

**Young Adults' Perception of Fathering and the Father-Child Relationship
in the Context of Marital Violence**

by

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Abstract

The current study utilized a qualitative research design, combining grounded theory and thematic analysis, to examine fathering by maritally violent men from the perspective of their young adult children. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty-three, female young adults from one Southeastern university to understand their perceptions of their maritally violent fathers along dimensions such as warmth and responsiveness, engagement and accessibility, and control and abuse. Additionally, we explored how factors such as marital violence dynamics (e.g., physical violence and coercive control) and characteristics of the father (e.g., substance abuse, biological versus nonbiological father) influenced the young adults' perceptions of their fathers and the father-daughter relationship over time. Results suggest that maritally abusive fathers are highly volatile and low in warmth, although their engagement and use of control and abuse varied. Young adults exposed to the highest levels of coercive control reported having fathers who were more volatile, disengaged, and controlling and abusive in contrast to women exposed to the lowest levels of coercive control. Whereas, young adults exposed to no or low levels of coercive control were more likely to have engaged fathers in childhood and less likely to experience abuse or harsh punishments. Possible explanations for these findings are discussed with respect to previous research on fathering and the father-child relationship over time.

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Introduction

Historically, fathers have played an important and unique role in the lives of their children; however, it wasn't until the late twentieth century that social scientists began examining the exact nature of the fathering role in child-rearing and child development (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Since then, the fathering literature has grown tremendously and what it means to be a 'good father' has continuously evolved (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda). Prior to the Industrial Revolution, fathers carried out the role as the family's moral leader. Post-Industrial Revolution, division of household labor and childrearing shifted so that fathers' key role was of financial providers while mothers raised the children (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda). During the 1970's, social scientists and feminist scholars began proposing the importance of the 'nurturing father,' an active parent who invests time and emotional energy into raising his children through building a relationship with them (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda). Theoretical models, such as Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine's (1985) tripartite model of father involvement (hereafter referred to as Lamb & Pleck's tripartite model in keeping with the literature), were developed to further examine the shifting and multifaceted role of fathers. This shift in conceptualization and measurement of fathering and the father-child relationships provides evidence of the positive influence that involved and nurturing fathers can have on their children's development and well-being (Allgood, Becker, & Peterson, 2012; Byrd-Craven, Auer, Granger, & Massey, 2012; Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009; Dick, 2005; Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004; Nielsen, 2014; Morman & Floyd, 2006; Pleck, 1997, 2010, 2012; Tastan, 2013).

Although the positive impact of involved fathers is well documented (Baumrind, 1967; Lamb et al., 1985; Pleck, 1997, 2010, 2012), few empirical studies examine fathering by maritally abusive men (i.e., men who are abusive to their wives or the children's mother) and their relationships with their children (Buckley, Holt, & Whelan, 2007; Cater & Forssell, 2014; Øverlien, 2013, 2014; Peled, 2000). However, parenting styles of maritally abusive men are well documented from a clinical perspective (Bancroft, 2002; Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, Silverman, & Ritchie, 2012). Based on this body of literature, maritally abusive fathers possess many characteristics that create an unhealthy and dysfunctional home environment that is not conducive to healthy child development and adjustment (Bancroft; Bancroft & Silverman; Bancroft et al.; Cater & Forssell; Edleson & Williams, 2007; Harne, 2003; Peled; see Holden & Barker, 2004 for a review). Abusive fathers also interfere in their partners' ability to mother and develop healthy mother-child relationships, which can indirectly and negatively impact child development (Bancroft et al.; Edleson & Williams). Indeed, many children report being afraid of their maritally abusive fathers (Buckley, Holt, & Whelan; Øverlien, 2013, 2014; Peled), which may be further exacerbated by an estimated 40% co-occurrence rate of exposure to domestic violence (DV) and child maltreatment and abuse (Appel & Holden, 1998; Edleson, Mbilinyi, & Shetty, 2003).

