Coercive Control

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Formative Assessment

The Aetiology and Psychology of Coercive Control

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January 13, 2021

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The purpose of this paper is to discuss coercive control and key theories and practices that have been put into place to detect and prevent coercive control and how to deal with it when it does happen in an abusive or even violent manner. A survey of the literature was done on domestic violence (DV) or intimate partner violence (IPV), extremist groups and human trafficking. These are the three domains which will be compared in terms of how they define or understand coercive control and how they propose to intervene when it happens.

Influence as a phenomenon is not inherently evil or malicious but, as Cialdini (2007) shows, is context dependent. Historically, it has often been utilized to achieve ends which were not beneficial to all parties concerned, which is when influence or manipulation become areas of concern for those who want a well-ordered society which could also offer an equality of opportunity, as well as the freedom to believe and say the things they want. It is at the crossroads of defining and regulating what is "bad" or coercive control and establishing the universal truth of human rights that difficulties arise in determining what is legitimate human trafficking (Logan and Walker, 2009), a principle that applies equally to "mind control" (Hassan, 1988) or even intimate partner violence. How much influence or coercion is too much? It seems context must always provide the answer and even then, Sharapov (2016) indicates that laws and opinions can vary as widely as culture, language, education, socioeconomics, and any other number of other influential or biasing factors.

Questions of informed consent, free will and how much "push" is too much are only included here to underline the immense difficulties presented in the discussions of individual

versus group or societal control. Such were the subjects of intellectuals and philosophers from ancient Greek figures such as Callicles and Thrasymachus to Machiavelli's dual treatments on how political will should best be exerted in *The Prince* and *The Discourses of Livy* (Noggle, 2020). Historically, coercive control has been the domain of the powerful over the weak, the male over the female, the privileged elite over the lower-class rabble. Domestic abuse, extremist groups or gangs, slavery and human bondage are problems as old as tribalism itself. Durant demonstrated that in ancient Rome, the patriarchy of the family unit was nearly absolute, "as if the family had been organized as a unit of an army always at war." (p., 57), including the power to sell any of his family into slavery, disapprove marriage partners or even keep them under his household rule no matter their age or education until he deemed it was time to emancipate them. These attitudes of family or state dominance and control have been demonstrated in almost every human society since.

In the modern world, the tools and methods of psychology and sociology are now being utilized to attempt a deeper and more layered understanding of how and why humans behave the way they do, which includes how they attempt to influence or manipulate one another. Thiessen (2006) argued that single word or simplistic explanations of influence are inadequate to the task of clarifying complex human emotions and attitudes, so now spectrums have been adopted as useful tools, such as the 'Continuum of Influence' (Singer, 1995). This isn't just in the cult word, as Skrivankova (2010) developed a 'Continuum of Exploitation' to help simplify the complex reality of trafficking, which can be defined too broadly or narrowly for law enforcement and NGOs to deal with effectively. Without a stable foundation upon which to base laws and regulations that can be applied across international borders, there will continue to be barriers to stopping abusive behavior (Logan et al., 2009). In the broadest sense, this is what the study of coercive control is all about.

Coercive control as a legal concept has only just been legislated in such a way that cases can be pursued in the domestic violence realm against a coercive control framework (Serious Crime Act 2015). Trafficking laws exist in nearly every country in the world, but Logan and Walker (2009) argue there is no universally agreed-upon understanding or even acknowledgement of human rights and human trafficking. This can create barriers to interagency and international cooperation and conflicting laws then make it a minefield of hard-to-understand and prosecute regulations (Sharapov, 2016). This is also not helped by the fact that while at the global level, lip service is given to individual agency and rights, at local levels, corrupt police and government officials condone and contribute to trafficking efforts rather than fight them (Skrivankova, 2010; Malloch, 2016).

However, the vagaries of international laws aside, definitions of coercive control or analogous concepts exist in various disciplines and these are gaining degrees of agreement in academic and activist circles while legislators catch up. In fact, there have been quite a few organizations involved in studying this phenomenon in earnest for at least the past 70 years. While efforts are sometimes hampered by the usual sorts of miscoordination, conflicting interests, bias, plain accident and other situational factors, certain themes and ideas present themselves in similar ways across these domains.

