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HOW BGSU STUDENTS DEFINE  
“INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE” AND “INTIMATE PARTNER ABUSE”

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HONORS PROJECT

Submitted to the University Honors Program  
at Bowling Green State University in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with

UNIVERSITY HONORS

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### **Abstract**

This study examines what behaviors undergraduate, heterosexual female Bowling Green State University students age 18-24 classify as “Intimate Partner Violence” and as “Intimate Partner Abuse.” This research begins to explore how this population defines these terms through looking at what types of behaviors are seen as violence and what types of behaviors are seen as abuse. Participants were randomly selected to take one of two online surveys. One survey asked participants to decide if listed behaviors were “Intimate Partner Violence” when committed by a male partner against a female partner. The other survey asked the same but replaced “Intimate Partner Violence” with “Intimate Partner Abuse.” The findings from this research can impact future violence and abuse education programs at BGSU. It fills the important role of helping these program coordinators understand how the target population defines these terms, allowing the coordinators to improve their programs to better educate their target audience about violence and abuse.

*Keywords:* Intimate Partner Violence, Intimate Partner Abuse, Domestic Violence, Bowling Green State University, definitions, quantitative

## **How BGSU Students Define “Intimate Partner Violence” and “Intimate Partner Abuse”**

### **Introduction**

In the beginning stages of research for this project, I found myself sitting in the crowded student union cafeteria around dinnertime. My friend Kathleen and I had met there in the late afternoon after I had asked her for an informal interview to talk about her reactions to a recent meeting of a Bowling Green State University (BGSU) student feminist organization we were both involved in. It was October—National Domestic Violence Awareness Month—and the organization had been focusing its weekly discussion topics on Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence. One evening, Kathleen led a discussion about coercion and reproductive control in relationships. I found it interesting that coercion and control—behaviors I was aware were classified by many scholars as Intimate Partner Violence (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, 1982; Stark, 2007; Burks, 2006)—were talked about at that meeting as if they were inappropriate, yet distinct from forms of physical violence. I was intrigued at the time, but that interest was overruled by my interest in the effectiveness of student organizations as sources of Intimate Partner Violence education—what I believed, at the time, this research would focus on. I asked Kathleen to sit down and discuss her beliefs about the effectiveness of student organizations. Our conversation, however, turned out to be much different than expected.

I realized early in my conversation with Kathleen that we were not understanding each other as well as I had assumed we would. We seemed to be slipping past one another, unknowingly dancing around an elephant in the room. The nature of the elephant

became clear to me halfway through our conversation: we were not using the same language to talk about the issue of relationship violence. Kathleen was referring to physical, verbal, sexual, and emotional violence using the word violence but to control and coercion using the word abuse. I, on the other hand, was categorizing all those behaviors as violence.

It occurred to me then that if Kathleen and I, who know each other very well, were having difficulty talking about these issues and understanding each other because we were using different terms (and, perhaps, different definitions), others may be having the same problem.

I began having similar conversations with others I knew, all female undergraduate students at BGSU. The definition problem surfaced again and again. Some women defined physical violence as Intimate Partner Violence and all other behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse, some classified different behaviors under each terms, and some mirrored Kathleen's definitions. None, however, defined all physical violence, emotional violence, sexual violence, verbal violence, control, and coercion as Intimate Partner Violence. The more women I talked to, the more intrigued I became and the more this project took a different direction than originally intended.

I wondered: do BGSU undergraduate women define Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse differently, or are these terms used interchangeably? If these terms are defined differently, which types of behaviors are classified as Intimate Partner Violence and which as Intimate Partner Abuse? My ultimate goal became to discover if there is a difference in the behaviors heterosexual, undergraduate female BGSU students ages 18-24 view as Intimate Partner Violence and the behaviors they view as Intimate

Partner Abuse. Based on my conversations with other undergraduate women at BGSU, I began this research with a hypothesis that there would be a difference and that Intimate Partner Abuse would be seen as the more inclusive of the two categories. I structured this study as an online survey, which will be discussed further below.

This research has important implications for how this topic is discussed at BGSU. Understanding how the student population defines Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse will assist anti-violence program administrators and counselors to better target their important messages to undergraduate students. The results of this study indicate my hypothesis that Intimate Partner Violence would be seen as a more inclusive term than Intimate Partner Abuse is true; however, this finding is complicated when we consider different categories of behaviors, as there was not a statistically significant difference between the terms for most behavior categories. Additionally, the findings suggest that the relationship between previous violence/abuse education and defining behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse is complex.

### **Literature Review**

Violence or abuse between intimate partners was not always recognized as a social problem in the United States. In fact, it actually was legally sanctioned in the early years of the nation. In the early 1700s, Puritans believed that women and children were the embodiment of sin and that violence was necessarily employed by husbands and fathers to keep discipline in the household (Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003). Violence itself was not considered problematic for the Puritans, but restrictions were set that denoted the boundaries of violence husbands were permitted to employ (Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003). There is little evidence, however, that these restrictions were

enforced, as common law dictated men's right to rule their families (Jones, 2000; Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003).

In the early nineteenth century, laws still permitted a husband to "chastise his wife without subjecting himself to vexatious prosecutions for assault and batter, resulting in the discredit and shame of all parties concerned" (Jones, 2000). By the late 1800s, however, the concept shifted and laws came into being that legally restricted the ways in which a husband could "discipline" his wife (Jones, 2000; Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003). By the end of the nineteenth century, Delaware, Maryland, and Oregon passed legislation outlawing all such behavior (Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003). There is little evidence, however, that these laws were enforced, as with Puritan common law (Jones, 2000). As the United States moved into the twentieth century, different political issues came to the forefront of public debate. Women's Suffrage, World War I, the Great Depression, and Prohibition became the salient issues of the day at the expense of the "private" issue of family violence (Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003).

It was not until the Second Wave Women's Movement of the 1970's that violence in the family regained attention as a social problem (Jones, 2000; Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003). Over the course of several decades, changes in public policy and shifts in discourse surrounding family violence took place (Jones, 2000; Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003). The movement fought for legal reform city by city, state by state, and its victories were hard-won but important (Jones, 2000). For example, in a 1984 decision by a federal district court, it was ruled that, "a man is not allowed to physically abuse or endanger a woman merely because he is her husband" (Jones, 2000). It was also ruled that police officers must interfere in such situations, regardless of the martial status of

those involved (Jones, 2000). Husbands' violence against wives was no longer legally sanctioned, though many scholars and activists have argued that the legal system does not protect victims of partner violence (Jones, 2000; Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003; Stark, 2007). Though much of the legislation and popular views of partner violence and abuse were centered around heterosexual married couples, as more types of relationships became socially acceptable, conceptualization of partner violence and abuse expanded to include not only married couples, but dating couples, cohabiting couples, and same-sex couples (Ard & Makadon, 2011; Fincham, Cui, Braithwaite, & Pasley, 2008; Cui, Ueno, Gordon, & Fincham, 2013).

Throughout the years of changing policy and social views, many terms have emerged to describe violence in intimate relationships: Wife Beating, Woman Battering, Abuse, Family Violence, Marital Violence, Domestic Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, and Intimate Partner Abuse (Aldarondo & Castro-Fernandez, 2011; Loue, 2001; Perilla, Lippy, Rosales, & Serrata, 2011). Each term carries a slightly different connotation and there is "enormous variation in how researchers conceptualize and explore this topic" (Perilla et al., 2011). For the purposes of this study, I am interested in the terms Intimate Partner Violence, and Intimate Partner Abuse. Some scholars (Loue, 2001; Potter, 2008; Roberts & Roberts, 2005) use the terms interchangeably in their work, whether they acknowledge it or it happens without their realization. Others use different terms to indicate different types of violence or abuse in different contexts.