The literature on fathering by maritally abusive men is largely clinical or from the perspective of former abused wives or batterers themselves; few studies examine the father-child relationship from the perspective of the child (Dick, 2005). When comparing the former and later bodies of literature, seemingly contradictory descriptions of maritally abusive fathers emerge. The clinical literature portrays maritally abusive fathers as unidimensional and negative, whereas the limited, yet growing body of literature from the children's perspective offers a far

more nuanced and complicated view of maritally abusive fathers (Peled, 1998, 2000; Sternberg et al., 1994). These contradictions may be partially due to clinicians' assumption or findings that maritally abusive fathers are homogenous, which is inconsistent with the empirical literature on male DV perpetrators (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Johnson, 2008). In fact, researchers theorize that different types of DV (e.g., violence that occurs in the context of coercive control or only specific situations) and maritally abusive men have a differential impact on the overall home environment, family dynamics (Haselschwerdt, 2014; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Johnson, 2008), and potentially, the father-child relationship. To address the limitations and contradictions of the current literature, we conducted a qualitative research study to examine fathering and the father-child relationship from the perspective of young adults exposed to father-perpetrated marital violence.

Literature Review

Tripartite Model of Father Involvement

This study is informed by Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine's (1985) original and revised (Pleck, 2010) tripartite model of father involvement as the theoretical lens from which to better understand the father-child relationship in the context of marital violence. The original tripartite model identified three dimensions of the role of fathers, (1) paternal engagement, (2) paternal accessibility, and (3) paternal responsibility (Lamb et al.). The revised conceptualization restructured the original model to include: (1) positive engagement activities, (2) warmth and responsiveness, and (3) control (Pleck, 2010). The reconceptualization sought to provide greater clarity to the operationalization of the original terms in a way that focused on the quality of the father-child relationship rather than the quantifiable amount of time fathers spend with their children (Pleck).

The revised conceptualization of the tripartite model explicitly focuses on the emotional quality of paternal involvement in the father-child relationship (Pleck, 2010). Specifically, one of the biggest changes was in the conceptualization of paternal engagement. Previously, paternal engagement was measured by the total time the father spends with his child, but the revised model emphasizes quality of *positive engagement activities* including interactive father-child leisure (e.g., playing a game or practicing a sport together) and direct child rearing activities (e.g., bathing a child) that promote positive child development and well-being. Warmth and responsiveness refers to the father's sensitivity to the child's needs. Lastly, paternal control includes a range of parenting behaviors that are designed to help the child learn discipline that

include parental monitoring of the child's time and activities (e.g., Internet usage, extracurricular activities), making parental decisions for the child (e.g., limit setting), and through the use of punishments (e.g., timeout, grounding). The tripartite model is often utilized when examining the relationship between fathers and younger children but less so with adolescence and young adults. Additionally, these dimensions of fathering are discussed in a rather static fashion, without taking into consideration how these three dimensions may ebb and flow or change in nature over the course of a child's development.

Changes in the father-child relationship across developmental periods. Researchers have documented that the role of fathers and the father-child relationship changes over time. Specifically, fathers tend to become less involved in their children's lives as their children get older and are seeking more independence (Bulanda, 2004; Nelson et al., 2011). Fathers tend to be more often involved in their child's life in instrumental ways (e.g., economically providing), but young adults retrospectively report that their fathers are at least sometimes involved in expressive ways (e.g., caregiving; Finley & Schwartz, 2006). Despite the decline in fathers' involvement as their children get older, research has shown that fathers still play an important role, and the father-child relationship is important as children move into adolescence and young adulthood (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004; Nielsen, 2014). Father involvement is negatively related to adolescents' internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009) and positively associated with young adult life satisfaction (Allgood, Beckert, & Peterson, 2012). Compared to mothers of young adults, fathers have lower levels of children-reported parental knowledge and lower levels of warmth, but young adults with authoritative fathers (i.e., high in warmth and responsiveness and demandingness; Baumrind, 1967) have the highest levels of parent-child closeness and self-worth and the lowest levels of depression (Nelson et al.). Given

the important role that involved fathers can play in a child's life over time, it is important for researchers to better understand these dimensions of fathering and the father-child relationship over time and into young adulthood, which is lacking in the current body of literature. In addition, the current literature is also missing examination of maritally violent and abusive fathers' parenting styles.