In beginning a survey of the breakthroughs or discoveries of psychology applicable to all the domains under discussion, Lifton (1987) studied Chinese POWs and re-education camp survivors in 1953 during the intensification of the Cold War and McCarthyism. He conducted a series of interviews with 25 US servicemen who had been held in re-education camps following the Maoist revolution, as well as 15 Chinese who had also undergone long-term thought reform efforts to “purify” their minds. In analyzing the Chinese methods, Lifton formed a model of how

an individual's belief set, or world view, can be deconstructed through mental and physical isolation, perceptual manipulation, environmental control, guilt induction, and other points he described as an 8-point model of thought reform which has been used in the decades since to analyze behavior across the domains being discussed in this paper. Elements of Lifton's research are seen in as diverse areas as domestic violence theory as described in the "Duluth Model" (Pence and Paymar, 1993) as well as in the UK Serious Crime Act of 2015 definitions of "controlling" and "coercive behavior" (Home Office, 2015), to detailed descriptions of cultic abuse and behavior (Hassan, 1988). In applying this model to IPV, Dubrow-Marshall (2017) argued "it is the coercive control and the resulting totalistic identity that effectively trap the person in an abusive relationship and environment where it can be hard for anyone, including the victim themselves, to recognise the problem and that they need to seek help" (p.22). Similarly, Ward (2008) went so far as to say "Every group that would warrant the label 'cult' has invariably the above set of [Lifton's] psychosocial phenomenon. This is true whether the group is religious, political or economic in orientation" (p. 38).

Another important point of research that has broad applicability across the domains of coercive control are the Asch Conformity Experiments, not only for their results but the fact they have been reliably replicated around the world, something that many psychological experiments seem to have a hard time doing (Aarts et al, 2015). The basic theme of the experiment is to test whether a subject will agree with others around them who insist that a graphic line is longer or shorter than it really is in reality. Surprisingly, about one-third (32%) of the test subjects verbally conformed with the incorrect majority. Over the course of 12 clinical trials, only 25% of the subjects never went with the group, while 75 conformed at least once. Conversely, where no group pressure existed, less than 1% of the subjects answered incorrectly (Asch, 1951; McCloud, 2018).

Asch changed the variables and situations of the experiment in follow up trials to investigate what situational factors might alter the rates of conformity. The size of the group, whether anyone else in the group dissents with the majority opinion, varying the length of the lines so they are not so obviously wrong, and answering in private rather than verbally in front of the group were all factors that shifted the rate of conformity sometimes significantly or almost completely (Asch, 1956). Further experiments have indicated that the kind of profession or background training the subject has, gender, culture and age are also conformity factors (Mori and Arai, 2010). Recently this was even tested in virtual reality (Kyrlitsias and Michael-Grigoriou, 2018).

Blass (1991) criticized overly simplistic interpretations of the Asch experiments, but revealed that social factors or situational factors alone can have a great deal to do with how an individual will act in any given situation even if there are other personality factors at play. This suggests that it's not just a personal failing on the part of any individual's willpower if they feel they have no choice but to conform with group pressures, despite the high percentage of IPV, cult and trafficking survivors who believe it is their fault they suffered abuse (Kennedy and Prock, 2018; Durocher, 1999). This is manifest in cultic or high-control groups, where individuals can find themselves engaging in immoral or even illegal behavior encouraged or demanded by the group which they would never have agreed to prior to their cult involvement (Singer, 2003). The same holds true for gangs or even terrorist cells, where individual doubts can be squelched through peer pressure alone.

However, this one factor does not explain the myriad of complicated behavioral issues connected with high-control groups as well as abused partners who seem to willingly remain trapped in abusive relationships. This is where the Milgram Obedience Experiment provides

additional layers of understanding. Specifically, Milgram investigated how the presence and demands of a perceived authority figure would affect compliance to orders which appear to cause others pain or could even kill them. The rates of compliance were high, with 65% of participants willingly delivering what they believed were up to 450-volt shocks to a "test subject" who was in fact just a knowing participant in the experiment and was not really being hurt (McCloud, 2017). Milgram (1974) carried out 21 variations of this study, altering the circumstances and methods of the situation and concluded:

> The disposition a person brings to the experiment is probably less important a cause of his behavior than most readers assume. For the social psychology of this century reveals a major lesson: often, it is not so much the kind of person a man is as the kind of situation in which he finds himself that determines how he will act. (p. 205)

The research of Lifton, Asch and Milgram described above all suggest that the idea of individual responsibility and accountability is not as clear-cut as has been generally assumed. This helps to explain a great deal of previously "unexplainable" behavior in high control groups and even how ordinary people could be turned into violent murderers under certain circumstances. This doesn't just clarify the extremes of Nazi genocide carried out by ordinary police officers as described by Browning (2001), but how followers of Jim Jones could force women and children to drink poison, or how the followers of Shoko Asahara could carefully execute a plan to kill millions of Japanese citizens using sarin gas. This research also helps explain the process of radicalization into terrorist groups, since isolation and subservience to the group ideals are two of the keystones of that process but peer pressure is almost invariably a factor (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008). Even in the realm of IPV or honor-based family violence, the influence of family plays a large role in establishing what is and isn't moral or "good" behavior.