"Domestic Violence" is the term most often heard in legislation and social discussions of relationship violence and abuse. For this reason, I believe it is important to understand how scholars use the term and how this usage relates to the way Intimate



Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse are conceptualized. Loue (2001) notes that Ohio law defines Domestic Violence (in respect to intimate partners) as “attempting to cause or recklessly causing bodily injury,” or “placing another person by the threat of force in fear of imminent serious physical harm” (p. 2). While Ohio’s legal definition of the term focuses only on the physical aspects of Domestic Violence, Perilla et al. (2011) use “Domestic Violence” in a much broader way to discuss physical, verbal, and sexual violence as well as stalking between different-sex or same-sex partners. Perilla et al. (2011) employ the American Psychological Association’s (APA) definition of Domestic Violence—“the range of physical, sexual and emotional maltreatment of one family member against another” to construct their own definition of Domestic Violence as “the violence (physical, verbal, sexual, or stalking) that women—in relationship with a man or a woman—experience from their intimate partners” (p. 199). Aldarondo & Castro-Fernandez (2011) seem to employ a still broader definition than Perilla et al. (2011) in their inclusion of coercive behaviors such as intimidation, harassment, and denial of access to resources. Aldarondo & Castro-Fernandez (2011) conceptualize Domestic Violence as “relational patterns of coercive control of intimate partners that may be achieved through intimidation, harassment and persecution, verbal aggression, denial of access to resources, sexual coercion and assault, and physical assault and torture” (p. 222). What we can see from these definitions of Domestic Violence is how different scholars conceptualize the term, some much more inclusively than others.

The term Intimate Partner Violence is just as complicated in its varying definitions as Domestic Violence. Intimate Partner Violence is used by Perilla et al. (2011) to discuss “physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner

or spouse” (p. 199). This definition goes on to mention that Intimate Partner Violence includes both heterosexual and same-sex couples regardless of if they engage in sexual intimacy (Perilla et al., 2011). This differs from how Perilla et al. (2011) define Domestic Violence as only current partners or spouses. For Perilla et al. (2011), it seems that Intimate Partner Violence is a term that can be applied to a broader spectrum of relationship types. Campbell, Alhusen, Draughon, Kub, and Walton-Moss (2011) illustrate the different types of relationships Intimate Partner Violence can encompass. They conceptualize Intimate Partner Violence as “physical and/or sexual assault or threats of assault against a married, cohabiting, or dating current or estranged intimate partner by the other partner, inclusive of emotional abuse and controlling behaviors in a relationship with a history of physical and/or sexual assault” (Campbell et al., 2011, p. 243).

While Potter (2008) states that she uses the terms Domestic Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Intimate Partner Abuse, Domestic Abuse, Woman Battering, Spouse Abuse, Wife Abuse, and Dating Violence interchangeably, she also mentions “[she] most often use[s] ‘intimate partner abuse’ to convey violence and other forms of abuse directed toward women by their companions. Using the word ‘abuse’ instead of ‘violence’ addresses acts that do not neatly fit within the strict definition of ‘violence,’ such as controlling and psychologically demeaning acts” (p. 229). Potter (2008) touches on the idea the violence and abuse may be seen as separate categories of behaviors. Like Potter (2008), Campbell et al. (2011) use Intimate Partner Abuse to refer to behaviors that do not neatly fit into the definition of violence. These behaviors include emotional abuse, control, and “other types of psychological abuse... occurring without violence as well as

physical or sexual assault and threats” (p. 243). Loue (2001) also writes of a distinction between violence and abuse. The definition of violence as “behaviors by persons against persons that intentionally threatens, attempts, or actually inflicts physical harm” specifically excludes acts of coercion, verbal harassment, and emotional abuse (Loue, 2001). Abuse “refers to actions which are harmful for the victims, both physically as well as mentally,” while violence refers to physical aggression (Loue, 2001, p. 1).

Sometimes, as is the case with Roberts and Roberts (2005), behaviors that would be classified as Intimate Partner Abuse by Loue (2001), Potter (2008), and Campbell et al. (2011) are deemed “warning signs” for violence. These behaviors range from threats of physical violence to name calling and coercive control (Roberts & Roberts, 2005). The distinction here is that Roberts and Roberts regard these behaviors as inappropriate, but do not label them in and of themselves as “abuse” or “violence”; rather, they are conceptualized as warning signs of future violence.

As illustrated in the literature, there is no standard definition for any term used to refer to violence between intimate partners. Different researchers and activists conceptualize each term in their own ways, leaving the topic difficult to discuss because it cannot be named according to a commonly understood term.

I understand both Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse to mean the same thing. To me, what is violent is also abusive and what is abusive is also violent. As evidenced in the literature, many scholars also view the two terms interchangeably. Within my survey instrument, I utilized “intimate partner” to mean “a person with whom someone has a close emotional and/or sexual relationship. An intimate partner can be a person like a boyfriend, girlfriend, fiancé, or spouse.” This operational definition was

inclusive of both different-sex and same-sex relationships; however, it was not inclusive of former partners or spouses, an oversight that I would remedy were I to do this study again. My understanding of violence and abuse in relation to Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse is based on the Duluth, MN Domestic Abuse Intervention Project's Power and Control Wheel (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The Power and Control Wheel, Duluth, MN Domestic Abuse Intervention Project

The Power and Control Wheel has been a tool for understanding Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse since its creation in 1982. It identifies a wide range of behaviors as violence and abuse, including Physical and Sexual Violence; Using Intimidation; Using Emotional Abuse; Using Isolation; Minimizing, Denying, and Blaming; Using Children; Using Male Privilege; Using Economic Abuse; and Using Coercion and Threats. What is particularly useful about The Power and Control Wheel is that it includes examples of each type of behavior under each category of the wheel. This is helpful in understanding what types of behaviors each category encompasses. The Power and Control Wheel became the basis for my study and for the behaviors included in my survey instrument.

### **Methods**

To explore if there is a difference between the behaviors heterosexual, undergraduate female BGSU students ages 18-24 define as Intimate Partner Violence and the behaviors they define as Intimate Partner Abuse, I chose to collect original data using an online survey administered through Qualtrics. Conducting research remotely was important to me out of concern for participants' safety. If any participants were in an abusive relationship at the time of the study, knowledge that they participated in the study could have led to violence from their partner. I hoped to reduce this possibility by utilizing a survey method instead of face-to-face methods like interviews or focus groups

Using a survey method also allowed me to increase comfort for participants who may have had anxiety about speaking with me directly about this sensitive topic. By participating anonymously through an online survey, these participants may have felt more comfortable sharing their true opinions rather than those they may have believed I

wished to hear (Neuman, 1997). Surveys also are beneficial for conducting research and gathering beliefs of many participants. Unlike interviews, which typically require more time to conduct and are dependent on the schedules of participants and researchers, surveys allow for more data in less time (Neuman, 1997). Because I wanted to collect as many opinions as possible about this topic, I chose to utilize a survey research method.

This study focused on heterosexual female BGSU undergraduate students. I wanted to research the definitions of students because I see this population as quite distinct from others who meet the same demographic characteristics but are not college students. College settings offer an atmosphere different than many non-college settings, not only because of the large social network that a university affiliation provides, but also because many college students find themselves living away from their parents for the first time and perhaps exploring newfound freedom. The educational purpose of a university as well as students' expected adherence to administrative policies also differs from many non-college settings. The combination of these factors makes college students a demographic distinct from those who are not college students.

I designated a heterosexual focus not to ignore Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse in LGBT relationships, but rather to acknowledge that LGBT persons may perceive Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse differently than heterosexual ones. For example, those in the LGBT community can face different emotional and coercive violence or abuse such as threats of outing if the perpetrator's wishes are not complied with.

This study also focused on undergraduate students for a similar reason: to acknowledge that Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse may be viewed

differently by graduate students than they are by undergraduate students. Graduate students are typically older than undergraduate students, even if by only a year, which can affect how they perceive Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse. Graduate students also have more educational experience than undergraduate students and more chance to have come across scholarly discussions of Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse than are undergraduate students; thus, graduate students are more likely than undergraduate students to have explored the topics of Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse in a scholarly setting.

Additionally, this research focused on “traditional” undergraduate students, which I define as students age 18-24 years. I chose age 18 as the low age cutoff because many first year college students coming directly from high school are 18 years old. I chose age 24 as the high age cutoff to allow for students who turn a year older inside a school year as well as students who take more than four years to finish a degree program. It is important to define the age range of my target population because undergraduates younger or older than this specified range may view Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse differently than those within the range. Those younger than 18 are still legally under their parents’ or guardians’ control, which can affect their beliefs and perceptions about relationships and behaviors that are normalized versus those that are inappropriate. When control is normalized and legally sanctioned in parent/child relationships, the children in those relationships may view control as normal in other types of personal relationships. Students younger than 18 may also be post-secondary students, who are still officially in high school while taking college courses and thus are part of a different culture than other undergraduates. Undergraduate students older than

24 may also experience a different culture than other undergraduates because of their older age.

