



NON CONSENSUAL COERCIVE CONTROL: A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR ABUSE ASSESSMENT IN BDSM

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WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

- Introduce coercive control
- Explore what the literature says about abuse in BDSM
- Introduce the NC-CC model
- Describe the subcategories of the NC-CC model
- Questions and feedback (please test and break my model! No, really!)

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WHY AM I DOING THIS RESEARCH?

- Very little formal research has been conducted on abuse or coercion in BDSM communities.
- Studying abuse in these communities poses unique challenges to researchers who may not have familiarity with BDSM relationships and communities.
- Behaviours that are usually listed in screens for intimate partner violence, may not be indicators of abuse within a given dynamic.

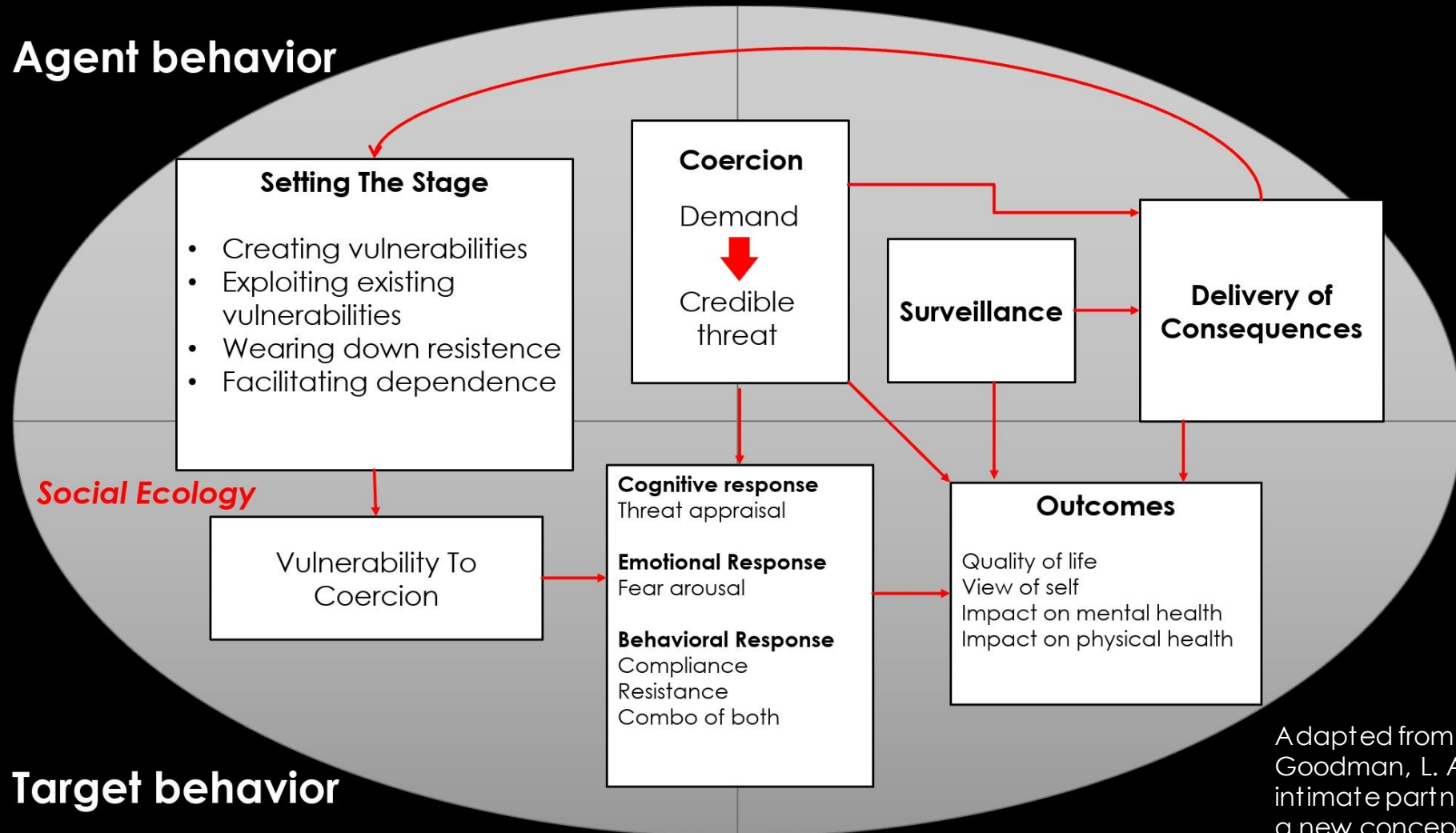
WHAT IS COERCIVE CONTROL?