In the honor-based paradigm, religious and cultural values combine with elements of coercive control to enforce rigid rules of obedience based on religious dogma. Behavior that violates those values must be punished and a great deal of pressure can be exerted against husbands, wives or children to conform to the larger group's value set. Rape and murder are not uncommon in this enforcement (Parekh and Egan, 2020).

The Stanford Prison Experiment (SPE) is useful to review because it highlights the importance of the roles people assume and how identity relates to the factors detailed above, such as the fact that peer pressure is one method of control, but just as powerful can be the "terror of being left outside" (Zimbardo, 2007). The identity one assumes in any given situation has everything to do with the expectations, duties or obligations the person will then feel compelled to exhibit, so much so that Zimbardo asserts assigning identity as one of the ten procedures which will manipulate people towards executing destructive or harmful actions on others, especially when an identity is paired with a set of rules to enforce, a diffusion of responsibility for negative outcomes, and a graduated escalation of harm or violence. This suggests that creating a transformation of character from good to evil can be formulaic in its aetiology.

When considered in relation to self-categorization theory, it's clear why identity and roles are so important to any analysis of coercive control. In fact, Turner and Reynolds (1987) demonstrate how group identity exists to reduce uncertainty, suggesting that group mores and regulations help individuals define themselves in relation to their environment and in-groups are desirous because they increase each individual member's sense of safety and security while reducing doubts or fears about the "outside" world. This is not a simple matter though, as individuals can assume many identities and any one of them is not necessarily a determinant in

how that same individual will behave under a different set of circumstances in which they have assumed a different identity. This not only helps explain radically aberrant behavior such as that of certain Nazi leaders, who Browning (2001) describes could order the violent death of thousands of innocent Jews in the afternoon and go home to affectionately interact with their family and personal friends that same evening, but it also gives insight into how a seemingly rational, calm and "normal" doctor could competently treat patients at his practice but then go home and ritualistically abuse his wife and family for years or even murder them. The roles people believe they play in any given situation can have everything to do with how they perceive the world and what choices they make in that world. Years after the fact of the week-long roleplaying experiment known as SPE, Zimbardo concluded that intentional 'mind control' is "not the consequence of exotic forms of influence such as hypnosis, psychotropic drugs or 'brainwashing' but rather the systematic manipulation of the most mundane aspects of human nature over time in confining settings" (p. 258).

This is not just true for the abusers but also the victims of coercive control as well. Being raised in strictly religious households, for example, second-generation cult members who have never had any other experience or training except from the high control group their parents were part of, are commonly raised to believe their "role" is to be subservient, compliant or submissive to the needs and desires of the head of household or cult leader. If they can break free from such teachings, it can take years of psychological counselling to overcome these embedded or indoctrinated roles and during this time, such are quite susceptible to re-indoctrination or will join a similarly abusive group or relationship with a different dogma or philosophy (Lalich, 2017).

In his studies of female trauma survivors of domestic abuse beginning in the early 1970s, Stark broke coercive control down into three components: isolation, manipulation and control (Stark, 2009). His work also emphasizes the fact that coercive control is a repeating pattern of abuse and cannot be judged by simply one or two isolated instances but can better be understood as a campaign of continued and purposeful abusive behavior which limits the economic and physical bounds of the victim, isolates them and uses gaslighting and other psychologically manipulative techniques to create a kind of learned helplessness. This theory has informed research, intervention and treatment/support methods since, with it literally written into UK domestic violence law (Serious Crime Act, 2015).

In fact, coercive control, as a term, is most widely recognized and used in the field of domestic relationships or intimate partner violence (IPV). Search results across three of popular and established psychology databases of the current literature on “coercive control,” show the overwhelming relevant and popular subject matter to be about domestic or intimate partner violence. JSTOR records 1,118 search results and in the first 25, 56% were focused on DV. The PsychARTICLES database revealed 753 results with 88% of the top 25 being focused on DV. Of the 435 results from the “Web of Science” database, 80% were about DV. Although not every article concerned DV, none of the articles in this range had to do with the other domains of extremist groups or human trafficking, as such. It’s clear that in the professional world, “coercive control” is a term that is almost exclusively used to discuss domestic violence.

