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DOES IT END WITH US? INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE IN COLLEEN HOOVER'S *IT ENDS WITH US*[1]

Abstract

Motivated by the desire for power, power as domination is in contemporary critical thought comprehended as the continuous, relatively stable control over them/others, that is, those who do not qualify as us/we (Connolly 1974; Coser 1976; Dowding 1996; Hartsock 1974 and 1983; Karlberg 2005; Lukes 1986; Macpherson 1973; Pitkin 1972; Wartenberg 1990). One of the instruments of power as domination is interpersonal violence, which can be exercised in a number of ways including verbal and visual objectification, prescriptive gender stereotyping, emotional blackmail and/or manipulation, domestic violence as well as physical child/young adult abuse and school bullying. This paper aims to examine different forms of interpersonal violence in Colleen Hoover's (dramatic) romance *It Ends with Us* (2016) to show that their perpetuation enables, and facilitates, the exercise of power as domination in the narrative space of Hoover's novel.

Keywords: power as domination, desire for power, interpersonal violence, Colleen Hoover, *It Ends with Us*

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In contemporary critical discourses, the term power has usually been viewed either in relation to different forms it takes (political, social, cultural, ideological, patriarchal, personal, collective, direct, indirect, and so on) or in relation to ways it has been exercised (physical violence, emotional and/or psychological abuse, manipulation, and similar). The former view in particular has espoused a number of responses, one of the most influential being Michel Foucault's, who in his *Power/Knowledge* (1980) discusses "the changing ways that power circulates throughout societies, constructing social institutions as well as individual subjectivities, as it imposes order and discipline in historically specific ways" (Karlberg 2). Foucault sees power as "productive" (119) rather than repressive—it "doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but . . . it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse" (119). He also sees it as "capillary" in the sense of "a productive network which runs through the whole social body" (Foucault 119) and "operates at the lowest extremities of the social body in everyday social practices" (Fraser 18). Finally, power is "anchored in the multiplicity of . . . 'micropractices,' the social practices that constitute everyday life in modern societies" (Fraser 18). For Foucault, these practices of power are "interwoven with other kinds of relations (production, kinship, family, sexuality) for which . . . it plays at once a conditioning and a conditioned role" (142). Other contemporary thoughts on power include the views that power is motivated by "the desire for power as rooted in human nature" (Baldwin 426), that power is "a basic force in social relationships" (Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson 265), that it is the capacity to influence other people (Turner 2), or that power implies domination over others (William Connolly (1974), Lewis Coser (1976), Keith Dowding (1996), Nancy Hartsock (1974; 1983), Michael Karlberg (2005), Steven Lukes (1986), C. B. Macpherson (1973), Hanna Pitkin (1972), Thomas Wartenberg (1990)). This paper will ground its theoretical argumentation on the last-mentioned view—the concept of power as domination.

The said concept of power can be traced back to the most important representatives of social and political thought such as Niccolò Machiavelli, Max Weber, Pierre Bourdieu, Thomas Hobbes, Antonio Gramsci, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels. It usually implies "a situation where an agent exercises relatively stable, ongoing control over the actions of other agents ('agents' taken broadly to mean anything from individual persons, to social groups, to organizations and institutions)" (Hearn, "Domination" 203) or, more generally, "an asymmetrical relation between two or more actors . . . specifically . . . a relation of social causation . . .

resulting from the intentions of the power wielder" (Pansardi 521). Power as domination has, therefore, always been part of social structures and comprehended as constant, actual, potential, taken for granted since it implies social and interpersonal relationships and processes of which the dominated are unconscious or only partially conscious. The concept of power as domination also implies conflict, influence, male privilege, coercion, social control, and the idea that "*A* has power over *B* to the extent that he can get *B* to do something that *B* would not otherwise do" (Karlberg 3), thus preventing them from identifying their interests. One of the most common instruments of power as domination, comprehended as the continuous, relatively stable control over others of any kind, is violence in a myriad of different forms: from interpersonal to institutional, from physical and verbal to emotional and psychological, from direct to covert.

