also learned that the term non-controlling aggression was critical for Johnson's typology because the purpose of his typology was originally to distinguish between SCV and IT violence. Johnson and Leone (2005:324) noted that even nonviolent control tactics take on a violent meaning that they would not have in the absence of their two-dimensional relationship with violence. In fact, other categories (MVC and VR) were developed using findings from studies on SCV and IT. In accordance, Johnson argued that victims of VR and perpetrators of SCV also performed non-controlling violence.

Nonetheless, even after better understanding non-controlling aggression, I offered the following critique. The application of the term in the context of SCV needed further clarification. SCV ignored the relationship between "intentions for hitting" and the "type of control" exercised. SCV showed that non-controlling physical aggression applied when the purpose of a fight was to resolve conflict. The "purpose" of the fight did not determine whether an aggressive partner intended to control the other's thoughts or ideas. Hence, in SCV, it was unclear whether

partners were fighting to *gain control of the other partner* or to *gain control over the situation* (Anderson 2008). I found that SCV did not distinguish between physical control and psychological control. The use of non-controlling aggression was also vague and inconsistent in SCV, especially given that the current study also assessed emotional responses as motivations for physical aggression.

### *12.0.2 Shifts in physical aggression*

This section is a critique on Johnson's typology its use of two-dimensional relationships between physical aggression and control, which he refers to as dyad relationships. The types of IPV often failed to consider changes in violent behavior that transpired over time. For instance, in the beginning of a relationship, one partner may have been non-violent. However, as a culture of violent behavior emerged, each partner was likely to perform different patterns of physically aggressive behavior. As the extent of violent behavior increased or declined, experiences of one or both participants were likely to fit into more than one type of IPV.

Furthermore, the two dimensions in Johnson's control typology had to be conceptualized dimensionally. His typology was essentially an analysis of the severity and symmetry of violence and control. However, when I considered shifts in physical aggression among women in this study, the dimensional analysis in the typology was flawed for two reasons. First, variations in physical aggression were not always consistent with changes for control held by each partner. For example, in this study, Aaliyah and Susie perpetrated IPV as self-defense. However, as these women gained marginal amounts of situational control, no present type considered this transition in their controlling behavior; none of Johnson's present two-dimensional relationships described one partner who used controlling-physical aggression that was not equivalent to the other partner's coercive controlling physical aggression. Since the relationship between violence and

control was not consistent with any existing type of IPV, I established another type of IPV, TVR. Although this study found that the extent of behavioral change was not predictable across participants, future research should further examine VR to consider varying forms of female-perpetrated IPV. The two-dimensional relationships also disregarded various emotional responses to IT victimization.

The second flaw related to shifts in partner's behavior during the course of the relationship. For example, Veronica performed IT and situational violence. However, when her partner used coercive controlling violence against her, she did not retaliate. Using Johnson's analysis, her experiences were forced into SCV because this was the only type of IPV that described her perpetration and victimization. However, the findings would not have considered her experiences of PTSD, which fit the criteria of the battered women's syndrome disorder. In essence, her victimization was parallel to other cases of VR, but since the typology did not consider shifts in physical aggression, this information was left out. This study considered these intricate details because I incorporated motivations for these shifts in aggression in my analysis of external motivations (See Chapter 10: External context and motivations). Without this additional information, Johnson's typology alone would have overlooked Veronica's wide-ranging experiences of IPV.

### *12.0.3 Types of control*

As mentioned in the analysis on non-controlling behavior, there were specific distinctions for the use of control in types of IPV. For example, MVC emphasized that a violent and controlling partner was paired with another violent and controlling partner. In contrast, SCV included a perpetrator who was violent and "non-controlling" and a partner who was either

nonviolent or violent, and non-controlling. In this section, I examine varying objectives for control that arose when each partner asserted physical aggression.

Johnson states that the severity of control ranges from non-controlling to controlling aggression. However, his types of IPV fell short because they did not consider dimensions or variations in types of control performed during IPV. For instance, SCV was less attributed to control, and more associated with conflict resolution:

Johnson hypothesized that in this type of physical aggression, which he called “common couple violence,” acts of violence by men and women occur at relatively equal rates, and are not committed in an effort to control or terrorize a partner. (Simpson et al. 2007)

I argue that research on IPV must distinguish between two types of control: “non-aggressive to coercive control of the partner” and “non-aggressive and coercive control over the situation.”

For example, Debra and her partner battled physically and emotionally to attain some level of control. Debra fought for control over the situation by attacking her partner because he used physical violence. On the other hand, Debra’s partner hit her, but used coercive control to alter her social and economic position in the family. Although both were controlling and violent, their intent or objective for control differed; in MVC, control did not conceptually describe Debra’s perpetration of IPV. Although MVC did describe physical battles that entailed mutual exchanges of ongoing forms of psychological and physical abuse, the interpretation of control was incomplete and inaccurate.

#### *12.0.4 Measuring control*

Most analyses of control obtain interval level estimates of violence on a continuum. The continuum evaluates degrees of control ranging from non-aggressive to coercively aggressive control. However, types of IPV rarely accounted for differences in the ways men and women assessed how much control they had. Instead, IPV types focused on a partner’s intent to gain

control or the violent actions that caused loss of control. I posit that current research must further examine (1) how a continuum of controlling behaviors fits on a scale of control, and (2) how that performance differs for men and women.

The conceptualization of control was vague and inconsistent among studies that apply Johnson's typology. For example, MVC entailed a continuous fight by each partner to maintain controlling behaviors (Appendix B: The revised Controlling Behaviors Scale). Furthermore, Kirkwood (1993) examined coercive controlling behavior, but did not classify specific types of coercive control such as fear inducing, domineering, and degradingly coercive. Furthermore, no single study examines the severity of each type of control in a continuum of physical aggression. I argue that abstractions of control in the analysis of MVC were often vague or flawed; this study examined coercive control by counting the instances of control used by each partner, but there was no consistent strategy available to assess comparable levels of control. Hence, data on how men and women performed physical violence and emotional abuse were often inconsistent. A parallel argument is found in research on gendered performance (Anderson and Umberson 2001).

Findings (Anderson and Umberson 2001; Anderson 2008) offer evidence that men and women define, experience, and perform coercive control in different ways. I recommend that future studies identify a method to assess how men and women perform violence, which can be useful for research on gender neutrality and studies that assess whether women are as violent as men. Furthermore, new assessment tools to measure gendered controlling behavior are essential for the study of MCV and IT.

In cases of MVC, one partner dominated, the other partner reciprocated the aggressive response, and they engaged in mutual violence. In this study, I found that violent responses were

likely to escalate over time. Since that was the case, it was also common for couples to create a climate of intolerance or to accept the use of force as a typical method of confronting conflict. Hence, when violence escalated during mutual combat, there was no assessment tool to survey the degree and severity of control. I also recommend the creation of such assessment tools because without such measures, distinctions between MVC and IT abuse will remain inevitably vague or inconsistent.

## 12.1 Additional type of IPV

In this section, I introduce new IPV types that are useful for examining women's experiences of IPV. In particular, TVR was an alternative method used in this study to describe resistance when a participant used controlling physical aggression rather than non-controlling physical aggression to defend herself against an intimate terrorist abuser.

### *12.1.1 Tempered violent resistance*

In this section, I critique ways in which Johnson's proposed characteristics of non-controlling performers discounts women's will to exert control in an extremely violent relationship. For example, VR inadvertently communicates that a victim resists reactively. Common descriptions of VR perpetrators promote this stereotypical image of pathology (Dutton 1996). For example, Aaliyah displayed forms of controlling self-defense, but her experiences could not be fully described by VR. In order to fit an interpretation of VR, Aaliyah had to act out perceived "normal" battered woman's responses to coercive control, such as fear or submission. Considering these limitations in Johnson's typology on IPV, this study introduced *tempered violent resistance* (TVR), which was defined as IPV where a participant resisted while acting out any form of controlling behavior.

In the following paragraphs, I offer the conceptualization and two-dimensional relationship between physical aggression and control for TVR. Victims who use low levels of control and protective resistance to combat ongoing experiences of IT abuse perform TVR. The victim of IPV uses strategic methods of control rather than non-controlling behavior. TVR is a strategy that combats violence that threatens emotional and physical safety. It is commonly employed by battered women who are no longer willing to tolerate ongoing violence. TVR can be performed as an escape, or as a temporary response to IT violence.

From the victim's perspective, TVR may be the victim's only reasonable alternative for protection from domestic abuse. TVR is significant because control-oriented tactics may be necessary to combat symptoms of battered women's syndrome, post-traumatic stress, or mood disorders. Hence, cases of TVR are instances that fail to fit both VR and SCV because TVR entails physical aggression performed by the victim that is provoked by the victim's desire to exercise control rather than by conflict.

TVR also differs from MVC because levels of control performed by each partner differ. As a battered woman's controlling response to different tactics used by an abuser to maintain power and control, TVR entails a specific relationship between the victim and batterer. Comparable to MVC, TVR is also gender specific, but is exclusive to self-defending victims who successfully resist IT. Moreover, I offer TVR because IPV types must consider that female perpetrators may not initiate a fight or want conflict. Instead, they may use TVR to maintain control and power rather than performing VR, which is a way of submitting to victimization. I urge that future research on IPV does not equate all forms of successful retaliation with types of IPV that describe mutual violence.

## 12.2 Mixed type interpretations

Johnson's typology was applied to each experience to examine the dimensions of physical aggression and control during participants' victimization and perpetration of IPV. Although there were advantages to using Johnson's types of IPV, as stated above, there were also conceptual limitations. As a result, I offered mixed type interpretations to describe four participant experiences of IPV.

I found that use of two-dimensional categories of aggression and control produced a considerable loss of information. Moreover, my findings indicated that when applying Johnson's typology to women's experiences, the types of IPV often ignored social constructions of power and control that negatively influenced women's control over men. The following conceptual challenges prompted my use of mixed type interpretations of Johnson's typology: (1) external motivations may have conditioned physical aggression, and (2) control was not always conditioned by the severity of physical aggression. Other conceptual issues are introduced in this chapter. However, those issues are also applicable to participant experiences that were described using a single IPV type (See 12.0: Conceptual challenges).

### *12.2.1 External motivations condition violence*

I found that some participants' emotional responses reflected both past and present experiences of violence. Most times, those emotional responses aligned with the two-dimensional interpretations of physical aggression and control in Johnson's typology, which entailed one partner responding to the violence of the other. However, the qualitative analysis in the current study was unique because it examined both Johnson's typology and external motivations of IPV. This study presented instances where external motivations conditioned the participant's perceptions of violence. Accordingly, I found that some participants overreacted or

avoided using violence and control if they were victimized or exposed to violence prior to their experiences of IPV. In VR, MVC, and IT, the two-dimensional relationships of physical aggression and control did not detect such emotional responses. Several of women's motivations for IPV were described by the VR, MVC, and IT patterns because the analysis was limited to the situational context of physical aggression and control. These findings did not align with precedent research on IPV in Johnson (1995).