IPV is "a pattern of abusive behavior used by one partner to gain and maintain power and control over another intimate partner" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). IPV is recognized as a universal social health issue (Dutton and Corvo 2006; WHO 2005; Coker et al. 2005) with wide-ranging and complicated consequences across social and financial spheres. Coercive control

theory states that the pattern of abusive behavior is based on the abusers' desire to control their partners and that social, economic and/or psychological pressures as well as physical force are all tools utilized to accomplish this end (Stark 2009; Lombard, et al. 2013). The controversial basis of this theory is that males carry out violence against female partners specifically as a reaction against feminism due to social pressures and the patriarchal power structure of human societies. Stark (2009) wrote:

> My argument is straightforward: that men have devised coercive control to offset the erosion of sex-based privilege in the face of women's gains, filling the void created as institutional support for male domination is disassembled by installing patriarchal-like controls in personal life. (p. 171)

This aspect of the theory is receiving push back as new interpretations of statistical and anecdotal data indicate that males can be and are victimized by female partners at rates previously ignored or denied (Powney and Graham-Kevan, 2019). The reason this is commented on here is that the male-centric view of DV has influenced the existing laws on this subject. Specifically, in the UK, for example, the Home Office stated that gendered violence "*should be understood as a cause and consequence of gender inequality.*" Stressing only one narrative through sustained feminist campaigning of DV and framing the argument as a gendered problem has led to policy which is focused almost exclusively on the problem of male-on-female domestic violence and leaves male victims of DV lacking for support services or state-sponsored assistance.

This has also informed intervention and treatment models such as the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (aka, the "Duluth Model" mentioned earlier) wherein the various factors of coercive control have been broken down into a "Power and Control Wheel" including using

coercion and threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, economic abuse and male privilege. While this has limited applicability since it ignores male victims and is problematic for minority victims of domestic abuse (Bennett and Hess, 2006), more recent studies and work have modified and expanded this work, such as the Power and Control Wheel for Abusive Groups (Hazlett, Brass and Eichel, 2018) and the modified Power and Control Wheel for workplace bullying (Scott, 2018).

This is not to infer that male-centric theories and models are the only research results in the IPV domain. Concurrent with Stark and the Duluth Model, Walker (1979) documented the Cycle of Abuse and wrote *The Battered Woman* in 1979 after interviewing 1,500 female domestic violence survivors. The four-stage cycle of tension building, incident, reconciliation and calm documents not just what occurs in DV situations but also parallels what cult survivors and trafficking victims explain was their experience under a narcissistic cult leader or sex trafficker (Macias-Konstantopoulos, 2016). While Walker's work remains controversial and, some complain, overly simplistic, researchers such as Dutton and Golant (1995) agree it accurately describes all cyclically abusive relationships while proposing their own theories of why abusers abuse, such as borderline personality disorder (Dutton, 1993). Mental illness certainly could be a factor in the phenomena of DV, but the research cited so far in this paper suggest there are many external factors at play as well.

Much of the above research has focused on explaining how and why abusers abuse, but the other side of the equation – why victims become or remain victims – is just as crucial an area of research. In fact, one could say there are prerequisite conditions for coercive control to have a detrimental and long-term effect on its victims, and research indicates two of those conditions are learned helplessness and traumatic bonding.

Learned helplessness is the phenomenon of an individual "learning" that under certain circumstances, outcomes are uncontrollable by his or her responses and becoming seriously debilitated by this knowledge (Maier and Seligman, 1976). Whether a situation is truly "unsolvable" is not the point. If a narcissistic domestic partner, cult leader or trafficker creates an environment where a person feels trapped, helpless to fight back, unable to communicate or otherwise powerless, they then experience stress and severe emotional disruption (Roth, 1980). Sullivan, et al (2012) suggest learned helplessness may also impair cognitive ability, such as problem solving.