As a form of fiction consisting of carefully arranged words designed not only to stir the imagination but also to mirror the real, literature draws attention to social, cultural, political and/or economic phenomena/trends of past and present times and their influence on individual lives as well as collective mindsets. Many literary representations of these phenomena are grounded in the desire for power leading to asymmetrical power relations, often perpetuated and maintained by different forms of institutional and interpersonal violence. Such a literary representation is Colleen Hoover's *It Ends with Us* (2016),[2] which uses the formula of popular romance, the genre "dominated by women—written by women; read by women; and choosing as its central figure a young girl" (Wolff 98), to address an issue rarely depicted in this genre of popular fiction: interpersonal violence. The novel is told and focalized "primarily through the consciousness of" (Culler 90) Lily Bloom, who tells her story either through present adult narration or adolescent diary entries serving as "memory monologues" (Cohn 209). As the narrator-focalizer, Lily Bloom relates her experiences, thoughts, feelings, observations or actions to deliver to the readers a detailed study of asymmetrical gender power relations fueled by the desire for gender power and brought into being by different forms of interpersonal violence inflicted on women by men who they are married to.

[2] The plot of the novel revolves around Lily Bloom and her relationship with and marriage to Ryle Kincaid who gradually becomes more and more abusive to her. Lily is no stranger to domestic abuse as she witnessed her mother's, Jenny Bloom's, abuse by her father Andrew Bloom when she was a child and a teenager. Lily repeats her mother's behavior patterns when Ryle starts to hurt her like her father hurt her mother. When Lily discovers that she is pregnant, she leaves Ryle, finding support for her decision in friends (Atlas Corrigan and Ryle's sister Allysa) and family (her mother Jenny).

In the narrative space of Hoover's novel, interpersonal violence takes the forms of (1) verbal objectification, (2) visual objectification, (3) prescriptive gender stereotyping, (4) emotional blackmail and/or manipulation, and (5) intimate partner violence/domestic violence. In addition to interpersonal gender violence, the novel also addresses interpersonal violence inflicted on children and young adults in form of (1) physical child/young adult abuse and (2) school bullying. In the paragraphs to follow, each of these forms of interpersonal violence, as they appear in Hoover's *It Ends with Us*, will be explained in detail to show that the novel may have an educational purpose for its readers, serving as a catalogue of instances of interpersonal violence.

1. Verbal Objectification

Verbal objectification is based on the idea of "verbal policing" (Roche 108), that is, "the linguistic routinization of power relationships between social groups," where "men's dominance over women in society can become codified in language, and the resulting male-centered language functions to keep women in their (inferior) place simply through its routine use in everyday life" (Ng 372). In Hoover's *It Ends With Us*, this is the language Andrew Bloom and Ryle Kincaid use when referring to or talking with Jenny Bloom and Lily Bloom, respectively.[3] Whereas Andrew's verbal objectifying tactics include "*accusing her* [his wife Jenny] *of flirting with some men*"[4] and calling "*her a whore*" (Hoover 153), Ryle verbally abuses Lily by calling her "a fucking liar" (232) and relativizes her domestic violence experience by saying "You have no idea what I've been through these past two months knowing what I've done to you" (322). Ryle's and Andrew's use of language thus shows that they "treat . . . [their wives] as an object—sexual or otherwise—but never a serious person with individual views" (Lakoff 48).

2. Visual Objectification

Visual objectification occurs with a man taking the role of a bearer of the look and a woman being reduced to an image in his gaze. In this script, the objectified woman operates "as sexual object" signifying "male desire" (Mulvey 11) because the man "cannot bear the burden of sexual objectification" as he

[3] Jenny and Andrew Bloom are Lily Bloom's parents. Ryle Kincaid is Lily's boyfriend and later her husband.

[4] If not otherwise noted, all the quotes/all the parts of the quotes written in italics and pertaining to *It Ends with Us* are Hoover's.