I recruited participants through Facebook, Twitter, BGSU email listservs, and more concentrated email messages to peers in classes I am enrolled in and coworkers at my place of employment (The Learning Commons at BGSU). I needed to be particularly careful to reach out to groups beyond those with whom I am in frequent contact and those in the School of Cultural and Critical Studies, as these two groups of people will likely have had academic contact with violence and abuse discourse and thus might not be representative of the rest of the BGSU population. I made an effort to recruit through Facebook groups and email listservs outside of those I frequent and those involved with the School of Cultural and Critical Studies to help reach this wider population. For example, I recruited through the Honors Program listserv and on Facebook groups like the “BGSU Class of 2013” pages. Each recruitment effort included the same or a similar recruitment script as the venue allowed. For example, Twitter only allows a certain number of characters in each tweet. In this case, the recruitment script was shortened. (See Appendix A for the text of recruitment scripts.)

All persons who wanted participate in the research were allowed to do so (unless they were under age 18) in order give everyone an opportunity to share their opinion on this issue. Before beginning to analyze the data, I isolated responses from participants who met the characteristics of my target population. Out of 125 participants, 113 participants were members of the target population. Of respondents in the target



population, 18 (15.9%) identified themselves as freshman students, 29 (25.7%) as sophomores, 26 (23%) as juniors, and 42 (37.2%) as seniors.<sup>1</sup>

This study utilized two different surveys to measure behaviors heterosexual, undergraduate female BGSU students ages 18-24 define as Intimate Partner Violence and the behaviors they define as Intimate Partner Abuse. Prospective participants were directed to a link in order to find out more about the study, provide informed consent, and then take the survey. Participants were randomly selected to take either a survey that asked whether they classified certain behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence or a survey that asked if they classified behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse. The two surveys were identical except for the difference in terms (“Intimate Partner Violence” vs. “Intimate Partner Abuse”). Of participants in the target population, 62 (54.9%) took the survey using “Intimate Partner Violence” and 51 (45.1%) took the survey using “Intimate Partner Abuse.”

Because of the sensitive nature of discussing Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse, I included a trigger warning before the survey. Additionally, every page of the survey included information about services should the participant wish to speak to someone about how the research made her feel or should she wish to contact someone about an abusive relationship. I included information for The Link, the BGSU Counseling Center, The Cocoon Shelter, and the SAAFE Center. I also encouraged participants to call 911 in the event of an emergency or immediate dangerous situation.

The surveys began by asking respondents for their age range (under 18, 18-21, 22-24, 25-30, or 30+), gender, sexual orientation, undergraduate status at BGSU, class

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding

standing, and major. Then, the survey asked participants if they had ever taken a class at BGSU that discussed violence or abuse between intimate partners. For participants' reference, I defined an intimate partner as "a person with whom someone has a close emotional and/or sexual relationship. An intimate partner can be a person like a boyfriend, girlfriend, fiancé, or spouse."

Participants were also asked if they had ever participated in a group discussion or presentation at BGSU about violence or abuse between intimate partners. If they had, they were asked to specify if the discussion was part of a student group, a residence hall program, a program by a university department, or a different type of program (which respondents were asked to write-in).

The surveys then listed 36 behaviors on two different pages and asked participants to respond "yes" or "no" to indicate how they believed each behavior should be categorized. I included four behaviors from each category in the Power and Control Wheel and an additional four physically violent or abusive behaviors. Both surveys had the same list of behaviors that were presented in a randomized order for each participant. Participants were asked to consider the behaviors as done by a male partner to a female partner. The behaviors are listed in Table 1.

Finally, data were analyzed using two-sample t-tests to determine statistical significance. Two-sample t-tests were run to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the two surveys as a whole and between each corresponding behavioral category in the two surveys. Two-sample t-tests were also employed to determine if participants who had previous violence or abuse education (having participated in a class that talked about or group discussion about violence or

abuse between intimate partners) answered statistically significantly different than those who did not. Additionally, two-sample t-tests were used to examine if there was a statistically significant difference in responses dependent on the type of violence or abuse education the participant had been involved with (ie: a class setting versus a group discussion setting).

Table 1

*Behaviors listed on each survey by category on the Power and Control Wheel.*

<b>PHYSICAL VIOLENCE</b>	<b>MINIMIZING, DENYING, AND BLAMING</b>
Hitting her	Telling her that his behavior is her fault
Pushing her	Saying his actions didn't really happen
Strangling her	Not taking her seriously
Initiating sexual activity after she has said no	Poking fun at her reactions to his behavior
<b>USING INTIMIDATION</b>	<b>USING CHILDREN</b>
Breaking objects	Making holes in condoms
Hurting pets	Telling her that her children's behavior is her fault
Looking at her in a way that scares her	Hiding birth control
Doing things that scare her	Telling her that he will take her children away
<b>USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b>	<b>USING MALE PRIVILEGE</b>
Making her feel guilty	Making all big decisions
Calling her names	Defining men's and women's roles
Putting her down	Acting like she should serve him
Telling her that she's crazy	Always having the last word in arguments
<b>USING ISOLATION</b>	<b>USING ECONOMIC ABUSE</b>
Using jealousy to limit her interactions with others	Preventing her from having a job
Deciding who she sees and talks to	Having her ask him for money
Keeping her from seeing her friends	Taking her money
Deciding what she can read or watch on TV	Controlling family expenses

## Findings

Survey responses were collected from 125 participants who took one of the two surveys. 113 of these participants were members of the target population. 54.9% (or 62) took the survey asking if they identified behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence and 45.1% or 51 took the survey identifying behavior as Intimate Partner Abuse. Of respondents in the target population, 18 (15.9%) identified themselves as freshman students, 29 (25.7%) as sophomores, 26 (23%) as juniors, and 42 (37.2%) as seniors.<sup>2</sup>

A two-sample t-test (P-value of 0.007) revealed that participants more often responded affirmatively that behaviors were Intimate Partner Abuse than Intimate Partner Violence. The hypothesis that Intimate Partner Abuse would be seen as inclusive of more behaviors than Intimate Partner Violence has merit and cannot be rejected. Although the dominant trend in the data is that more behaviors were classified as Intimate Partner Abuse than Intimate Partner Violence, analyzing how participants responded to specific categories of behaviors can shed light on the types of behaviors with the largest disparity between the two terms.

### Behaviors by Type

As noted in the methods section, the behaviors listed on the surveys were based upon the categories and examples from the Duluth, MN Domestic Abuse Intervention Project's Power and Control Wheel. Four behaviors were included from each of the following categories: Using Intimidation; Using Emotional Abuse; Using Isolation; Minimizing, Denying, and Blaming; Using Children; Using Male Privilege; Using Economic Abuse; and Using Coercion and Threats. Four behaviors related to a ninth

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<sup>2</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

category of Physical Violence were also included on the survey. Table 2 presents the percentage of “yes” responses indicating that a behavior was Intimate Partner Violence or Intimate Partner Abuse for each behavior.

The difference between frequencies of “yes” responses indicating that a behavior was violence or abuse in the Intimate Partner Violence and the Intimate Partner Abuse survey is not statistically significant in most of the categories of behaviors. The two categories in which this difference is statistically significant are Using Isolation and Using Children. In both of these categories, “yes” responses were statistically significantly greater when the term Intimate Partner Abuse was used than when the term Intimate Partner Violence was used. This means that these are the categories of behaviors for which respondents saw the most difference between what they considered Intimate Partner Violence and what they considered Intimate Partner Abuse. Though there are individual behaviors that present a greater numerical difference between the Intimate Partner Violence “yes” percentage and the Intimate Partner Abuse “yes” percentage, Using Isolation and Using Children as whole categories are the most different between the two terms. The statistical significance of these two categories suggests that they are driving the holistic statistically significant difference between the two surveys.

