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# Power-control theory: An examination of private and public patriarchy

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Power-Control Theory: An Examination of Private and Public Patriarchy

by

Jessica Nicole Mitchell

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
Department of Criminology  
College of Behavioral and Community Sciences  
University of South Florida

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## Dedication

I dedicate the following to my family and friends who provided me with unwavering support and encouragement throughout the process.

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## Power-Control Theory: An Examination of Private and Public Patriarchy

Jessica Nicole Mitchell

### ABSTRACT

The gender difference in crime is indisputable. In an attempt to explain gender differences in adolescents' involvement in crime, secondary data analysis of middle and high school students and their neighborhoods will be examined. Feminists have identified the concept of patriarchy as the root of gender differences in all behavior and particularly in criminal behavior. Hagan's Power-Control Theory incorporates the concept of patriarchy through measures within home to examine how differences in occupational authority between parents affects the gender difference in delinquency through differential controls placed on sons and daughters. However, it has been suggested that the measure of patriarchy be extended into the public sphere (Walby, 1990). Specifically, this study compares a traditional private patriarchy model to a public patriarchy model in order to determine which approach better explains the gender gap in crime. Patterns of findings were not substantively different between private and public patriarchy models; however, a number of theoretical implications point to the fact that alternate measures of patriarchy could lend support for power-control theory that it currently lacks.



## Chapter 1

### Introduction

An indisputable finding in criminological research is that men commit substantially more crimes than women (Heimer, 2000). This difference in crime rates for men and women is often referred to as the gender gap in crime. Despite the persistent evidence of a gender gap in crime, mainstream criminologists have often failed to acknowledge gender in the development of their theories and empirical studies (Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008). Feminist criminologists have recognized that inadequate attention has been given to this issue.

Feminists argue that gender must be looked at as a product of power relations between males and females and “not simply the enactment of roles and formation of masculine or feminine attitudes” (Daly & Chesney-Lind, 1988, p. 511; Heimer, 2000, p. 444). This feminist perspective, along with feminist thought in general, focuses on patriarchy as the root of gender differences in all behavior and particularly in criminal behavior.

Patriarchy is a social construct in which men and masculine qualities are valued more highly than women and feminine qualities (Belknap, 2007). A patriarchal society thus creates gender inequities, oppressing women. As an abstract concept, a variety of definitions exist for patriarchy. Sylvia Walby defines patriarchy as “a system of social

structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women” (1990, p. 20). In examining and assessing various theoretical approaches to patriarchy, she offers a perspective on theorizing patriarchy in a manner that articulates two distinct forms of patriarchy, which she labels “private patriarchy” and “public patriarchy,” that are evident in a number of societal structures. “Private patriarchy” is the oppression of women by limiting them to unpaid household labor and keeping them from the public sphere. Alternatively, “public patriarchy” gives women access to both private and public spheres, but this access is seen as inferior compared with that of their male counterparts, and women are still collectively subordinated by societal constructions.

Patriarchy is a central idea and necessary in understanding gender inequities, especially in the study of gender and crime. One attempt to explain the gender gap in crime that utilizes the concept of patriarchy was offered by criminologist John Hagan and his colleagues, who developed power-control theory (1985). This theory explains the gender difference in crime through power and control relations between mothers and fathers. Family relations are differentiated as more or less patriarchal by the amount of authority the mother and father have in their workplace relative to one another. In more patriarchal families the father’s workplace authority exceeds that of the mother, especially when the mother does not work outside the home. Within these families, sons and daughters are socialized to take on gender roles similar to those of their parents; this is accomplished through stronger controls on daughters and weaker controls on sons. In more patriarchal families, the gender gap in delinquency is expected, therefore, to be fairly substantial. In contrast, less patriarchal families are characterized by a balance of

power and occupational authority between mothers and fathers. In these types of families, both sons and daughters are exposed to fewer controls and encouraged to take risks. It is this similar lack of control and similar ideations of risk between sons and daughters that narrows the gender gap in delinquency in less patriarchal families.

Research on power-control theory has demonstrated limited support for the theory. Hagan and his associates have been able to find consistent support for his model (Hagan, 1990; Hagan, Simpson, & Gillis, 1987; Hagan & Wheaten, 1993; Hagan et al., 2002; Grasmick et al., 1996; McCarthy et al., 1999). However, a number of studies that attempt to replicate Hagan's findings (Hill & Atkinson, 1988; Singer & Levine, 1988; Jensen & Thompson, 1990; Morash & Chesney-Lind, 1991; Avakame, 1997; Lieber & Wacker, 1997; Uggen, 2000; Blackwell, 2000; Blackwell et al., 2002) have failed to find much support for the theory. A common feature in all of these studies, however, is the persistent conceptualization of patriarchy as strictly a family-level or "private" phenomenon. Yet Walby (1990) theorizes patriarchy as a phenomenon reaching beyond the family into the public sphere. Might the support for power-control theory be strengthened or clarified if a measure of public patriarchy were included in the power-control model?

It is conceivable that measures of public patriarchy that illustrate gender inequalities occurring at the macro-level may provide a test of power-control theory more closely aligned with Hagan's conception of the theory. The current study compares a typical private patriarchy power-control model with a public patriarchy power-control model in order to determine which approach better explains the gender gap in crime.

In the next chapter, a closer look is taken at Walby's theory of patriarchy and its applicability to Hagan's power-control theory of gender differences in delinquency. An alternative conceptualization of power-control theory is then presented that offers a public patriarchy, rather than strictly a private patriarchy, explanation of the gender gap in delinquency. Chapter three delineates an empirical test of the original micro-level power-control model, the "private patriarchy" model, as well as the alternative multi-level power-control model, the "public patriarchy" model. In that chapter, the methods are described for each model tested and compared. Chapter four presents the results of these empirical tests, and the implications of those findings are discussed in Chapter five.

## Chapter 2

### Patriarchy, Power-Control Theory, and the Gender Difference in Crime

#### *Gender Differences in Crime*

Gender and its link to crime and delinquency can not be ignored. According to the FBI Uniform Crime Report, there were an estimated 2.6 million females arrested, accounting for about 24.5% of all arrests in 2008. Additionally, the Bureau of Justice Statistics indicates that women make up about 12.9% of the jail population (Sabol & Couture, 2008) and 7.2% of the state or federal prison inmate population (Sabol & Couture, 2008). In a lifetime, men have a greater chance of going to prison than women, with 11.3% of all men and 1.8% of all women incarcerated in prisons. Nine out of every 10 inmates in the jail system are male and of the 3.2% of all adults in the United States who are under some type of correctional supervision, men make up 77% compared with 23% for females in 2007 (Sabol & Couture). Men also exceed women in other types of antisocial and deviant behavior (Toro, Urberg, & Heinze, 2004). For example, in a national sample, women found suicide less acceptable than men (Stack et al., 1994; Stack & Wasserman, 1992, 1995); men report greater drinking and drug use, as well as heavy smoking compared to females (Rodham et al., 2005), and men are also more likely to initiate aggressive or violent behaviors such as intimate partner violence (Tjaden &

Thoennes, 2000). Specifically, females account for only about 14% of all violent offenders.

Despite the persistent gender gap in crime, delinquency, and other deviant acts, efforts to account for this discrepancy have been somewhat limited. Historically, the gender gap has been ignored by criminological theory. Most attempts to account for delinquency have based theoretical explanations on the circumstances of male offending exclusively. More recently, as feminist criminologists have called for increased attention to the criminal involvement of females, mainstream criminologists have routinely controlled for gender in empirical tests of theories of delinquency. However, merely including girls in samples and controlling for gender does little to explain the gender gap in delinquency. Such statistical controls may identify that gender differences exist but fail to explore *why* those differences exist. Even feminist criminologists, who have alternatively promoted gender-specific theories of delinquency involvement, and who have uncovered more completely the circumstances of female offending, neglect to account for why males and females differ so greatly in their offending behavior.

