Woman Abuse in University and College Dating Relationships: The Contribution of the Ideology of Familial Patriarchy

Walter S. DeKeseredy, Carleton University
Katharine Kelly, Carleton University

Several theorists contend that male university/college students who physically, sexually, and psychologically abuse their female dating partners are more likely than men who are not abusive to adhere to the ideology of familial patriarchy. These scholars also argue that men who hold familial patriarchal attitudes and beliefs, and who are supported by their male peers, are most likely to victimize their dating partners. This research provides quantitative data from a national representative sample of Canadian male undergraduate students that support these hypotheses.

A large corpus of survey data demonstrates that male-to-female physical, sexual, and psychological assaults are common in US college and university dating relationships.[1] A small number of comparable Canadian studies have been conducted (Barnes, Greenwood, and Sommer 1991; DeKeseredy 1988; DeKeseredy and Kelly 1993; DeKeseredy, Kelly, and Baklid 1992; DeKeseredy, Schwartz, and Tait 1993; Elliot, Odynak, and Krahn 1992; Finkelman 1992). Although these surveys show that many Canadian female students' lives 'rest upon a continuum of violence' (Stanko 1990: 85), they provide no data on the macro-level factors that contribute to female victimization in post-secondary school courtship relations. In an earlier work (DeKeseredy and Kelly 1993), we contend that familial patriarchy may be a major source of dating abuse in the Canadian context. Following DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993), we also argue that the impact of this variable is mediated by male peer support.

DeKeseredy and Kelly predict that males who espouse familial patriarchal attitudes and beliefs are more likely to abuse their female dating partners than those who do not adhere to such an ideology. They also argue that men who hold patriarchal attitudes and beliefs and who are supported by their male peers, are most likely to sexually, physically, and psychologically victimize their dating partners. The primary objective of the study presented here was to test these two hypotheses using data gathered from a Canadian national representative sample of undergraduate university and community college students.

Definition of Familial Patriarchal Ideology

Feminist scholars argue that a substantial number of male actions, values, and beliefs are microsocial expressions of broader patriarchal forces. While there is no precise definition of patriarchy, Dobash and Dobash (1979) point out that it consists of a structure and an ideology. Structurally, patriarchy is an hierarchical organization of institutions and social relations that enable men to maintain more power and privilege than women. Ideologically, patriarchal relations are legitimated to the extent of creating an acceptance of subordination, even by those subordinated (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 1993).

Some theorists contend that there are two types of patriarchy: 'social' and 'familial' (Smith 1990). The former refers to male domination at the societal level and the latter refers to male control in domestic contexts (Barrett 1980; Eisenstein 1980; Ursel 1986). Nevertheless, even if patriarchy is classified into these two variants, Smith (1990) asserts that neither can be understood without reference to the other. Several feminists, however, argue that familial patriarchy should be the major concern in research on woman abuse in intimate, heterosexual contexts (Martin 1977; Millett 1969; Smith 1983; Smith 1990). Based upon such assertions, this study examined the influence of the ideological element of familial patriarchy on female victimization in post-secondary school dating relationships.

For purposes of the following discussion, familial patriarchal ideology is defined as a discourse which supports the abuse of women who violate the ideals of male power and control over women in intimate relationships (see: DeKeseredy and Schwartz 1993; Smith 1990). Relevant themes of this ideology are an insistence upon women's obedience, respect, loyalty, dependency, sexual access, and sexual fidelity (Barrett and McIntosh 1982; Dobash and Dobash 1979; Pateman 1988). While there are many theoretical and empirical sources which point to patriarchy as a major predictor of male-to-female victimization,[2] few attempts have been made to empirically demonstrate a relationship between woman abuse and familial patriarchal ideology. Briefly reviewed below, these studies mainly focus on wife-beating.

Review of Empirical Evidence

Dobash and Dobash's (1979) path-breaking study of 109 battered working-class wives in Glasgow and Edinburgh demonstrates qualitatively that violence is related to a husband's expectations about his wife's domestic labour, his possessiveness and sexual jealousy, and his control over the family's financial resources. As Smith (1990) points out, however, Dobash and Dobash's findings cannot be generalized, and their data do not reveal how abusive men or marriages differ from non-abusive ones. In order to address these concerns, he conducted two quantitative studies based on representative samples of Toronto women.

Smith's (1990) study reveals that men who espouse the ideology of familial patriarchy are more likely to beat their wives than men who do not adhere to such an ideology. He also found that men with low incomes, low educational attainment, and low status jobs are more likely than higher status husbands to hold a set of beliefs and attitudes supportive of familial patriarchy.

Informed by Coleman and Straus' (1986) gender-neutral survey that reports a high rate of 'marital violence' (e.g., husband-to-wife and wife-to-husband) in relationships where spouses disagree on the legitimacy of patriarchal norms, Smith (1993a) tested the 'lack-of-consensus' hypothesis from a feminist perspective. For example, he argues:

> From a feminist perspective, the Coleman-Straus results suggest that the probability of wife abuse increases when the wives of patriarchal husbands espouse a contrary view. Put differently, it is not simply husbands' adherence to an ideology of familial patriarchy, but a lack of consensus between wives and husbands regarding the legitimacy of such an ideology, that results in violence to wives. (Smith 1993a: 2-3)

Smith's findings support this hypothesis. Female respondents whose husbands, according to the respondents, espoused an ideology of familial patriarchy, which the women themselves rejected, were much more likely to have been beaten than respondents who shared their spouses' beliefs. Furthermore, the women who markedly repudiated their husbands' patriarchal expectations were at the greatest risk of assault. Additional support for Smith's hypothesis is provided by responses to supplementary open-ended questions which probed: (1) whether or not abusive incidents were preceded by an argument, and, if so, (2) the nature of the argument.

