

**“Have You Seen the Wheel?”:  
The Circulation of Grey Literature about  
Domestic Violence among members of an  
Online Survivor Group**

Maria E. Gonzalez  
Wayne State University



*The Grey Mosaic: Piecing It All Together*

Washington, D.C.  
December 14, 2009

## Overview

- **DV/IPV in U.S. – Past and current situation**
- **Dissemination of the DV/IPV literature**
- **Does DV/IPV lit circulate among Netizens?**
- **Investigation of an online support group**
- **Method**
- **Findings**
- **Take away**



## DV and IPV: Past and current

- Wife beating > private matter
- Battered women > feminist issue
- Intimate terrorism > human rights issue
- DV/IPV > social issue with costs
  - \$4B medical and mental health
  - \$8B police, court, legal and corrections
  - \$2B productivity
- Trans-generational impact to children



# SESSION ONE: IMPACT OF GREY LITERATURE ON NET CITIZENS

## “The Wheel”

- Intimate Partner Violence is not erratic behavior
- It is intentional violence and systematic, controlled abuse of power over current or former intimate



Image by R. Reis for DeafHope



*The Grey Mosaic: Piecing It All Together*

Washington, D.C.  
December 14, 2009

## SESSION ONE: IMPACT OF GREY LITERATURE ON NET CITIZENS

# Creation & Dissemination of DV/IPV Lit

- Lone researchers or small teams of practitioners
- U.S. DHHS, HUD and CDC supported initiatives on family violence, safe shelter, and alcoholism
- 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act included \$5.5M and mandate to develop research agenda re: violence against women
- V&A Abstracts; handbooks; monographs; ISI Web of Knowledge listed 525 articles for 2008
- Dozens of gov, non-profits, think tank websites



*The Grey Mosaic: Piecing It All Together*

Washington, D.C.  
December 14, 2009

## Research Question

- What information needs do victims and survivors of DV/IPV have?
- Among BSNetizens, what online resources do they find useful?
- Which of these resources do BSNetizens recommend to each other?



## **Description of Online Support Group**

- **English-language, international community**
- **Part of BB active since April 2001**
- **5,400 community members**
- **DV support group one of 31 forums**
- **Actively administered and moderated**
- **Anonymous, register under screen name**
- **Over 38, 000 individual posts**
- **24/7 non-judgmental, responsive forum**



## Method: Content Analysis

- Exempt Human Subject Research
- Permission of moderator; no interaction
- Ten months of online discussions
- 659 threads; 3625 posts; 733,272 words
- Cut/paste all posts under original threads
- Eight codes
- *HyperResearch* used for coding and reports





## Findings

- 2232 of the 3625, or 62%, of the individual posts mentioned:
  - Information Needs - 434
  - Information Barriers - 487
  - Resources - 1311
- Balance of posts, or 38%, included introductions, description of circumstances, statements of sympathy, encouragement or agreement



## Circulation of DV/IPV Lit among BSNetizens

- Support and validation offered by the BSN
- BSN thread on warning signs of abuse
- Safety plan posted on BB during study
- National Domestic Violence Hotline
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Minnesota Center against Violence and Abuse
- Wikipedia
- Several commercial websites



*The Grey Mosaic: Piecing It All Together*

Washington, D.C.  
December 14, 2009

## Take Away

- People at risk or subject to DV/IPV ask:
  - Is this abuse?
  - Why does he do that?
  - How can I manage the abuse?
  - Will he get better with counseling?
  - How will this affect my children?
  - How can I find adequate mental health counseling?
  - How did you escape abuse?
  - How do I get a protective order?
  - What is a victim impact statement?



## References

Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs. *Wheel Gallery* (DAIP,2008) <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/wheelgallery.php>

Michael P. Johnson. *A Typology of Domestic Violence: Intimate Terrorism, Violent Resistance and Situational Couple Violence* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2008)

National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence. *“Wheels” Adapted from the Power and Control Wheel Model* (NCDSV, 2009) [http://www.ncdsv.org/publications\\_wheel.html](http://www.ncdsv.org/publications_wheel.html)

National Research Council. *Advancing the Federal Research Agenda on Violence against Women* (Wash. D.C.: National Academy Press, 2004)



*The Grey Mosaic: Piecing It All Together*

Washington, D.C.  
December 14, 2009