When viewed through the lens of traumatic bonding, learned helplessness could be considered a first stage in long-term coercive control. Whether a cult member, IPV victim or trafficked sex worker, once their will to escape has been defeated, their behavior can be further manipulated by alternating cycles of rewards and punishments which, in turn, strengthen the coercive control and can create an endless loop of victimization, not dissimilar to drug addiction (Carnes, 2019). The world watched in confused shock and awe, for example, as hostage takers were defended and embraced by the very people they had taken hostage, while police trying to free them were reviled and insulted by the hostages, even months after the incident of a bank robbery in Stockholm, Sweden. The so-called "Stockholm Syndrome" has been vigorously debated and is not an official classification of mental health (Namnyak, et al, 2008), but the reality of traumatic bonding which was researched on the heels of the Stockholm incident helps explain a great deal of seemingly contradictory behavior on the part of trauma victims.

Stein (2017) combined trauma bonding and attachment theory in relation to cult membership. She explains how a trauma bond (or "disorganized attachment bond") is very difficult to break so long as the cult member doesn't have access to any other safe locations but

the cult, but that it's emotional and cognitive isolation which are more important than physical isolation. She writes:

> Second, the disorganized attachment, characterized by running to the source of fear, causes dissociation. Running to the source of fear obviously doesn't provide escape from the threat. Because it is a maladaptive way of coping with threat, the person goes into a "freeze" mode and is unable to think clearly about what is happening. This explains why perfectly intelligent people can find themselves unable to rationally view a cult they are involved with. It is literally too frightening and disorganizing to do so. The lack of alternate information and true havens undermine a follower's cognitive processes on matters regarding the group. The cult can now do the thinking for them—the essence of brainwashing. (2017)

Finally, learned helplessness and trauma bonding have long-term, negative consequences, as detailed by Hermann's (1992) theory of Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Directly applicable to trauma survivors across the domains, cPTSD combines concepts from learned helplessness, trauma bonding and attachment theory to demonstrate that trauma is not just experienced once but over weeks, months, or years and the ongoing pattern of abusive behavior can create "a shamed and damaged sense of self, disrupted interpersonal relationships, and shattered systems of meaning" (Levin, 2010).

Where IPV and human trafficking are relatively uniform in definitions, cults and extremist groups have not surrendered to such easy efforts to even define what they are, much less model what makes them abusive or destructive. The pejorative use of the term "cult" in common parlance has made it especially difficult to communicate about it, even in academia. Robbins and Zablocki (2001) have shown these disagreements have led to internecine "cult

wars” over whether religious groups with objectively destructive consequences such as the Church of Scientology or the Hare Krishna's are considered “new religious movements” by academics whose interests may lie more in activism for religious freedom than identifying deceptive groups using religious cloaking to hide their true intentions and activities (Barker, 2011; Urban, 2011; Palmer, 2016).

The roots of cultic modeling lie in the first efforts to create a psychological model of coercive control, or what Biderman (1957) referred to as ‘coercive management techniques.’ Given the uniformity of characteristics such as isolation, perception control, mental and physical exhaustion, threats and occasional indulgences in cult models and descriptions since Biderman published, it appears Biderman’s work (see Appendix: Biderman Framework) served as a reference point for the work of cult and thought reform specialists such as Lifton, Hassan, Lalich, Singer, Hassan, Langone and others who have presented their own models, but this work is an ongoing process and most recently involves the study and modeling of ‘second generation’ cult members – those who were born and/or raised in high control groups and were never offered a choice as to whether they wanted to participate or not (Lalich, 2017; Matthews and Salazar, 2014).

There are unique challenges in researching, describing, exposing and prosecuting high control groups. Because of the very nature of these groups and the coercive control techniques leveled against their members, cult followers are often not in a critical frame of mind about their group and, even if they are, are not willing to publicly criticize or comment on their group because of the fear of repercussions, social pressures, etc. When they do speak out, some have been met with scorn, ridicule, disbelief and have even been purposefully ignored by a few religious scholars, who dismiss so-called “apostates” claims either because “their testimonies are

usually highly distorted by their hostility and desire to hurt the group at all costs" (Melton & Moore, 1982) or because the very concept of mind control or 'brainwashing' is anathema to some in the academic community (Zablocki, 1997).

These same difficulties have made prosecution of cult-related cases complicated, if not impossible, using a recognized cult paradigm because expert witnesses in cultic studies can and often do provide conflicting testimony on matters of coercive control, brainwashing and thought reform. Legitimate concerns about the freedom of religion and belief, and what constitutes a "sincere" belief and how to test for such, have gone all the way to the US Supreme Court (Lucksted & Martel, 1983). Best (2018) argues that cults are no different from any other group from a psychological perspective and use the same psychological techniques. These factors and opinions make prosecution of cult leaders extremely difficult under existing laws of duress, kidnapping, financial fraud and even violence and it's common to see cult cases dismissed because of the uncertainty of how these laws apply in coercive situations, as seen in cases as recent as last month involving the Church of Scientology (Ortega, 2020).