While the above three studies make an important contribution to a sociological understanding of the relationship between familial patriarchy and woman abuse, there are still several gaps that need to be filled in feminist research on this topic. For example, to the best of our knowledge, there have been no attempts to elicit quantitative self-

report data from men. Also absent are studies of the ways in which the impact of familial patriarchy is mediated by various institutional, interactional, and situational factors, such as male peer support. Moreover, there has been no attempt to examine whether men who abuse their dating partners are more likely to espouse a set of values and beliefs supportive of familial patriarchy then men who do not assault their dates or girlfriends. By addressing these three concerns, the current study is informed by the theoretical framework developed by DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993), discussed below.

Familial Patriarchy, Male Peer Support, and Woman Abuse in University and College Dating Relationships

Which group of men are prone to developing an ideology that perpetuates and legitimates woman abuse in university/college dating relationships? According to DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993), the answer lies in the empirical work on pro-abuse male peer groups. Building upon DeKeseredy's (1988) male peer support model, these researchers contend that some men experience considerable stress when their dating partners reject or fail to live up to the ideals of familial patriarchy. These women are also regarded as appropriate targets for physical, sexual, and psychological abuse by some of the male friends of these men. Peers tell their friends to mistreat dating partners who challenge their authority and/or refuse to provide them with sexual gratification (DeKeseredy 1988).

Several studies have documented male university social networks that approve of sexual assaults on certain dating partners,[3] such as those defined as 'teasers,' 'economic exploiters,' 'bar pick-ups,' and 'loose women' who do not want to engage in sexual intercourse (Kanin 1985). Such male homo-social cohorts often provide sexually aggressive members with a 'vocabulary of adjustment' so that their violent actions do not alter their conceptions of themselves as normal, respectable men (Kanin 1967).

Similar theories have been advanced to explain the linkage between familial patriarchy and wife-beating (Bowker 1983, 1985; Smith 1991). However, consistent with DeKeseredy and Schwartz's formulation, they have not been systematically tested on representative samples of male respondents. This study attempts to fill this research gap.

Methodology

Sample and Data Collection

The data for this study come from a national representative sample survey of Canadian male college and university students conducted in the autumn of 1992.[4] The research team distributed and collected self-

administered questionnaires in 95 undergraduate classes across the country. Response rates were very high with fewer than one percent of the participants refusing to answer. In analyzing the data reported here, figures were weighted to guarantee that the results reflected the national conditions.

A total of 1,307 men participated in this study. The median age was 21 and most of the respondents identified themselves as either English Canadian (46%) or French Canadian (27%). The sample was composed mainly of first and second year students (67.1%) and the most common program of enrollment was Arts (29.6%). Approximately 82% were never married and about six percent of the respondents either belonged, or did belong in the past, to a fraternity.

Prior to each administration, students were asked to participate in a study on problems in male-female dating relationships. They were also told that participation would be strictly voluntary and that all information they provided would be kept strictly confidential. Additionally, students were told that they did not have to answer any question they did not want to and that they could terminate questionnaire completion at any time. This information was also printed on the cover of the instrument that respondents were asked to read prior to commencing.

Following the administration, debriefings were conducted. These debriefings discussed the objectives of the survey, existing information on dating violence, and the role that peers play in perpetuating dating violence. All respondents were given a list of local (on-and off-campus) support services for survivors and offenders. Participants were also encouraged to ask us questions and to discuss the survey. These debriefing techniques are similar to those used in Koss et al.'s (1987) US national sexual assault survey.

Definitions and Measurement

Woman Abuse. Woman abuse is defined as any intentional physical, sexual, or psychological assault on a female by a male dating partner. Respondents were asked to report abusive events that took place in the last 12 months (incidence). The term 'abuse' was used instead of terms such as 'battering' and 'violence' because it implies that women are victims of a wide range of assaultive behaviours in a variety of social contexts (Okun 1986). Indeed, many studies demonstrate that male-to-female victimization in intimate relationships is 'multidimensional in nature' (DeKeseredy and Hinch 1991).

Physical and psychological abuse were measured using a modified rendition of Straus and Gelles' (1986) Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS). This measure is reliable and has both concurrent and construct validity (Straus 1990a). It has also been used in the majority of quantitative

studies of male-to-female abuse in intimate relationships (Straus 1990b). Nevertheless, as several critics have shown, the CTS has some serious limitations. For example, since it is a unidimensional measure, it cannot determine the context or consequences of and the motivation for violence. The CTS also misses major forms of physical and psychological abuse, such as burning, suffocating, squeezing, scratching, and sexual harassment (Breines and Gordon 1983; DeKeseredy 1992; De-Keseredy and MacLean 1990; Dobash et al. 1992; Saunders 1989; Smith 1987).

Given these criticisms, the rationale for using the CTS here is, perhaps, best described by Smith (1993b) who argues that the attacks on the CTS are:

> apt but also misplaced. The CTS is not flawed simply because it is unidimensional; rather studies employing the CTS are flawed if they used the CTS as the sole measure of violence, without any attempt to explore the multidimensionality of violence through other measures. (Smith 1993b: 9-10)

Based on this argument, we did not rely on the CTS as the only indicator of abuse. Rather, we also employed quantitative measures of sexual abuse and supplementary open-ended questions. The responses to the qualitative questions, however, have yet to be analyzed.