### *12.2.2 Control is not conditioned by severity of violence*

I found that the severity of violence performed by each participant was not always directly associated with the extent of control achieved. Studies on MVC posit that two mutually violent and controlling partners engage in ongoing battles, and they hypothesize that an ongoing exchange of coercive control occurs during this process. However, in this study five women performed ongoing violence that was more severe than violence performed by their partners. However, regardless of their determination to exert coercive control, most of these women failed to achieve control over their partners. The findings include depictions of men laughing at their female partners during fights, even when the women caused injuries. In these cases, aggression was mutual, but the severity of violence was not. The MVC category often classifies instances of IPV as mutual combat when violence and control are not reciprocated mutually. This study found that physically overpowering a partner during multiple fights was not likely to equate to winning control over the intimate partner.

### *12.2.3 Participant experiences and mixed types of IPV*

The unique experiences of four participants met criteria of one or more of Johnson's patterns of IPV: Susie (VR; SCV), Aaliyah (VR; MVC), Debra (SCV; MVC), and Sasha (MVC and IT). These results indicated that use of Johnson's typology was not consistent across all

women's experiences of IPV. In this section, I explain various conceptual challenges encountered while applying four participants experiences to Johnson's types of IPV.

The conceptual challenge in Susie's experience was that SCV described the situational context of Susie's experience, but omitted her past experiences of fear, terror, and psychological abuse. Instead, SCV focused on conflict rather than control. Vice-versa, VR omitted facets of SCV. According to Susie, her partner's violence was psychologically traumatizing. Her methods of resistance were consistent with those illustrated in research on battered women's syndrome. Susie intensified the magnitude of apparent threat, ability to predict her partner's violence, and her partner's perceived intent of violence during her adult experiences of victimization, which triggered greater fear of her partner than the SCV pattern shows. Ultimately, Susie's previous victimization conditioned her emotional responses to aggressive conduct (See 12.2.1: External motivations condition violence). As a result, Susie's experiences of IPV were described using relationships present in VR and SCV.

During three distinct stages of violence, Aaliyah performed IPV that was classified using VR, TVR, and MVC (See 12.0.2: Shifts in physical aggression). During the first stage, Aaliyah's partner performed IT violence and sexual assaults. To counter the assaults, Aaliyah performed VR, but was unable to restrain him. As unhealthy conditions and his conduct became predictable, Aaliyah reoriented herself to several previously learned self-defense techniques. In the second stage of IPV, Aaliyah performed TVR, using low counts of controlling aggression in response to IT victimization (See 12.1.1: Tempered violent resistance). Her resistance was finally successful; success refers to her partner's defeat during physical altercations. In the final stage of IPV, Aaliyah perfected defense maneuvers, often taking control of the situation by choking her partner until he was nearly unconscious (See 12.0.3: Types of control). Still, she was unable to take

general control of her partner. As her aggression escalated, her partner used more severe types of violence such as throwing Aaliyah head first into a concrete wall, as opposed to punching her. At no point in the relationship did Aaliyah perform IT victimization successfully (See 12.2.2: Control is not conditioned by severity of violence). As noted by Graham-Kevan (2009), who argues that feminist theories typically explain female-perpetrated IPV as defensive and men's aggression as coercive, Aaliyah retaliates and each type of IPV is enacted while defending herself against an intimate terrorist abuser.

Debra's violent performance met the criteria of MVC because she was mutually violent, and she held more economic power in her relationship. However, Debra did not exploit her power. Instead, she took control of their finances, but made decisions that her partner believed were for men only (See 12.0.3: Types of control). Similarly, the situational context of IPV entailed fights that related specifically to her partner's disapproval of economic conditions in their relationship. Since Debra interpreted her aggression as being non-controlling, her experiences also fit SCV. Nonetheless, after being abused as a child, Debra declared that a man would never victimize her again. Hence, she viciously attacked her partner each time she perceived his comments as being intimidating or disrespectful (See 12.2.1: External motivations condition violence). Debra punched her partner and threw him onto the floor or across the room, but her expressions of control were not mutual (See 12.2.2: Control is not conditioned by severity of violence). Following these brutal attacks, Debra submitted to her partner's needs because she wanted to have a successful marriage. As a result, Debra's experiences of IPV were described using relationships present in SCV and MVC.

Sasha's violent behavior also occurred in stages; aggression became more severe over time because her partner ignored her instructions and demands (12.0.2 Shifts in physical

aggression). Sasha said, “He does not hear me unless I act violent.” In the first stage, she performed IT to distract, annoy, and anger him. She also hit her partner in pursuit of gaining his undivided attention; perceptions of emotion-driven harassment were expressed similarly by men and women, but received differently. For instance, in other instances in this study, when a male partner performed isolation, he was considered jealous and controlling. However, when a female partner performed the same actions, the conduct was considered annoying rather than coercive because jealousy was more often perceived as a normal emotional response for women (See 12.0.4: Measuring control). Hence, Sasha’s violence was also prompted by her emotional responses. Sasha threw objects, slapped him, cut him, and attempted to injure him if he failed to express his love for her. However, he held Sasha’s arms and legs down, sometimes placing his body on top of her until she calmed down.

In the second stage, Sasha’s partner responded differently because he used violent physical aggression to resist. Her partner grew tired of her violent outbursts and they performed MVC, often engaging in physical battles for control. When she hit him, he laughed, and shoved her down to the ground so hard that permanent marks were left on her skin. However, his IPV was never mutual or as physically violent as Sasha’s, but his resistance was more forceful and violent than it was in the past. Sasha continued in her efforts to take charge of the relationship. She mandated her partner’s whereabouts and harassed him about abandoning his peer network. She also performed many other types of violence that Johnson characterized as coercive controlling behavior. However, the harder she fought, the more amusing the situation was to her partner (See 12.2.2: Control is not conditioned by severity of violence). As a result, Sasha’s experiences of IPV were described using IT and MVC.

### 12.3 Limitations of study

Some research suggests that qualitative research on IPV should interview both partners. I examined a unique sample of women who were both perpetrators and victims of IPV. In this section, I examine the pros and cons of interviewing only one partner. I also explore points in which the thematic analysis and centered research approaches were in conflict. Given that this research used a single informant sample, the data relied on women's accounts of the violence of the other partner. This section examines the limitations of the thematic analysis and centered methodology as well.

#### *12.3.1 Biases and single informant studies*

This study relied on one partner's viewpoint of violence in each intimate relationship. However, patterns present in Johnson's typology looked different depending on the participant's viewpoint, since they reported the behavior. Some researchers have critiqued the use of self reports altogether. For example, Cui et al. (2005:1170) argued that partner violence has significant negative consequences for the physical wellbeing and psychological health of both partners. Ultimately, they posit that both informants were likely to "under-or over-report" their experiences for a variety of reasons including social desirability and society's lack of awareness of female-perpetrated violence. Hence, a limitation of this study was its reliance on a single informants.

Previous research on IPV has examined all male reports. With respect to women's perpetration of IPV, data indicated that male violence reports were likely to underestimate or exaggerate the extent of female-perpetrated IPV (Johnson 1995). This may also be the case for the partners of each participant. Those against single informant studies have argued that there is a general lack of consistency between reports on how men and women report violence and

behavior. They have also suggested that single person responses may be biased because of “centered” or unique dispositions of that individual; a single respondent may also create a systematic measurement error. For example, each participant has defined violence differently.

However, I argue that the single informant sample is often necessary in order to examine data compiled in research that has neglected the use of women’s perspectives. The data in most studies on IPV classify women as victimized (Johnson 2008; Caldwell et al. 2009). For instance, this data also offers gender stereotypes in hegemonic discourses that illustrate women’s weakness, vulnerability, and passivity. In other studies, reports have been averaged, usually predicting that women are as violent as men (Swartz 2000).

Although it is becoming more common for studies on IPV to assess female-perpetrated IPV, researchers use this data in different ways. For example, Allen-Collinson (2009), a study on the motivations for IPV, used a single informant sample rather than leaving such data uncontested. More specifically, in the current analysis of MVC and IT, this study countered findings on male strength, invincibility, and aggression, which is research that feminists are challenged to analyze. I also supported the supposition that the participants in this study were honest. Some accounts were strikingly similar to those described in the literature relating to victims and perpetrators of IPV.

Furthermore, given the diverse characteristics of the sample in this study, data from multiple partners was inaccessible for many reasons. For example, Ann was still in the abusive relationship and she had to “sneak in” to complete the interview. She claimed that her partner did not like sharing his personal information with others. However, Sasha introduced me to her husband after the interview. In tandem, studies that examine multiple partners directly suggest that when a couple is in greater agreement about their exposure to violence, they have reported

more positive adjustment. Such concordance has been likely to reflect the presence of protective factors such as increased relationship quality following the abuse or more optimal family functioning. This was not the case among the participants in this study. For instance, Debra and Susie divorced their husbands and were uncertain of their whereabouts. Given the experiences of this sample, it was not possible to use a multiple informant sample.

My findings on women who were both victims and perpetrators of IPV also challenged many previously held conceptualizations and explanations on IPV. This study was an in-depth examination of their dual experiences, which is an area in which there is relatively little qualitative research. Ultimately, like other studies that have used single informant reports, my qualitative analysis of IPV used women's unique experiences to make existential sense of violence (Allen-Collinson 2009).

### *12.3.2 Methodology*

I used a centered perspective to find out women's perceptions of their perpetration and victimization of IPV. I used this method during the interview process. As the conversation flowed naturally during interviews, I asked participants, "What were your experiences of violence? How did you respond to your experiences? What did you do before the violent event occurred? How did your partner respond?" My primary objective was to learn and assess how the participants perceived of their own experiences of IPV. I selected the centered perspective because I believed that each woman's experience would be significant to the study of IPV. However, Johnson's typology did not always align with the centered approach.

A main idea in Johnson's typology was to use the complexities of personal experiences to examine dimensions of violence and control. Since Johnson's typology entailed many undefined concepts, I established themes to portray patterns of similarities and differences. Then, I coded

participant transcripts and inserted patterns of participant behavior, aggression, and emotions into the themed analysis. I did not generalize participant experiences nor did I force them into a single type of IPV in Johnson's typology.

To the best of my ability, I assessed the types of IPV through the eyes of each participant. In doing so, gendered stereotypes emerged in explanations of victim and perpetrators' experiences. I noticed that Johnson's typology implied the following stereotypes: women's violence was non-aggressive and women's violence echoed patterns of male aggression. It also disregarded the context of violence when violent experiences were not positively associated with aggression or control. Furthermore, Johnson's types of IPV automatically centered the experiences of the subject(s) who controlled the relationship. Hence, in many cases, Johnson's typology contradicted the centered perspective. For instance, the participant's motivations to perpetrate IPV may have been more external and due to their past experiences of violence than they were to the extent of violence and control performed by the partner. In fact, the two-dimensional relationship between aggression and control failed to describe these instances of IPV because the partner's behavior did not always determine the woman's responses to IPV.

In particular, centering women's resistance using VR was disconcerting since the typology directed attention away from their centered viewpoint on IPV. Instead, the type of IPV leaned more toward detailed interpretations of a man's emotional and controlling behavior and woman's victimization. During the initial coding process of VR, I had to "carefully" analyze participant scenarios to present their interpretations of the partners' experiences of IPV. Furthermore, I introduced TVR as another form of resistance because the VR framed women as victims-only. VR did not recount most participants' experiences of perpetrated violence because it assumed that women who resisted were unable to exert control; instead, women's violence that

entailed control was only hypothesized as being influenced by a situational and conflict.