Table 2

*Percentage of responses indicating a behavior is Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) or Intimate Partner Abuse (IPA) by behavior and category*

	<b>IPV</b>	<b>IPA</b>
<b>PHYSICAL VIOLENCE</b>		
Hitting her	96.67%	98.00%
Pushing her	96.67%	98.00%
Strangling her	98.33%	97.92%
Initiating sexual activity after she has said no	98.33%	97.92%
<b>USING INTIMIDATION</b>		
Breaking objects	86.67%	77.55%
Hurting pets	76.67%	86.00%
Looking at her in a way that scares her	86.67%	81.25%
Doing things that scare her	88.33%	93.75%
<b>USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b>		
Making her feel guilty	75.00%	86.00%
Calling her names	86.67%	94.00%
Putting her down	85.00%	93.75%
Telling her that she's crazy	65.00%	83.33%
<b>USING ISOLATION</b>		
Using jealousy to limit her interactions with others	78.33%	92.00%
Deciding who she sees and talks to	83.33%	98.00%
Keeping her from seeing her friends	85.00%	97.92%
Deciding what she can read or watch on TV	78.33%	93.75%
<b>MINIMIZING, DENYING, AND BLAMING</b>		
Telling her that his behavior is her fault	81.36%	90.00%
Saying his actions didn't really happen	75.00%	85.71%
Not taking her seriously	44.07%	68.75%
Poking fun at her reactions to his behavior	60.00%	66.67%
<b>USING CHILDREN</b>		
Making holes in condoms	78.33%	96.00%
Telling her that her children's behavior is her fault	76.67%	84.00%
Hiding birth control	76.67%	95.83%
Telling her that he will take her children away	86.67%	95.83%
<b>USING MALE PRIVILEGE</b>		
Making all big decisions	53.33%	72.00%
Defining men's and women's roles	50.00%	66.00%
Acting like she should serve him	80.00%	93.75%
Always having the last word in arguments	38.33%	45.83%
<b>USING ECONOMIC ABUSE</b>		
Preventing her from having a job	80.00%	96.00%
Having her ask him for money	60.00%	64.00%
Taking her money	78.33%	95.83%

Controlling family expenses	53.33%	70.83%
<b>USING COERCION AND THREATS</b>		
Saying he will commit suicide if she leaves him	90.00%	96.00%
Saying he will report her to Children’s Services	76.67%	82.00%
Having her do illegal things	90.00%	95.83%
Saying he will hurt her	95.00%	93.75%

### Exceptions

Though “yes” responses were selected statistically significantly more often for Intimate Partner Abuse than Intimate Partner Violence, there were actually five behaviors that were more often “yes” responses for Intimate Partner Violence than Intimate Partner Abuse. These behaviors were: breaking objects, strangling her, initiating sexual activity after she has said no, looking at her in a way that scares her, and saying he will hurt her. Table 3 presents these five behaviors and the percentage of respondents that classified them as Intimate Partner Violence and as Intimate Partner Abuse.

Table 3

*Percentage of “yes” responses that a behavior is Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) or Intimate Partner Abuse (IPA) by behaviors received more “yes” responses for IPV than IPA.*

<b>Behavior</b>	<b>IPV</b>	<b>IPA</b>
Strangling her	98.33%	97.92%
Initiating sexual activity after she has said no	98.33%	97.92%
Breaking objects	86.67%	77.55%
Looking at her in a way that scares her	86.67%	81.25%
Saying he will hurt her	95.00%	93.75%

**Possible explanations for exceptions.** My research was not designed to answer why behaviors may have been viewed differently, but it is possible to speculate the reasons these five behaviors more often received “yes” responses for Intimate Partner Violence than Intimate Partner Abuse. There may be a tendency to view violence as a one-time event, but abuse as a more long-term, ongoing series of events. Breaking objects

may be considered more frequently as Intimate Partner Violence because “breaking” carries a connotation of a single, violent act that cannot be repeated.

Strangling her and initiating sexual activity after she has said no may be viewed more as Intimate Partner Violence than Intimate Partner Abuse because of the way these acts are represented in our legal language. The participants may have viewed “strangling” as having a connotation of killing the victim. In this way, this behavior may have been viewed as violence because of a stronger connection between violence and death than between abuse and death. Likewise, initiating sexual activity after she has said no is a behavior that is often referred to as rape, sexual violence, or sexual assault. These types of behaviors are ones that are often referred to in the legal system and social discussions as violent behaviors, which could lead more participants to classify initiating sexual activity after she has said no as Intimate Partner Violence than those who classified it as Intimate Partner Abuse.

Looking at her in a way that scares her and saying he will hurt her may have been identified more as Intimate Partner Violence than as Intimate Partner Abuse because of the connotations of the words “scares” and “hurt.” “Scare” is usually a word that is associated with a fear of violence. Participants may have thought that to scare her, there must be a threat of violence in the way he looks at her. Similarly, participants may have viewed saying he will hurt her as a threat of physical harm, which is usually referred to as physical violence.

In this study, there is no way to be certain why breaking objects, strangling her, initiating sexual activity after she has said no, looking at her in a way that scares her, and saying he will hurt her were seen more frequently as Intimate Partner Violence than as



Intimate Partner Abuse. The ideas I have presented above are speculation and should be taken as such. These possible explanations show how views on behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse may be complicated by the connotations of the words used and common legal and social discussions of the behaviors.

### **Educational Influence on Responses**

Of respondents in the target population who completed the survey using Intimate Partner Violence, 30 out of 62 had previously taken a class or been part of a group discussion about Intimate Partner Violence or Intimate Partner Abuse. Eighteen of these respondents had taken a class for academic credit, including classes in Social Work, Sociology, Women's Studies, Psychology, Critical Thinking, and Ethnic Studies. Twenty-seven of these respondents were part of a discussion group, including, but not limited to, discussions sponsored by student organizations, residence halls, and university departments.

Of the respondents who completed the Intimate Partner Abuse survey, 17 out of 51 had previously taken a class or been part of a group discussion. Eleven of these respondents had taken a class, such as Women's Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Gerontology, Ethnic Studies, and American Culture Studies. Fourteen of these respondents had been part of a discussion group. Some respondents both took a class that discussed Intimate Partner Violence/Intimate Partner Abuse and participated in a discussion group.

For the purposes of this study, I viewed anyone who has taken a class for academic credit, participated in a discussion group, or both, as having previous education about Intimate Partner Violence/Intimate Partner Abuse. Table 4 presents the percentage

of “yes” responses for each behavior for the Intimate Partner Violence survey by respondents who had previously taken a class that discussed Intimate Partner Violence, participated in a discussion group, been part of a class and/or a discussion group, and had no previous education on Intimate Partner Violence. Table 5 presents the same information for the Intimate Partner Abuse survey.

Table 4

*Percentage of “yes” responses by behavior category and type of education for the survey using Intimate Partner Violence.*

<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Discussion Group</b>	<b>Class/Group Discussion</b>	<b>No Previous Education</b>
<b>PHYSICAL VIOLENCE</b>				
Hitting her	94.44%	100.00%	96.55%	96.67%
Pushing her	94.44%	100.00%	96.55%	96.67%
Strangling her	100.00%	100.00%	96.55%	100.00%
Initiating sexual activity after she has said no	100.00%	100.00%	96.55%	100.00%
<b>USING INTIMIDATION</b>				
Breaking objects	83.33%	88.89%	86.21%	86.67%
Hurting pets	83.33%	83.33%	68.97%	83.33%
Looking at her in a way that scares her	94.44%	83.33%	86.21%	86.67%
Doing things that scare her	88.89%	88.89%	89.66%	86.67%
<b>USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b>				
Making her feel guilty	72.22%	77.78%	75.86%	73.33%
Calling her names	77.78%	88.89%	89.66%	83.33%
Putting her down	88.89%	83.33%	82.76%	86.67%
Telling her that she's crazy	50.00%	55.56%	75.86%	53.33%
<b>USING ISOLATION</b>				
Using jealousy to limit her interactions with others	72.22%	83.33%	79.31%	76.67%
Deciding who she sees and talks to	72.22%	88.89%	86.21%	80.00%
Keeping her from seeing her friends	77.78%	88.89%	86.21%	83.33%
Deciding what she can read or watch on TV	77.78%	77.78%	79.31%	76.67%
<b>MINIMIZING, DENYING, AND BLAMING</b>				
Telling her that his behavior is her fault	72.22%	88.89%	82.14%	80.00%