"controls the . . . [narrative] phantasy" (Mulvey 12). In Hoover's novel, there are multiple examples of Ryle's visual objectification of Lily. For instance, he is "looking up at [Lily] with puppy dog eyes and a pathetic, hopeful grin," telling her: "I want you so, so bad and I swear, once you have sex with me you'll never hear from me again. I promise" (Hoover 71) or when his "eyes journey down to . . . [Lily's] cleavage. As soon as they do . . . [Lily] yank[s] at the top of . . . [her] dress so he can't see it" (Hoover 88). These scenes render Lily "as immobile and captive . . . as unable to communicate adequately or liberate herself from" (Sielke 161) Ryle's objectifying gaze, from being the locus of his narrative phantasy.

3. Prescriptive Gender Stereotyping: Relaxed Proscriptions for Women

Gender stereotypes are, in general, "oversimplified [gender] conceptions" based on "misapplied [gender] knowledge" (Williams et al. 398), imposing prescriptive visions of masculinity and femininity as well as traditional gender social roles and power relations the disobedience of which usually results in punishment or devaluation. Expanding on this premise, Deborah A. Prentice and Erica Carranza have proposed a comprehensive list of prescriptive gender stereotypes, also including relaxed proscriptions for women or "traits low in general social desirability but significantly higher in desirability for" women (271). Relaxed proscriptions for women include traits such as being "yielding, emotional, impressionable, child-like, shy, naïve, superstitious, weak, melodramatic, gullible" as well as "dependent [and] insecure" (Prentice and Carranza 273, 277).

When translated to the narrative space of Hoover's *It Ends with Us*, prescriptive gender stereotyping, and in particular relaxed proscriptions for women, is instrumentalized by Andrew and Ryle to confirm their gender role and power over their wives, Jenny and Lily. To confirm his power over Jenny, Andrew gradually forces her to accept a number of relaxed proscriptions and to become:

- ***Yielding***: "*Things that hurt her just got swept under the rug, never to be brought up again*" (Hoover 156)
- ***Weak***: she "*chooses to stay*" with him (Hoover 64) and uses "*excuses*" to defend Andrew's behavior (Hoover 113) because she "was never strong enough" to confront him (Hoover 242)
- ***Dependent:*** "*My mother had warned me not to call the police in the past. She said it could jeopardize my father's career . . . If you call the police, it'll just make it worse, believe me*" (Hoover 155), and

- ***Gullible:*** "The first time your father hit me, he was immediately sorry. He swore it would never happen again. The second time he hit me, he was even more sorry. The third time it happened, it was more than a hit. It was a beating. And every single time, I took him back. But the fourth time, it was only a slap. And when that happened, I felt relieved. I remember thinking, '*At least he didn't beat me this time. This wasn't so bad*'" (Hoover 335).

Similarly, Ryle initially succeeds, yet eventually fails, to mold Lily into being:

- ***Yielding***: "*Look at me, sweeping shit under the rug just like my mother*" (Hoover 294)
- ***Weak***: "This isn't how this was supposed to be. My whole life, I knew exactly what I'd do if a man ever treated me the way my father treated my mother. It was simple. I would leave and it would never happen again. But I didn't leave. And now, here I am with bruises and cuts on my body at the hands of the man who is supposed to love me. At the hands of my own husband. And still, I'm trying to justify what happened. *It was an accident. He thought I was cheating on him. He was hurt and angry and I got in his way*" (Hoover 242)
- ***Gullible:*** "*I am in love with a man who physically hurts me. Of all people, I have no idea how I let myself get to this point*" (Hoover 281)
- ***Impressionable:*** "Against my better judgment, I face him again and the look in his eyes completely captivates me. He looks hopeful and hungry and completely confident. He sinks his teeth into his bottom lip as his hand begins to tease its way up my shirt. I know he can feel my heart thrashing around in my chest. Hell, he can probably hear it." (Hoover 25), and
- ***Naïve:*** "He brushes his hand down my cheek and I can see in his eyes and in the way he touches me that he deserves at least one chance at forgiveness. I feel if I don't find a way to forgive him, I'll somewhat be placing blame on him for the resentment I still hold for my father. He's not like my father. Ryle loves me. He's never come out and said it before, but I know he does. And I love him. What happened in the kitchen tonight is something I'm confident won't happen again. Not after seeing how upset he is that he hurt me" (Hoover 192).