Within the confines of existing laws across disparate domains and countries with varied and even conflicting legal philosophies, not to mention wildly different views on human rights, prosecution of coercive control is complicated and difficult (Malloch, 2016). Breaking the laws down by domain is likely the path of greatest promise, as the UK has demonstrated with the Serious Crime Act of 2015, focusing its first efforts at prosecuting coercive control exclusively on repeating patterns of domestic and honor-based violence. It's too early to tell whether it will have long-term impact in reducing the incidents of IPV and but case law so far has shown promise and scholars such as Douglas (2015) are now considering whether similar legislation should be enacted in Australia and the US.

The same cannot be said of laws that could or do target destructive cults. Undue influence is a term that is well understood in cult scholarship, but in US law, the concept has been applied very narrowly only to tort and contract law (Plotkin, Spar & Horwitz, 2016). Even when murder has been committed at the behest of a cult leader, Holoyda and Newman (2016) show that not one cult member has ever successfully argued an insanity defense. The About-Picard Law in France was a bipartisan 2001 effort to target groups that engage in coercive behavior ("mental manipulation" as stated in the law itself), but has been fought by church groups, religious scholars and law makers so effectively that it has only been used to successfully prosecute a single notable case of cultic influence, that of Arnaud Mussy (Palmer, 2008). "Predatory alienation" is being researched as a legal concept in New Jersey and shows promise of being utilized across IPV and high control group domains, perhaps even touching on grooming for human trafficking as well, but as of the date of this writing, it is still in the research and analysis phase (Duron & Postmus, 2017).

Where cult prosecution has found success is when human trafficking laws are utilized. The case of Keith Raniere, founder and leader of NXIVM, a non-religious, personal development cult, is a good recent example. Raniere was engaged in a years-term pattern of continual and even ritualized psychological and physical abuse of his followers, especially focusing on taking sexual liberties with a secret inner circle of female-only followers. Rather than pursue charges of assault, rape or other state-level charges which Raniere was clearly guilty of, instead the government indicted and found Raniere guilty of sex trafficking, sex trafficking conspiracy and conspiracy to commit forced labor, all US federal laws targeting human trafficking, not cults (Moynihan, 2019). Interestingly, his co-conspirators were also charged with the same or similar crimes and this was highly effective in shutting the group down and putting all of its principal figures behind bars.

Coercive control has been and will continue to be a problem in interpersonal and group relations for the foreseeable future. As research continues and as activists, scientists, the media and governments attempt to understand and deal with the negative consequences of abusive or destructive authoritarian behavior, more theories, models and treatment modalities will surely be developed. In an ideal world going forward, psychology and sociology will recognize their mutual dependency in realms such as this, where behavioral motivations cannot be reduced down to mantras, catch phrases or slogans despite how many times such are repeated by narcissistic intimate partners, cult leaders or sex and labor traffickers. New developments in neuroscience may also soon contribute to broad understandings of what drives behavior, and all of this could inform legal and regulatory philosophy and approaches. If the arguments made in this paper have shown anything, it's that a well-rounded, interdisciplinary approach to coercive control, informed by both objective academic and scientific researchers as well as by survivors of these abusive systems, has yielded some of the best research and results to date. It is hoped this movement will continue so remedies can be found which will enable the bulk of society to lead happy, healthy and productive lives free from authoritarian influence.

Appendix

Biderman's Framework of Coercion

(Biderman, 1957)

Method of Coercion	Purpose of Tactic
Isolation	Deprives victim of all social support. Victim develops an intense concern with self. Victim becomes dependent on trafficker/abusive boss.
Monopolization of perception	Fixes victim's attention on immediate predicament. Eliminates stimuli competing with those controlled by trafficker. Frustrates action not consistent with compliance.
Induced debility and exhaustion	Weakens mental and physical ability to resist.
Threats	Cultivates anxiety and despair.
Occasional indulgences	Provides positive motivation for compliance. Hinders adjustment to deprivation.
Demonstrating omnipotence	Suggests futility of resistance.
Degradation	Makes cost of resistance more damaging to self-esteem than capitulation. Reduces victim to "animal level" concerns.
Enforcing trivial demands	Develops habits of compliance.

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