Saying his actions didn't really happen	77.78%	77.78%	75.86%	73.33%
Not taking her seriously	50.00%	58.82%	37.93%	48.28%
Poking fun at her reactions to his behavior	61.11%	72.22%	55.17%	63.33%
<b>USING CHILDREN</b>				
Making holes in condoms	72.22%	88.89%	75.86%	80.00%
Telling her that her children's behavior is her fault	72.22%	88.89%	72.41%	80.00%
Hiding birth control	83.33%	77.78%	72.41%	80.00%
Telling her that he will take her children away	77.78%	100.00%	86.21%	86.67%
<b>USING MALE PRIVILEGE</b>				
Making all big decisions	50.00%	66.67%	51.72%	53.33%
Defining men's and women's roles	55.56%	55.56%	44.83%	53.33%
Acting like she should serve him	77.78%	83.33%	79.31%	80.00%
Always having the last word in arguments	38.89%	44.44%	31.03%	43.33%
<b>USING ECONOMIC ABUSE</b>				
Preventing her from having a job	66.67%	83.33%	86.21%	73.33%
Having her ask him for money	55.56%	77.78%	55.17%	63.33%
Taking her money	72.22%	83.33%	79.31%	76.67%
Controlling family expenses	55.56%	66.67%	44.83%	60.00%
<b>USING COERCION AND THREATS</b>				
Saying he will commit suicide if she leaves him	77.78%	100.00%	93.10%	86.67%
Saying he will report her to Children's Services	66.67%	83.33%	82.76%	70.00%
Having her do illegal things	88.89%	94.44%	89.66%	90.00%
Saying he will hurt her	88.89%	100.00%	96.55%	93.33%

Table 5

*Percentage of “yes” responses by behavior category and type of education for the survey using Intimate Partner Abuse.*

<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Discussion Group</b>	<b>Class/Group Discussion</b>	<b>No Previous Education</b>
<b>PHYSICAL VIOLENCE</b>				
Hitting her	100.00%	90.00%	100.00%	94.12%
Pushing her	100.00%	90.00%	100.00%	94.12%
Strangling her	100.00%	90.00%	100.00%	94.12%
Initiating sexual activity after she has said no	100.00%	90.00%	100.00%	94.12%
<b>USING INTIMIDATION</b>				
Breaking objects	81.82%	90.00%	72.41%	82.35%
Hurting pets	90.91%	90.00%	83.33%	88.24%
Looking at her in a way that scares her	81.82%	70.00%	82.14%	76.47%
Doing things that scare her	100.00%	90.00%	92.86%	94.12%
<b>USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b>				
Making her feel guilty	90.91%	90.00%	86.67%	88.24%
Calling her names	100.00%	90.00%	93.33%	94.12%
Putting her down	90.91%	90.00%	96.43%	88.24%
Telling her that she's crazy	81.82%	80.00%	85.71%	76.47%
<b>USING ISOLATION</b>				
Using jealousy to limit her interactions with others	81.82%	90.00%	96.67%	82.35%
Deciding who she sees and talks to	100.00%	90.00%	100.00%	94.12%
Keeping her from seeing her friends	100.00%	90.00%	100.00%	94.12%
Deciding what she can read or watch on TV	100.00%	90.00%	92.86%	94.12%
<b>MINIMIZING, DENYING, AND BLAMING</b>				
Telling her that his behavior is her fault	90.91%	90.00%	90.00%	88.24%
Saying his actions didn't really happen	90.00%	80.00%	86.67%	81.25%
Not taking her seriously	72.73%	70.00%	71.43%	70.59%
Poking fun at her reactions to his behavior	72.73%	60.00%	67.86%	64.71%
<b>USING CHILDREN</b>				
Making holes in condoms	100.00%	90.00%	96.67%	94.12%
Telling her that her children's behavior is her fault	100.00%	90.00%	76.67%	94.12%

Hiding birth control	100.00%	90.00%	96.43%	94.12%
Telling her that he will take her children away	100.00%	90.00%	96.43%	94.12%
<b>USING MALE PRIVILEGE</b>				
Making all big decisions	81.82%	90.00%	63.33%	82.35%
Defining men's and women's roles	63.64%	90.00%	70.00%	70.59%
Acting like she should serve him	100.00%	90.00%	92.86%	94.12%
Always having the last word in arguments	54.55%	70.00%	42.86%	58.82%
<b>USING ECONOMIC ABUSE</b>				
Preventing her from having a job	100.00%	90.00%	96.67%	94.12%
Having her ask him for money	63.64%	80.00%	63.33%	64.71%
Taking her money	90.91%	90.00%	100.00%	88.24%
Controlling family expenses	81.82%	90.00%	67.86%	82.35%
<b>USING COERCION AND THREATS</b>				
Saying he will commit suicide if she leaves him	100.00%	90.00%	96.67%	94.12%
Saying he will report her to Children's Services	100.00%	90.00%	76.67%	94.12%
Having her do illegal things	100.00%	90.00%	96.43%	94.12%
Saying he will hurt her	100.00%	90.00%	92.86%	94.12%

**Education and the Intimate Partner Violence survey.** For the Intimate Partner Violence survey, there was not a statistically significant difference in the frequency respondents classified behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence between those who had previous violence education and those who had not. Stated otherwise, I found that previous violence education had no statistically significant impact on the frequency with which respondents classified behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence. There are two ways to interpret this finding: one suggests that previous education does not have a statistically significant impact because a substantial amount of respondents with no previous Intimate Partner Violence education already understood that these behaviors were Intimate Partner Violence. In this optimistic view, one might conclude that there is not a statistically significant difference between responses by those with previous Intimate Partner

Violence education and those without because there is a greater cultural conversation happening surrounding issues of Intimate Partner Violence.

The second possible explanation of why there is not a significant difference in the responses of those with previous Intimate Partner Violence education and those without suggests that the previous Intimate Partner Violence education these respondents participated in did not impact their views on what is Intimate Partner Violence and what is not. If previous education had an impact on the participants' views, we would see a statistically significant difference between the frequency those with no previous violence education classified behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence and the frequency those with previous violence education did so. Put simply, this approach suggests that the violence education these respondents received was ineffective in educating students to see more behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence. In the case of behaviors classified as Using Isolation, previous violence education actually had a negative effect: respondents with previous Intimate Partner Violence education classified behaviors in this category as Intimate Partner Violence statistically significantly less frequently than those with no previous Intimate Partner Violence education. This finding will be discussed further below.

A notable finding is that there was a statistically significant difference in the responses of participants according to the type of education they received. However, sample sizes were not large enough to make any generalizable conclusions. Thus, statistics comparing types of violence education within both surveys can only speak about this study.

Respondents who had been part of a discussion group on Intimate Partner

Violence answered “yes” that behaviors were Intimate Partner Violence statistically significantly more often than those who had been part of a class that discussed Intimate Partner Violence. This suggests that discussion groups are a more effective means of Intimate Partner Violence education than formal classes. However, this can be complicated by the possibility that those who are interested in Intimate Partner Violence issues and already educated may be more likely to seek out discussion groups than classes, skewing a discussion of the effectiveness of discussion groups as an educational forum.

When previous Intimate Partner Violence education is considered in relation to each behavioral category, several statistically significant differences emerge: for Physical Violence, participation in a discussion group resulted in significantly greater frequencies of responding affirmatively that behaviors were Intimate Partner Violence than no previous education, even though previous education as a whole did not result in a significant difference than no previous education. For Using Economic Abuse and Using Isolation, participation in a discussion group resulted in significantly greater frequencies of “yes” responses that behaviors were Intimate Partner Violence than previous participation in a class that discussed Intimate Partner Violence, though previous education as a whole did not result in a significant difference than no previous education. This suggests that discussion groups are better in educating students about physically violent behaviors, economically abusive behaviors, and isolative behaviors than no education, but classes are not as effective. Additionally for Using Isolation, no previous education resulted in significantly greater frequencies of “yes” responses that behaviors

were Intimate Partner Violence than previous participation in a discussion group. This will be discussed further below.

**Education and the Intimate Partner Abuse survey.** Unlike the statistical significance of discussion groups over no previous education in the Intimate Partner Violence survey, there was no statistically significant difference between responses from participants with any type of previous education and those without any previous education in the Intimate Partner Abuse survey as a whole. This can be a result the two possible explanations presented in my discussion of previous education in the Intimate Partner Violence survey.

There was a statistically significant difference, however, between some educational categories and no education within the behavior categories in the Intimate Partner Abuse survey. For Using Children and Using Coercion and Threats, those who had taken a class that discussed Intimate Partner Abuse were statistically significantly more likely to classify the behaviors in each of the two categories as Intimate Partner Abuse than those who had been part of a discussion group. This suggests that classes were more effective than discussion groups in educating these students that behaviors that fall under Using Children and Using Coercion and Threats were Intimate Partner Abuse.