Recent developments in feminist perspectives on crime are beginning to address this oversight. Chapple and colleagues assert that “Researchers are increasingly suggesting that gender as structure is created, maintained, and differentially experienced within families leading to gender differences in boys’ and girls’ delinquency” (2005, p. 358). In particular, they argue that social controls have a different level of importance and effect for boys and girls, therefore demanding gender-specific theories of social control (Chapple et al., 2005). Feminist thought has introduced many new approaches to

various fields of study, emphasizing the need to include feminist views and to account for females in research. One such development emphasized early on in feminism, and later in feminist criminology, is the concept of patriarchy. These advances have increased the awareness of including females in criminological research, yet a majority of studies concentrate on female victimization, overlooking the influence of patriarchy on female offending (Yllo, 1983, 1984; Yllo & Straus, 1984; Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008). While there are many dimensions of the concept of patriarchy and the feminist perspective, the focus remains constant in attempting to explain the gender differences in crime and its link to the structure of society.

*Patriarchy: The root of gender differences*

In general, patriarchy is a promising explanation of gender differences and inequalities. Much has been written about this concept, but Sylvia Walby (1990) is one of few that have “theorized” patriarchy. According to Walby (1990, p. 1), “the concept of ‘patriarchy’ is indispensable for an analysis of gender inequality.” Patriarchy may thus serve as a key in unlocking the question: Why do women have a significantly lower rate of criminality than men?

As a building block of the feminist perspective, patriarchy reflects the subordination and disadvantaged position of women in social institutions. In general, patriarchy is the structuring of society by family units where fathers are the head of the household. Within these family units, fathers hold the responsibility of the welfare of the family. This position in the family in turn gives fathers authority over their families

(Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008). Patriarchy describes males as having more power and control over females, dominating them both culturally and socially.

Walby (1990) identifies several approaches to understanding the role played by patriarchy in accounting for gender differences. These theoretical perspectives include radical feminism, Marxist feminism, liberal feminism, and dual-systems theory. *Radical feminism* asserts that the cause of gender inequality arises from men as a group controlling women as a group. This form of patriarchy is seen as an independent social construct that oppresses women in any way to benefit men's needs and desires. Some radical feminists have gone as far as arguing that modern reproductive technologies (i.e. birth control and fertility drugs) are, far from liberating women, a way for men to control women's sexuality and reproduction. Unlike radical feminists, *Marxist feminism* views gender inequality as a product of capitalism. Class relations are emphasized as the primary cause of gender relations. Women are dominated by men as a result of economic exploitation, which forces women to remain in the household as unpaid laborers. While both radical and Marxist feminists analyze women's oppression as a deep rooted social structure, *liberal feminism* accounts for all the practical inequalities women encounter. For example, this approach focuses on women's access to education, paid employment, and general equal treatment between men and women. Finally, *dual-systems theory* combines both Marxist and radical feminist theory. This perspective explains gender inequality as a result of both patriarchy and capitalism, either interacting in society together or each as a separate system that functions independently at different levels. These four main feminist arguments all provide insight into the concept of patriarchy.



Walby (1990) further distinguishes areas or settings within which patriarchal relations occur: the household, paid employment, the state, sexuality, male-on-female violence, and cultural institutions. Beginning with the *household*, this private setting of women's oppression focuses on women's roles in the household and division of labor. Under a patriarchal household with the husband considered the breadwinner, the wife is the homemaker whose full-time "job" is reproduction and production within the home. Marxist theorists view patriarchy in the household as class relations using a materialistic approach. Materialism explains the subordination of women by the higher value placed on men's surplus production in a capitalist society compared to the lower value of women reproducing and rearing children. Drawing on reproduction as an oppressive force, the main focus of radical feminism in regard to the household are the biological dangers of reproduction. Although both liberal feminists and dual-systems theorists hold to similar arguments, they give more attention to the division of labor by gender. They argue that the core of patriarchal exploitation is the expropriation of domestic work required of women. This domestic labor is not valued or considered work because it is unpaid.

The increase of *paid employment* of women in contemporary society would naturally be considered a move away from a patriarchal society. However, feminists explain that paid employment has also been influenced by patriarchy. These effects can be seen through the lower pay rates, occupational positions, and amount of occupational authority held by women compared to men. National statistics in the U.S. have consistently expressed a gender bias in regard to hourly wages and salary, as well as the opportunity for overtime and longer shifts (Walby, 1990, p. 25). Over time, women have

gained access to employment outside of the home, yet remain exploited as cheaper labor than men.

The lack of power held by women in society is also seen as a form of patriarchy exuded by the *state* as a whole. While distinct theoretical approaches explain the state's political influence on various structures in society differently, the main focus is on the patriarchal effort to maintain gender inequality. Similarly, *culture*, *sexuality*, and *male-on-female violence* are viewed as constructions in society built to preserve men's power and subordination of women.

By looking at these various units of society, Walby is able to explain in detail the different feminist perspectives on how patriarchy is embedded in society. She then critically assesses them relative to one another to develop a contemporary model or theory of patriarchy. An important aspect of Walby's contribution to literature on patriarchy is her distinction between private and public forms of patriarchy, into which she fits the above-mentioned structures of oppressive social relations that exist in contemporary society.

*Forms of patriarchy in society: private and public.*

Patriarchy, as it contributes to gender inequality, exists in both the private and public spheres (Walby, 1986; Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008). Women's oppression through inequalities within the home and family constitutes *private patriarchy*. In this private sphere, the family is structured in such a way that the male is labeled the head of the household solely based on the fact that the male works more hours outside of the home and has a greater occupational authority outside of the home. Through private

patriarchy, women are oppressed and controlled individually (Walby, 1990, p. 24).

Walby identifies household production as the dominating patriarchal structure in the private sphere, with employment, the state, sexuality, violence, and culture as secondary patriarchal influences. By means of patriarchal socialization and gender-role preferences, female responsibilities are restricted to the family, which is not recognized in this ideology as work because it is unpaid labor. “Consequently, because women are relegated to the household, they undergo socialization and experiences that restrict their activities, whereas men maintain their power and dominance over economic resources and hold a position of power over women” (Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008, p. 9).

In contrast to Walby’s concept of private patriarchy, *public patriarchy* includes institutional structures such as employment, schools, churches, and the government (Walby, 1990; Atwell, 2002). These institutions preserve patriarchy in society by perpetuating the inequality of men and women in their position, power, and controls within them. The dominating forms of patriarchy in the public sphere are employment and the state, with household production and the other patriarchal structures mentioned by Walby having less of an impact on gender relations. Unlike conditions under private patriarchy, where women were isolated within the home, women under public patriarchy are allowed roles in the public sphere, but remain oppressed by the gender inequalities in paid employment, education, economic conditions, and positions of power held in society. Although women are involved in the public sphere, patriarchy is still evident through measures of female poverty, part-time work, income, and educational disparities

(Heimer, 2000). Accordingly, even when private patriarchy is not observed, public patriarchy may still be controlling and limiting power to females relative to males.

While Walby does not apply her theoretical model of patriarchy to the gender difference in crime, one criminological theory that has used the concept of patriarchy, at least in a limited way, to account for the gender gap in crime is power-control theory.

#### *Hagan's power-control theory*

Hagan and associates (1985) used both macro-level and micro-level concepts to explain the link between gender and delinquency, integrating traditional theories of class (power) and family function (control). In his initial version of power-control theory, Hagan centered the theory on Marxist ideas of class relations and positions of authority held by the head of the household in families. He argued that class affects the gender difference in delinquency. Specifically, higher classes with greater occupational authority held by the head of the household (i.e. owners, managers) present a greater difference in delinquency between genders. In families of lower classes (i.e. workers, unemployed-surplus population) the gender disparity in delinquency narrows. According to Hagan, males are freer to deviate from social norms than females and they are freest to deviate in the higher classes. However, Hagan's initial (1985) version of power-control theory did not directly address gender relations in the workplace and at home; instead, the gender-power imbalance was *assumed* by virtue of the class position of the male "head of household." In response to counterarguments on this point (Coser & Coser, 1974; Coser, 1985), Hagan further elaborated on the power-control model in 1987. By looking at the relative difference in authority in the workplace between the wife and the husband,

instead of simply the absolute authority of the male head of the household, the gender-power relations within the family unit could be observed.