Another reason for using the CTS stems from the problem of eliciting accurate and honest responses from men. The male incidence and prevalence rates reported in all surveys on female victimization in intimate relationships are underestimates because of fear of reprisal, embarrassment, and social desirability factors (Arias and Beach 1987; Dutton and Hemphill 1992; Kennedy and Dutton 1989; Smith 1987).[5] For example, the last 20 years have witnessed a significant increase in public, criminal justice, and professional attention given to male-to-female abuse in North America. More people recognize that this type of behaviour is unacceptable (Straus and Gelles 1986). Therefore many men will not disclose their assaultive behaviour for fear of stigmatization, even when researchers guarantee anonymity and confidentiality (DeKeseredy 1988).

The CTS minimizes this problem by presenting the instrument to respondents in the context of disagreements and conflicts 'which all couples experience,' and by categorizing items on a continuum from least to most severe so that socially desirable tactics are presented first (Kennedy and Dutton 1989). However, in analyzing CTS findings, it is incorrect for researchers to assume that a punch is worse than a slap or an insult because a slap can break teeth. Many women state that psychological mistreatment hurts them more than acts of physical violence (Breines and Gordon 1983; DeKeseredy and MacLean 1990; Smith 1987; Walker 1979).

The CTS used in this study was introduced as follows:

We are particularly interested in learning more about your dating relationships. No matter how well a dating couple gets along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed with the other person, or just have spats or fights because they're in a bad mood or tired or for some other reason. They also use many different ways to settle their differences. Below is a list of some things that you might have done to your girlfriends and/or dating partners in these circumstances. Please circle the number which best represents your answer in each of the following situations. Please note that the items are repeated twice. The first set is for the past 12 months, the second set covers all of your experiences since you left high school.

IF YOU ARE OR HAVE BEEN MARRIED, PLEASE NOTE THESE QUESTIONS REFER ONLY TO DATING RELATIONSHIPS.

Following this preamble were 16 items designed to measure two different means of dealing with conflict in dating relationships: psychological mistreatment and interpersonal acts of violence. Only those events that took place in the last 12 months were examined for the purpose of this study.

The physical abuse component of the CTS consisted of nine violence items used by Straus and Gelles ('threw something at her;' 'grabbed or shoved her;' 'slapped her;' 'kicked, bit or hit her with your fist;' 'hit or tried to hit her with something;' 'beat her up;' 'choked her;' 'threatened her with a knife or a gun;' and 'used a knife or a gun on her'). The last six items in this scale constitute Straus et al.'s (1981) operational definition of 'severe violence.'

The psychological abuse scale consisted of six items, four of which are part of Straus and Gelles' verbal aggression sub-scale ('insulted or swore at her;' 'did or said something to spite her;' 'threatened to hit or throw something at her;' and 'threw, smashed or kicked something').[6] Two new items were added to this sub-scale that were used in Statistics Canada's pretest for a national telephone survey on violence against women. These measures are: 'put her down in front of friends and family,' and 'accused her of having affairs or flirting with other men.' Previous research shows that these items are related to male-to-female violence in marital contexts (Smith 1990).

Sexual abuse was operationalized using a slightly reworded version of Koss et al.'s (1987) Sexual Experiences Survey (SES). The 10 items in this version can be examined both in their totality, and as subdivided into four types of sexual abuse: unwanted sexual contact, sexual coercion, attempted rape, and rape. Widely used in Canada and the United States, the SES is a reliable and valid measure (Koss and Gidycz 1985).

Respondent's Adherence to Familial Patriarchal Ideology. As stated above, patriarchal ideology is defined as a discourse which supports the abuse of women who violate the ideals of male power and control over women in intimate relationships. Again, key themes of this ideology are obedience, respect, loyalty, dependency, sexual access, and sexual fidelity. These themes are operationalized by constructing two indices used by Smith (1990). One index measures patriarchal beliefs, and the other measures patriarchal attitudes. Chronbach's alpha coefficients (.79 for beliefs, and .76 for attitudes) show that these indicators are reliable and consistent with Smith's (1990) factor item analysis of female responses (.79 and .71 respectively). Responses to these items (Tables 1 and 2) indicate that most respondents do not espouse a set of beliefs and attitudes supportive of patriarchy in intimate heterosexual contexts.[7]

Male Peer Support. Male peer support is defined as 'the attachments to male peers and the resources that these men provide which encourage and legitimate woman abuse' (DeKeseredy 1990: 130). Five variants of this variable were measured. The first, routine activities, was operationalized by creating a seven item index which measures the frequency of participation in the following activities with other men in a typical month in the past year: 'worked on school assignments,' 'exercised or played sports,' 'attended sports events as a spectator,' 'went to bars or nightclubs,' 'went to movies or plays,' 'went out for dinner or lunch,' and 'worked for wages' (e.g., a part-time or full-time job, summer job, etc.). Responses yielded an inter-item correlation of Chronbach's alpha = .73.

The second male peer support variable, informational support, refers to guidance and advice that influence men to sexually, physically, and psychologically assault their dating partners. To measure this variable, an index (Chronbach's alpha = .70) was constructed by taking the sum of respondents' scores on seven dichotomous items (DeKeseredy 1988). For each of the following questions, respondents were asked to circle 'yes' or 'no:'

Did any of your male friends tell you that...

- you should respond to your dates' or girlfriends' challenges to your authority by using physical force, such as hitting or slapping?

- it is alright for a man to hit his date or girlfriend in certain situations?

- your dates or girlfriends should have sex with you when you want?