Ultimately, method-bound, the IPV types could override an analysis of participants' alleged details about her partner's emotions and physical responses, which took away from the depth and richness of the centered analysis.

The obstacles listed above were most commonly associated with the mixed types that entailed characteristics of VR, MVC, and IT. In particular, SCV did allow for an examination of the context of situational IPV, which granted me an opportunity to expose additional complexities present in each participant scenario of IPV. I overcame these obstacles by positing mixed patterns and external motivations (See 12.2: Mixed type interpretations; Chapter 10: External context and motivations). These analyses also examined context, violence, control, and emotional responses. For example, Susie's motivations were influenced by emotional responses that were "external" to her intimate relationship. According to VR, her partner's conduct was intimidating, which was one of twenty-four items on the control scale; her partner scored low on the control scale. He was not an IT abuser. Instead, he was a jealous partner who committed SCV.

An accurate interpretation of Susie's experience was located in the analysis of external motivations of IPV (See Chapter 10: External context and motivations). With awareness of the context of violence, these findings illustrated Susie's motives for resistance, and clarified her viewpoint on "what violence meant to her." This case confirmed that the two-dimensional relationship between physical aggression and control did not accurately describe Susie's resistance and perpetration of IPV. To conclude: (1) the typology did not allow for the individual analyses of significant variables that determined motives for IPV. Without the additional analysis of external motivations, this study would have (i) omitted unique details that were critical to

understanding why women hit in violent relationships, and (ii) offered inconsistent interpretations of participants who were both victims and perpetrators of IPV. (2) I argue that the all-encompassing situation-specific type of IPV, as applied in the examination of external motivations, diverged from Johnson's typology to offer an alternative analysis that included emotional factors and was more useful for describing comprehensive, multi-level interpretations of IPV.

#### 12.4 Summary of findings

The goal of this study was to examine 10 women's physical and emotional experiences of victimization and perpetration of IPV. To address the first research question, these experiences were examined using four types (VR, SCV, MVC, and IT) in a typology of IPV introduced in Johnson (1995). Six participant experiences were classified using a single type of IPV. I introduced a new IPV type (TVR) and described the four remaining experiences using mixed type interpretations of the typology. These experiences did not fit the conceptual requirements of the typology. In the process, I identified and defined dimensions of resistance and offered alternative concepts to extend findings on types of resistance. Furthermore, I identified types of control that were not closely examined in previous research using Johnson's typology. I offered a recommendation that future IPV research distinguishes between self-control, situational control, and partner control when applying SCV, MVC, and IT.

To address the second research question on external motivations for IPV, I included an analysis of external motivations of IPV, which provided a deeper understanding of the emotional responses that depicted various motivations for IPV. The analysis of external motivations offered a comprehensive overview of the immediate and broader contexts of IPV. This section uncovered findings on the contexts of IPV that were omitted in the analyses of VR, MVC, and

IT. I note that research on women who are victims and perpetrators cannot be limited to the context of violence and control. Regardless of the gender of the perpetrator or victim, I argue that it is critical that studies on IPV examine the varying contexts of both violent behavior and violent responses.

The final research question on women's expression and experiences of control offered a comprehensive look at the coding that I used to apply Johnson's types of IPV. To address this question, I conducted an analysis of controlling and non-controlling behavior. This analysis highlights a catalog of types of control performed by women during IPV. These findings on control, physical violence, and emotional responses illustrated and confirmed the various limitations of using Johnson's two-dimensional relationships of physical aggression and control to examine the complex and unique experiences of women who are both victims and perpetrators of IPV.

I found that while Johnson's types on IPV were useful for describing physical aggression and control, these experiences of IPV were not all applicable to the two-dimensional relationships in each of his IPV types. Concepts used in the analyses of physical aggression and control such as resistance, non-controlling aggression, mutual violence, and control also require further explanation and review.

## 12.5 Recommendations

Findings from this study concluded that the conceptual framework of Johnson's typology was limiting and vague. The typology also overlooked various contexts of IPV, intricate motivations for violent behavior, and multiple dimensions of control. The following section explains the shortcomings of Johnson's typology.

When I explored use of control, I found that women performed multiple dimensions of control during IPV, sometimes without pursuing an immediate goal of controlling their partners. These dimensions of control were often attributed to women's agency and, or their specific intentions. The analysis on control revealed that VR, MVC, and IT failed to distinguish between self-control, situational control, and control over a partner. For example, Johnson assumed that situational violence is non-controlling violence. By distinguishing types of control, this study also re-evaluated the term "mutual," which is central in mutual violent combat (MVC). Data confirmed that physical conduct may be mutual, while the intent of control is not mutual; intent of control may be similar while a participants' ability to execute control over the partner is limited. I posit that neither example of IPV is performed mutually.

Johnson has also redefined and created new concepts to classify IPV such as mutual violence, non-controlling aggression, control, and resistance, which have been either poorly defined or misleading. For example, during resistance, a victim is unable to exert control (non-controlling aggression), which disregards control performed during premeditated violence, revenge, and inadvertent attacks. The conceptualization of resistance and non-controlling aggression is unrealistic and not applicable to women's emotional responses to habitually violent partners.

Consistent with findings offered by Johnson, this study also found that women's violence is likely to occur in the context of their victimization. However, women's motivations for IPV varied depending on the context of IPV. Whereas Johnson's typology assumed that contexts of physical aggression and control described types of IPV, this study described additional dynamics that motivated violent conduct. For example, data on external factors such as history of violence and abuse, access to social support, and addictions offered conclusive evidence that Johnson's

two-dimensional relationship between violence and control limited or omitted findings on women's motivations for initiating and responding to IPV. The typology also failed to consider intersectionality of women's social relationships; multiple historical, cultural, or situational factors were interrelated or occurred simultaneously, which influenced women's physical and emotional responses.

Consistent with findings projected by Johnson, I agree that situational violence and intimate terrorism are unique and distinct forms of IPV. However, this study found it is not likely for a single type of IPV to describe experiences of IPV when women are both victims and perpetrators of IPV. These experiences are often too complex or unique to fit the conceptualization of Johnson's typology. Among this sample, use of violence and control was likely to shift throughout the duration of the relationship; no distinct patterns were conclusive when external motivations differed. Some participant experiences also fit multiple classifications of IPV. Even among women who were controlled and expressed being fearful of their partners, the IPV type did not reflect the severity or frequency of women's physical aggression.

In closing, to describe women's experiences of IPV, I maintain that research must explore additional motives that relate to victimization and violent behavior. Furthermore, research should examine the intersectionality of variables such as support, previous history of violence or exposure to abuse. Ultimately, the findings from this study further develop Johnson's typology. However, I posit that researchers consider using these findings to explore alternative methods to describe women's violence. New research must move beyond Johnson's context of two-dimensional conceptualization of control and violence to better describe intentions and motivations for violent conduct.

## REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. 1988. *Attitudes, Personality, and Behavior*. Chicago, IL: Dorsey Press.
- Allen-Collinson, J. 2009. "A Marked Man: Female-perpetrated Intimate Partner Abuse." *The Free Library*. Retrieved December 27, 2010. (<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/A+marked+man:+female-perpetrated+intimate+partner+abuse.-a0200844516>)
- Almgren, G., A. Guest, G. Innerwahr, and M. Spittel. 1998. "Joblessness, Family Disruption, and Violent Deaths in Chicago: 1970-1990." *Social Forces* 76(4):1465-1493.
- Alvi, S., M. D. Schwartz, W. S. DeKeseredy, and J. Bachaus. 2005. "Perceptions of Male Privilege and the Physical, Psychological and Economic Abuse of Impoverished Minority Women." *Western Criminology Review* 6(1):1-11.
- Amato, P. R., D. R. Johnson, A. Booth, and S. J. Rogers. 2003. "Continuity and Change in Marital Quality between 1980 and 2000." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 65(1):1-22.
- Anderson, K. L. 1997. "Gender, Status, and Domestic Violence: An Integration of Feminist and Family Violence Approaches." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 59(3):655-669.
- 2002. "Perpetrator or Victim? Relationships between Intimate Partner Violence and Well-being." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 64(4):851-863.
- 2008. "Is Partner Violence Worse in the Context of Control." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 70(5):1157-1168.
- Anderson, K. L., and D. Umberson. 2001. "Gendering Violence: Masculinity and Power in Men's Account of Domestic Violence." *Gender and Society* 15(3):358-380.
- Archer, J. 2000. "Sex Differences in Aggression between Heterosexual Partners: A Meta-Analytic Review." *Psychological Bulletin* 126(5):651-680.

- Archer, J., and A. Haigh. 1999. "Sex Differences in Beliefs about Aggression: Opponent's Sex and the Form of Aggression." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 38(1):71-84.
- Arehart-Treichel, J. 2007. "Men Shouldn't be Overlooked as Victims of Partner Violence." *Psychiatric News* 42(15):31.
- Astin, S., P. Redston, and A. Campbell. 2003. "Sex Differences in Social Representations of Aggression: Men Justify, Women Excuse?" *Aggressive Behavior* 29(2):128-133.
- Atkinson, M., T. N. Greenstein, and M. Monahan Lang. 2005. "For Women, Breadwinning can be Dangerous: Gendered Resource Theory and Wife Abuse." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67(5):1137-1148.
- Ayyildiz, E. 1995. "When Battered Woman's Syndrome does not go Far Enough: The Battered Woman as Vigilante." *The American University Journal of Gender and the Law* 4(1):141-166.
- Bachman, R., and D. C. Carmody. 1994. "Fighting Fire with Fire: The Effects of Victim Resistance in Intimate Versus Stranger Perpetrated Assaults against Females." *Journal of Family Violence* 9(4):317-331.
- Barber, M. E., L. A. Foley, and R. Jones. 1999. "Evaluations of Aggressive Women: The Effects of Gender, Socioeconomic Status and Level of Aggression." *Violence and Victims* 14(4):353-363.
- Barnett, O.W., C. Y. Lee, and R. E. Thelen. 1997. "Gender Differences in Attributions of Self-defense and Control in Inter Partner Aggression." *Violence Against Women* 3(5):462-481.
- Bauer, H. M., M. A. Rodriguez, S. S. Quiroga, and Y. G. Flores-Ortiz. 2000. "Barriers to Healthcare for Abused Latina and Asian Immigrant Women." *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 11(1):33-44.