In this elaborated model (1987), Hagan and his colleagues introduced the basic elements of power-control theory as it is commonly known today. The main idea of the theory is that the amount of authority parents have in the workplace, relative to one another, is reproduced within the two-parent household. The difference in power between parents is then believed to differentially influence the social control of daughters and sons, in turn, having an effect on gender differences in the child's preference for risky behavior, as well as assessments of risk. At last, it is these differences in control and access to risk that explain the gender difference in delinquency.

In particular, the aim of power-control theory is not to predict the probability of females being involved in delinquent behavior; instead, it seeks to clarify the differences between males and females in delinquency and how these differences may be greater in certain types of households compared with others (Blackwell, 2000). Hagan et al. (1987) distinguish households as being "more patriarchal" or "less patriarchal" on the basis of whether individuals have positions of authority in the workplace relative to their spouse. For example, a household would typically be described as "more patriarchal" if the father holds an authority position, while the mother does not have authority in her job or is unemployed. Additionally, even if the father has no authority in his job outside the home, but the mother is unemployed, the household is considered more patriarchal. On the other hand, a "less patriarchal" family would exist when both parents hold jobs of equal authority, creating a more even balance of power between the two spouses.

Basically, the theory looks at the relational rather than absolute measures of authority of the father and mother.

In more patriarchal families, where the father has greater power and occupational authority outside the home as opposed to the mother, the “child socialization in these unbalanced families generally is delegated to mothers” (Leiber & Wacker, 1997). Hagan et al. (1985) state that mothers more than fathers are likely to be the instruments or means of control over the children and that daughters more than sons are likely to be the objects of that control. This instrument-object relationship is stronger in more patriarchal families, whereas it is less prominent in less patriarchal (egalitarian) families. More patriarchal families socialize their daughters to take on feminine roles similar to that of their mothers, while sons are expected to take on occupational positions like those of their father (Leiber & Wacker, 1997). These reproductions of order allow for sons to have greater freedom and to be encouraged to take risks, while daughters are controlled more and discouraged from risky behavior. As a result of the differences in socialization and therefore differences in risk preferences and perceptions, sons are more likely to be involved in delinquent activities compared to daughters (Blackwell, 2000).

Alternatively, less patriarchal families, where mothers and fathers have similar levels of occupational authority and power in the family, do not exhibit such pronounced differences between sons and daughters since they are controlled more similarly than in unbalanced families (Hagan et al., 1987). It is the similarity in the controls and ideation of risk that narrows the gender gap in delinquency within less patriarchal families in comparison to more patriarchal families. “Power-control theory is not merely a theory of

the gender pattern of delinquency; rather, it is a theory of the gender patterning of risk preferences more generally, which could potentially lead to a wide variety of risk-taking behaviors” (Grasmick et al., 1996, p.181).

Hagan’s first attempt to advance power-control theory reveals his awareness of the impact of private patriarchy on the gender difference in crime. In homes where wives do not work outside the home but husbands are fully employed, private patriarchy prevails. It is in these “more patriarchal” households that Hagan hypothesizes a larger gender difference in delinquency. Alternatively, in families where both husband and wife are employed and enjoy equal levels of authority in their employment, private patriarchy is diminished; likewise, the gender gap in delinquency in these “less patriarchal” households is expected to be reduced. Although Hagan makes no explicit distinction between private and public patriarchy in his development of power-control theory, it is clear that the theoretical statement singles out the influence of private patriarchy specifically on the gender gap in delinquency. This emphasis on private patriarchy is further evident in empirical tests of power-control theory.

#### *Research on power-control theory*

While power-control theory has been praised as a fundamental development in criminological theory, empirical support for the theory is mixed (Grasmick et al., 1996; Hagan et al., 1979, 1987; Hill & Atkinson, 1988; Singer & Levine, 1988; Jensen & Thompson, 1990, Morash & Chesney-Lind, 1991; Avakame, 1997; Leiber & Wacker, 1997; Uggen, 2000; Blackwell, 2000; Blackwell et al., 2002). The inconsistencies in support of power-control theory have resulted in criticisms that attack Hagan and his

associates from several sides, but most controversy has centered on the measures used to test power-control theory. A weakness feeding this debate is that while Hagan's Canadian data show strong support for the theory, attempts to replicate these findings with other data sets have often failed. Hagan has attempted to answer these criticisms and lack of support by replying that their contradictory findings are due to poor measurement of the latent variables in power-control theory. Of central concern is the attempt to measure the effects of patriarchy.

Hagan's own empirical tests of the theory have evolved and changed from the initial version (1985) of power-control theory. In fact, in the first test of the theory, Hagan et al. (1985) had no measure of patriarchy at all. Instead, they tested the hypothesis that movement upward in social position or class increases the gender difference in delinquency. Hagan assumed that the freedom to deviate is directly related to one's class position, explicitly asserting that males are freer to deviate than females, and that males are freest to deviate in the highest classes. To test their hypothesis, Hagan et al. (1985) compared the effect of gender on delinquency controlling for parental controls and risk among four neo-Marxian class categories: employer, managerial, working, and surplus classes (Wright 1978; Wright et al., 1982). Four questions were asked about only the head of the household to determine the class category in which the respondent belongs. Employers were those working for themselves and had others working for or paid by them. Managers were full time workers who worked for someone else and supervised others. Workers were those working full time but did not work for themselves, did not supervise others, and did not have others working for them. Finally,



the surplus category comprised those not working full time. In this study, patriarchy was assumed to be present in the employer and managerial classes and absent in the working and surplus classes, but patriarchy itself was never measured. Hagan et al.'s (1985) finding in this initial study was that the gender effect in the employer class differed most from the gender effect in other classes.

A possible counterargument in the literature (Coser & Coser, 1974; Coser, 1985), however, emphasized the need to look at the relative difference between the occupational power of both the father and mother within a household. Hagan's second test of power-control theory (Hagan et al., 1987) incorporated some of these counterarguments and introduced a more deliberate measure of patriarchy. In this second test, Hagan measured fathers' occupational authority relative to mothers' occupational authority in order to determine empirically whether a family was balanced or unbalanced. Similar to the measures used in the first (1985) study, Hagan et al. (1987) asked questions about whether the individual supervised, or was supervised by, others in the workplace. In the second study, however, these questions were extended to both husband and wife rather than limited to only the head of household. Responses to these questions produced what Hagan et al. (1987) referred to as a "Dahrendorfian model of family class relations." The relative occupational authority measure, or "occupational patriarchy," separated families into six categories, which were subsequently designated as balanced or unbalanced. Balanced families included: upper command class (both wife and husband have occupational authority), upper obey class (both wife and husband both have no authority), and lower obey class (wife not employed and husband has no occupational authority).

Female-headed households (wife has occupational authority and husband has no authority) and male-headed households (wife has no occupational authority or is unemployed and husband commands) were considered unbalanced or “patriarchal.”

Hagan et al. (1987) found that the gender effect on delinquency, controlling for parental controls and risks, was larger in patriarchal families than in balanced families. In other words, males from patriarchal families were involved in significantly more delinquency than females within patriarchal families, while males and females in balanced families were not significantly different in their involvement in delinquency.

Most of Hagan’s subsequent tests of power-control theory have operationalized the concept of occupational patriarchy using measures identical to or conceptually indistinct from those used in the 1987 test of the theory (Hagan, 1990; Hagan et al., 1988; Hagan et al., 2004; Hagan and Kay, 1990; McCarthy et al., 1999). Moreover, a handful of studies conducted by other researchers have also adopted measures identical to those used in the Hagan et al. (1987) study (Singer and Levine, 1988; Grasmick et al., 1996; Blackwell, 2000; Blackwell et al., 2002; Blackwell and Piquero, 2005).