For Using Isolation, those who had no previous education were statistically significantly more likely to classify those behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse than those who had been part of a discussion group. Those with no previous violence or abuse education more frequently classify Using Isolation behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence and as Intimate Partner Abuse than those who had been part of a discussion group. This suggests that, for Using Isolation, discussion groups actually have a negative



effect on classifying behaviors as violence or abuse under this category when the language “Intimate Partner Violence” is used and when the language “Intimate Partner Abuse” is used.

**Comparing types of education between surveys.** The type of previous violence/abuse education participants were involved in and the frequency with which they classified behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence or Intimate Partner Abuse were compared between both surveys. There was a statistically significant difference in the answers of participants who took a class, who had no previous education, and who were part of a class or group discussion, all of which played out with Intimate Partner Abuse having a higher mean percentage than Intimate Partner Violence. This means that those who had any type of previous violence or abuse education (class or discussion group), those who took a class discussing violence or abuse, and those with no previous violence or abuse education were more likely to classify behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse than those from the same educational background were to classify behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence. Those who participated in a discussion group and took the Intimate Partner Abuse survey were also more likely to classify behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse than those who participated in a discussion group and took the Intimate Partner Violence survey were to classify a behavior as Intimate Partner Violence, though this finding is not statistically significant. What this indicates is that, no matter the type of previous education or lack thereof, respondents were more likely to classify behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse than Intimate Partner Violence. This further supports my hypothesis that Intimate Partner Abuse would be seen as a more inclusive category than Intimate Partner Violence.

**Comparing types of education between the surveys according to behavior categories.** There were also statistically significant differences between answers in behavioral categories in the Intimate Partner Violence survey and the Intimate Partner Abuse survey when previous education is considered; however, the sample size for each type of previous education is not large enough to generalize the results outside of this sample.

In the category of Physical Violence, there was a statistically significant difference between responses of those who had any type of previous violence/abuse education and took the Intimate Partner Violence survey and those who had any type of previous violence/abuse education and took the Intimate Partner Abuse survey. This is the only educational category in which Intimate Partner Violence had the statistically significantly higher mean. This indicates that, when concerned with Physical Violence, those who had any type of previous violence/abuse education were more likely to view the behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence than Intimate Partner Abuse. Additionally under Physical Violence, those with no previous violence/abuse education were statistically significantly more likely to view the physically violent behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse than Intimate Partner Violence. Thus, those with any type of previous violence/abuse education answered more frequently that such behaviors are Intimate Partner Violence, but those with no previous violence/abuse education answered more frequently that such behaviors are Intimate Partner Abuse.

The category of Using Children also contains several types of previous violence/abuse education in which there was a statistically significant difference between the answers in the Intimate Partner Abuse survey and the Intimate Partner Violence

survey. Those who had any type of previous violence/abuse education classified behaviors in this category more frequently as Intimate Partner Abuse than as Intimate Partner Violence. Additionally, those who took a class that discussed violence/abuse toward intimate partners also classified behaviors in this category statistically significantly more frequently as Intimate Partner Abuse than as Intimate Partner Violence. This suggests two conclusions: first, that previous violence/abuse education is linked to the way this population views Using Children behaviors in relation to Intimate Partner Abuse more than it is linked to the way the population views such behaviors in relation to Intimate Partner Violence.

Second, these statistics suggest that taking a class that discussed violence/abuse had more of an impact than participation in a discussion group, as the difference between Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse responses was not statistically significant when participants had been part of a discussion group on the topic, but the differences were statistically significant when participants had been in a class that discussed violence/abuse. This supports the conclusion drawn comparing class education and discussion group education responses within the Intimate Partner Abuse survey, in which I found that there was a statistically significant difference between the responses of those who had taken a class (and more frequently classified Using Children behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse) and those who had been part of a discussion group (and less frequently classified Using Children behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse). These findings also suggest that those who took a class and those with any type of previous violence/abuse education were more likely to view Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse as different within the category of Using Children.

With Using Coercion and Threats, I found a statistically significant difference in the responses of those who took a class that discussed violence/abuse. Those who took such a class were more likely to define behaviors in this category as Intimate Partner Abuse than Intimate Partner Violence. What is interesting about this finding is that any type of previous violence/abuse education did not have a statistically significant effect on responses, but taking a class that discussed the topic did. This suggests that when participation in discussion groups is considered along with classes, there is less of a difference between the frequency behaviors in this category are classified as Intimate Partner Violence and the frequency with which they are classified as Intimate Partner Abuse. This conclusion is supported by the lack of a statistically significant difference between the surveys in the responses of those who participated in a discussion group. Additionally, when taking a class and participation in a discussion group are compared for responses in this category within the Intimate Partner Abuse survey, there is a statistically significant difference between the two in favor of participation in a class. So, those who participated in a class are more likely to see a difference between Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner abuse for the category of Using Coercion and Threats.

Within the category of Using Isolation, there was a statistically significant difference in responses between Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse when participants had any type of previous violence/abuse education, when they were in a class that discussed the topic, and when they had no previous violence/abuse education. Participants in each of the three listed educational groups more frequently classified isolative behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse than Intimate Partner Violence. This

suggests that those who had experienced any type of violence/abuse education, a class that discussed the topic, or no such education viewed Intimate Partner Abuse more inclusively than Intimate Partner Violence in respect to Using Isolation.

### **Conclusion**

This study reveals that female undergraduate students at BGSU ages 18-24 seem to view Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse differently. This population tends to view Intimate Partner Abuse as the broader of the two categories, encompassing more behaviors. Though five individual behaviors were more frequently seen as Intimate Partner Violence than Intimate Partner abuse, the general trend holds. Students who had any type of previous violence/abuse education, students who had taken a class that discussed Intimate Partner Violence/Abuse, and students with no previous violence/abuse education all also provided responses that indicated Intimate Partner Abuse is the more inclusive of the two terms, though there was not a statistically significant difference between responses in the two surveys for students who had participated in a discussion group on the topic, indicating that such students tended to view the two terms more similarly than others.

### **Problematic Behavior Categories**

The behavioral categories that had the most statistically significant differences between the two surveys as a whole and when the data were applied to previous education were Physical Violence, Using Children, Using Coercion and Threats, and, especially, Using Isolation. These four behavioral categories seem to be driving much of the statistically significant differences between responses to the Intimate Partner Violence

and Intimate Partner Abuse surveys and much of the differences found in the educational analysis.

**Using Isolation.** The category Using Isolation was a category that received much attention in my analysis of the data. Using Isolation, along with Using Children, was one of the two categories that had a statistically significant difference. Participants viewed Using Isolation behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse more frequently than Intimate Partner Violence. There was also a statistically significant difference in responses between Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse when participants had any type of previous violence/abuse education, when they were in a class that discussed the topic, and when they had no previous violence/abuse education. Participants with such educational backgrounds more frequently classified isolative behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse than Intimate Partner Violence. Additionally, those students who had no previous violence or abuse education more frequently classified behaviors in this category as Intimate Partner Violence and as Intimate Partner Abuse than those who had been part of a discussion group. The statistically significant differences surrounding Using Isolation in the survey as a whole and in the analysis of previous education suggest that it is a category educators should pay particular attention to.

### **Recommendations for Intimate Partner Violence and Abuse Educators**

**Language.** I argue that educators in the field of Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse should pay particular attention to discussing behaviors that fall into the categories of Physical Violence, Using Children, Using Coercion and Threats,

and Using Isolation.<sup>3</sup> Using Children and Using Isolation are the two categories that are statistically significantly different between the frequency with which participants classified behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence and the frequency with which they classified behaviors as Intimate Partner Abuse. This suggests two conclusions: first, that using the terms Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse without discussing what they mean could be detrimental to educational goals. Since participants in this target population saw these two terms differently in connection with Using Isolation and Using Children, their use in educational settings could confuse students and make them unsure of how behaviors in these categories fit into the language educators are using. For example, if an educator uses the term Intimate Partner Violence to talk about this issue, a student may not view isolative behaviors as a problem because she or he may not believe they fit under Intimate Partner Violence. On the other hand, if the educator used the term Intimate Partner Abuse instead, the student may be more likely to see a problem with isolative behaviors. This illustrates how vital it is for educators to spend time discussing the meanings of the terms they use.