Fathering in the Context of Domestic Violence

Researchers and clinicians have documented that abusive men display characteristics that are not conducive to healthy child development and do not foster strong father-child relationships. Specifically, abusive men have been described or categorized as being angry, authoritarian, controlling, manipulative, unpredictable, and selfish (Bancroft, 2002; Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft et al., 2012; Edleson, Mbilinyi & Shetty, 2003; Edleson & Williams, 2007; Harne, 2003; Holden et al., 1998; Peled, 1998, 2000). Abusive fathers interfere in women's ability to mother their children and interfere in the mother-child relationship (Bancroft, 2002; Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, et al. 2012; Edleson, et al., 2003; Edleson & Williams, 2007; Rothman, Mandel, & Silverman, 2007). For example, abusive fathers tend to be controlling over their wives, denying their right to make parenting decisions (Bancroft, et al.) as well as interfere with mothers' capacities to discipline by undermining them with name calling or verbal abuse in front of their children (Bancroft; Bancroft & Silverman; Bancroft, et al.; Edleson & Williams). In addition, many abused women report needing to alter their parenting styles to align with their abusive husbands when they are present to avoid making them angry, which can then impact the children through these maladaptive mothering strategies (Bancroft; Bancroft & Silverman; Bancroft, et al.).

Although the maritally violent fathering literature is limited, a number of studies and

books have been written on fathering that can be applied to the original and reconceptualized tripartite model of father involvement (Lamb et al, 1985; Pleck, 2010). Therefore, we summarize this literature along the three main dimensions of father involvement– paternal engagement and accessibility, warmth and responsiveness, and control – and conclude with a brief discussion on the co-occurrence of marital violence exposure and child maltreatment.

Engagement and accessibility. Paternal engagement and accessibility refers to the time fathers spend with their children in direct caregiving activities (e.g., bathing, helping with homework) or when fathers are available to spend time with their children (i.e. not at work, but at home; Lamb et al., 1985; Pleck, 2010). Maritally violent fathers tend to be less engaged and accessible and more neglectful of their children compared to nonviolent fathers (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, et al., 2012; Cater & Forssell, 2014; Dick, 2005; Edleson & Williams, 2007; Holden & Ritchie, 1991; Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). For example, Cater and Forssell (2014) found that abusive fathers are less involved in all aspects of parenting as compared to the mothers. Bancroft and his colleagues describe maritally abusive men as selfish parents who only get involved with their children’s activities and interests when it appeals to them and corresponds to their hobbies or interests; these fathers do not actively seek out and build relationships with their children. For example, in a study comparing adult men – maritally abusive and not non-maritally abusive fathers – Dick (2005) found that non-abusive fathers are more accessible when their children need advice. The non-abusive fathers are also more likely than the abusive fathers to be involved in child-rearing activities such as reading, helping with homework, and attending school-related activities.

Warmth and responsiveness. Not only are maritally abusive fathers less engaged and accessible, they are reportedly less warm and responsive (Bancroft & Silverman; Bancroft et al.,

2012; Cater & Forssell, 2014; Dick, 2005; Edleson & Williams, 2007; Worley, Walsh, & Lewis, 2004). Warmth and responsiveness refers to fathers' sensitivity and attentiveness to their children's needs (Pleck, 2010). Abusive fathers reportedly make little effort to care about their children's thoughts, feelings, and emotions than nonviolent fathers (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, et al., 2012; Edleson & Williams, 2007). Both clinicians and the former wives of abusive men describe the parenting style of batterers as emotionally dismissive and authoritarian rather than warm and responsive (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, et al.; Edleson, et al., 2003; Worley, et al.). For example, the men exposed to maritally violent fathers in Dick's study describe their fathers as unloving, rejecting, emotionally distant or unavailable, and not dependable in times of need. Additional studies have documented maritally abusive fathers as unpredictable – sometimes playful and fun to be around, sometimes quick to anger in response to their children's needs (Edleson & Williams, 2007; Harne, 2003; Holden et al, 1998; Peled, 1998). Mothers in Harne's study report that their abusive husbands are quick to anger and often yell or scream at their children when tasks aren't done correctly or quickly enough. Researchers have documented an association between marital abuse and verbal abuse directed towards children when comparing violent versus non-violent fathers (Bancroft, et al., 2012; Edleson & Williams, 2007).