- Berger, R. J. 1989. "Female Delinquency in the Emancipation Era: A Review of the Literature." *Sex Roles* 21(5-6):375-399.
- Berk, R. A., S. Berk, D. R. Loseke, and D. Rauma. 1983. "Mutual Combat and other Family Violence Myths." Pp. 197-212 in *The Dark Side of Families* edited by D. Finkelhor, R. Gelles, G. Hotaling and M. Straus. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Bennett, L., S. Riger, P. Schewe, A. Howard, and S. Wasco. 2004. "Effectiveness of Hotline, Advocacy, Counseling, and Shelter Services for Victims of Domestic Violence: A Statewide Evaluation." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 19(7):815-829.
- Bhatt, R.V. 1998. "Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse." *International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics* 63(1):S25-S31.
- Bible, A., S. K. Dasgupta, and S. Osthoff. 2002. "Guest Editors' Introduction to Special Issue on Women's use of Violence in Intimate Relationships." *Violence Against Women* 8(11):1267-1270.
- Blumer, R. 1999. "Men Get Slapped Around: Who Cares?" *Star Ledger*, December 12, p.6.
- Bograd, M. 1988. "How Battered Women and Abusive Men Account for Domestic Violence: Excuses, Justifications, or Explanations?" Pp. 60-70 in *Coping with Family Violence: Research and Policy Perspectives*, edited by G. T. Hotaling, D. Finkelhor, J. T. Kirkpatrick, and M. A. Strauss. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Bookwala, J., I. Frieze, C. Smith, and K. Ryan. 1992. "Predictors of Dating Violence: A Multivariate Analysis." *Violence and Victims* 7(4):297-311.
- Boulder County Domestic Abuse Prevention Project. 1999. *Boulder County Domestic Abuse Prevention Project 1st Quarter Report*. Boulder, CO: Author.

- Bozett, F. W. 1982. "Heterogeneous Couples in Heterosexual Marriages: Gay Men and Straight Women." *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 8(1):81-89.
- Bradbury, T., R. Rogge, and E. Lawrence. 2001. "Reconsidering the Role of Conflict in Marriage." Pp. 59-81 in *Couples in Conflict*, edited by A. Booth, A. C. Crouter, and M. Clements. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Breines, W., and L. Gorden. 1983. "The New Scholarship on Family Violence." *Signs: A J. Women in Cultural and Society* 8(3):490-531.
- Broidy, L., and R. Agnew. 1997. "Gender and Crime: A General Strain Theory Perspective." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 34(3):275-306.
- Browne, A., and K. R. Williams. 1993. "Exploring the Effect of Resource Availability and the Likelihood of Female-perpetrated Homicides." *Law and Society Review* 23(1):75-94.
- Brownstein, H. H. 2000. *The Social Reality of Violence and Violent Crime*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. 1979-2003. *National Crime (victimization) Survey: Criminal Victimization in the United States*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- 1998. *Alcohol and crime: An Analysis of National Data on the Prevalence of Alcohol Involvement in Crime*. Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Justice Programs.
- Butler, J. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Buzawa, E., and C. Buzawa. 2003. *Domestic Violence: The Criminal Justice Response*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Caldwell, J., S. Swan, C. Allen, T. Sullivan, and D. Snow. 2009. "Why I Hit Him: Women's

- Reasons for Intimate Partner Violence.” *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma* 18(7):672-697.
- Caetano, R., and C. Cunradi. 2003. “Intimate Partner Violence and Depression among Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics.” *AEP* 13(10):661-665.
- Caetano, R., C. Cunradi, J. Schafer, and C. Clark. 2000. “Intimate Partner and Drinking among White, Black and Hispanic Couples in the US.” *Journal of Substance Abuse* 11(2):123-138.
- Caetano, R., C. McGrath, S. Ramisetty-Mikler, and C. A. Field. 2005. “Drinking, Alcohol Problems and the Five-Year Recurrence and Incidence of Male to Female and Female to Male Partner Violence.” *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* 29(1):98-106.
- Caetano, R., J. Schafer, and C. Cunradi. 2001. “Alcohol-related Intimate Partner Violence among White, Black, and Hispanic Couples in the United States.” *Alcohol Research and Health* 25(1):58-65.
- Campbell, J. C., and K. L. Soeken. 1999. “Forced Sex and Intimate Partner Violence: Effects on Women’s Risk and Women’s Health.” *Violence Against Women* 5(9):1017-1035.
- Campbell, A., S. Muncer, and B. Gorman. 1993. “Sex and Social Representations of Aggression: A Communal-agentic Analysis.” *Aggressive Behavior* 19(2):125-135.
- Campbell, J. C., L. Rose, J. Kub, and D. Nedd. 1998. “Voices of Strength and Resistance: A Contextual and Longitudinal Analysis of Women’s Responses to Battering.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 13(6):743-762.
- Caulfield, M., and D. Riggs. 1992. “The Assessment of Dating Aggression: Empirical Evaluation of the Conflicts Tactics Scale.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 7(4):549-558.

- Cavanaugh, M. M., and R. Gelles. 2005. "The Utility of Male Domestic Violence Offender Typologies: New Directions for Research, Policy, and Practice." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 20(2):155-166.
- Chesney-Lind, M. 2002. "Criminal Victimization: The Unintended Consequences of Pro-arrest Policies for Girls and Women." *Criminology and Public Policy* 2(1):81-90.
- Chester, B., R. Robin, and M. Koss. 1994. "Grandmother Dishonored: Violence against Women by Male Partners in Indian communities." *Violence and Victimization* 9(3):259-274.
- Coker, A. L., P. H. Smith, R. E. McKeown, and M. J. King. 2000. "Frequency and Correlates of Intimate Partner Violence by Type: Physical, Sexual, and Psychological Battering." *American Journal of Public Health* 90(4):553-559.
- Coleman, K. H. 1980. "Conjugal Violence: What 33 Men Report." *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 6(2):207-213.
- Connell, R. 1995. *Masculinities*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- Cook, P. W. 1997. *Abused Men: The Hidden Side of Domestic Violence*. New York, NY: Praeger.
- Crowell, N. A., and A. W. Burgess. 1996. *Understanding Violence against Women*. Washington, D.C: National Academy Press.
- Cui, M., F. O. Lorenz, R. D. Conger, J. N. Melby, and C. M. Bryant. 2005. "Observer, Self-, and Partner Reports of Hostile Behaviors in Romantic Relationships." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67(5):1169-1181.
- Cunradi, R. C., R. Caetano, and J. Schafer. 2002. "Alcohol-Related Problems, Drug Use, and Male Intimate Partner Violence Severity Among US Couples." *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* 26(4):493-500.

- Dasgupta, S. D. 1999. "Just like Men? A Critical Review of Violence by Women." Pp. 195-222 in *Coordinating Community Response to Domestic Violence: Lessons from Duluth and Beyond*, edited by M. F. Shepard and E. L. Pence. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 2001. "Towards an Understanding of Women's use of Non-lethal Violence in Intimate Heterosexual Relationships." *Applied Research Forum: National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women* (14 pages). Retrieved March 1, 2008.  
[http://new.vawnet.org/Assoc\\_Files\\_VAWnet/AR\\_womviol.pdf](http://new.vawnet.org/Assoc_Files_VAWnet/AR_womviol.pdf)
- 2002. "A Framework for Understanding Women's use of Nonlethal Violence in Intimate Heterosexual Relationships." *Violence Against Women* 8(11):1364-1389.
- DeKeseredy, W., and M. Schwartz. 1998. "Measuring the Extent of Woman Abuse in Intimate Heterosexual Relationships: A Critique of the Conflict Tactics Scales." *Applied Research Forum: National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women* (7 pages). Retrieved March 1, 2008. (<http://www.csaj.org/documents/178.pdf>)
- DeLeon-Granados, W. W., and R. Binsbacher. 2006. "Arresting Developments: Trends in Female Arrests for Domestic Violence and Proposed Explanations." *Violence Against Women* 12(4):355-371.
- DeMaris, A. 1992. "Male Versus Female Initiation of Aggression: The Case of Courtship Violence." Pp. 111-120 in *Intimate partner violence: Interdisciplinary perspectives*, edited by E. C. Viano. Bristol, PA: Taylor and Francis.
- DeSteno, D. A., and P. Salovey. 1996. "Evolutionary Origins of Sex Differences in Jealousy? Questioning the 'Fitness' of the Model." *Psychological Science* 7(6):367-372.
- Dobash, R. P., and R. E. Dobash. 1979. *Violence Against Wives*. New York, NY: Free Press.

- 1984. "The Nature and Antecedents of Violence." *British Journal of Criminology* 24(3):269-88.
- 1998. "Violent Men and Violent Contexts." Pp. 141-168 in *Rethinking Violence against Women*, edited by R. E. Dobash and R. P. Dobash. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 2004. "Women's Violence Against an Intimate Male Partner: Working on a Puzzle." *British Journal of Criminology* 44(3):324-349.
- Donovan, R., and M. Williams. 2002. "Living at the Intersection: The Effects of Racism and Sexism on Black Rape Survivors." Pp. 95-105 in *Violence in the Lives of Black Women: Battered, Black, and Blue*, edited by C. West. New York, NY: Haworth.
- Driscoll, H., A. Zinkivskay, K. Evans, and A. Campbell. 2006. "Gender Differences in Social Representations of Aggression: The Phenomenological Experience of Differences in Inhibitory Control?" *British Journal of Psychology* 97(2):139-153.
- Dowd, L.S., Leisring, P.A., Rosenbaum, A. 2005. "Partner Aggressive Women: Characteristics and Treatment Attrition." *Violence and Victims* 20(2):219-231.
- Dugan, L., D. S. Nagin, and R. Rosenfeld. 1999. "Explaining the Decline in Intimate Partner Homicide: The Effects of Changing Domesticity, Women's Status and Domestic Violence Resources." *Homicide Studies* 3(3):187-214.
- Dunn, J. 2005. "Victims and Survivors: Emerging Vocabulary of Motive for Battered Women Who Stay." *Sociological Inquiry* 75(1):1-30.
- Durose, M. R., C. W. Harlow, P. A. Langan, M. Motivans, R. R. Rantala, and E. L. Smith. 2005. "Family violence statistics: Including statistics on strangers and acquaintances." *Bureau of Justice Statistics*, U. S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs.

- Dutton, D. G. 1994. "Patriarchy and Wife Assault: The Ecological Fallacy." *Violence and Victims* 9(2):167-182.
- Dutton, M. A. 1993. "Understanding Women's Responses to Domestic Violence: A Redefinition of Battered Woman Syndrome." *Hofstra Law Review* 21(4):1191-1243.
- 1996. "Critique of the Battered Women's Syndrome." *VAWnet National Online Resource Center on Violence against Women*. Retrieved September 19, 2010.  
[http://new.vawnet.org/category/Main\\_Doc.php?docid=375](http://new.vawnet.org/category/Main_Doc.php?docid=375)
- Dutton, M., L. E. Orloff, and G. A. Hass. 2000. "Characteristics of Help-seeking Behaviors, Resources, and Service Needs of Battered Immigrant Latinas: Legal and Policy Implications." *Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law and Policy* 7(2):245-305.
- Ehrensaft, M. K., and D. Vivian. 1999. "Is Partner Aggression Related to Appraisals of Coercive Control by a Partner?" *Journal of Family Violence* 14(3):251-266.
- Enander, V. 2010. "A Fool to Keep Staying: Battered Women Labeling Themselves Stupid as an Expression of Gendered Shame." *Violence Against Women* 16(1):5-31.
- Erblich, J., and M. Earleywine. 1995. "Distraction does not Impair Memory during Intoxication: Support for the Attention-allocation Model." *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 56(4):444-448.
- Faith, K. 1993. *Unruly Women: The Politics of Confinement and Resistance*. Vancouver, Canada: Press Gang.
- Falbo, T., and L. A. Peplau. 1980. "Power Strategies in Intimate Relationships." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 38(4):618-628.
- Family Violence Council. 1998. *Family Violence Council Report on Domestic Violence for 1998*. Lincoln/Lancaster County, NE: Author.