Second, the statistical significance of Using Isolation and Using between the two surveys suggests that these categories of behaviors are particularly prone to be seen as Intimate Partner Abuse. Thus, if an educator chooses to use the term Intimate Partner Violence, she or he should be particularly careful to illustrate and explain that behaviors in these two categories are considered Intimate Partner Violence if she is teaching from the Duluth model. The key to effectively communicating about violence and abuse issues between intimate partners is clearly explaining what terminology means and how it is

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<sup>3</sup> See the Power and Control Wheel in the methods section for examples of behaviors in these categories.

being used. In this way, it is less likely that students will be confused and more likely that they will see all relevant behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence, Intimate Partner Abuse, or whatever other term the educator elects to use.

**Types of violence and abuse education.** I spent a great deal of time in the above findings section discussing how different types of violence/abuse education was related to participants' willingness to classify behaviors as Intimate Partner Violence or Intimate Partner Abuse. The difference in the responses by different types of previous violence/abuse education suggests that different educational formats are related to different understandings of Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse. Discussion groups, for instance, appear to be associated with this population's understanding of physically violent behaviors differently than how they are associated with the understanding of isolative behaviors. This is something to take into consideration when planning how discussions of Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse take place. Educators may want to consider using a format that works well with the behavioral category they want to discuss at the time.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

I have found that, generally speaking, college women view Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse as terms that encompass different behaviors. Future research should take this a step further and examine why this population sees these terms differently. Such knowledge would continue to help violence and abuse educators to better address their teaching and discussions to their students.

Additionally, future research should also examine the difference in responses between the types of classes that students took. Do responses differ between someone



who took a Women's Studies class as opposed to someone who took a Criminal Justice class? What about Sociology, Psychology, Social Work, Human Development and Family Studies, and Ethnic Studies? What might this mean for larger social discourses surrounding Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse?

This research should also be extended in the future to discuss different populations than this study's target population. Men, LGBT persons, graduate students, and students at other universities should also be included or focused on in further studies in order to begin to fully understand the dynamics of terms related to violence and abuse and in order to provide the best education possible to put an end to Intimate Partner Violence and Intimate Partner Abuse.

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## Appendix A Recruitment Scripts

### **Twitter Recruitment Script:**

#BGSU undergrad? Interested in sharing your opinion about #RelationshipViolence/  
#RelationshipAbuse? Check out this research study! [link]

### **Facebook Recruitment Script:**

Are you an undergraduate student at BGSU and between the ages of 18-24? Are you interested in sharing your opinion about male Intimate Partner Violence/Intimate Partner Abuse against women? Think about anonymously participating in this research study!

My name is Kelsey Klein and I am an undergraduate researcher at BGSU. I can be reached at kklein@falcon.bgsu.edu with any questions or concerns.  
[link]

### **Email Recruitment Script:**

Hello (appropriate group; ex: “members of the Honors Program,” “students in ETHN 1010”),

My name is Kelsey Klein and I am an undergraduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am currently working on a research project that examines what behaviors BGSU undergraduates define as Intimate Partner Violence/Intimate Partner Abuse. This study focuses on male behaviors against female partners.

If you are a self-identified heterosexual female undergraduate student at BGSU and are between the ages of 18 to 24, you are eligible to participate in this study. These specific requirements are in place in order to study the perspectives of a particular population so that results can be standardized as much as possible.

This survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete. It is anonymous. You will not be asked for your name, student ID number, email address, or phone number.

You may access the survey at [link]

Please contact me at kklein@falcon.bgsu.edu if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time,

Kelsey Klein

**Appendix B**  
**Survey Design Using “Intimate Partner Violence”**

[BEGIN FIRST SURVEY PAGE]

Hello,

My name is Kelsey Klein and I am an undergraduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am currently working on a research project that examines what behaviors BGSU undergraduates define as Intimate Partner Violence. This study focuses on male behaviors against female partners.

If you are a self-identified heterosexual female undergraduate student at BGSU and are between the ages of 18 to 24, you are eligible to participate in this study. These specific requirements are in place in order to study the perspectives of a particular population so that results can be standardized as much as possible.

This survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete. It is anonymous. You will not be asked for your name, student ID number, email address, or phone number.

Please contact me at [kklein@falcon.bgsu.edu](mailto:kklein@falcon.bgsu.edu) if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time,

Kelsey Klein

[END OF FIRST SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN SECOND SURVEY PAGE]

Informed Consent for Students

Introduction: My name is Kelsey Klein and I am a senior undergraduate student at Bowling Green State University majoring in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. I am researching women’s attitudes about Intimate Partner Violence at Bowling Green State University (BGSU) for my Senior Capstone and Honors Project. My advisor for this research is Dr. Susanna Peña, Director of the School of Cultural and Critical Studies. You have been asked to be a part of my research because you are a female undergraduate student at BGSU.

Purpose: I am researching attitudes about Intimate Partner Violence at BGSU because no research about the topic has focused on BGSU. This research can be important to help the BGSU community understand and react to Intimate Partner Violence at the university. There are no direct benefits such as monetary awards or gifts for your participation. However, this research gives you a chance to influence the way people at BGSU think about and respond to Intimate Partner Violence.

**Procedure:** Questions will be asked in English in an online survey. Some questions will be multiple choice and others will need you to type an answer. This survey will take you less than 15 minutes to complete. You will not be asked for your name, student ID number, email address, or phone number. You must be 18 years or older to participate.

**Voluntary Nature:** You do not have to be part of this project. You can stop taking the survey at any time or skip questions in the survey. You will not be punished in any way. Choosing to be part of this research or to not be part of it will not change your grades, class standing, or relationship with the researcher, advisor, or BGSU.

**Anonymity Protection:** You will not be asked for any identifying information, such as your name, student ID number, email address, or phone number, in the survey. Responses to the survey are anonymous and will be kept on a computer that requires a password to access. Only my advisors and I will have access to the data. Please be careful about what computer you use for the survey. Some employers have software that can tell them what websites their workers go to. You may want to take the survey on a personal or university computer. Please also be careful about who is near you when you take the survey if there is someone who you do not want to know about your participation. Do not leave the survey open on a computer others can use. Please clear your Internet cache and history when you finish the survey.

**Risks:** It is possible this survey can make you feel emotional or make you remember things you do not want to remember. If this happens, please contact the BGSU Counseling Center at 419-372-2081 or The Link (a 24-hour, 7 days a week service) at 419-352-1545 or 1-800-472-9411. It is also possible for you to feel threatened if someone finds out about your participation in this project. If at any time you feel scared that someone may hurt you, contact 911 if it is an emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571. For ways I am protecting your responses, please see “Anonymity Protection.”

**Contact Information:** I can be reached at [kklein@falcon.bgsu.edu](mailto:kklein@falcon.bgsu.edu) if you have any questions about my research or your participation. My advisor can be reached at [susanap@bgsu.edu](mailto:susanap@bgsu.edu). You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Review Board at 419-372-77116 or [hsrb@bgsu.edu](mailto:hsrb@bgsu.edu), if you have any questions about your rights as part of this research. Thank you for your time.

I have been informed of the purposes, procedures, risks, and benefits of this study. I have had the opportunity to have all my questions answered and I have been informed that my participation is completely voluntary. I agree to participate in this research.

---

By clicking “Next,” you agree to the above statement.

[END OF SECOND SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN THIRD SURVEY PAGE]

What is your age?

(select one)

-Under 18

-18-21

-22-24

-25-30

-30+

How do you currently identify your gender?

(select one)

-Female

-Male

-Transgender

-Other (write-in)

How do you currently identify your sexual orientation?

(select one)

-Bisexual

-Heterosexual

-Gay/Lesbian

-Other (write-in)

Are you currently an undergraduate student at BGSU?

(select one)

-Yes

-No

What is your class standing?

(select one)

-Freshman

-Sophomore

-Junior

-Senior

-Other (write-in)

What is your major degree program?

(Write-in box)

If you need to talk to someone about how this survey made you feel or about a relationship you or a friend is in, please contact the BGSU Counseling Center at 419-372-2081 or The Link (a 24-hour, 7 days a week service) at 419-352-1545 or 1-800-472-9411. If at any time you feel scared that someone may hurt you, contact 911 if it is an emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571.

[END OF THIRD SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN FOURTH SURVEY PAGE]

For the purposes of this study, an intimate partner is a person with whom someone has a close emotional and/or sexual relationship. An intimate partner can be a person like a boyfriend, girlfriend, fiancé, or spouse.