In response to their fathers' low levels of warmth and responsiveness and high levels of anger and unpredictability, children with abusive fathers report feeling anxious and afraid around them because of their quick anger, moodiness, and unpredictability (Buckley, Holt, & Whelan, 2007; Harne, 2003; Øverlien, 2013; Peled, 1998). This unpredictability results in children who withhold their emotions around their fathers, so as not to set off their anger or provoke them in any way (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, Silverman, & Ritchie, 2012; Harne). Children

and adolescents report feeling “on edge” when their fathers are around and describe feeling like they have to walk on eggshells not to incite their fathers’ anger (Harne, 2003; Øverlien, 2013). When alcohol is involved in the maritally violent dynamics, older adolescents report being nervous when their parents drink because alcohol consumption typically fuels the abusive relationship (Buckley, et al., 2007). Children in Øverlien’s (2013) study describe how their fathers threatened to harm them or their mothers if they disclose the violence to others, which increases their fear of their fathers. This concern or fear is common; many DV exposed children report worrying about their parents’ well-being and safety. For example, DeBoard-Lucas and Grych (2011) found that as many as 37.5% of the children in their study are worried one or both of their parents are going to get hurt. Only 15% of their sample indirectly intervened (e.g., called for help), and the remainder of the sample explicitly reported not intervening or calling for help – fearing their father might retaliate against them or their mother (Buckley, Holt, & Whelan, 2007; Øverlien, 2013). Aside from an overall lack of warmth and responsiveness, compounded by anger and irritability, maritally abusive fathers also use controlling and abusive behaviors towards their children.

Control. Paternal control includes a range of parenting behaviors that are designed to keep the child safe as well as help the child learn discipline. Control can include various parenting behaviors and strategies such as, parental monitoring of the child’s time and activities making parental decisions for the child, and through the use of punishments (Nelson, et al., 2011; Pleck, 2010). Although paternal control can serve as a protective factor when used to monitor children’s well-being and safety and when appropriately disciplining a child, high levels of control or intrusive and overly controlling parenting is associated with negative child and adolescent well-being (Barber, 1996, 2002). In general, abusive fathers have been found to be

more controlling of their children than non-abusive fathers (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, et al., 2012). To illustrate how control operates in the father-child relationship, Barber's (1996) recommendations are utilized to make distinctions between psychological and behavioral control. Psychological control is defined as parental behavior or discipline methods that attempts to control a child's psychological and emotional development, whereas behavioral control refers to parental behaviors aimed at controlling or managing the behavior of their child (Barber, 1996). Researchers and clinicians have examined abusive fathers parenting specific to psychological and behavioral control.

Psychological control. Maritally abusive men use a variety of psychologically controlling tactics towards their children (Edleson et al., 2003; Edleson & Williams, 2007; Harne, 2003; Peled, 1998, 2000). For example, abusive fathers often indirectly use their children as pawns to abuse and manipulate the mother (Edleson, et al.; Edleson & Williams; Harne; Peled, 1998, 2000); as many as 73% of batterers reportedly use their children as pawns or weapons both during the relationship with the mother as well as after separation (Mbilinyi, Edleson, Beeman, & Hagemiester, 2002). Buckley and colleagues' (2007) found that some use their children as messengers – forcing them to deliver threats to the mother during visitation since the father does not have direct contact to the mother.

Abusive fathers tend to be coercive and manipulative (Bancroft 2002; Bancroft & Silverman; Bancroft, et al., 2012; Cater & Forssell, 2014; Øverlien, 2013; Peled, 1998), seeing their children as objects who will give them unconditional love (Harne, 2003). The abusers' sense of possessiveness and objectification often plays a role in the use of abuse against the children (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, et al., 2012). Post-separation, the fathers' possessiveness may result in them making their children feel obligated to visit them, spend the

night at their house, or trying to manipulate their children to live with them instead of their mothers as requisites for their love or economic support (Bancroft, et al.). Abusive fathers also attempt to sow seeds of dissention and create family divisions by pitting the children against the mother, or playing favorites with one child, typically a son, in order to manipulate family dynamics and keep control (Bancroft, et al.).