Other researchers attempting to test power-control theory have not always operationalized patriarchy in a manner consistent with Hagan’s own practices. In one early test of the theory, Hill and Atkinson (1988) analyzed gender differences in the effects of parents’ instrumental and relational controls but neglected to examine these relationships within the context of patriarchy or even economic class. Leiber and Wacker (1997), in a test of power-control theory that focused on delinquency among children of single mothers, used an index of mother’s education and employment status combined

with neighborhood socioeconomic status as a proxy for mother's power. Bates et al. (2003) substituted a measure of attitudinal patriarchy, assessing the degree of adherence to traditional sex role beliefs, in the absence of a measure of occupational patriarchy<sup>1</sup> Even Hagan (Hagan et al., 1988; Hagan et al., 1993) himself has deviated from his own established measure of occupational patriarchy in some of his research, substituting instead a measure of "marital power" based on a question about who in the family decides whether or not the wife works.

Additional studies that test power-control theory offer closer approximations of the occupational patriarchy measure advocated by Hagan et al. (1987) but still fall somewhat short (Jensen and Thompson, 1990; Morash and Chesney-Lind, 1991; Avakame, 1997; Finckenauer et al., 1998; Uggen, 2000; Blackwell and Reed, 2003; Hadjar et al., 2007). Rather than questioning respondents on whether or not they supervise or are supervised by others in the workplace, several studies employ a survey item that simply elicits the respondents' occupation, which is then classified into one of several categories consistent with the neo-Marxist framework used by Hagan et al. (1985). Occupations in the employer and manager categories are assumed to be "with authority" and those in the worker and surplus categories are assumed to be "without authority." Occupational patriarchy is then estimated on the basis of similarity or difference in the categorization of the occupations of husbands relative to wives (but see Uggen, 2000 for an exception). Although these studies make a greater effort to assess relative workplace authority for husbands and wives, the means by which authority is

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<sup>1</sup> Grasmick et al. (1996) also incorporated attitudinal patriarchy into their power-control model but retained the occupational patriarchy measure used by Hagan et al. (1987).

determined leaves open the possibility of error. Occupational titles can be deceiving, and an occupation that one researcher designates as “with authority” another may designate as “without authority.”

Given the variability with which the concept of patriarchy has been operationalized in tests of power-control theory, it is not surprising that the results of these tests have been quite mixed. Although Hagan’s own research has produced considerable support for the theory over the years, the results of other tests of the theory have not been as successful, even among those using measures of occupational patriarchy identical to those advocated by Hagan. For example, Singer and Levine (1988) found that gender differences in controls, risk preferences, and delinquency are all greater, rather than reduced as the theory predicts, in balanced households. Moreover, studies by Blackwell (2000; Blackwell et al., 2002; Blackwell and Piquero, 2005), using different samples, failed to find any statistically significant differences between more and less patriarchal households in the gender effect on delinquency when power-control variables were estimated in the models tested.

It is important to note that the measure of patriarchy used in all of these tests of power-control theory focuses solely on conventional ideas of household production and paid employment in order to label a family as more or less patriarchal. Under a more patriarchal family, the breadwinning father and homemaker mother are intended to illustrate an imbalance of power, while less patriarchal families are described as more balanced in power as a result of equal occupational authority between the mother and father. Walby (1990) identifies the setting for this type of gender relations as private

patriarchy. However, Walby also acknowledges the existence of public patriarchy. Public patriarchy expresses the perpetuation of gender bias through institutional structures at the macro-level such as education, employment, and the government. Differing from private patriarchy, this type of oppression allows women to join the public sphere, but maintains power and control over females through various practices, such as subordination and segregation. Moreover, Walby (1990) makes a persuasive argument that contemporary society has been shifting from private patriarchy to public patriarchy. Unfortunately, none of the extant tests of power-control theory attempt to measure patriarchy in its public form. In Hagan's more recent work, he acknowledges that private patriarchy is now fairly rare in Western families, and uses that argument to account for a persistent gender difference in delinquency even within less patriarchal families. Nevertheless, he does not speculate on whether private patriarchy has been replaced by public patriarchy (Hagan et al., 2004). As a result, he never conceptualizes patriarchy beyond the family setting in power-control theory, and thus misses the opportunity to incorporate measures of public patriarchy at a macro level of analysis.

Public patriarchy, parallel to private patriarchy, influences the controls and risks placed on individuals differently for males and females. Public patriarchy does not oppress women by keeping them in the household as with forms of private patriarchy; access is given to the public sphere, yet is still oppressive through societal constructions (i.e. unequal pay in employment or limited access to higher education). It is the inequities found in the public sphere that carry into the gender roles placed on adolescents in the home. Perhaps the weak findings in previous studies (Singer &

Levine, 1988; Blackwell, 2000; Blackwell et al., 2002; Blackwell & Piquero, 2005) may be a failure to recognize the role that public patriarchy may play in the raising of children.

Power-control theory currently lacks any measurement of public patriarchy and could be improved by including such measures. Walby (1990) emphasizes public patriarchy as an integral part of the conceptualization of patriarchy, which is the foundation of power-control theory. Outside of tests of power-control theory, other studies of gender and crime (Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008; Atwell, 2002; Heimer, 2000; Steffensmeier & Haynie, 2000; DeWees & Parker, 2003) have used measures that distinguish between private and public patriarchy. For example, private patriarchy has been measured at the macro level in these studies using the Traditional Family Index (percentage of families where the husband works, while the wife does not; percentage of married families with children) and Family Unpaid Work Index (percentage of women working full-time with no income; percentage of employed females who are unpaid family workers) (Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008). In contrast, public patriarchy has been measured at the macro level in these studies as the Income Inequality Index (ratio of men to women with bachelor's or higher degree; ratio of men to women in professional occupations), the percentage of women working part-time, and the percentage of women below the poverty line. Measures such as these have been found to have influence on female crime rates, even when controlling for measures of private patriarchy (Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008).

### *The Present Study*

The review of the literature on power-control theory has revealed some weaknesses in the measurement of patriarchy and the role it plays in accounting for gender differences in delinquency. Although patriarchy has been measured in a variety of ways in the extant research, all of these measures have the commonality that they assume that only private patriarchy, the oppression of women within the family, has an impact on the way sons and daughters are raised. None has considered the impact of public patriarchy, at the community level, on gender differences in childrearing and delinquency. The present study investigates the extent to which public patriarchy plays a role in explaining gender differences in delinquency. Specifically, the study tests two alternative models of power-control theory. The first model (see Figure 1) operationalizes private patriarchy at the family level in a manner consistent with extant tests of the theory. This model is then compared with the second model (see Figure 2), a public patriarchy model that operationalizes patriarchy at the community level and links it to childrearing processes and delinquency at the family level. It is hypothesized that the public patriarchy model of power-control theory will provide a more robust explanation of gender differences in delinquency than the private patriarchy model alone.

Figure 1. Private Patriarchy Conceptual Model

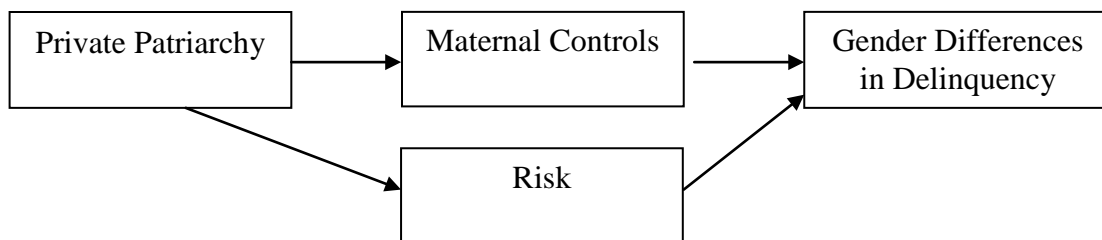
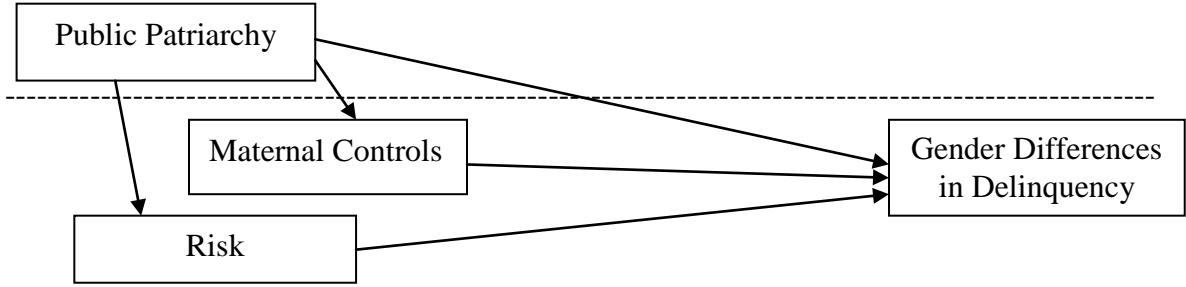