- Feldbau-Kohn, S., R. E. Heyman, and K. D. O'Leary. 1998. "Major Depressive Disorder and Depressive Symptomology as Predictors of Husband to Wife Physical Aggression." *Violence Victimization* 13(4):347-360.
- Feldman, C. M., and C. A. Ridley. 2000. "The Role of Conflict-Based Communication Responses and Outcomes in Male Domestic Violence toward Female Partners." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 17(4-5):552-573.
- Fergusson, D. M., J. L. Horwood, and E. M. Ridder. 2005. "Partner Violence and Mental Health Outcomes in a New Zealand Birth Cohort." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67(5):1103-1119.
- Ferraro, K. J. 1989. "Policing Woman Battering." *Social Problems* 36(1):61-74.
- 1996. "Women's Fear of Victimization: Shadow of Sexual Assault?" *Social Forces* 75(2):667-690.
- 1997. "Battered Women: Strategies for Survival." Pp. 124-140 in *Violence among Intimate Partners: Patterns, Causes, and Effects*, edited by A. Carderelli. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Fiebert, M. S. 1998. "References Examining Assaults by Women on their Spouses or Male Partners: An Annotated Bibliography." *Sexuality & Culture* 14(1):49-91.
- Fiebert, M. S., and M.D. Gonzalez. 1997. "College Women Who Initiate Assaults: The Reasons Offered for Such Behavior." *Psychological Reports* 80(2):583-590.
- Flannery, R. B. 1995. *Violence in the Workplace*. New York, NY: Crossroad.
- Follette, V. M., M. A. Polusny, A. E. Bechtle, and A. E. Naugle. 1996. "Cumulative Trauma: The Impact of Child Sexual Abuse, Adult Sexual Assault, and Spouse Abuse." *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 9(1):25-35.

- Follingstad, D. R., S. Wright, and J. A. Sebastian. 1991. "Sex Differences in Motivations and Effects in Dating Violence." *Family Relations* 40(1):51-57.
- Fox, J., and J. Levin. 2000. *The Will to Kill: Making Sense of Senseless Murder*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Frieze, I. H., and M. C. McHuch. 1992. "Power and Influence Strategies in Violence and Nonviolent Marriages." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 16(4):449-465.
- Galvani, S. 2004. "Responsible Disinhibition: Alcohol, Men and Violence to Women." *Addiction Research and Theory* 12(4):357-371.
- Gibson, J. W. 1994. *Warrior Dreams: Paramilitary Culture in Post-Vietnam America*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang.
- 1997. "Is the Apocalypse Coming? Paramilitary Culture after the Cold War." Pp. 180-189 in *The Year 2000: Essays on the End*, edited by C. B. Strozier and M. Flynn. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Gilbert, P. R. 2002. "Discourses of Female Violence and Societal Gender Stereotypes." *Violence Against Women* 8(11):1275-1304.
- Gilfus, M. E. 1992. "From Victims to Survivors to Offenders: Women's Routes of Entry and Immersion into Street Crime." *Women and Criminal Justice* 4(1):63-89.
- Glass, N., J. Koziol-McLain, J. Campbell, and C. R. Block. 2004. "Female-perpetrated Femicide and Attempted Femicide: A Case Study." *Violence Against Women* 10(6):606-625.
- Goetting, A. 1988. "Patterns of Homicide among Women." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 3(1):3-20.
- Goldenhar, L. M., N. G. Swanson, J. J. Hurrell, A. Ruder, and J. Deddens. 1998. "Stressors and

- Adverse Outcomes for Female Construction Workers.” *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* 3(1):19-32.
- Gondolf, E. W., E. Fisher, and J. R. McFerron. 1988. “Racial Differences among Shelter Residents: A Comparison of Anglo, Black and Hispanic Battered Women.” *Journal of Family Violence* 3(1):39-51.
- George, M. J. 1994. “Riding the Donkey Backwards: Men as the Unacceptable Victims of Marital Violence.” *The Journal of Men’s Studies* 3(2):137-159.
- Gorman-Smith, D., and P. Tolan. 1998. “The Role of Exposure to Community Violence and Developmental Problems among Inner-city Youth.” *Development and Psychopathology* 10(1):101-116.
- Gottfredson, M. R., and T. Hirschi. 1990. *A General Theory of Crime*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- 2003. “Self-Control and Opportunity.” Pp. 5-19 in *Advances in Criminological Theory Volume 12: Control Theories of Crime and Delinquency*, edited by Chester L. Britt and Michael R. Gottfredson. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.
- Gottman, J., and N. Jacobson. 1998. *When Men Batter Women: New Insights into Ending Abusive Relationships*. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Graham-Kevan, N. 2009. “The Psychology of Women’s Partner Violence: Characteristics and Cautions,” *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, & Trauma* 18(6):587-603.
- Graham-Kevan, N., and J. Archer. 2003. “Intimate Terrorism and Common Couple Violence: A Test of Johnson’s Predictions in Four British Samples.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 18:1247-1270.
- 2004. “Using Johnson’s Domestic Violence Typology to Classify Men and Women in a

- Non-selected sample.” *National Family Violence Legislative Resource Center*. Retrieved: April 10, 2009. ([http://www.nfvlrc.org/docs/Graham\\_Kevan.ArcherJohnsonstudy.pdf](http://www.nfvlrc.org/docs/Graham_Kevan.ArcherJohnsonstudy.pdf))
- Grasmick, H. G., J. Hagan, B. S. Blackwell, and B. J. Arneklev. 1996. “Risk Preferences and Patriarchy: Extending Power-control Theory.” *Social Forces* 75(1):177-199.
- Greenberg, D. F. 1977. “Delinquency and the Age Structure of Society.” *Contemporary Crises* 1(2):189-223.
- Griffin, J. M., R. Fuhrer, S. A. Stansfeld, and M. Marmot. 2002. “The Importance of Low Control at Work and Home on Depression and Anxiety: Do these Effects Vary by Gender and Social Class?” *Social Science & Medicine* 54(5):783-798.
- Groves, P. E. 1996. “Coming-of-Rage: Young, Black and Female in America.” in *Mosaics of Meaning*, edited by K. E. Vandergrift. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.
- Gruber, K. J., and J. W. White. 1986. “Gender Differences in the Perceptions of Self’s and Others’ use of Power Strategies.” *Sex Roles* 15(1-2):108-118.
- Hall, W. 2004. “Violence among Girls on Upswing.” *The Patriot News* (April 21): A1,A8.
- Hamberger, L. K. 1997. “Female Offenders in Domestic Violence: A Look at Actions in their Contexts.” *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, and Trauma* 1(1):117-129.
- Hamberger, L. K., and C. E. Guse. 2002. “Men’s and Women’s use of Intimate Partner Violence in Clinical Samples.” *Violence Against Women* 8(11):1305-1335.
- Hamberger, L. K., and T. Potente. 1994. “Counseling Heterosexual Women Arrested for Domestic Violence: Implications for Theory and Practice.” *Violence and Victims* 9(2):125-137.
- Hamberger, K. L., J. M. Lohr, D. Bonge, and D. F. Tolin. 1997. “An Empirical Classification of Motivations for Domestic Violence.” *Violence Against Women* 3(4):401-423.

- Hampton, R. L., R. J. Gelles, and J. W. Harrop. 1989. "Is Violence in Black Families Increasing? A Comparison of 1975 and 1985 National Survey Rates." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 51(4):969-980.
- Harris, C. R., and N. Christenfeld. 1996. "Gender, Jealousy, and Reason." *Psychological Science* 7(6):364-366.
- Harrison, L. A., and C. W. Esqueda. 1999. "Myths and Stereotypes of Actors Involved in Domestic Violence: Implications for Domestic Violence Culpability Attributions." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 4(2):129-138.
- Henton, J., R. Cate, J. Koval, S. Lloyd, S. Christopher. 1983. "Romance and Violence in Dating Relationships." *Journal of Family Issues* 4(3):467-482.
- Herzog, S. 2006. "Battered Women who Kill: An Empirical Analysis of Public Perceptions of Seriousness in Israel from a Consensus Theoretical Perspective." *Homicide Studies* 10(4):293-319.
- Heyman, R. E., and K. Schlee, K. 2003. "Stopping Wife Abuse via Physical Aggression Couples Treatment." *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, and Trauma* 7(1-2):135-157.
- Higgins, G. E., and R. Tewsbury. 2006. "Sex and Self-control Theory: The Measures and Causal Model may be Different." *Youth and Society* 37(4):479-503.
- Hill, G. D., and E. M. Crawford. 1990. "Women, Race, and Crime." *Criminology* 28(4):601-626.
- Hill-Collins, P. 1990. "Black Feminist Thought in the Matrix of Domination." Pp. 221-238 in *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman.
- Hindin, M. J., and L. S. Adair. 2002. "Who's at Risk? Factors Associated with Intimate Partner Violence in the Philippines." *Social Science and Medicine* 55(8):1385-1399.

- Hines, D., and E. M. Douglas. 2010. "Intimate Terrorism by Women towards Men: Does it Exist?" *Journal of Aggression, Conflict, and Peace Research* 2(3):36-56.
- Hines, D. A., J. Brown, and E. Dunning. 2007. "Characteristics of Callers to the Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men." *Journal of Family Violence* 22(2):63-72.
- Hines, D.A., and K. J. Saudino. 2003. "Gender Differences in Psychological, Physical, and Sexual Aggression among College Students using the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales." *Violence Victimization* 18(2):197-217.
- Hirschel, J. D., and E. Buzawa. 2002. "Understanding the Context of Dual Arrests with Directions for Future Research." *Violence Against Women* 8(12):1449-1473.
- Hoffman, K.L., D. H. Demo, and J. N. Edwards. 1994. "Physical Wife Abuse in a Non-Western Society: An Integrated Theoretical Approach." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 56(1):131-146.
- Holmes, J. G., and S. L. Murray. 1996. "Conflict in Close Relationships." Pp. 622-54 in *Social Psychology: Handbook of Basic Principles*, edited by E. T. Higgins and A. W. Kruglanski. New York, NY: Guilford.
- Holtzworth-Munroe, A. 2000. "A Typology of Men who are Violent toward their Female Partners: Making Sense of the Heterogeneity in Husband Violence." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 9(4):140-143.
- 2005. "Female Perpetration of Physical Aggression Against an Intimate Partner: A Controversial New Topic of Study." *Violence and Victims* 20(2):251-259.
- Holtzworth-Munroe, A., and G. L. Stuart. 1994. "Typologies of Male Batterers: Three Subtypes and Differences among Them." *Psychological Bulletin* 116(3):476-497.