What Lily's and Jenny's traits point out is the power inequality embedded in the prescriptive and relaxed proscriptive components of women stereotypes, the purpose of which is to justify and perpetuate gender role imbalance.

4. Emotional Blackmail and/or Manipulation

This term refers to a relationship in which a blackmailer/manipulator understands "the vulnerabilities of the victim and plays on these to get what the blackmailer [/the manipulator] wants" (Dowding, "Blackmail" 74). It involves a situation "where one person threatens to withdraw his or her love, kindness, or friendship unless the other person accedes to the first person's demands" (Dowding, "Coercion and Power" 115), and occurs because of the victim's fear of rejection. Hoover's *It Ends with Us* addresses this "subtle and indirect art" (Giomi and Magaraggia 139) of interpersonal violence in the scenes following Ryle's beatings of Lily, when she accepts his apologies and love reassurances out of fear not to lose him:

> When I look in the mirror, I don't see my mother. I just see me. I see a girl who loves her husband and wants more than anything to be able to help him. I know Ryle and I are strong enough to move past this. Our love is strong enough to get us through this. . . . He exhales what feels like every breath he's been holding in since last night. He wraps his arms tightly around me and buries his face in my hair. "Help me, Lily," he whispers. "I need you to help me." He holds me against him and I know deep in my heart that I'm doing the right thing. There is so much more good in him than bad, and I'll do whatever I can to convince him of that until he can see it, too. (Hoover 243–44)

This persistent coercive strategy helps Ryle to "misrepresent. . . reality and reverse. . . the roles, putting himself as the victim" (Xavier and Lima 248), thus emotionally manipulating Lily.

5. Intimate Partner Violence/Domestic Violence5

Understood as "a social, historical structural phenomenon related to wider patterns of inequality" (Hearn, "A Multi-Faceted Power Analysis" 592), domestic violence is "a pattern of coercive control" (Finley 335) that consists of predominantly "repeat victimization, physical injury, and emotional harm" (Hollin 78) against women by men. It is "committed by intimate partners or acquaintances, including persons who are current or former spouses, cohabiting partners, boy-

[5] The terms intimate partner violence and domestic violence are used interchangeably in the academic scholarship on this topic. In the paper, the term domestic violence will be used from this chapter on.

friends, and dates" (Carlson 371). Never a "single, one-off, event," domestic violence is often witnessed by bystanders who "may be children for whom witnessing the assault within their family can have profound effects . . . [and who] may try to intervene to prevent the violence or leave to find assistance" (Hollin 79). One of the most common risk factors causing domestic violence is the impulse disorder known as *intermittent explosive disorder* (IED), which is "more common in men than women" (Dragiewicz 361). Characterized by "extreme outbursts of anger which are sometimes out of all proportion to the situation and to any provocation, real or perceived, that may have occurred" (Hollin 80), IED is followed by "pleasure or relief derived from acting on the impulse, followed by remorse for the violent outburst or its consequences" (Dragiewicz 361).

Inspired by Hoover's childhood memories of domestic violence in her own home (368–73), *It Ends with Us* depicts two cases of domestic violence against women by men as current spouses—Andrew's over his wife Jenny and Ryle's over his wife Lily. In both cases, the pattern of domestic violence involves the same or similar agents (victims, abusers, and bystanders), repetitive three-phase cycle of abuse, the same or similar types of violence, similar risk factors leading to violent outbursts, similar effects on female victims, no or active counterreactions, and no or active interventions. The table to follow illustrates the pattern of violence in the Blooms' and the Kincaids' relationship:

The Pattern of Domestic Violence	The Blooms	The Kincaids
The Victim	Jenny is in a constant state of denial, shame, and fear for her daughter and herself, which paralyses her and makes her helpless and unable to confront Andrew: "'*When they ask you what happened, tell them you slipped on the ice.' When she said that, I just looked out my window and started crying. Because I thought for sure this was the final straw. That she would leave him now that he had hurt me. That was the moment. I realized that she'd never leave him. I felt so defeated, but I was too scared to say anything to her about it*" (Hoover 110).	Driven by love and passion, Lily condones, accepts, and forgives Ryle's abuse: "He lowers his mouth to my ear. His voice cracks when he says, 'You are my *wife*. I'm supposed to be the one who protects you from the monsters. I'm not supposed to be one.' He holds me with so much desperation, he begins to shake. I have never, in all my life, felt so much pain radiating from one human. It breaks me. It rips me apart from the inside out. All my heart wants to do is wrap tightly around his. But even with everything he just told me, I'm still fighting my own forgiveness. . . . My whole life, I knew exactly what I'd do if a man ever treated me the way my father treated my mother. It was simple. I would leave and it would never happen again. But I didn't leave. . . . And still, I'm trying to justify what happened. *It was an accident. He thought I was cheating on him. He was hurt and angry and I got in his way*" (Hoover 241–42). Lily then fights her own denial to put herself and her unborn daughter above the illusion of love: "Most days I'm strong. Most days I'm so mad at him that the thought of ever forgiving him is ludicrous. But some days I miss him so much I can't breathe. I miss the fun I had with him. I miss making love to him. I miss missing him" (Hoover 331). For her daughter's sake, Lily finds strength and courage to end her marriage with Ryle (Hoover 358–61).

The Abuser	Andrew remains abusive toward Jenny, and occasionally toward his daughter, Lily, until he dies: "*my father was the reason I was hurt and he didn't even stay and check on me. He just left us both there on the floor of the garage and left*" (Hoover 111).	After several violent outbursts and separation, Ryle becomes aware of his own toxicity and agrees to divorce: "'What would you say to her, Ryle? Tell me. I need to know what you would say to our daughter if the man she loves with all her heart ever hurts her.' A sob breaks from his chest. He leans toward me and wraps an arm around me. 'I would beg her to leave him," he says through his tears. . . . 'I would tell her that she is worth so much more. And I would *beg* her not to go back, no matter how much he loves her. She's worth so much more.' We become a sobbing mess of tears and broken hearts and shattered dreams. We hold each other. We hold our daughter. And as hard as this choice is, we break the pattern before the pattern breaks us" (Hoover 359–60).
The Bystander	The bystander to Andrew's abuse of his wife Jenny is their daughter, Lily, who as a child looked forward to her father making up for his violent outbursts, but who as a young adult and an adult felt resentment toward him, especially after witnessing her father's rape of her mother (Hoover 154), and tried to intervene and prevent the violence (16–17). Lily's attempts at preventing domestic violence at her home included walking "*into the living room, hoping it'll calm him down. He doesn't like to hit her when I'm in the room*" (64) or screaming at her father and "*hitting him on the side of his head*" (110).	The bystanders to Ryle's abuse of his wife Lily are: 1. Ryle's sister, Allysa, who: a) sympathizes with Lily and makes him confess his trauma to her (Hoover 237) and b) supports Lily's decision to leave Ryle when she hears about Ryle's abuse: "As his sister, I wish more than anything that you could find a way to forgive him. But as your best friend, I have to tell you that if you take him back, I will never speak to you again" (315) and 2. Atlas Corrigan, Lily's ex-boyfriend, who intervenes either verbally and physically to protect Lily (197–202) or takes care of her after she was head-butted and almost raped by Ryle (269–89).