Figure 1 represents the basic elements of Hagan's power-control theory using measures of private patriarchy. It illustrates that occupational patriarchy at the family level (private patriarchy) affects the gender difference in delinquency both directly and indirectly through risk and maternal control factors. As illustrated, patriarchy measured through occupational authority between the mother and father impacts the level of controls placed on sons and daughters. In more patriarchal families, greater controls are put on daughters and they are raised to take fewer risks. It is this difference in child-rearing that leads to a greater gender gap in delinquency. In less patriarchal families or more balanced families, similar controls are placed on sons and daughters. They also have more equal risk preferences and risk perception leading to a narrower gender gap in delinquency. Alternatively, Figure 2 demonstrates a new model that includes a community level measure of public patriarchy. In this conceptual model, patriarchy measured at the census tract level will, similar to the private patriarchy model, directly and indirectly affect the gender difference in delinquency through maternal controls and risk factors. A daughter raised in a more patriarchal community will be taught to take fewer risks and given fewer opportunities for delinquency with greater controls placed upon her; alternatively, her male counterpart will be raised very differently. Sons and daughters raised in less patriarchal communities will be more equally controlled and given more equal opportunities to offend.



Figure 2. Public Patriarchy Conceptual Model



Based on the work of Walby (1990), including community characteristics that reflect public patriarchy in the power-control model is crucial when looking at gender inequities. Power-control theory must take a more holistic approach to the fact that patriarchy operates at not only the individual level but at the community level as well. It may be that the lack of support in previous tests of the theory is due to the need for measures of public patriarchy. For that reason, this study compares a private patriarchy model of power-control with a public patriarchy model of power-control to further explore the ways in which patriarchy might account for gender differences in delinquency.

## Chapter 3

### Method

#### *Sample and Procedure*

The analyses in this study are based on data gathered for a cross-sectional study designed to examine delinquency among students in a middle school and high school in Largo, Florida in 1998. In the middle school, the survey was administered in all social studies classes, a required course for all students in the school. During the administration of the survey, one researcher read the questions aloud, and a second researcher assisted as needed while the students marked their responses on the questionnaire. A total of 1,043 surveys were completed by these middle school students, representing 81% of the students enrolled in the school. Non-response was due mainly to absences on the day of survey administration; very few parents actively withheld consent for their children to participate, and few students declined to participate after passive parental consent was secured.

In the high school, the survey was self-administered in 30 randomly selected third-period classrooms. The third period was chosen because more classes were taught during this period, affording a greater chance of representation of the entire student body. A total of 621 surveys were completed by the high school students, representing 79% of

those enrolled in the randomly selected classrooms. Again, non-response was due largely to absences on the day of survey administration.

The analyses in the present study utilize a subsample from the original data collection effort. The private patriarchy model requires the sample to be reduced to those students living in two-parent (mother/father, mother/stepfather, father/stepmother) households. This restriction is necessary in order to assess the occupational authority of the father relative to that of the mother. This subsample, comprising 1,058 middle and high school students, is further subdivided into those who can be classified as “more patriarchal” and those who can be classified as “less patriarchal” households. Missing data on variables used to determine the private patriarchy classification further eliminated cases from the final sample. Additionally, the public patriarchy model required another criterion for inclusion in the sample. Data from individual students had to be linked to macro-level data in the census tracts in which these students lived. In the self-report survey, students were asked to report the names of the two streets that formed the intersection closest to their home. Of the 1,674 students in the original sample, 1,188 responded with information that allowed them to be geo-coded. However, in order to compare the private and public patriarchy models using the same subjects, the final sample had to include only those geo-coded individuals residing in two-parent families that could be classified into more or less patriarchal families. Once missing data on variables in the analysis were taken into consideration, 485 cases were usable for both the full private and public patriarchy models. Table 1 provides descriptive statistics of the sample.

Table 1. Description of the Sample

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	48.7%
Female	51.3%
<b>Type of School</b>	
Middle School	62.7%
High School	36.3%
<b>Race</b>	
White	77.7%
Black	11.6%
Hispanic	4.1%
Asian	3.2%
Other	3.9%
<b>Avg. Age</b>	13.72 yrs.
<b>Delinquency</b>	
Total	59.8%
Vandalism	25.4%
Stole a backpack	11.9%
Petty theft	17.5%
Grand theft	6.4%
Hit someone intentionally	38.7%

With the large drop in sample size, it is dually important to mention some highlights of the sample that were omitted. While there was still more middle school kids overall in the sample omitted, a number of high school students were part of this sample. Additionally, a significant number of the students eliminated from the sample were delinquent. Although losing a large number of the students who are delinquent could be

problematic by losing variation and/or biasing the results, more than half of the sample was still labeled delinquent lending sufficient variation in the sample.

### *Measurement of Variables*

Measurements of the variables are described below in detail. Gender is coded as male = 0 or female = 1, and is referred to as *female* in the models.

The sample was divided into more and less patriarchal groups based on two different ways of measuring patriarchy. First, the sample was split into more and less patriarchal groups using a measure of private patriarchy and second using a measure of public patriarchy. To operationalize *private patriarchy*, an initial survey question asked students to describe separately the main jobs of their fathers and mothers in terms of whether or not they supervised others, had others supervising them, or were not employed. To be classified as residing in a more patriarchal family, the father had to (a) have an authority position over others, with the mother either not having authority or no job at all, or (b) have a job with no authority, with the mother having no job. To be classified as residing in a less patriarchal family, both parents had to exhibit equal levels of: (a) authority, (b) lack of authority, or (c) unemployment.

To classify the sample as residing in a more or less patriarchal community using the *public patriarchy* concept, data were collected from the Pinellas County Census (2000). Geo-coding was utilized to match the sample to census tracts, with respondents in the final sample residing in a total of 71 different tracts. Three measures were used: 1) the percentage of females living below the poverty level (reverse coded), 2) the ratio of men to women aged 25 or older with a bachelor's or higher degree, and 3) the ratio of

men to women in management and professional occupations (see Parker & Reckdenwald, 2008). Factor analysis was used to create a scale and the factor scores were saved (see Appendix A). To distinguish students residing in the more patriarchal tracts (coded as 1) from those residing in less patriarchal tracts (coded as 0), the median on each of the three variables was used as a cut-point separating the two groups.

*Maternal control*<sup>2</sup> is a scale that incorporates aspects of both relational and instrumental control (see Appendix A). Relational controls by mother were assessed through a semantic differential technique that asked respondents to rate, on a scale of 1 to 6, the degree to which they could talk to their mother, were trusted by their mother, could ask their mother for advice, received praise from their mother, and wanted to be like their mother. Instrumental controls by mother were evaluated by eliciting the degree to which the respondent reported that their mother knows both their whereabouts and with whom they spend time (both reverse coded). Items comprising the maternal control scale were standardized prior to scaling and factors were saved. Appendix A reports the results of exploratory factor analyses on the construction of the maternal control scale. All of the variables within the scale loaded highly, ranging from .537 - .816, well above standard acceptable loadings. Furthermore, this scale had an eigenvalue of 3.48, with Cronbach's alpha being at least 0.70 ( $\alpha = .83$ ). Higher scores on the maternal control variable indicate greater control.