Behavioral control. In addition to psychological control, abusive fathers are more likely to use behavioral control with their children (e.g. harsh parenting and disciplinary methods; Bancroft, 2002; Bancroft et al., 2012; Edleson & Williams, 2007) than non-abusive fathers. Abusive fathers tend to be possessive of their children by controlling with whom their children spend time, mandating they stay at home instead of going out with friends (Bancroft; Bancroft, et al.; Øverlien, 2013), or through excessive monitoring of their private conversations with friends (Øverlien, 2013). For example, the children and adolescents in Øverlien's study report that their abusive fathers monitor their appearance – forcing them to dress in a certain way. Abusive fathers often become very angry with and harshly punish their young children who make age-appropriate mistakes (e.g. wetting the bed) or ridicule their children in front of others. (Bancroft). Maritally abusive fathers are also more likely to employ harsh and punitive physical discipline methods (e.g., corporal punishment) as well as being physically abusive to their children as compared to non-abusive fathers (Bancroft et al., 2012; Dick, 2005; Edleson & Williams, 2007; Harne, 2003; Holden, Barker, Appel, & Hazlewood, 2010; Holden & Ritchie, 1991; Peled, 1998). For example, Holden and Ritchie (1991) found that maritally violent men spank their children more than twice as often as non-violent fathers, and these spankings are often carried out when angry. Similarly, Dick (2005) found that adult men from maritally abusive homes report being spanked and hit more often by their fathers compared to adult men who did not

witness marital violence. The co-occurrence rates for exposure to DV and child abuse are roughly 40%, indicating a strong link between these two forms of maltreatment and a dysfunctional and unhealthy father-child relationship (Appel & Holden, 1998; Edleson, Mbilinyi, & Shetty, 2003).

Children’s perceptions of maritally abusive fathers. In contrast to the largely clinical literature on maritally abusive fathers and few empirical studies from the perspective of former wives of abusive men, studies examining children’s perception of their fathers offered far more complex fathering narratives than what was previously summarized. The clinical literature seems to indicate that children have an overwhelmingly negative view of their fathers (Bancroft; Bancroft & Silverman; Bancroft et al.). Although some children *do* report only negative perceptions of their fathers (Øverlien, 2013, 2014), for many other children, their relationships with their fathers are more complicated by a mixture of positive and negative perceptions (Holden & Barker, 2004; Peled, 1998, 2000; Sternberg et al., 1994). Specifically, these children and young adults see their fathers in two distinct ways – as the “good, loved father” and as the “bad, abusive father” (Peled 1998, 2000). The DV-exposed children in Peled’s study describe how they are afraid of their father but still love and desire closeness to him. Additionally, the children’s and adolescents’ perceptions of their relationships with their maritally abusive fathers can change over time depending on when the abuse occurred and which parent they deemed responsible (Peled, 1998, 2000; Sternberg, Lamb, Guterman, Abbott, & Dawud-Noursi, 2005).

The contrasting narratives of fathering by abusive men and father-child relationships are further complicated by the fact that both the clinical and existing empirical studies have described maritally abusive fathers as a homogenous group, which is inconsistent with the adult DV literature of the past decade (Holden & Barker, 2004; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994;

Johnson, 2008; Perel & Peled, 2008). Theoretical and empirical studies document the distinct couple's dynamics and diverging outcomes for women (and men) who experience coercive controlling violence (often referred to as intimate terrorism) as opposed to situational couple violence (Frye, Manganello, Campbell, Walton-Moss, & Wilt, 2006; Hardesty, Crossman, Haselschwerdt, Raffaelli, Ogolsky, & Johnson, 2015; Johnson, 2008; Johnson & Leone, 2005). Situational couple violence is DV that escalates from situationally-based couple conflict and disagreements that are not rooted in one partner's general desire to control and dominate the other (Johnson). In contrast, coercive controlling violence is rooted in an overarching pattern of manipulation and control where a partner deliberately and strategically restricts the liberties and freedoms of their partner (Johnson). Although the adult DV literature, as a whole, has shifted to examine the context in which DV occurs (i.e., situational versus coercive controlling violence, or coercive control on a continuum), the children's exposure literature has yet to make these explicit distinctions (see Haselschwerdt, 2014 for a review) with the exception of Øverlien's (2013, 2014) Norwegian study that explicitly examines coercive controlling violence. Just as the adult DV literature documents that DV and abusive men are not homogenous, it is likely that maritally violent fathers are not homogenous. Thus, this study begins addressing this disconnect between the adult DV and children's exposure literatures.