Basic Components of Coercive Control

1. Perpetrator's intention and motivation to control the target
2. Target perceives behaviour as negative
3. Perpetrator's ability to make a credible threat

COERCIVE CONTROL MODEL

Agent behavior



Target behavior

Adapted from Dutton, M. A.,
Goodman, L. A. (2005). Coercion in
intimate partner violence: Toward
a new conceptualization. *Sex
Roles, 52*, 743-756.

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LITERATURE ON BDSM, CONSENT, AND ABUSE

2016 Israeli study on considerations BDSM practitioners weigh when deciding whether to report sexual assaults in to local authorities.

- Fear of Victim Blaming
- Not wanting to “out” themselves or others
- Stigma of being considered “Deviant” or “perverse”
- Having to explain difference between BDSM and assault



LITERATURE ON BDSM, CONSENT, AND ABUSE

Qualitative study on community response to boundary violations

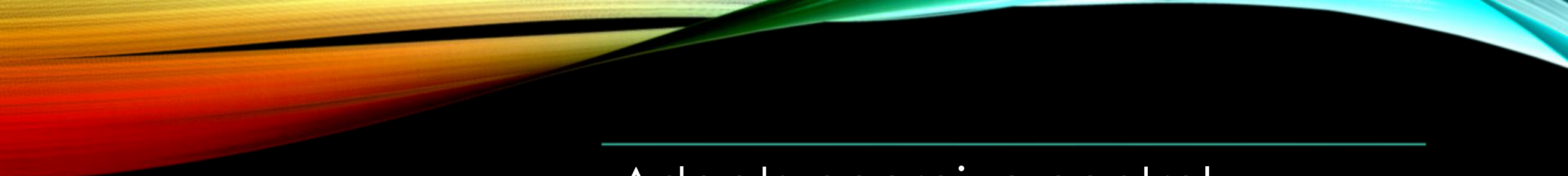
- Often handled internally within communities
- Barriers to pursuing legal sanctions
- Notes that underreporting of victimization in the community is “A serious problem”



MORE BDSM LITERATURE

2015 Journal article on BDSM and IPV

- Literature and case studies to address the issue facing IPV victims in BDSM communities
- Since literature on abuse in BDSM is “all but nonexistent”, relies on literature about IPV in same sex relationships
- Major barrier is that BDSM and abuse are often conflated



NON
CONSENSUAL
COERCIVE
CONTROL
FRAMEWORK

Adapts coercive control
assessment to BDSM
practitioners

Designed to be non-shaming
and non-stigmatizing of
consensual BDSM play

Modeled, in part, off of Intimate
Partner Violence checklists for
LGBTQ populations



SUBCATEGORIES
OF NC-CC
FRAMEWORK

Consent violations

Isolation

Minimizing and shaming

Abuse of intrinsic power
dynamics

CONSENT VIOLATIONS

Ignored a safeword

Violated a standing agreement

Violated pre-existing agreements with other partners

Told target that safewords are “for beginners”

Brought a third party into a scene without negotiation

Took advantage of target while they were in an altered state

Gave target drugs or alcohol in order to impair their judgment

Unilaterally renegotiated scene agreements

ISOLATION

Discouraged
from
participating in
local scenes

Shamed for
seeking out
social support

Prohibited from
seeing friends,
family, community
members

Discouraged
from reading
about BDSM in
books or online

Prevented from
seeking medical
attention

Prevented from
interacting with
local or online
scene members

Weaponized
jealousy

MINIMIZING AND SHAMING

Belittled, teased, or shamed for using a safeword or enforcing a hard limit.

Accused of not being [dominant, submissive, kinky, etc...] enough

Belittled, teased or shamed for requesting aftercare/check ins

Belittled, teased, or shamed for not wanting to engage in "edge" play or an intense D/s dynamic

Dismissed or shamed for requiring verbal negotiations

Shamed, teased or belittled for not doing kink "the right way"

INTRINSIC POWER DYNAMICS/SOCIAL ECOLOGY

Threatened to out
target to friends,
family, employers,
etc.

Threatened to
blacklist target/have
target blacklisted
from a community
or event

Told target that no
one would believe
them if they spoke
out because of
their identity

Weaponized aspect
of target's identity
(kink role, gender,
race, size, sexuality,
etc.) against them

Treated target as
inferior outside of a
kink context



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Anyone in any BDSM role (top, bottom, dominant, submissive, pet, switch etc.) can be perpetrators and targets of abuse

It is important, from a harm reduction perspective, to distinguish between consensual BDSM activity and abuse

Coercive control focuses on underlying dynamics, as opposed to the external trappings of BDSM play

The fact that abuse exists within BDSM is not a product of deviance, but of painfully normal interpersonal dynamics

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

What, if anything, resonates with you about this framework?

How would you feel if you were given this assessment?

What, if anything (subcategories, items, etc.) would you want to add?

Could you see this being useful for you and your communities? If so, in what way?

What, if anything, am I missing?

Did I miss the mark anywhere? If so, how might I fix it?

Do you have any other thoughts or feedback?

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