*Risk preference* is operationalized by four items that measure impulsivity and attraction to risk: sometimes I will take a risk just for the fun of it, I test myself every

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<sup>2</sup> A scale for paternal control was created similar to maternal control; however, it was omitted from the final model due to multicollinearity with the maternal control variable.

now and then by doing something risky, I act on the spur of the moment without stopping to think, and I often do whatever brings me pleasure here and now. Responses to these four items were combined into an additive scale. The results of an exploratory factor analysis of this scale are reported in Appendix A. The risk preference scale met all acceptable criterion, with variables load scores ranging from .594 - .786 (Eigenvalue = 2.17;  $\alpha = .71$ ). Higher scores on the risk preference variable indicate greater perception of risk.

*Risk perception* is measured as the degree to which one believes he/she would get caught by the police if they committed certain delinquent acts: skipping school, stealing, hitting someone intentionally, and using marijuana. Responses to these four items were combined into an additive scale. The results of an exploratory factor analysis of this scale are reported in Appendix A. The risk perception scale met all acceptable criterion, with variables load scores ranging from .742 - .833 (Eigenvalue = 2.49;  $\alpha = .80$ ). Higher scores on the risk perception variable indicate greater preference for risk.

*Delinquency* is measured by five observed variables in the past twelve months: stolen a student's backpack/lunch money, stolen other things worth \$50 or less, stolen other things worth more than \$50, damaged or destroyed property, and hit someone with the intention of hurting them. These measures of "common" delinquency (Hagan et al., 1985) are theoretically consistent with the initial test of power-control theory. Responses to these five items were then converted to a dichotomous variable, coded as 1 = having committed any number of delinquent acts specified and 0 = having committed none of

these delinquent acts. This process was used to accommodate and adjust for several outliers that were skewing the data.

### *Analytic Plan*

Latent constructs for the final model consisted of gender, maternal control, risk perception, and risk preference. Using the latent constructs, logistic regression was employed for each family and community type (more patriarchal and less patriarchal), first using a measure of private patriarchy and then using a measure of public patriarchy to account for gender differences in delinquency. In order to determine when the model estimates were significantly different, a z-test was performed between estimates for gender as well as for all latent power-control measures (Knoke, Bohrnstedt, & Mee, 2002). Coefficients from the less and more patriarchal models were examined through these calculations to determine significant differences. From these two models, comparisons can be made to conclude whether or not a public patriarchy model better explains the gender difference in crime, as opposed to the traditional private patriarchy model.



## Chapter 4

### Results

#### *Private Patriarchy Model*

Of the 485 cases in the final sample, 330 of the youths were categorized as belonging to a less patriarchal family and 155 resided in a more patriarchal family when private patriarchy was used as the measure of patriarchy. Within each group, there were nearly equal numbers of females and males. Also, a majority of both groups consisted of middle school students, with an average age of 13.9 years old in the less patriarchal sample and 13.7 years old in the more patriarchal sample. Descriptive and bivariate statistics given in Table 2 and 3 illustrate the differences in the more and less patriarchal groups. The less patriarchal group indicates higher mean levels of delinquency (mean = .620) than the more patriarchal group (mean = .571), but this difference is not statistically significant. Moreover, contrary to the predictions of power-control theory, gender is significantly correlated with delinquency in less patriarchal families ( $r = -.252$ ) but not in more patriarchal families ( $r = -.118$ ). In fact, there are no significant gender differences in the maternal control, risk perception, and risk preference variables among those in the more patriarchal group, whereas in the less patriarchal group, males are more likely than females to report weaker maternal controls, lower perceptions of risk, and greater

preference for risk. However, when gender is not held constant, delinquency is greater among those who indicate higher preference for risk and fewer perceptions of risk within both the less and more patriarchal groups. Additionally, lower maternal control is associated with higher likelihood of delinquency, but only for those in less patriarchal families. Maternal control is also significantly related to risk preference and risk perception in both the more and less patriarchal samples. These findings indicate that regardless the type of patriarchal influence, the stronger maternal control, the more the individual has a negative perception of risk and the less likely he/she will be involved in risky behavior.

Table 2. *Correlations of Variables Included in Final Private Patriarchy Model – Less Patriarchal Sample (N=330)*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Gender</b>	---				
<b>2. Delinquency</b>	-.252**	---			
<b>3. Maternal Control</b>	.108*	-.275**	---		
<b>4. Risk Perception</b>	.160**	-.353**	.274**	---	
<b>5. Risk Preference</b>	-.137*	.367**	-.392**	-.388**	---
<b>Mean</b>	.501	.620	.022	-.023	-.007
<b>S.D.</b>	.500	.486	.986	1.022	.963

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

Table 3. *Correlations of Variables Included in Final Private Patriarchy Model – More Patriarchal Sample (N=155)*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Gender</b>	---				
<b>2. Delinquency</b>	-.118	---			
<b>3. Maternal Control</b>	-.014	-.137	---		
<b>4. Risk Perception</b>	.004	-.279**	.327**	---	
<b>5. Risk Preference</b>	-.072	.320**	-.199*	-.350**	---
<b>Mean</b>	.484	.571	-.041	.031	.294
<b>S.D.</b>	.501	.496	.915	.925	.457

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

In an effort to more fully understand these relationships, binary logistic regression was used to examine the extent to which the control and risk variables from power-control theory mediated the effect of gender on delinquency. If power-control theory is a valid explanation of gender differences in delinquency, then the gender effect on delinquency will be stronger in more than in less patriarchal families. Further, it is expected that the gender effect will be reduced for both more and less patriarchal families when the control and risk variables are introduced into the model; however, the reduction will be more pronounced in the less patriarchal than in the more patriarchal group. As illustrated in Table 4, Equation 1 is the base model that includes only the variable female using measures of private patriarchy as the selection variable. Consistent with the bivariate analysis in Tables 2 and 3, only the less patriarchal sample shows a significant impact of gender on delinquency, with females having 1.027 lower log-odds of being delinquent than males. Contrary to power-control theory's predictions, males and females are equally likely to be delinquent in more patriarchal families. A z-test for difference in the log-odds of females being delinquent between more and less patriarchal families ( $z = -1.644$ ) indicates that the difference between the two groups in the effect of

gender on delinquency just misses significance at the .05 level. As a result, when patriarchy is measured in terms of relative occupational authority at the family level, gender differences in delinquency are greater rather than smaller in less patriarchal families, and the impact of gender is somewhat greater (although not significantly so) in less than in more patriarchal families.

Despite these unexpected findings, it remains instructive to examine the effect of adding control and risk variables to these models, as demonstrated in Equation 2 in Table 4. In the less patriarchal model, the log-odds of females being delinquent is reduced from -1.027 to -.897, indicating that maternal control, risk perception, and risk preference partially mediate the gender effect on delinquency. Further, lower maternal controls, lower perceptions of risk, and higher preferences for risk all contribute to the probability of being delinquent when gender is held constant. Nevertheless, the gender effect on the probability of being delinquent is not completely eliminated when control and risk variables are included in the model, indicating that power-control theory cannot completely explain gender differences in delinquency even in less patriarchal families. Although there was no difference between males and females in the probability of being delinquent in the more patriarchal sample to account for, the model is presented for heuristic purposes. When maternal control and the risk variables are added to the model with gender, gender remains a non-significant predictor of delinquency, as does maternal control. However, lower perceptions of risk and higher preference for risk are both associated with a higher probability of delinquency within the more patriarchal sample, as power-control theory would predict.