Table 1: % of Respondents With Patriarchal Beliefs (N = 1,307)

Beliefs	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A man has the right to decide whether or not his wife/partner should go out in the evening with her friends	2.3	7.2	49.6	41.0
A man has the right to decide whether or not his wife/partner should work outside the home	1.7	4.4	41.5	52.3
Sometimes it is important for a man to show his wife/partner that he is the head of the house	3.8	14.3	35.8	46.1
A man has the right to have sex with his wife/partner when he wants, even though she may not want to	0.9	1.5	35.5	62.1

Table 2: % of Respondents Who Approve of a Man Slapping His Dating Partner or Girlfriend (N = 1,307)

Attitudes	Yes	Depends	No	Don't Know
She won't do what he tells her to do	1.5	2.9	95.2	0.5
She insults him when they are home alone	1.0	5.3	92.5	1.2
She insults him in public	1.5	8.0	88.9	1.5
She comes home drunk	1.3	5.7	91.3	1.6
She is sobbing hysterically	1.3	9.6	86.7	2.4
She won't have sex with him	0.9	1.9	96.4	0.8
He learns that she is dating another man	6.2	15.2	72.8	5.7
She hits him first when they are having an argument	7.1	22.4	66.4	4.0

- if a man spends money on a date, she should have sex with him in return?

- you should respond to your dates' or girlfriends' challenges to your authority by insulting them or putting them down?

- you should respond to your dates' or girlfriends' sexual rejections by employing physical force to obtain sex?

- it is alright for a man to physically force a woman to have sex with him under certain conditions?

Attachments to abusive male peers was the third variant of male peer support examined in this study. Another index (Chronbach's alpha = .65) was constructed by the following items:

To the best of your knowledge, how many of your male friends...

- have ever made physically forceful attempts at sexual activity with women they were dating which were disagreeable and offensive enough that the woman responded in an offended manner such as crying, fighting, screaming or pleading?

- have ever used physical force, such as hitting or beating, to resolve conflicts with their girlfriends and/or dating partners to make them fulfill some demand?

- insulted their dating partners and/or girlfriends, swear at them, and/or withhold affection?

The response categories were: 'none,' 'one or two,' 'three to five,' 'six to ten,' 'more than ten,' and 'don't know.'

The fourth variant of peer support, peers' patriarchal attitudes, was measured using an index (Chronbach's alpha = .80) consisting of all the items found in the attitude index presented in Table 2. The response categories for these items are 'yes,' 'depends,' 'no,' and 'don't know.' The items were introduced with the following preamble:

Now we would like to ask you some more questions about your current male friends. Some people think it is alright for a man to slap his dating partner or girlfriend in certain situations. Other people think it is not alright. For each of the following situations, please tell us if your male friends would approve of a man slapping his dating partner or girlfriend. Would they approve if (*circle the number which best represents your answer*)...

To measure the fifth type of male peer support, pressure to have sex, respondents were asked 'How much pressure did your friends place on you to have sex with your dating partners and/or girlfriends?' The response categories were: 'a great deal,' 'considerable,' 'moderate,' 'little,' and 'none.'

Data Analysis

The theoretical model tested in this study includes a number of dimensions which, taken together, are hypothesized to increase the likelihood of abuse in university/college dating relationships. Correlation analysis was used to measure the strength of association among the variables included in the model and between each of these factors and the three abuse variables. Finally, each of these three dependent variables was regressed on the predictor variables in order to determine their independent and part contribution to the three forms of abuse. Squaring the part correlations yields the unique proportion of variation in the abuse variables that is explained by each of the predictor variables.

Correlation and regression analyses were then used to answer different kinds of questions. The former provides information on the strength of bivariate associations. Multiple regression analysis provides information on the impact of a number of predictor variables (jointly and independently) on the dependent variables. It is possible for a variable that is weakly associated with one of the dependent variables, such as sexual abuse, to make a non-trivial independent contribution to this form of female victimization when it is included in the set of variables upon which sexual abuse is regressed.

Results

Before we report the results on the linkages between familial patriarchy, male peer support and woman abuse in courtship, it is necessary to examine the incidence and prevalence rates of sexual, physical, and psychological victimization as estimated by the study. Incidence refers here to the percentage of women who stated that they were abused and the number of men who indicated that they were abusive in the past 12 months. Prevalence refers to the proportion of men who reported having been abusive and the percentage of women who indicated having been abused, since leaving high school.[8]

The Incidence and Prevalence of Sexual Abuse

The responses to each of the items in the Sexual Experiences Survey are presented in Tables 3 and 4.[9] Approximately 28 percent of the female participants stated that they were sexually abused in the past year, while 11 percent of the males reported having victimized a female dating partner in this way during the same time period. As was expected, the prevalence figures are significantly higher, with 45.1 percent of the women stating that they had been abused since leaving high school and 19.5 percent of the men reporting at least one incident in the same time period. Except for the male prevalence figure, these data approximate the pretest estimates (DeKeseredy et al. 1992).

Moreover, despite some methodological differences, the data presented in Tables 3 and 4 are consistent with Koss et al.'s (1987) US national data.

The Incidence and Prevalence of Physical Abuse

The male physical abuse incidence rate (13.7%) approximates those reported in previous Canadian and US incidence studies that employ similar measures (DeKeseredy 1988; DeKeseredy et al. 1992; Makepeace 1983). Even so, this figure is considerably lower than Stets and Henderson's (1991) US national incidence rate (21.9%). Our female estimate (22.3%) is also markedly lower than Stets and Henderson's (29.6%). These differences may be the result of sampling procedures. For example, Stets and Henderson examined members of the general population, while we restricted our focus to the post-secondary school community.

Table 5 shows that every type of violence was reported by at least one respondent; however, less lethal forms of assault apparently occurred more often. This is consistent with most of the earlier North American research (Sugarman and Hotaling 1989).

The prevalence data presented in Table 6 also show that less severe types of violence occur more often. Almost 35 percent of the women reported having been physically abused and 17.8 percent of the men stated that they were violent since leaving high school. These prevalence estimates are similar to the pretest results (DeKeseredy et al. 1992). Even so, the male figure is much lower than Barnes et al.'s (1991) rate (42%). This inconsistency probably reflects differences between the renditions of the CTS employed by the two studies. For example, Barnes et al.'s version included a sexual assault item and several other items were distinct from those used in our version.