The Repetitive Three-Phase Cycle of Abuse Consisting of: "(1) a tension-building phase; (2) an acute battering incident; and (3) a contrition phase, where the batterer showers affection on the woman with promises never to repeat the abuse" (Finley 99), which later slips into a simple lull in the hostilities.	The three-phase cycle of violence in the Blooms' marriage is described as follows: "When I married your father, I knew exactly what my limit was. But slowly . . . with every incident . . . my limit was pushed a little more. And a little more. The first time your father hit me, he was immediately sorry. He swore it would never happen again. The second time he hit me, he was even more sorry. The third time it happened, it was more than a hit. It was a beating. And every single time, I took him back. But the fourth time, it was only a slap. And when that happened, I felt relieved. I remember thinking, '*At least he didn't beat me this time. This wasn't so bad*'" (Hoover 335). In the Blooms' relationship, there are several repetitive cycles of domestic violence as exemplified by the kitchen incident (Hoover 64–65), the garage incident (109–11), and the incident after the community function (153–56).	The three-phase cycle of violence in the Kincaid's marriage is exemplified by the cell phone number incident: (1) after dropping Lily's phone by accident, Ryle finds Atlas's number hidden in the back of its cover. He crashes the phone against the wall and leaves. Lily feels guilty for not throwing the number away (Hoover 229–30). (2) Lily runs after Ryle and begs him to explain herself. He pushes her away. Lily loses consciousness and finds her injuries (cuts on her lip and eye) administered by Ryle, who claims she fell down the stairs (230–32). (3) After accusing her of lying and cheating, Ryle leaves Lily self-accusing and sobbing. He returns afterwards and asks for an explanation, making her swear on their marriage that she is telling the truth. Lily swears and throws him out of the apartment. She accepts Ryle's apology after his sister Allysa makes him admit his anger outbursts are caused by his childhood trauma. Lily decides to help him overcome his trauma (232–44). In the Kincaids' relationship, there are also several repetitive cycles of domestic violence, as exemplified by the casserole incident (184–86), the verbal incident in Atlas's restaurant (197–202), the already described cell phone number incident (229–34), and the Boston magnet incident (260–67).

Types of Domestic Violence: 1. Physical	Jenny is backhanded, knocked to the floor (Hoover 64), and choked (110) by Andrew. Lily sees her father "kick her [mother] a few times, choke her, hit her on the back and the stomach, pull her hair. The few times he's hit her on the face, it's always just been a slap, so the marks wouldn't stay for long" (153). Jenny has swollen eyes, cut lips, and pulled hair (Hoover 155).	Lily is pushed so hard by Ryle that she loses her footing and hits her face on one of the cabinet door handles as she comes down (Hoover 185). Lily is pushed down the stairs by Ryle (230). Ryle tugs Lily's hair (261), squeezes her throat (261), bites her collarbone (265), and head-butts her (266).
Types of Domestic Violence: 2. Sexual	Jenny is the victim of domestic rape (Hoover 154).	Lily suffers an attempt of domestic rape (Hoover 264–67).
Types of Domestic Violence: 3. Psychological	Andrew is "*staring down . . . with so much hatred* [at Jenny]. *Something about not having respect for how hard he works*" (Hoover 110). He accuses his wife of flirting with other men (153).	Ryle plays the role of the victim after his attempted rape of Lily: "'Lily, you have no idea. I am so sorry. You have no idea what I've been through these past two months knowing what I've done to you.' I clench my teeth together. I can feel my fingers as they fist around the blanket beside me. I have no idea what *he's* been through?" (Hoover 322).
Risk Factors Leading to Domestic Violence: 1. Intermittent explosive disorder (IED) 2. Alcohol 3. Trauma	In the Blooms' case, risk factors leading to domestic violence are (1) IED and (2) alcohol: 1. "*my mother had a lot of stuff to carry in, so she pulled up in the garage so she could bring it all in through the kitchen door. . . . I was helping her bring everything inside when my dad pulled up in the driveway. He started honking his horn because he was mad that my mom was parked in the garage. I guess he didn't want to have to get out of his car in the snow.*	In the Kincaids' case, all three risk factors leading to domestic violence are present: 1. IED caused by Ryle's burnt hand and Lily's laughter at the whole situation (Hoover 185), IED caused by Atlas Corrigan's phone number in Lily's phone cover (229–34), and IED caused by Lily's refusal to move to Minnesota to support Ryle's career: he "knocked a vase full of flowers off the table and onto the floor" (247). 2. Wine in the casserole incident (182) and scotch in the Boston magnet incident (262).