Have you ever taken a class for academic credit at BGSU that discussed violence between intimate partners?

(Select one)

-Yes

-What class was it? (write-in box)

-No

Have you ever participated in any group discussions or presentations at BGSU about violence between intimate partners?

(select one or more)

-Yes, in a student group (like a sorority, fraternity, or student organization)

-Yes, in a residence hall program

-Yes, in a program by a university department (like the Student Health Center or The Wellness Connection)

-Yes, in other (write-in box)

-No

If you need to talk to someone about how this survey made you feel or about a relationship you or a friend is in, please contact the BGSU Counseling Center at 419-372-2081 or The Link (a 24-hour, 7 days a week service) at 419-352-1545 or 1-800-472-9411. If at any time you feel scared that someone may hurt you, contact 911 if it is an emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571.

[END OF FOURTH SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN FIFTH SURVEY PAGE]

Please respond yes or no, indicating if you believe the following behaviors can be classified as Intimate Partner Violence. Remember, for the purposes of this study, an intimate partner is a person with whom someone has a close emotional and/or sexual



relationship. An intimate partner can be a person like a boyfriend, girlfriend, fiancé, or spouse. During this survey, please think about these behaviors as actions done by a male partner to a female partner.

*(The following behaviors will be presented in a randomized order. Participants may either select Yes or No for each behavior.)*

	Yes	No
Hitting her		
Pushing her		
Breaking objects		
Hurting pets		
Making her feel guilty		
Calling her names		
Using jealousy to limit her interactions with others		
Deciding who she sees and talks to		
Telling her that his behavior is her fault		
Saying his actions didn't really happen		
Making holes in condoms		
Telling her that her children's behavior is her fault		
Making all big decisions		
Defining men's and women's roles		
Preventing her from having a job		
Having her ask him for money		
Saying he will commit suicide if she leaves him		
Saying he will report her to Children's Services		

If you need to talk to someone about how this survey made you feel or about a relationship you or a friend is in, please contact the BGSU Counseling Center at 419-372-2081 or The Link (a 24-hour, 7 days a week service) at 419-352-1545 or 1-800-472-9411. If at any time you feel scared that someone may hurt you, contact 911 if it is an emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571.

[END FIFTH SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN SIXTH SURVEY PAGE]

Please respond yes or no, indicating if you believe the following behaviors can be classified as Intimate Partner Violence. Remember, for the purposes of this study, an intimate partner is a person with whom someone has a close emotional and/or sexual relationship. An intimate partner can be a person like a boyfriend, girlfriend, fiancé, or spouse. During this survey, please think about these behaviors as actions done by a male partner to a female partner.

*(The following behaviors will be presented in a randomized order. Participants may either select Yes or No for each behavior.)*

	Yes	No
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Initiating sexual activity after she has said no		
Looking at her in a way that scares her		
Doing things that scare her		
Putting her down		
Telling her that she's crazy		
Keeping her from seeing her friends		
Deciding what she can read or watch on TV		
Not taking her seriously		
Poking fun at her reactions to his behavior		
Hiding birth control		
Telling her that he will take her children away		
Acting like she should serve him		
Always having the last word in arguments		
Taking her money		
Controlling family expenses		
Having her do illegal things		
Saying he will hurt her		

If you need to talk to someone about how this survey made you feel or about a relationship you or a friend is in, please contact the BGSU Counseling Center at 419-372-2081 or The Link (a 24-hour, 7 days a week service) at 419-352-1545 or 1-800-472-9411. If at any time you feel scared that someone may hurt you, contact 911 if it is an

emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571.

[END SIXTH SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN SEVENTH SURVEY PAGE]

Thank you for your participation!

If you need to talk to someone about how this survey made you feel or about a relationship you or a friend is in, please contact the BGSU Counseling Center at 419-372-2081 or The Link (a 24-hour, 7 days a week service) at 419-352-1545 or 1-800-472-9411. If at any time you feel scared that someone may hurt you, contact 911 if it is an emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571.

[END SURVEY]

**Appendix C**  
**Survey Design Using “Intimate Partner Abuse”**

[BEGIN FIRST SURVEY PAGE]

Hello,

My name is Kelsey Klein and I am an undergraduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am currently working on a research project that examines what behaviors BGSU undergraduates define as Intimate Partner Abuse. This study focuses on male behaviors against female partners.

If you are a self-identified heterosexual female undergraduate student at BGSU and are between the ages of 18 to 24, you are eligible to participate in this study. These specific requirements are in place in order to study the perspectives of a particular population so that results can be standardized as much as possible.

This survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete. It is anonymous. You will not be asked for your name, student ID number, email address, or phone number.

Please contact me at [kklein@falcon.bgsu.edu](mailto:kklein@falcon.bgsu.edu) if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time,

Kelsey Klein

[END OF FIRST SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN SECOND SURVEY PAGE]

Informed Consent for Students

Introduction: My name is Kelsey Klein and I am a senior undergraduate student at Bowling Green State University majoring in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. I am researching women’s attitudes about Intimate Partner Abuse at Bowling Green State University (BGSU) for my Senior Capstone and Honors Project. My advisor for this research is Dr. Susanna Peña, Director of the School of Cultural and Critical Studies. You have been asked to be a part of my research because you are a female undergraduate student at BGSU.

Purpose: I am researching attitudes about Intimate Partner Abuse at BGSU because no research about the topic has focused on BGSU. This research can be important to help the BGSU community understand and react to Intimate Partner Abuse at the university. There are no direct benefits such as monetary awards or gifts for your participation. However, this research gives you a chance to influence the way people at BGSU think about and respond to Intimate Partner Abuse.

Procedure: Questions will be asked in English in an online survey. Some questions will be multiple choice and others will need you to type an answer. This survey will take you less than 15 minutes to complete. You will not be asked for your name, student ID number, email address, or phone number. You must be 18 years or older to participate.

Voluntary Nature: You do not have to be part of this project. You can stop taking the survey at any time or skip questions in the survey. You will not be punished in any way. Choosing to be part of this research or to not be part of it will not change your grades, class standing, or relationship with the researcher, advisor, or BGSU.

Anonymity Protection: You will not be asked for any identifying information, such as your name, student ID number, email address, or phone number, in the survey. Responses to the survey are anonymous and will be kept on a computer that requires a password to access. Only my advisors and I will have access to the data. Please be careful about what computer you use for the survey. Some employers have software that can tell them what websites their workers go to. You may want to take the survey on a personal or university computer. Please also be careful about who is near you when you take the survey if there is someone who you do not want to know about your participation. Do not leave the survey open on a computer others can use. Please clear your Internet cache and history when you finish the survey.

Risks: It is possible this survey can make you feel emotional or make you remember things you do not want to remember. If this happens, please contact the BGSU Counseling Center at 419-372-2081 or The Link (a 24-hour, 7 days a week service) at 419-352-1545 or 1-800-472-9411. It is also possible for you to feel threatened if someone finds out about your participation in this project. If at any time you feel scared that someone may hurt you, contact 911 if it is an emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571. For ways I am protecting your responses, please see “Anonymity Protection.”

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[END OF SECOND SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN THIRD SURVEY PAGE]

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-Under 18

-18-21

-22-24

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-Heterosexual

-Gay/Lesbian

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Are you currently an undergraduate student at BGSU?

(select one)

-Yes

-No

What is your class standing?

(select one)

-Freshman

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-Junior

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-Other (write-in)

What is your major degree program?

(Write-in box)

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[END OF THIRD SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN FOURTH SURVEY PAGE]

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[END OF FOURTH SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN FIFTH SURVEY PAGE]

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[END FIFTH SURVEY PAGE]



[BEGIN SIXTH SURVEY PAGE]

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Taking her money		
Controlling family expenses		
Having her do illegal things		
Saying he will hurt her		

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emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571.

[END SIXTH SURVEY PAGE]

[BEGIN SEVENTH SURVEY PAGE]

Thank you for your participation!

If you need to talk to someone about how this survey made you feel or about a relationship you or a friend is in, please contact the BGSU Counseling Center at 419-372-2081 or The Link (a 24-hour, 7 days a week service) at 419-352-1545 or 1-800-472-9411. If at any time you feel scared that someone may hurt you, contact 911 if it is an emergency. If it is not an emergency, please call the BGSU Police Department at 419-372-2346 or the Bowling Green City Police at 419-352-2571.

[END SURVEY]