The Incidence and Prevalence of Psychological Abuse

Similar estimates of psychological abuse were provided by men (74.1%) and women (79.1%). As anticipated, the prevalence rates were higher at 86.2 percent for women and 80.8 percent for men. The male incidence figure is higher than those reported by DeKeseredy (1988) and DeKeseredy et al. (1992). The women's estimate is also higher than DeKeseredy et al. (1992). However, Stets and Henderson's (1991) male (86.6%) and female (88.8%) estimates are markedly higher. Furthermore, the male prevalence statistic is 12% lower than that reported by Barnes et al. (1991) (92.6%). These differences probably reflect the use of different measures.

The responses to the psychological abuse items presented in Tables 5 and 6 show that there is considerable congruency in male and female

Table 3: Sexual Abuse Incidence Rates

Type of Abuse	Men (N = 1,307)		Women (N = 1,835)	
	%	N	%	N
Have you given in to sex play (fondling, kissing, or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because you were overwhelmed by a man's continual arguments and pressure?	7.8	95	18.2	318
Have you engaged in sex play (fondling, kissing, or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because a man used his position of authority (boss, supervisor, etc.) to make you?	9	10	1.3	21
Have you had sex play (fondling, kissing, or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc) to make you?	1.1	13	3.3	54
Has a man attempted sexual intercourse (getting on top of you, attempting to insert his penis) when you didn't want to by threatening or using some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.), but intercourse did not occur?	.6	7	3.9	67
Has a man attempted sexual intercourse (getting on top of you, attempting to insert his penis) when you didn't want to because you were drunk or high, but intercourse did not occur?	2.5	29	6.6	121
Have you given in to sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because you were overwhelmed by a man's continual arguments and pressure?	4.8	55	11.9	198
Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man used his position of authority (boss, supervisor, etc.) to make you?	.8	9	.5	8
Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because you were drunk or high?	2.2	25	7.6	129
Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc) to make you?	.7	8	2.0	34
Have you engaged in sex acts (anal or oral intercourse or penetration by objects other than the penis) when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?	.3	3	1.8	29

Table 4: Sexual Abuse Prevalence Rates

Type of Abuse	Men (N = 1,307)		Women (N = 1,835)	
	%	N	%	N
Have you given in to sex play (fondling, kissing, or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because you were overwhelmed by a man's continual arguments and pressure?	14.9	172	31.8	553
Have you engaged in sex play (fondling, kissing, or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because a man used his position of authority (boss, supervisor, etc.) to make you?	1.8	24	4.0	66
Have you had sex play (fondling, kissing, or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?	2.2	25	9.4	154
Has a man attempted sexual intercourse (getting on top of you, attempting to insert his penis) when you didn't want to by threatening or using some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.), but intercourse did not occur?	1.6	19	8.5	151
Has a man attempted sexual intercourse (getting on top of you, attempting to insert his penis) when you didn't want to because you were drunk or high, but intercourse did not occur?	5.5	6.3	13.6	244
Have you given in to sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because you were overwhelmed by a man's continual arguments and pressure?	8.3	96	20.2	349
Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man used his position of authority (boss, supervisor, etc.) to make you?	1.4	17	1.5	24
Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because you were drunk or high?	4.7	55	14.6	257
Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?	1.5	18	6.6	112
Have you engaged in sex acts (anal or oral intercourse or penetration by objects other than the penis) when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?	1.4	16	3.2	51

Table 5: Psychological and Physical Abuse Incidence Rates

Type of Abuse	Men (N = 1,307) %	N	Women (N = 1,835) %	N
Psychological				
Insults or Swearing	52.7	623	52.5	857
Put her (you) down in front of friends or family	18.9	233	30.7	491
Accused her (you) of having affairs or flirting with other men	29.3	350	37.2	614
Did or said something to spite her (you)	57.7	350	37.2	614
Threatened to hit or throw something at her (you)	6.1	71	10.6	174
Threw, smashed or kicked something	25.4	304	25.5	433
Physical				
Threw something at her (you)	3.5	40	5.1	85
Pushed, grabbed or shoved her (you)	11.7	132	19.6	319
Slapped her (you)	2.9	30	5.5	85
Kicked, bit or hit her (you) with your (his) fist	1.7	16	3.9	61
Hit or tried to hit her (you) with something	1.9	20	3.3	54
Beat her (you) up	.9	7	1.4	21
Choked you (her)	1.0	10	2.1	32
Threatened her (you) with a knife or gun	.9	9	.5	9
Used a knife or gun on her (you)	1.0	8	.1	2

Table 6: Psychological and Physical Abuse Prevalence Rates

Type of Abuse	Men (N = 1,307)		Women (N = 1,835)	
	%	N	%	N
Psychological				
Insults or Swearing	62.4	747	65.1	1105
Put her (you) down in front of friends or family	25.9	322	44.2	742
Accused her (you) of having affairs or flirting with other men	40.9	495	52.6	901
Did or said something to spite her (you)	65.2	773	72.2	1216
Threatened to hit or throw something at her (you)	8.0	97	20.6	346
Threw, smashed or kicked something	30.6	373	37.3	652
Physical				
Threw something at her (you)	4.3	50	10.6	185
Pushed, grabbed or shoved her (you)	15.8	182	31.3	529
Slapped her (you)	4.9	53	11.1	186
Kicked, bit or hit her (you) with your (his) fist	2.8	28	8.0	135
Hit or tried to hit her (you) with something	2.9	33	8.0	136
Beat her (you) up	1.0	8	3.9	63
Choked you (her)	1.0	9	4.6	80
Threatened her (you) with a knife or gun	.9	9	2.4	41
Used a knife or gun on her (you)	1.0	9	.5	8

reporting. This is particularly true of 'insults or swearing;' 'throwing, smashing or kicking something;' and 'doing something to spite a partner.' However, there were inconsistent responses to the following items: 'threatening to throw something at her,' 'putting her down in front of friends and family,' and 'accusing her of having affairs or flirting with other men.'