	That's the only thing I can think of that would make him want her to move her car right then and there, instead of just waiting until she was finished unloading it. . . . my mother got that real scared look in her eye when he started honking and she told me to take all her stuff to the table while she moved her car out. I'm not sure what happened when she went back outside. I heard a crash, and then I heard her scream, so I ran to the garage thinking maybe she had slipped on ice" (Hoover 109). 2. "*Dad got home late tonight, which means he went to the bar after work. Which means he's probably going to instigate a fight with my mother*" (64).	3. Ryle's emotional and psychological trauma caused by killing his brother accidentally when he was six years old, which led to his IED: "'I would never tell you this because I want it to excuse my behavior.' He pulls back and looks me firmly in the eyes. 'You have to believe that. Allysa wanted me to tell you all of this because since that happened, there are things I can't control. I get angry. I black out. I've been in therapy since I was six years old. But it is not my excuse. It is my reality'" (241).
The Effects of Domestic Violence on the Victims: 1. Denial 2. Shame	Jenny is mostly in denial about domestic violence inflicted on her and/or feels shame about being a victim: (1, 2) "*She was crying and I could already see the redness on her cheek from where he hit her. When I walked closer to her, wanting to make sure she was okay, she turned her back to me and gripped the counter. 'I said I'm fine, Lily. Go back to your room*'" (Hoover 65). (1, 2) "'Mom, he was trying to rape you!' She ducked her head and winced when I said that. She shook her head again and said, 'It's not like that, Lily. We're married, and sometimes marriage is just . . . you're too young to understand it'" (157).	Like her mother, Lily is also in denial about domestic violence she suffers and/or feels shame about being victimized: (1) "For fifteen seconds, I saw a side of him that wasn't him. That wasn't me. I laughed at him when I should have been concerned. He shoved me when he should have never touched me. I pushed him away and caused him to cut his hand. It was awful. The whole thing, the entire fifteen seconds it lasted, was absolutely awful. I never want to think about it again. . . . *He' not like my father*" (Hoover 189–92). (1, 2) Lily lies about the causes of her injuries to other people: Ryle's sister Allysa and Atlas Corrigan (193, 194).

Reactions to Domestic Violence	In the Blooms' relationship, Jenny never reacts to domestic violence: "*Things that hurt her just got swept under the rug, never to be brought up again*" (Hoover 156).	After Ryle's physical attack and attempted rape, Lily's reaction to Ryle's abuse are separation and divorce.
Intervention	In Jenny's case, there is none.	Unlike her mother, Lily asks Atlas Corrigan for help after almost being raped by Ryle, ends their marriage, and decides for shared parenthood with him.

6. Physical Child/Young Adult Abuse

This form of interpersonal violence can be perpetrated as: (1) the direct purposeful *injury* including "bruises, welts, cuts, burns, broken bones or other tissue damage to the child inflicted by the parent or a caregiver in a parenting role" (Stith et al. qtd. in Hollin 73–74), and (2) the child's safety and welfare *neglect* – a "failure of a parent or a caregiver in a parenting role to provide adequate supervision, safety, medical care, education, or other necessities to the child" (Stith et al. qtd. in Hollin 74). Hoover's *It Ends with Us* addresses two cases of the direct purposeful injury of a child/young adult: Lily's and Atlas Corrigan's. Lily, the daughter of Andrew and Jenny Bloom and the bystander to domestic violence in the Bloom family, is thrown off by her father while trying to protect her mother from one of his violent outbursts. When falling, she hurt her head and had to be given "nine stitches" (Hoover 111) in the hospital. Atlas Corrigan, Lily's first boyfriend, is another victim of child/young adult abuse in the novel: not only was he purposefully injured, that is, burnt by cigarettes (Hoover 113), but his mother also failed in her role as a parent when she remarried and eventually kicked him out of their home (Hoover 117).