- Hughes, M., and L. Jones. 2000. "Women, Domestic Violence, and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)." California State University. Retrieved October 29, 2010 ([http://www.csus.edu/calst/government\\_affairs/reports/ffp32.pdf](http://www.csus.edu/calst/government_affairs/reports/ffp32.pdf))
- Hurlbert, J. S., and W. B. Bankston. 1998. "Cultural Distinctiveness in the Face of Structural Transformation: The 'New' Old South." Pp. 168-88 in *The Rural South Since World War II*, edited by D. R. Hurt. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press.
- Hutchinson, I.W., J. D. Hirschel, and C. E. Pesackis. 1992. "Family Violence and Police Utilization." *Violence and Victims* 9(4):299-313.
- Infante, D.A., and A. S. Rancer. 1996. "Affirming and Non-affirming Style, Dyad Sex, and the Perception of Argumentation and Verbal Aggression in an Interpersonal Dispute." *Human Communication Research* 22(3):315-335.
- Infante, D. A., and C. J. Wigley. 1986. "Verbal Aggressiveness: An Interpersonal Model and Measure." *Communication Monographs* 53(1):61-69.
- Jacobson, N. S., and J. M. Gottman. 1998. *When Men Batter Women: New Insights into Ending Abusive Relationships*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
- Jang, D. 1994. "Caught in a Web: Immigrant Women and Domestic Violence." *Nat. Clearinghouse Leg. Serv. Rev. Special Issue* 28(4):397-405.
- Jenkins, P., and B. Davidson. 1990. "Battered Women in the Criminal Justice System: An Analysis of Gender Stereotypes." *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* 8(2):161-170.
- Jewkes, R. 2002. "Intimate Partner Violence: Causes and Prevention." *The Lancet* 359 (9315):1423-1429.
- Johnson, M. P. 1995. "Patriarchal Terrorism and Common Couple Violence: Two Forms of Violence against Women." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 57(2):283-294.

- 1999. "Two Types of Violence against Women in the American Family: Identifying Patriarchal Terrorism and Common Couple Violence." Paper presented at the National Council on Family Relations annual meetings, November 1999, Irvine, CA.
- 2006. "Conflict and Control: Gender Symmetry and Asymmetry in Domestic Violence." *Violence Against Women* 12(11):1003-1018.
- 2006a. "A 'General' Theory of Intimate Partner Violence: A Working Paper." *TCRM Paper*. Retrieved September 19, 2010.  
<http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/m/p/mpj/dvpage.html>
- 2006b. "Gendered Communication and Intimate Partner Violence." P. 71-89 in *The Sage Handbook of Gender and Communication*, edited by ed. B. J. Dow and J. T. Wood. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- 2008. *A Typology of Domestic Violence: Intimate Terrorist, Violent Resistance, and Situational Couple Violence*. Lebanon, NH: Northeastern University Press.
- Johnson, M. P., and K. J. Ferraro. 2000. "Research on Domestic Violence in the 1990s: Making Distinctions." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62(4):948-963.
- Johnson, M. P., and J. M. Leone. 2005. "The Differential Effects of Intimate Terrorism and Situation Couple Violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey." *Journal of Family Issues* 26(3):322-349.
- Johnson, H., and T. Hotton. 2003. "Losing Control: Homicide Risk in Estranged and Intact Intimate Relationships." *Homicide Studies: An Interdisciplinary and International Journal* 7(1):58-84.
- Jones, R. K. 1993. "Female Victim Perceptions of the Causes of Male Spouse Abuse." *Sociological Inquiry* 63(3):351-361.

- Jones-Webb, R. J., and L. R. Snowden. 1993. "Symptoms of Depression among Blacks and Whites: Differential Patterns of Risk." *American Journal of Public Health* 83(2):240-244.
- Kanter, G. K., and M. A. Straus. 1990. "The 'Drunken Bum' Theory of Wife Beating." Pp. 203-224 in *Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence in 8,145 Families*, edited by M. A. Straus, and R. J. Gelles. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Kaukinen, C. 2004. "Status Compatibility, Physical Violence, and Emotional Abuse in Intimate Relationships." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66(2):452-471.
- Katz, J., and V. Tirone. 2010. "Going Along With It: Sexually Coercive Partner Behavior Predicts Dating Women's Compliance with Unwanted Sex." *Violence Against Women* 16(1):730-742.
- Kelly, J. B., and M. K. Johnson. 2008. "Differentiation among Types of Intimate Partner Violence: Research Update and Implications for Interventions." *Family Court Review* 46(3):476-499.
- Kernsmith, P.D. 2005. "Exerting Power or Striking Back: A Gendered Comparison of Motivations for Domestic Violence Perpetration." *Violence and Victims* 20(2):171-183.
- Kershaw, T. 2003. "The Black Studies Paradigm: The Making of Scholar Activist." Pp. 27-37 in *Afrocentricity and the Academy, Essay on Theory and Practice*, edited by James L. Jr. Conyers. New York, NY: McFarland and Co. Inc.
- Kevan-Graham, N., and J. Archer. 2004. "Using Johnson's Domestic Violence Typology to Classify Men and Women in a Non-selected Sample." *National Family Violence Legislative Resource Center*. Retrieved August 28, 2010.  
[http://www.nfvlrc.org/docs/Graham\\_Kevan.ArcherJohnsonstudy.pdf](http://www.nfvlrc.org/docs/Graham_Kevan.ArcherJohnsonstudy.pdf)

- Killias, M., and C. Clerici. 2000. "Different Measures of Vulnerability in their Relation to Different Dimensions of Fear of Crime." *British Journal of Criminology* 40(3):437-450.
- Kilpatrick, D. G., R. Acierno, H. S. Resnick, B. E. Saunders, and C. L. Best. 1997. "A Two-Year Longitudinal Analysis of the Relationships between Violent Assault and Alcohol and Drug Use in Women." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 65(5):834-847.
- Kim, H. K., and D. M. Capaldi. 2004. "The Association of Antisocial Behavior and Depressive Symptoms between Partners and Risk for Aggression in Romantic Relationships." *Journal of Family Psychology* 18(1):82-96.
- Kimmel, M. S. 2002. "Gender Symmetry in Domestic Violence: A Substantive and Methodological Research Review." *Violence Against Women* 8(11):1336-1367.
- Kirkwood, C. 1993. *Leaving Abusive Partners: From the Scars of Survival to the Wisdom for Change*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Kishor, S., and K. Johnson. 2004. *Profiling Domestic Violence: A Multi-country Study*. Calverton, MD: ORC Macro.
- Kopper, B. A., and D. L. Epperson. 1991. "Women and Anger." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 15(1):7-14.
- Koerner, K., and N. S. Jacobson. 1994. "Emotion and Behavior Couple Therapy." Pp. 207-226 in *The Heart of the Matter: Perspectives on Emotion in Marital Therapy*, edited by S. M. Johnson and L. S. Greenberg. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Koss, M. P. 2000. "Blame, Shame, and Community: Justice Responses to Violence Against Women." *The American Psychologist* 55(11):1332-1343.
- Koss, M. P., L. A. Goodman, A. Browne, L. Fitzgerald, G. P. Keita, and N. F. Russo. 1994. *No*

- Safe Haven: Violence against Women at Home, at Work, and in the Community.*  
Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Kyriacou, D. N., D. Anglin, E. Taliaferro, S. Stone, T. Tubb, and J. A. Linden. 1999. "Risk Factors for Injury to Women from Domestic Violence." *The New England Journal of Medicine* 341(25):1892-1898.
- Landenburger, K. 1989. "A Process of Entrapment in and Recovery from an Abusive Relationship." *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* 10(3-4):209-227.
- Langford, D. R. 1996. "Predicting Unpredictability: A Model of Women's Processes of Predicting Battering Men's Violence." *Research and Theory for Nursing* 10(4):371-385.
- Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J., P. Neidig, and G. Thorn. 1995. "Violent Marriages: Gender Differences in Levels of Current Violence and Past Abuse." *Journal of Family Violence* 10(2):159-176.
- Lee, C. 1996. "Race and Self-Defense: Toward a Normative Conception of Reasonableness." *Minnesota Law Review* 81(2):368-500.
- Leonard, K. E., and B. M. Quigley. 1999. "Drinking and Marital Aggression in Newlyweds: An Event-based Analysis of Drinking and the Occurrence of Husband Marital Aggression." *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 60(4):537-545.
- Leone, J. M., M. P. Johnson, and C. L. Cohan. 2004. "Consequences of Male Partner Violence for Low-income Minority Women." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66(2):472-490.
- Lempert, L. B. 1996. "Women's Strategies for Survival: Developing Agency in Abusive Relationships." *Journal of Family Violence* 11(3):269-289.

- Lindhorst, T., and E. Tajima. 2008. "Reconceptualizing and Operationalizing Context in Survey Research on Intimate Partner Violence." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 23(3):362-388.
- Lloyd, S. A., and B. C. Emery. 2000. *The Dark Side of Courtship: Physical and Sexual Aggression*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Macchietto, J. G. 1992. "Aspects of Male Victimization and Female Aggression: Implications for Counseling Men." *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* 14(3):375-392.
- MacMillian, R., and R. Gartner. 1999. "When She Brings Home the Bacon: Labor-force Participation and the Risk of Spousal Violence against Women." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 61(4):947-958.
- Martin, M. E. 1997. "Double Your Trouble: Dual Arrest in Family Violence." *Journal of Family Violence* 12(2):139-157.
- Martin, D. 1981. *Battered Wives*. San Francisco, CA: Volcano Press.
- Marshall, L. L. 1992. "Development of the Severity of Violence against Women Scales." *Journal of Family Violence* 7(2):103-120.
- Mason, C. 2002. *Killing for Life: The Apocalyptic Narrative of Pro-life Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- McHugh, M. C., and Frieze, I. H. 2006. "Intimate Partner Violence: New Directions." Pp. 121-141 in *Violence and exploitation against women and girls. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1087, edited by F. L. Denmark, H. H. Krauss, E. Halpern, and J. A. Sechzer. Boston, MA: Blackwell New York Academy of Sciences.
- Merritt-Gray, M., and J. Wuest. 1995. "Counteracting Abuse and Breaking Free: The Process of

- Leaving Revealed through Women's Voices." *Health Care for Women International* 16(5):399-412.
- McNeely, R. L., and C. R. Mann. 1990. "Domestic Violence is a Human Issue." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 5(1):129-132.
- McNeely, R. L., and G. Robinson-Simpson. 1987. "The Truth about Domestic Violence: A Falsely Framed Issue." *Social Work* 32(6):485-490.
- Melzer, S. A. 2002. "Gender, Work, and Intimate Partner Violence: Men's Occupational Violence Spillover and Compensatory Violence." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 64(4):820-832.
- Messerschmidt, J. W. 1993. *Masculinities and Crime: Critique and Reconceptualization of Theory*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Migliaccio, T. A. 2002. "Abused Husbands: A Narrative Analysis." *Journal of Family Issues* 23(1):26-52.
- Milardo, R. M. 1998. "Gender Asymmetry in Common Couple Violence." *Personal Relationships* 5(4):423-438.
- Miller, J. 2001a. *One of the Guys: Girls, Gangs and Gender*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Miller, S. 2001b. "The Paradox of Women Arrested for Domestic Violence: Criminal Justice Professionals and Service Providers Respond." *Violence Against Women* 7(12):1339-1376.
- Miller, S. L., and M. L. Meloy. 2006. "Women's Use of Force: Voices of Women Arrested for Domestic Violence." *Violence Against Women* 12(1):89-115.
- Miller, J., and N. A. White. 2003. "Gender and Adolescent Relationship Violence: A

- Contextual Examination.” *Criminology* 41(4):1207-1248.
- 2004. “Situational Effects of Gender Inequality on Girls’ Participation in Violence.” Pp. 167-190 in *Girls’ Violence: Myths and Realities*, edited by C. Alder and A. Worrall. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Mills, T. 1984. “Victimization and Self-esteem: On Equating Husband Abuse and Wife Abuse.” *Victimology* 9(2):254-261.
- Mitchell, R. E., and C. A. Hodson. 1983. “Coping with Domestic Violence: Social Support and Psychological Health Among Battered Women.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 11(6):625-654.
- Mitchell, C., and D. Anglin. 2009. *Intimate Partner Violence: A Health-based Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Moffit, T. E., and A. Caspi. 1999. *Findings about Partner Violence from the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice.
- Morash, M., M. Bui, and A. Santiago. 2000. “Gender Specific Ideology of Domestic Violence in Mexican Origin Families.” *International Review of Victimology* 1(3):67-91.
- Neff, J., B. Holaman, and T. D. Schluter. 1995. “Spousal Violence among Anglos, Blacks, and Mexican Americans: The Role of Demographic Variables, Psychosocial, Predictors, and Alcohol Consumption.” *Journal of Family Violence* 10(1):1-21.
- Ness, C. 2004. “Why Girls Fight: Female Youth Violence in the Inner City.” *Annals* 595(1):32-48.
- O’Brien, R. 1999. “Measuring the Convergence/divergence of ‘Serious Crime’ Arrest Rates for Males and Females: 1960-1995.” *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 25(1):97-114.