In sum, the incidence and prevalence rates reported here are both high and consistent with those presented in previous US and Canadian surveys. The next step is to empirically discern the major factors associated with the high level of female victimization in university/college courtship relations. Several studies reveal that the ideology of familial patriarchy and male peer support are key determinants, and we now turn to the contribution of these variables in explaining the observed abuse patterns.

The Contribution of Familial Patriarchy and Male Peer Support

As predicted, the results presented in Table 7 demonstrate that respondents' patriarchal beliefs and attitudes are associated with sexual, physical, and psychological abuse. Table 9 also shows that men who hold patriarchal attitudes and beliefs, as well as those who are exposed to male peers who espouse familial patriarchal attitudes, are most likely to sexually assault their dating partners. Two male peer support variables, attachment to abusive peers and informational support, are most strongly associated with psychological abuse. Additionally, men who hold patriarchal attitudes and those who received informational peer support are most likely to physically assault their partners. Respondents' patriarchal attitudes and informational support are associated, albeit not very strongly, with all three forms of woman abuse. All of the associations reported here are statistically significant.

The strength of the association between respondents' attitudes and beliefs is of acceptable magnitude to support our model. The modest size of the coefficient (.30) indicates that they are not measures of the same subjective states. Respondents who espouse patriarchal beliefs are more likely to have friends who hold patriarchal attitudes (.31), while those who hold patriarchal attitudes are much more likely to associate with peers who possess similar attitudes (.70). These associations are statistically significant.

The five male peer support variables not only vary in the strength of their association with respondents' attitudes and beliefs, but also with each other. At the same time, the associations between three of the five peer support variables are fairly strong and roughly equal in strength. These are peers' familial patriarchal attitudes, attachment to abusive peers, and informational support. Among this set of variables, informa-

tional support is most strongly associated with both peers' patriarchal attitudes (.52) and attachment to abusive peers (.42). These associations are statistically significant.

In sum, on the basis of the above results, we may conclude that men who espouse patriarchal beliefs and attitudes are more likely to engage in all three types of woman abuse. Are these two independent variables also statistically significant predictors of female victimization when they are entered into a model which includes a number of male peer support variables? Regression analysis provides an answer to this question.

The results of the multivariate analysis are presented in Tables 8, 9 and 10. In Table 8, the incidence scores for sexual abuse were regressed on the patriarchal ideology variables and the five peer support factors identified earlier. Taken together, these seven variables explain 21 percent of the variation in the incidence of sexual abuse. An examination of the standardized beta coefficients reveals that the respondents' attitudes constitute the most important determinant of sexual abuse, followed by informational support, respondents' patriarchal beliefs, and the familial patriarchal attitudes of peers. All four are statistically significant predictors of sexual abuse, with the first three variables being highly significant ($p < .001$), and the fourth achieving statistical significance at the criterion level ($p < .05$). None of the other three variables had significant independent effects on sexual abuse. The r^2 for the model is also statistically significant ($F = 22.1, P < .001$).

Table 9 presents the results of the analysis in which physical abuse is regressed upon the same set of seven predictor variables. Taken together, these variables explain 22 percent of the variation in the incidence of this form of woman abuse. The respondents' patriarchal attitudes is clearly the most important determinant of physical assaults on female dating partners. It is almost two and one-half times as strong a predictor as the next most important one – informational support. In order of their relative importance, the remaining two predictors are the familial patriarchal attitudes of peers and respondents' patriarchal beliefs. The first two of the four variables identified here are statistically significant ($p < .001$). The remaining two, patriarchal attitudes of peers and respondents' beliefs, meet or exceed the criterion level of significance ($p < .05$). The r^2 for the model is also statistically significant ($F = 23.5, p < .001$).

Table 10 presents the results of the analysis in which the incidence scores for psychological abuse were regressed using the same set of predictor variables included in Table 9. Overall, the set of seven variables explains 20 percent of the variation in psychological abuse. A comparison of beta coefficients clearly indicates that attachment to abusive peers is the most important predictor. In order of their relative

Table 7: Correlation Matrix, Means, and Standard Deviations of Sexual, Physical, and Psychological Abuse (N = 755)*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X̄	s
1. Physical Abuse	1.00	.47	.48	.21	.36	.23	.22	.01	.28	.01	.05	2.3
2. Psychological Abuse		1.00	.33	.21	.23	.34	.27	.09	.24	.16	4.6	4.9
3. Sexual Abuse			1.00	.25	.31	.22	.28	.04	.23	.04	2.0	0.5
4. Respondents' Patriarchal Beliefs				1.00	.30	.14	.21	.11	.31	.10	13.7	2.1
5. Respondents' Patriarchal Attitudes					1.00	.20	.23	.11	.70	.12	22.9	1.9
6. Attachment to Abusive Peers						1.00	.42	.20	.39	.17	4.2	1.5
7. Informational Support							1.00	.23	.52	.09	13.4	1.4
8. Pressure to have sex								1.00	.19	.11	1.5	0.5
9. Peers' Patriarchal Attitudes									1.00	.12	22.3	2.5
10. Routine Activities										1.00	17.6	7.8

*Given the large size of the sample, all bivariate correlations except for those which are underlined meet or exceed the criterion level of statistical significance.