Table 4. Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Probabilities for Power-Control Theory Latent Constructs/Gender and Delinquency in Private Patriarchy Model

Variable	Less Patriarchal			More Patriarchal			Z-Score
	Log-Odds	SE	Odds Ratio	Log-Odds	SE	Odds Ratio	
<b>Equation 1</b>							
Female	<b>-1.027***</b>	.221	.358	<b>-.397</b>	.313	.672	<b>-1.644 NS</b>
Constant	.848	.187	2.334	.535	.245	1.707	
N		375			170		
-2LL		477.566			229.421		
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		.089			.013		
<b>Equation 2</b>							
Female	<b>-.897**</b>	.262	.408	<b>-.464</b>	.357	.629	<b>-.977 NS</b>
Mat. Cont.	<b>-.316*</b>	.151	.729	<b>-.076</b>	.191	.927	<b>-.986 NS</b>
Risk Perc.	<b>-.562***</b>	.148	.570	<b>-.509*</b>	.235	.601	<b>-.191 NS</b>
Risk Pref.	<b>.636***</b>	.172	1.889	<b>.689**</b>	.237	1.991	<b>-.181 NS</b>
Constant	.838	.225	2.312	.702	.287	2.018	
N		330			155		
-2LL		355.902			184.694		
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		.317			.199		

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

### *Public Patriarchy Model*

Using the public patriarchy measure, the final sample of 485 students consisted of 309 adolescents residing in communities categorized as less patriarchal and 176 adolescents residing in communities categorized as more patriarchal, both having nearly equal numbers of males and females. Both samples consisted of more middle school students with an average age of 13.8 years old in the less patriarchal sample and 13.7 years old in the more patriarchal sample. Interestingly, and contrary to the findings utilizing the private patriarchy selection criterion, as shown in Tables 5 and 6, those residing in more patriarchal communities show greater mean levels of delinquency (Mean = .629) than those residing in less patriarchal communities (Mean = .588), however, this difference is not statistically significant. Nonetheless, individuals living in both less and more patriarchal communities show significant correlations between gender and delinquency ( $r = -.218$  and  $r = -.193$ , respectively,). Specifically, they both are in the expected direction, such that females are less likely to be delinquent compared to their male counterparts. Females in less patriarchal communities report a stronger perception of getting caught if participating in risky behaviors and less preference for risky behavior. Moreover, the females residing in the less patriarchal communities indicate higher perception of risk than males, while females in more patriarchal communities are not statistically significantly different from males in their perception of risk. Furthermore, delinquent adolescents (without regard to gender) from both community types report fewer maternal controls, lower perception of risk, and greater risk preference than non-delinquents. Maternal controls are also significantly related to both risk preference and

risk perception. Similar to the findings in the private patriarchy model, regardless of the type of patriarchal influence, strong maternal control predicts lower risk preference and higher perception of risky behaviors as negative or having a negative outcome.

Table 5. *Correlations of Variables Included in Final Public Patriarchy Model – Less Patriarchal Sample (N=309)*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Gender</b>	---				
<b>2. Delinquency</b>	-.218**	---			
<b>3. Maternal Control</b>	.085	-.265**	---		
<b>4. Risk Perception</b>	.193**	-.349**	.308**	---	
<b>5. Risk Preference</b>	-.141*	.406*	-.317**	-.378**	---
<b>Mean</b>	.515	.588	-.033	-.030	-.015
<b>S.D.</b>	.500	.493	.996	.969	.960

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

Table 6. *Correlations of Variables Included in Final Public Patriarchy Model – More Patriarchal Sample (N=176)*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Gender</b>	---				
<b>2. Delinquency</b>	-.193**	---			
<b>3. Maternal Control</b>	.035	-.156*	---		
<b>4. Risk Perception</b>	-.025	-.296**	.251**	---	
<b>5. Risk Preference</b>	-.070	.240**	-.353**	-.372**	---
<b>Mean</b>	.496	.629	-.085	-.048	.016
<b>S.D.</b>	.501	.484	1.016	1.003	.969

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

Since males are significantly more likely to be delinquent than females in both types of communities, it is appropriate to explore the degree to which variables from power-control theory mediate those gender differences using a multivariate logistic regression technique. Again, it is expected that the gender effect on delinquency will decrease when the maternal control, risk perception, and risk preference variables are

added to the basic model. Equation 1 in Table 7, in which delinquency is regressed on only the gender variable, demonstrates that females living in less patriarchal neighborhoods have .885 lower log-odds of being delinquent than males, while females residing in more patriarchal neighborhoods have .705 lower log-odds of being delinquent than males. Contrary to theoretical expectations, though, the gender gap in delinquency is wider in the less than in the more patriarchal communities. Equation 2, in which the control and risk variables are incorporated, demonstrates that the gender effect on delinquency is indeed mediated by the power-control variables, but only in the less patriarchal communities, where the log-odds of females being delinquent decreases from -.885 to -.692. On the other hand, in the more patriarchal communities, once maternal controls, risk perception, and risk preference are added to the model, the log-odds of females being delinquent actually increases from -.705 to -.918. In the more patriarchal model, then, the power-control variables demonstrate a suppression effect rather than a mediating effect on the gender-delinquency relationship. Despite the difference between the less and more patriarchal samples in the way the power-control variables operate on the gender-delinquency relationship, the difference in the gender effect across the two models is not statistically significant ( $z = .511$ ).



Table 7. Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Probabilities for Power-Control Theory Latent Constructs/Gender and Delinquency in Public Patriarchy Model

Variable	Less Patriarchal			More Patriarchal			Z-Score
	Log-Odds	SE	Odds Ratio (O.R.)	Log-Odds	SE	Odds Ratio	
<b>Equation 1</b>							
Female	<b>-.885***</b>	.223	.413	<b>-.705*</b>	.303	.494	<b>-.478 NS</b>
Constant	.767***	.186	2.153	1.018	.239	2.767	
N		348			197		
-2LL		458.436			251.019		
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		.061			.045		
<b>Equation 2</b>							
Female	<b>-.692**</b>	.268	.501	<b>-.918**</b>	.352	.339	<b>.511 NS</b>
Mat. Cont.	-.273	.146	.761	-.141	.203	.868	-.528 NS
Risk Perc.	<b>-.508***</b>	.159	.602	<b>-.635**</b>	.205	.530	.490 NS
Risk Pref.	.839***	.178	2.314	.360	.225	1.434	1.67 NS
Constant	.743	.227	2.102	1.196	.291	3.306	
N		309			176		
-2LL		338.089			200.707		
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		.319			.208		

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

Examination of both models shows more support for power-control theory when patriarchy is measured at the public or community level rather than at the private or

family level; however, this support is limited. Maternal controls are not significant in either the more or less patriarchal sample and moreover, none of the z-tests indicate significant differences between the more and less patriarchal communities. Further discussion of these results is presented in the next chapter.

## Chapter 5

### Discussion and Conclusion

Gender differences in delinquency are evident across a wide spectrum of criminological research. Hagan's power-control theory was designed specifically to account for this gender difference. However, the evidence in support of the power-control model has been modest at best. At the foundation of the power-control explanation of gender differences in delinquency is the concept of patriarchy. Specifically, children reared in homes where the father holds a position of occupational authority, while the mother does not, is considered a more patriarchal family environment. This difference in occupational authority is translated into varying parental controls and risk ideations for sons and daughters. In this family type, power-control theory predicts a greater gap in delinquency between sons and daughters due to differential controls, risk perception, and risk preference. Contrarily, families with parents who have equal authority in their jobs are considered less patriarchal, producing reduced gender differences in controls and risky behavior. Whereas Hagan's own research has demonstrated support for power-control theory, others who have attempted to replicate his studies have failed.

This study suggests that patriarchy, as the pillar of power-control theory, is found not only at the family level, but also at the community level. Sylvia Walby (1990)

conceptualizes these two forms of patriarchy as private and public. Private patriarchy is described as oppression of females at the individual level within the family. On the other hand, public patriarchy is considered to be oppression at the community level through unequal employment opportunities or state institutions. Power-control theory does take into consideration private patriarchy, but does not consider public patriarchy in its model. Conceivably, the lack of support in previous studies could be a result of the exclusion of public patriarchy measures.

The current study compared a traditional, private patriarchal model of power-control theory to a model which used public patriarchal measures to delineate between more and less patriarchal influences on gender differences in crime among adolescents. Although no significant gender differences were found between more and less patriarchal influences in either the private or public patriarchal model, there were a number of significant and insignificant paths within each model and at various levels of analysis worth discussing.