- O'Carroll, P., and J. Mercy. 1986. "Patterns and Recent Trends in Black Homicide." Pp. 44-62 in *Homicide among Black Americans*, edited by D. Hawkins. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Ooms, T. 2006. "A Sociologist's Perspective on Domestic Violence: A Conversation with Michael Johnson, Ph.D." *Center for Law and Social Policy*. Retrieved July 18, 2010. ([www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications\\_states/files/0314.pdf](http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications_states/files/0314.pdf))
- Osthoff, S. 2002. "But, Gertrude, I Beg to Differ, a Hit is not a Hit is not a Hit." *Violence Against Women* 8(12):1521-1544.
- O'Sullivan, L. F., and E. R. Allgeier. 1998. "Feigning Sexual Desire: Consenting to Unwanted Sexual Activity in Heterosexual Dating Relationships." *Journal of Sex Research* 35(3):234-243.
- Ousey, G. 1999. "Homicide, Structural Factors, and the Racial Invariance Assumption." *Criminology* 37(2):405-426.
- Pagelow, M. D. 1985. "The 'Battered Husband Syndrome': Social Problem or Much Ado about Little?" Pp. 172-195 in *Marital Violence*, edited by N. Johnson. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Pain, R. 1997. "Whither Women's Fear? Perceptions of Sexual Violence in Public and Private Space." *International Review of Victimology* 4(4):297-312.
- Patrick, C. J. 2006. *The Handbook of Psychopathy*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Pence, E., and M. Paymar. 1993. *Education Groups for Men who Batter: The Duluth Model*, New York: Springer.
- Perry-Jenkins, M., R. L. Repetti, and A. C. Crouter. 2000. "Work and Family in the 1990s." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62(4):981-998.

- Pierce, M. C., and R. J. Harris. 1993. "The Effect of Provocation, Race, and Injury Description on Men's and Women's Perceptions of a Wife-battering Incident." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 23(10):767-790.
- Pollock, J. M., and S. M. Davis. 2005. "The Continuing Myth of the Female Offender." *Violence Against Women* 30(1):5-29.
- Popenoe, D. 1996. "A World without Fathers." *Wilson Quarterly* 20(2):12-29.
- Pramaggiore, M. T. 1992. "Resisting/performing/femininity: Words, Flesh, and Feminism in Karen Finley's *The Constant State of Desire*." *Theatre Journal* 44(3): 269-290.
- Pratt, T. C., and F. T. Cullen. 2000. "The Empirical Status of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime: A Meta-analysis." *Criminology* 38(3):931-964.
- Pridemore, W. A., and J. D. Freilich. 2005. "Gender Equity, Traditional Masculine Culture, and Female Homicide Victimization." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 33(3):213-223.
- Raj, A., and J. Silverman. 2002. "Violence against Immigrant Women: The Roles of Culture, Context, and Legal Immigrant Status on Intimate Partner Violence." *Violence Against Women* 8(3):367-398.
- Rasche, C. E. 1995. "Minority Women and Domestic Violence: The Unique Dilemmas of Battered Women of Color." Pp. 246-261 in *The Criminal Justice System and Women: Offenders, Victims, and Workers* edited B. R. Price and N. J. Sokoloff. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Rennison, C. M. 2003. "Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001." Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs.
- Rennison, C. M., and S. Welchans. 2000. *Intimate Partner Violence*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

- Renzetti, C. M. 1994. "On Dancing with a Bear: Reflections on Some of the Current Debate among Domestic Violence Theorists." *Violence and Victims* 9(2):195-200.
- Retzinger, S. M. 1991. *Violent Emotions: Shame and Rage in Marital Quarrels*. National Criminal Justice 132424, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Robins, R. W., A. Caspi, and T. E. Moffitt. 2002. "It's Not Just Who You're With, It's Who You Are: Personality and Relationship Experiences across Multiple Relationships." *Journal of Personality* 70(6):925-964.
- Rogers, B., G. McGee, A. Vann, N. Thompson, and O. Williams. 2003. "Substance Abuse and Domestic Violence: Stories of Practitioners that Address the Co-occurrence among Battered Women." *Violence Against Women* 9(5):590-598.
- Rose, L., and J. Campbell. 2000. "The Role of Social Support and Family Relationships in Women's Responses to Battering." *Health Care for Women International* 21(1):27-39.
- Rosen, K. H., S. M. Stith, A. L. Few, K. L. Daly, and D. R. Tritt. 2005. "A Qualitative Investigation of Johnson's Typology." *Violence and Victims* 20(3):319-334.
- Rosenfeld, R. 1997. "Changing Relationships between Men and Women: A Note on the Decline in Intimate Partner Homicide." *Homicide Studies* 1(1):72-83.
- Russo, N. F. 2006. "Violence against Women: A Global Health Issue." *Proceedings of the 28th International Congress of Psychology, Beijing, 2004*. New York, NY: Psychology Press Taylor and Francis Group.
- Russo, N. F., and A. Pirlott. 2006. "Gender-based Violence: Concepts, Methods, and Findings." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1087(1):178-205.

- Salomon, A., S. S. Bassuk, and N. Huntington. 2002. "The Relationship between Intimate Partner Violence and the Use of Addictive Substances in Poor and Homeless Single Mothers." *Violence Against Women* 8(7):785-815.
- Saunders, D. G. 1986. "When Battered Women Use Violence: Husband-Abuse or Self-defense." *Violence and Victims* 1(1):47-60.
- 1995. "The Tendency to Arrest Victims of Domestic Violence: A Preliminary Analysis of Officer Characteristics." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 10(2):147-158.
- Schechter, S. 2008. "Poverty and Domestic Violence: What Battered Women with Abused Children Need from their Advocates." Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Retrieved on October 29, 2010. (<http://www.wscadv.org/docs/Poverty-and-Domestic-Violence.pdf>)
- Schuller, R. A., and P. A. Hastings. 1996. "Trials of Battered Women Who Kill: The Impact of Alternative Forms of Expert Evidence." *Law and Human Behavior* 20(2):167-187.
- Schwartz, M. D. 2000. "Methodological issues in the Use of Survey Data for Measuring and Characterizing Violence against Women." *Violence Against Women* 6(8):815-838.
- Scott, M. B., and S. M. Lyman. 1968. "Accounts." *American Sociological Review* 33(1):46-62.
- Shields, N. M., and C. R. Hanneke. 1983. "Attribution Processes in Violent Relationships: Perceptions of Violent Husbands and their Wives." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 13(6):515-527.
- Silverstein, L. B., and C. F. Auerbach. 1999. "Deconstructing the Essential Father." *The American Psychologist* 54(6):1-21.

- Simmons, C. A., P. Lehmann, and S. W. Craun. 2008. "Women Arrested for IPV Offenses: Abuse Experiences Yet Low Trauma Pathology." *Journal of Family Violence* 23(8):755-765.
- Simon, T. R., M. Anderson, M. P. Thompson, A. E. Crosby, G. Shelley, and J. J. Sacks. 2001. "Attitudinal Acceptance of Intimate Partner Violence among US adults." *Violence and Victims* 16(2):115-126.
- Simpson, L. E., B. D. Doss, J. Wheeler, and A. Christensen. 2007. "Relationship Violence among Couples Seeking Therapy: Common Couple Violence or Battering." *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 33(2):270-283.
- Snow, D. A., and L. Anderson. 1995. "The Problem of Identity Construction among the Homeless." Pp. 230-258 in *Symbolic Interaction: An Introduction to Social Psychology*, edited by N. J. Hermann and L. T. Reynolds. New York: General Hall, Inc.
- Sokoloff, N. J., and I. Dupont. 2005. "Domestic Violence at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender: Challenges and Contributions to Understanding Violence against Marginalized Women in Diverse Communities." *Violence Against Women* 11(1):38-64.
- Sorenson, S. B., and C. A. Taylor. 2005. "Female Aggression toward Male Intimate Partner an Examination of Social Norms in a Community-based Sample." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 29(1):78-96.
- Stamp, G. H., and T. C. Sabourin. 1995. "Accounting for Violence: An Analysis of Male Spousal Abuse Narratives." *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 23(4):284-307.
- Stanko, E. 1995. "Women, Crime, and Fear." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 539(1):46-58.