7. School Bullying

School bullying is a complex socio-cultural phenomenon that "does not occur in isolation" (Swearer and Espelage 3) and "is enacted or constituted through the interactive/intra-active entanglements that exist between a variety of open-ended, social, discursive, material and subjective forces" (Schott and Søndergaard 9) such as the individual, family, peer group, school, community, and culture. As a result, it can occur in aggressive-relational, relational, passive,

nonmalign or indirect form (Horne et al. 2008). In *It Ends with Us*, the readers witness nonmalign and indirect school bullying when reading Lily's teen diary entries about Atlas Corrigan. Atlas Corrigan is indirectly bullied—subjected to subtle and insidious acts of peer victimization—when Lily's friend Katie rolls her eyes after Lily asks her who he is and says: "'*I don't know anything else about him, but he smells.' She scrunched up her nose like it grossed her out*" (Hoover 33). Katie's indirect bullying occasionally slips into nonmalign bulling— "a seemingly harmless practice from which some sort of pleasure is gained" (Rigby qtd. in Harris and Petrie 2): for instance, when she, during a bus ride, comments on Atlas kissing Lily: "Gross . . . I can't believe Lily lets him touch her. He wears the same clothes almost every day" (Hoover 146). Katie's bullying, both indirect and nonmalign, extends to Lily as well after Lily's father beats Atlas to a pulp: "She said she knew he was bad news from the moment she laid eyes on him. . . . She just rolled her eyes and said, 'Jesus, Lily. Did he brainwash you? He was a dirty, thieving homeless kid who was probably on drugs. He used you for food and sex and now you're defending him?'" (Hoover 216).

In conclusion, Colleen Hoover's (dramatic) romance *It Ends with Us* allows to be read not only as an always valid and applicable manual educating the readers how to recognize, identify, and act against different forms of interpersonal violence as the instruments of power as domination but also as a literary text whose critical potential lies in its ability to discuss abusive behavior patterns and consequently to empower readers, who are also experiencing violence in interpersonal relationships, to react. Through Jenny's, Lily's, and Colleen Hoover's eyes, the readers witness verbal and visual objectification, prescriptive gender stereotyping based on traits socially more desirable for women, emotional blackmail and/or manipulation, domestic violence following a fixed pattern (the involved agents (victims, abusers, and bystanders), repetitive three-phase cycle of abuse, types of violence, risk factors leading to violent outbursts, effects on female victims, reactions, and interventions), physical child/young adult abuse, and school bullying. By compiling this catalogue of interpersonal violence forms in the genre of romance and presenting it through the female first person narration and focalization, Colleen Hoover draws the readers' attention to the key issues women and children/young adults face in private and public spheres, which cannot and must not be disregarded: gender subordination, sexual harassment, prejudice, verbal, emotional, psychological and physical violence, home and school victimization as well as unequal emotional exchange in intimate relationships.

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ZAVRŠAVA LI S NAMA? INTERPERSONALNO NASILJE U ROMANU COLLEEN HOOVER *PRIČA ZAVRŠAVA S NAMA*

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Potaknuta žudnjom za moći, moć kao dominacija u suvremenoj je kritičkoj misli definirana kao stalna, relativno stabilna kontrola nad njima/drugima, odnosno onima koji nisu mi (Connolly 1974; Coser 1976; Dowding 1996; Hartsock 1974 and 1983; Karlberg 2005; Lukes 1986; Macpherson 1973; Pitkin 1972; Wartenberg 1990). Jedan je od instrumenata moći kao dominacije interpersonalno nasilje koje se može provoditi na različite načine uključujući verbalnu i vizualnu objektivizaciju, preskriptivno rodno stereotipiziranje, emocionalnu ucjenu i/ili manipulaciju, obiteljsko nasilje, zlostavljanje djece/mladih u obitelji te nasilje među djecom i mladima. Cilj je ovoga rada propitati različite oblike interpersonalnog nasilja u romanu *Priča završava s nama* (2016.) Colleen Hoover kako bi pokazao da interpersonalno nasilje omogućava i olakšava provedbu moći kao dominacije u narativnom prostoru Hooverina romana.

Ključne riječi: moć kao dominacija, žudnja za moći, interpersonalno nasilje, Colleen Hoover, *Priča završava s nama*