Within the private patriarchy model, bivariate analysis illustrated a strong correlation between gender and delinquency in less patriarchal families; however, the more patriarchal sample showed an insignificant correlation between gender and delinquency. There was also a lack of correlation between delinquency and risk/control variables in the more patriarchal sample. Multivariate analysis shows similar results; in the private patriarchy model, there is only a significant relationship between gender and delinquency in the less patriarchal family types, while an insignificant relationship was

found in the more patriarchal sample. Furthermore, there was no significant difference between the two samples' gender coefficients using measures of private patriarchy.

A primary reason for these findings could be a result of the final sample size. Once the measures were determined and missing variables were accounted for in the analysis, the sample size was reduced from 1,674 cases to 485 cases total. After implementation of the more and less patriarchal standards, further reduction in the sample sizes could have affected the outcomes, especially given the disparity in the distribution of cases in regards to more and less patriarchal samples. Specifically, the sample size for the more patriarchal sample is drastically smaller than the less patriarchal sample size. Walby (1990) explains that there is a shift in modern society from private to public patriarchy. Therefore, relatively low numbers of students being categorized as more patriarchal in the private model is expected, but could be detrimental to the analysis in terms of finding significant results. Furthermore, with only about a fourth of the sample being used in the models, there are issues with generalizability. It is possible that those who answered the questions to the surveys that were in the final model are unique or have something in common. Also, with the survey being administered within schools, adolescents who may be absent from school for a number of reasons are not being represented. For instance, all of the kids who may be the most delinquent, such as students who are truant, those who may have dropped out of school, or even those children who are in juvenile detention centers, are missing from the sample. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize these findings to all adolescents.

Unlike the private patriarchy model, gender differences in delinquency were present in both more and less patriarchal communities when patriarchy was measured at the public level. However, the correlation was stronger in less patriarchal communities than in more patriarchal communities. While this finding is contrary to the power-control theory, it may be explained by the fact that males naturally commit more crimes and in less patriarchal communities where both parents could be working outside the home, there are even fewer controls placed on the children overall, leading to more delinquency. Also, within communities where more equal opportunities are given to women, daughters may be raised to aspire to reach certain goals and in turn are controlled more and have less risk preference.

Another key finding in the model was that maternal control was not a significant predictor of delinquency in both less and more patriarchal communities. Perhaps the explanation for these findings is that when using measures of public patriarchy, maternal control is no longer an appropriate measure when looking at the community level influence on adolescent behavior. The maternal control scale is based at the individual level. If Walby (1990) is correct, then with the shift from private to public patriarchy, maternal control is no longer as influential on gender differences given the oppressive effects of patriarchy would be mostly found in community level variables.

Multivariate analysis did show a significant relationship between gender and delinquency in both more and less patriarchal communities. Unfortunately, using z-score calculations, there was no significant difference found between the two community types. Again, the power-control theory model operates as expected in less patriarchal

communities, but does not in the more patriarchal communities. In fact, the gender difference increases rather than decreases when control/risk variables are incorporated, indicating a suppressor effect. Suppression usually occurs when an independent variable is related to the dependent variable in one direction, but relates to the other independent variable in the opposite direction. In this particular model, females are less likely to be delinquent (negative relationship), but females have a positive relationship with the risk preference variable. Moreover, females have a negative relationship between the other control and risk variables.

Several of the limitations in this study related to the measures and models, in addition to the previously mentioned issue of sample size. The measure of delinquency as a dichotomous variable limited the type of analyses that could be performed as well as the variation. Creating a dichotomous variable was necessary with the data given the low numbers of delinquent adolescents as defined by the scale adapted from Hagan's measure of delinquency. Despite the weakness of the variable, it was important to adhere to Hagan's measure as closely as possible to test power-control theory appropriately; especially given that the focus of the study was to compare the traditional model with another measure of patriarchy. However, future studies could either use larger datasets or find a more appropriate scale to measure common delinquency among adolescents.

Additionally, there was no measure of paternal control in the model. Hagan's model of power-control theory includes this particular measure. A scale for paternal control was created similar to maternal control; however, it was eliminated due to multicollinearity with the maternal control variable. Furthermore, inclusion of the

paternal control measure in the model had no impact on the results compared to the model excluding paternal control. Also, a combined parental control variable was created, but did not meet sufficient eigenvalues to be utilized nor was it suitable for finding key relationships in power-control theory. Specifically, it was most important to measure the difference in maternal control to understand the relationship sought in power-control theory. Maternal control is the variable that illustrates the patriarchal influence in the home and truly uncovers sons and daughters difference in controls and risk. Nevertheless, exclusion of paternal control in the model limits the study in that it does not follow the traditional power-control theory.

Given the results, there are a number of theoretical implications of this study. Although gender is a significant factor in some of the analyses, ultimately there was no gender difference found between individuals or neighborhoods characterized as having more or less patriarchal influences. Even though no gender differences were found in the final model, there is still support for the public patriarchy measure. The models using the public patriarchy measure show more significant paths as predicted in power-control theory, while the private patriarchy models do not.

Regardless of the public or private measures of patriarchy, the study failed to uncover any statistically significant relationships between less and more patriarchal contexts in the gender pattern of delinquency. The gender difference did not vary between more and less patriarchal samples, consistent with other studies (Singer & Levine, 1988; Blackwell, 2000; Blackwell et al., 2002; Blackwell & Piquero, 2005). Patterns of findings were not substantively different between private and public



patriarchy models. Development of a multilevel model could be a more appropriate measure of the influence that public patriarchy has on individual level behavior. Additionally, with the changing of family dynamics, power-control theory must evolve to not only include measures of public patriarchy but also the prevalence of single-parent families, as well as alternative family structures. While a few studies (Hagan et al., 1987; Jensen & Thompson, 1990; Leiber & Wacker, 1997; Morash & Chesney-Lind, 1991) have indeed investigated single-parent households, their findings remain limited to mainly single mother families, used alternative measures to those in traditional power-control theory, and remained inconclusive. Another limitation to the study is not identifying and using siblings to test the models. Using siblings in future studies would be ideal in measuring whether or not the family type or even the community type influenced sons and daughters differently. Specifically, by using siblings in studies, “gender differences in delinquency between siblings within families can be examined” to truly test power-control theory as it is conceptualized (Blackwell & Reed, 2003).

Future studies should take into consideration the fact that the central tenet of power-control theory is the idea of patriarchy and its effect on gender differences in delinquency. Patriarchy influences exist in more aspects of society than simply at the family or individual level. In order to truly assess the effect of patriarchy on gender differences in crime, it should be measured at the community level as well.

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## Appendices



## Appendix A. Factor Loadings for Latent Variables

	Factor Loading	Eigenvalues	Variance	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Maternal Control Scale</b>		3.48	49.7	.83
I can't/can talk to her about anything. <sup>a</sup>	.798			
She never/always trusts me. <sup>a</sup>	.734			
I can never/always ask her for advice. <sup>a</sup>	.816			
She never/always praises me. <sup>a</sup>	.708			
I don't want/want to be the kind of person she is. <sup>a</sup>	.744			
Mother knows where I am when I am not at home. <sup>b</sup>	.537			
Mother knows who I am with when I am not at home. <sup>b</sup>	.546			
<b>Risk Perception<sup>c</sup></b>		2.17	54.2	.71
Skipping school.	.784			
Stealing something.	.764			
Hitting someone with the idea of hurting them.	.594			
Using marijuana.	.786			
<b>Risk Preference<sup>b</sup></b>		2.49	62.3	.80
Sometimes I will take a risk just for the fun of it.	.812			
I test myself every now and then by doing something risky.	.833			
I act on the spur of the moment without stopping to think.	.742			
I often do whatever brings me pleasure here and now.	.767			
<b>Public Patriarchy</b>		1.52	50.6	
Percent of females living below poverty level (<15K)	.738			
Ratio of men to women aged 25 and older with a bachelor's or higher degree	.560			
Ratio of men to women in management and professional occupations	.812			

- a. 6-point Semantic Differential scale  
b. 1= strongly disagree...4= strongly agree.  
c. 1= not at all likely...4= very likely [to get caught by police]