Table 8: Ordinary Least Squares Estimates of the Effects of Male Peer Support on Sexual Abuse (N = 586)

$$R = .46; \quad R^2 = .21; \quad F = 22.1; \quad P < .001$$

Predictor Variable	b	Beta	Standard Error of b	F
Pressure to have sex	-.09	-.06	.06	2.15
Respondents' Patriarchal Attitudes	.12	.30^	.02	30.92
Routine Activities	-.002	-.02	.01	0.42
Attachment to Abusive Peers	.03	.06	.02	2.16
Respondent's Patriarchal Beliefs	.07	.20^	.01	24.08
Informational Support	.15	.23^	.03	24.30
Peers' Patriarchal Attitudes	-.04	-.13*	.02	4.58

^ P < .001; * P < .01; CONSTANT 15.1

Table 9: Ordinary Least Squares Estimates of the Effects of Male Peer Support on Physical Abuse (N = 577)

$$R = .47; \quad R^2 = .22; \quad F = 23.5; \quad P < .001$$

Predictor Variable	b	Beta	Standard Error of b	F
Pressure to have sex	-.36	-.09	.15	5.81
Respondents' Patriarchal Attitudes	.44	.42^	.05	60.84
Routine Activities	-.01	-.04	.01	1.24
Attachment to Abusive Peers	.10	.08	.05	3.58
Respondent's Patriarchal Beliefs	-.10	.12+	.03	8.77
Informational Support	-.30	.18^	.07	14.84
Peers' Patriarchal Attitudes	-.11	-.14+	.05	4.98

^ P < .001; + P < .01; CONSTANT 12.8

importance, informational support, respondents' patriarchal attitudes, and respondents' patriarchal beliefs also had significant independent effects upon psychological abuse. All four variables were statistically significant predictors, with peers' attitudes ($p < .001$) and the remaining three variables achieving or exceeding the criterion level of significance ($p < .05$). The r^2 for the entire model is also statistically significant ($F = 20.3$, $p < .001$).

In an attempt to ascertain the relative contribution of respondents' patriarchal beliefs/attitudes and male peer support variables to the variance explained by each of the three types of woman abuse, part correlations were computed and then squared. The results are presented in Table 11 which shows that respondents' patriarchal attitudes account for the largest amount of the variance (5.2%) explained in sexual and physical abuse. A peer support variable, attachment to abusive peers, explains the largest amount of variance in psychological abuse (5.0%).

When they are combined, two male peer support variables, informational support and attachment to abusive peers, explain more of the variation in psychological abuse (8.7%) than do respondents patriarchal beliefs and attitudes (6.0%). This pattern, however, is reversed for sexual abuse (8.2% vs 6.5% respectively) and physical abuse (9.2% vs 6.8% respectively). Taken together, the four statistically significant predictors explain 70 percent of the total variance (r^2) explained in sexual abuse, 75 percent of the total variance explained in psychological abuse, and 73% of the total variance explained in physical abuse.

Discussion

The key findings of this study show that males who report abusing their dating partners are more likely to espouse the ideology of familial patriarchy than those who do not report abusive behaviour. These men are even more likely to abuse their partners when supported by their male peers. Male peer support, then, does contribute to the relationship between patriarchal ideology and female victimization in university/ college courtship.

Male peer support is multidimensional and can take many forms. The findings presented above indicate that some types of peer support have a greater impact on female victimization than others. For example, informational support and peers' patriarchal attitudes have an impact on all three variants of woman abuse examined here. However, peers' attitudes only predicts psychological abuse and routine activities with male peers is not statistically significant predictor of any of the three types of woman abuse.

Table 10: Ordinary Least Squares Estimates of the Effects of Male Peer Support on Psychological Abuse (N = 572)

$R = .45;$ $R^2 = .20;$ $F = 20.3;$ $P < .001$

Predictor Variable	b	Beta	Standard Error of b	F
Pressure to have sex	-.17	-.02	.38	.20
Respondents' Patriarchal Attitudes	.36	.14*	.14	6.47
Routine Activities	.06	.09	.02	5.58
Attachment to Abusive Peers	.90	.27^	.14	39.75
Respondent's Patriarchal Beliefs	.28	.12*	.09	8.89
Informational Support	.78	.18^	.20	14.96
Peers' Patriarchal Attitudes	- 23	-.11*	.13	3.11

^ P < .001; * P < .01; CONSTANT 16 7

Table 11: Unique Variance in the Incidence of Sexual, Physical, and Psychological Abuse Explained by Statistically Significant Predictor Variables

Predictor Variable	% of Variance Explained		
	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Psychological Abuse
Respondents' Patriarchal Attitudes	5.2	5.0	3.0
Informational Support	3.7	4.2	3.7
Peers' Patriarchal Attitudes	2.8	2.6	—
Respondents' Patriarchal Beliefs	3.0	4.2	3.0
Attachment to Abusive Peers	—	—	5.0
TOTAL	14.7	16.0	15.0
r^2	21.0	22.0	20.0

The relative impact of male peer support and respondents' patriarchal beliefs and attitudes on woman abuse in courtship varies with the type of victimization. Our results show that the combined effects of attachment to abusive peers and informational support on psychological abuse are greater than the combined impact of respondents' patriarchal attitudes and beliefs. When it comes to sexual and physical abuse, however, the pattern is reversed, with the combined impact of respondents' beliefs and attitudes being greater than the combined impact of the two male peer support variables included as predictors for each type of abuse.