- Stark, E. 1996. "Mandatory Arrest of Batterers: A Reply to its Critics." Pp. 115-49 in *Do Arrests and Restraining Orders Work?* Edited by E. S. Buzawa and C. G. Buzawa. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Stark, E., and A. Flitcraft. 1996. "Women at Risk: Domestic Violence and Women's Health." Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- State of Connecticut. 1998. *Summary of Family Violence Arrest Incidents in Connecticut 1987-1997*. Hartford, CT: Office of Policy and Management Statistical Analysis Center.
- Steil, J. M., and K. Weltman. 1992. "Influence Strategies at Home and at Work: A Study of Sixty Dual Career Couples." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 9(1):65-88.
- Steele, C. M., and R. A. Josephs. 1990. "The Two Faces of Alcohol Myopia: Attentional Mediation of Psychological Stress." *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 99(2):115-126.
- Steffensmeier, D., and S. Demuth. 2006. "Does Gender Modify the Effects of Race-ethnicity on Criminal Sanctioning? Sentences for Male and Female White, Black, and Hispanic Defendants." *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 22(3):241-261.
- Steffensmeier, D., J. Kramer, and C. Streifel. 1993. "Gender and Imprisonment Decisions." *Criminology* 31(3):411-446.
- Steffensmeier, D., H. Zhong, J. Ackerman, J. Schwartz, and S. Agha. 2001. "Gender Gap Trends for Violent Crimes, 1980 to 2003: A UCR-NCVS comparison." *Feminist Criminology* 1(1):72-98.
- Stets, J. E., and M. A. Straus. 1990. "Gender Differences in Reporting Marital Violence and its Medical and Psychological Consequences." Pp. 151-165 in *Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations in 8,145 Families*, edited by M. A. Straus and R. J. Gelles. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

- Stout, K. D., and P. Brown. 1995. "Legal Differences between Men and Women who Kill Intimate Partners." *Affilia* 10(2):194-205.
- Straus, M. A. 1980. "A Sociological Perspective on the Causes of Family Violence." Pp. 7-31 in *Violence and the Family*, edited by M. Greene. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- 1993. "Physical Assaults by Wives: A Major Social Problem." Pp. 67-87 in *Current Controversies on Family Violence*, edited by R. J. Gelles and D. R. Loseke. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- 1999. "The Controversy over Domestic Violence by Women: A Methodological, theoretical, and Sociology of Science Analysis." Pp. 17-44 in *Violence in Intimate Relationships*, edited by X. Arriaga and S. Oskamp. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.
- Straus, M. A., and R. J. Gelles. 1990. *Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence in 8,145 Families*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press.
- Sullivan, T. P., K. J. Meese, S. C. Swan. 2005. "Precursors and Correlates of Women's Violence: Child Abuse, Traumatization, Victimization of Women, Avoidance Coping, and Psychological Symptoms." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 29(3):290-301.
- Swan, S. C., and D. L. Snow. 2006. "The Development of a Theory of Women's Use of Violence in Intimate Relationships." *Violence Against Women* 12(11):1026-1045.
- 2002. "A Typology of Women's Use of Violence in Intimate Relationships." *Violence Against Women* 8(3):286-319.
- Swan, S. C., L. J. Gambone, A. M. Fields, T. P. Sullivan, and D. L. Snow. 2005. "Women Who Use Violence in Intimate Relationships: The Role of Anger, Victimization and Symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress and Depression." *Violence and Victims* 20(3):267-285.

- Tan, C., J. Basta, C. M. Sullivan, and W. S. Davidson. 1995. "The Role of Social Support in the Lives of Women Exiting Domestic Violence Shelters: An Experimental Study." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 10(4):437-451.
- Thoits, P. 1992. "Identity Structures and Psychological Well-being: Gender and Marital Status Comparisons." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 55(3):236-256.
- Tichenor, V. J. 1999. "Status and Income as Gendered Resources: The Case of Marital Power." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 61(3):638-650.
- Tittle, C. R., D. A. Ward, and H. G. Grasmick. 2003. "Gender, Age and Crime/deviance: A Challenge to Self-control Theory." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 40(3):426-453.
- Tolman, R. M., J. L. Edleson, and M. Fendrich. 1996. "The Applicability of the Theory of Planned Behavior to Abusive Men's Cessation of Violent Behavior." *Violence Victimization* 11(4):341-54.
- Tjaden, P., and N. Thoennes. 2000. "Prevalence and Consequences of Male-to-female and Female-to-male Intimate Partner Violence as Measured by the National Violence against Women Survey." *Violence Against Women* 6(2):142-161.
- Tsang, J., and M. S. Stanford. 2007. "Forgiveness for Intimate Partner Violence: The Influence of Victim and Offender Variables." *Personality and Individual Differences* 42(4):653-664.
- U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. 1981-1986. *Crimes in the United States*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- Vangelisti, A. L., and D. Perlman. 2006. *The Cambridge Handbook of Personal Relationships*. New York, New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Vieraitis, L. M., and M. R. Williams. 2002. "Assessing the Impact of Gender Inequality on Female Homicide Victimization across U.S. Cities: A Racially Disaggregated Analysis." *Violence Against Women* 8(1):35-63.
- Vogler, C. 2005. "Cohabiting Couples: Rethinking Money in the Household at the Beginning of the Twenty First Century." *The Sociological Review* 53(1):1-29.
- Walker, L. E. 1979. *The Battered Woman*. New York: Harper and Row.
- 1989. *Terrifying Love: Why Battered Women Kill and How Society Responds*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Ward, R. E., and J. P. Muldoon. 2007. "Female Tactics and Strategies of Partner Violence: A Study of Incident Reports." *Sociological Spectrum* 26(3):337-364.
- Warrington, M. 2001. "I Must Get Out: The Geographies of Domestic Violence." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 26(3):365-382.
- Weaver, T. L., C. K. Sanders, C. Campbell, and M. Schnabel. 2009. "Development and Preliminary Psychometric Evaluation of the Domestic Violence-related Financial Issues Scale (DV-FI)." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24(4):569-585.
- Wesely, J. 2006. "Considering the Context of Women's Violence: Gender, Lived Experiences, and Cumulative Victimization." *Feminist Criminology* 1(4):303-328.
- West, C., and S. Fenstermaker. 1995. "Doing Difference." *Gender and Society* 9(1):8-37.
- Whaley, R. B., and S. F. Messner. 2003. "Gender Equality and Gendered Homicides." *Homicide Studies* 6(3):188-210.
- White, J. M., and D. M. Klein. 2007. *Family Theories: 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. Sage Publications.
- White, L., and S. J. Rogers. 2000. "Economic Circumstances and Family Outcomes: A Review of the 1990's." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62(4):1035-1051.

- Wideman, M. W., and E. R. Allgeier. 1993. "Gender Differences in Sexual Jealousy: Adaptionist or Social Learning Explanation?" *Ethology and Sociobiology* 14(2):115-140.
- Wilson, N. K. 1993. "Stealing and Dealing: The Drug War and Gendered Criminal Opportunity." Pp. 169-194 in *Female Criminality: The State of the Art*, edited by C. C. Culliver. New York, NY: Garland Publishing.
- Wolff, K. B. 2004. "'Cracks in the System': How Discourse, Dominance, and Whiteness Shape Maternal Drug Health Policy." *Ph.D. dissertation*, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.
- Worcester, N. 2002. "Women's Use of Force: Complexities and Challenges of Taking the Issue Seriously." *Violence Against Women* 8(11):1390-1415.
- Worrall, A. 1990. *Offending Women: Female Lawbreakers and the Criminal Justice System*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Yodanis, C. L. 2004. "Gender Inequality, Violence against Women, and Fear: A Cross-National Test of the Feminist Theory of Violence against Women." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 19(6):655-675.
- Yoshihama, M. 2001. "Immigrants-in-context Framework: Understanding the Interactive Influence of Socio-cultural Contexts." *Evaluation and Program Planning* 24(3):307-318.
- Zorza, J. 1992. "The Criminal Law of Misdemeanor Domestic Violence, 1970-1990." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 83(1):46-72.
- Zorza, J., and L. Woods. 1994. *Mandatory Arrest: Problems and Possibilities*. New York: National Center on Women and Family Law.

## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

#### VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

##### **Informed Consent for Participants in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects**

Title of Project: A Qualitative Analysis of Intimate Partner Violence

Principal Investigator: Chiquita D. Howard-Bostic

#### I. THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH/PROJECT

You are invited to participate in a study on women's perspectives on intimate partner violence. This project will examine what your experiences of abuse relationships and domestic violence are like.

#### II. PROCEDURES

You will be asked to share your experiences about your abusive relationship, interactions with your partner, experiences of violence, methods of violence, and post violence conditions. You will be asked to participate in an interview. The interview will include a series of open-ended questions. The objective of the interview is to understand your point of view rather than make generalizations about ways in which women experience intimate partner violence. During the interview, you will discuss your experiences of domestic abuse. Your description of these events may include information about the environment, personal behavior, beliefs, language differences, interactions, and how you would do things differently or the same in the future. The interview will last about 2 hours and 30 minutes.

#### III. RISKS

Main concerns for risk during research on domestic violence include: (1) ensuring safety of respondents, (2) protecting confidentiality when breaches could provoke an attack, and (3) ensuring the interview process is affirming and does not cause distress. The safety of respondents will be reassured since interviews will be held at a woman's center site. The researcher will not inform the wider community of the study. The researcher will protect the privacy by ensuring that interviews are done in complete privacy. The researcher has received formal training and ongoing support on symptoms of distress and methods of ending an interview if any discomfort emerges during the interview. If any symptoms or experiences of anger, anxiety, or sadness occur during the interview, the subject may end the interview at any time.

#### IV. BENEFITS OF THIS PROJECT

You may not obtain any personal benefit from participating in this project. You will be given information to contact the principal investigator to get information about the outcomes of the study.

#### V. EXTENT OF ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The results of this study will be kept strictly confidential. No one other than the principal investigator will be able to connect any data with your name. The information you provide will have your name removed and only a pseudonym (a made-up name that will be used to conceal your identity) will identify you during analyses and any written reports of the research. A text transcript will be made from the experimental session with you. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the data nor will you ever be identified as a participant in the project. The information that you provide during the interview will be audio recorded. This is to help the researcher collect accurate information. A typed transcript will be made from the audio recording that you take part in. Your name and other personal information that can identify you will not be used in either the audio tape or the written transcript. Once the research project is complete, the audio recording and written transcript will be destroyed.

#### VI. COMPENSATION

There is no monetary compensation for participating in the study.

#### VII. FREEDOM TO WITHDRAW

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time for any reason.

#### VIII. APPROVAL OF RESEARCH

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

#### IX. RECORDING

This interview will be audio recorded in order to help more effectively and thoroughly collect the data needed for this study. The recordings will be destroyed after the research is completed.

#### X. PARTICIPANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

It is very important that you keep the activities and information discussed confidential, since others will be participating in this research.

#### XI. QUESTIONS

If you have questions, or do not understand information on this form, please feel free to ask them now.

**XII. PARTICIPANT'S PERMISSION**

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study, and I know of no reason I cannot participate. I have read and understand the informed consent and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this project. If I participate, I may withdraw at any time without penalty. I agree to abide by the rules of this project

---

Signature Date

---

Name (please print) Contact (telephone #):

**XIII. CONTACT**

If you have questions at any time about the project or the procedures, you may contact the principal investigator, Chiquita D. Howard-Bostic, [choward@vt.edu](mailto:choward@vt.edu), or (304) 260-4380 ext. 2351. If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Dr. David Moore, Chair of the Institutional Review Board Research Division at (540) 231-4991.

**Appendix B: The revised Controlling Behaviors Scale (CBS-R)**

1. Made it difficult to work or study
2. Control the others money
3. Keep own money matters secret
4. Refuse to share money/pay fair share
5. Threaten to harm the other one
6. Threaten to leave the relationship
7. Threaten to harm self
8. Threaten to disclose damaging or embarrassing information
9. Try to make the other do things they didn't want to
10. Use nasty looks and gestures to make the other one feel bad or silly
11. Smash the other ones property when annoyed/angry
12. Be nasty or rude to other one's friends or family
13. Vent anger on pets
14. Try to put the other down when getting 'too big for their boots'
15. Show the other one up in public
16. Tell the other they were going mad
17. Tell the other they were lying or confused
18. Call the other unpleasant names
19. Try to restrict the time spent with family or friends
20. Want to know where the other went and who they spoke to when not together
21. Try to limit the amount of activities outside the relationship the other engaged in
22. Act suspicious and jealous of the other one
23. Check up on other's movements
24. Try to make the other feel jealous