In all three regression tables, one statistically significant predictor, peers' familial patriarchal attitudes, stands out because the standardized beta coefficients have a negative sign attached to them (-.14 for physical abuse, -.11 for psychological abuse, and -.13 for sexual abuse). This means that higher values on the predictor variable (more strongly espoused familial patriarchal attitudes) predict lower values on each of the three types of woman abuse. The most likely reason for an apparently anomalous finding such as this is ambiguity in the way in which the questions in this index were formulated. Since the response categories were 'yes,' 'depends,' 'no,' and 'don't know,' the second category could include 'yes' answers. Consequently, a large but unknown number of the highest scored responses ('yes') actually received a lower score because the respondents included them under 'depends.' This could account for the negative values in the tables.

Taken together, respondents' attitudes and beliefs and five male peer support variables entered in the regression analysis explain approximately 21 percent of the variance in the three types of woman abuse in dating relationships. This leaves close to 80 percent of the variation unexplained. In addition to measurement error (e.g., retrospective dependent variable data on abusive incidents that may have occurred two or more years earlier), respondent, situational, and male peer support variables that were not included in the model tested here may also account for non-trivial amounts of the variation in sexual, physical, and psychological abuse. For example, one respondent variable that may have a significant impact on all three types of abuse is 'past history of violence.' This includes violence toward anyone, such as sisters, friends, and relatives, as well as violence against women who are not dating partners. According to Monahan (1981), past violence is one of the best predictors of present or future violence. Parental familial patriarchal values and norms, as well as the structural fact of male dominance with the family, may also support woman abuse generally.

A situational variable that may help explain variations in the types of woman abuse examined in this study is the number of times a man and his dating partner were at parties where alcohol was being consumed

(or together in private when both were drinking, or in private settings where only one partner was drinking). Although the underlying mechanisms have been ambiguously identified, the literature reports fairly strong associations between alcohol and woman abuse in dating relationships (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 1993; Ehrhart and Sandler 1985; Martin and Hummer 1989; Sanday 1990; Ward et al. 1991).

Averill's (1982) theory of aggression and Bernard's (1990) application of it to 'subcultural aggression' strongly suggest that an analysis of male peer informational support should include measures of attribution of female causality and blameworthiness. Compared with other males, respondents who learn from their male peers that females are fully responsible and accountable for what happens to them, and that they are morally blameworthy, are probably more likely to abuse their dating partners (Kanin 1985).

In subsequent research, these missing variables should be included in the theoretical model tested in this study. DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993) suggest that two other factors need to be addressed in order to enhance the model's contribution to a sociological understanding of the relationship between familial patriarchy, male peer group dynamics, and woman abuse. These factors are membership in formal social groups (such as fraternities), and the absence of deterrence. Their rationale for including these two variables is briefly described below.

Male peer support for woman abuse is not limited to a specific time, geographical context, social class, religion, occupational group, or ethnic category (Bowker 1983). Even so, cross-cultural data reveal that pro-abuse peer relations are often found in cultures where men band and often sleep together in residences apart from women (Levinson 1989). Some university fraternities are examples of these cultures. Members develop quasi-familial bonds with each other, and they live in houses which are generally off-limits as residences to female students (Martin and Hummer 1989; Sanday 1990). Fraternities are also fertile breeding grounds for woman abuse, especially sexual assault (Berkowitz 1992). For example, Schwartz's (1991) slight reorganization of Garrett-Gooding and Senter's (1987) data shows that fraternity men are more likely to sexually abuse women than male students active in campus social organizations, or than men who are inactive in campus social life. Fraternity members are also more likely to have a narrow conception of masculinity, espouse group secrecy, and sexually objectify women (Martin and Hummer 1989).

DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993) and Sanday (1990) point out that the absence of deterrence is a major determinant of pro-abuse group activities. Of course, criminologists for many years have discussed the inability to measure the effects of deterrence, because to do so is to measure the omission of an act, rather than the commission of one

(Gibbs 1975). People obey the law for many reasons, only one of which is fear of punishment (Zimring and Hawkins 1973). Several researchers claim that the fear of informal sanctions is more powerful than the fear of formal sanctions. However, based on their analysis of a variety of studies, Hawkins and Alpert (1989: 162) argue that 'when the informal reactions are controlled statistically, there is still a deterrent effect of threat of formal sanctions, so deterrence must be taken seriously.'

Many male students will not lose much if their abusive dating behaviour comes to the attention of university/college officials because on many campuses, administrators will not seriously punish men who victimize women (McMillen 1990). DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993) argue that the fact that many men do not see woman abuse as a serious problem or as a crime (lack of internal controls) is a strong factor in permitting such abuse to occur. Nevertheless, the lack of external controls means that, to the extent that men actually do rationally weigh the potential outcomes of their behaviour, the rewards for abusing women may seem to outweigh the costs.

Notes

1. See DeKeseredy (1988); DeKeseredy and Kelly (1993); Koss et al. (1987); Lloyd (1991); Sugarman and Hotaling (1989); and Ward et al. (1991) for reviews of these studies.
2. See Smith (1990) for a comprehensive review of this literature.
3. See DeKeseredy (1988, 1990) and DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993) for summaries of these studies.
4. See DeKeseredy and Kelly (1993) and Pollard (1993) for more details on the sampling procedure and other technical aspects of the study.
5. Problems characteristic of other types of self-report crime surveys may also contribute to underreporting, such as forward and backward telescoping (O'Brien 1985).
6. The items deleted from Straus and Gelles' original verbal aggression sub-scale are: 'sulked or refused to talk about it;' 'stomped out of the room, or house or yard;' and 'cried.'
7. Missing cases are excluded from all of the tables presented in this article.
8. See DeKeseredy and Kelly (1993) for a more detailed discussion on the incidence and prevalence rates.
9. All of the incidence and prevalence tables presented here include the items found in the female instrument. Different wording was used in the male questionnaire.

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