The Current Study

The current study makes three core contributions to the general fathering and maritally violent fathering literatures. First, this study examines father-child relationships and the three dimensions of fathering over time – beginning in childhood and continuing through young adulthood. Second, this study adds to the relatively small, empirical body of literature on maritally abusive men as fathers from the perspective of the children. Third, this study makes distinctions in the young adults' reports of marital violence and coercive control to highlight the homogeneity *and* heterogeneity within the category of maritally abusive men, which extends what is known about DV in the adult literature to the less sophisticated children's exposure literature. In conclusion, the present study contributes to the DV and fathering literatures through the use of a qualitative study design to examine the complexity of maritally violent fathers from the perspective of their now young adult children. Two key research questions guide the current study:

1. How do young adults describe their maritally abusive fathers and dimensions of fathering from childhood through the present time?
2. How do young adults' perceptions of marital violence (e.g., levels of physical violence and coercive control) and their fathers' characteristics (e.g., substance abuse, biological versus stepfather) contribute to their descriptions of their fathers and their fathering styles?

Method

This study utilized a qualitative research design and analyses for three key reasons. The strengths of qualitative methods make this the appropriate method to use when little is known about the topic being studied (e.g., exposure to coercive control; Creswell, 2013; Goldberg & Allen, 2015). Qualitative methods are also best used when a large body of research exists with conflicting or contradictory findings that need more in-depth exploration (e.g., impact of DV exposure; Creswell; Goldberg & Allen). Lastly, when studying sensitive topics (e.g., IPV), qualitative methods give an equal voice to the participants which allow them to tell their stories and share their experiences (Goldberg & Allen). Specifically, this study primarily utilized thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), although constant comparative analyses (Charmaz, 2006) – a hallmark of grounded theory – was also used in the initial analysis process that is discussed in the data analysis section.

Participants and Sampling Strategy

Twenty-five participants from one state university in the Southeast United States were recruited and interviewed as a part of a qualitative study (Young Adults Live and Learn) investigating the experiences of young adults exposed to DV. From September 2014 through March 2015, potential participants were recruited through advertisements on campus and in newspapers, emails from instructors, announcements in classes, social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter), and word of mouth. To be eligible to participate, the young adults needed to meet the following criteria: (1) between the ages of 19-25, (2) father or father-like figure (hereafter referred to as father) must have physically hurt their mother on more than one occasion (e.g.

pushed or shoved with force, slapped, punched, kicked, or beat up), and (3) their parents must either still be married, or must have separated or divorced sometime after their 13th birthday. Halfway through recruitment, we adjusted the third inclusion criteria to allow for participants' whose parents had separated after their eighth birthday as all interviewed participants vividly recalled their earliest DV exposure experiences earlier or around this age; thus, their eighth birthday was a modest cutoff for inclusion. The participants interviewed following this decision reported similar ages of first DV exposure unless their mothers married their stepfathers later in life; thus, this criteria remained throughout the duration of the study.

Upon learning of our study, 41 potential participants either emailed or called the research project. The three eligibility questions were sent via email or asked verbally over the phone depending on the nature of initial contact. Of those who initially contacted the project, 26 responded to the eligibility questions and were eligible, 12 responded and were ineligible, and 2 never responded to the eligibility questions and subsequent follow-up attempts. Although it is unknown whether the nonrespondents were eligible or ineligible, we suspect that some may have chosen not to respond if they did not meet the eligibility criteria. After determining the young adults' eligibility, a research team member set up the location and date and time for the interview. Of those eligible to participate, 26 participated in the interview. However, we did not analyze one of the interviews as the participant did not fit the criteria even though she had initially responded affirmatively to the inclusion criteria – bringing the full study sample to 25 participants. This sample size is consistent with the recommended guidelines for more interpretive qualitative study designs (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2013).

Although we attempted to recruit both men and women, we were only able to recruit and interview two male participants. For the purpose of this study, we focused solely on the 23

female participants. These participants are between 19 and 25 years old ($M = 20.4$ years old; $SD = 1.6$ years). The majority of participants identified as White/European American (12) or Black/African American (7) with the remaining participants identifying as biracial (2), Latino/Hispanic (1), or Asian/Asian American (1). Participants had an average of almost two siblings ($M = 1.8$ siblings), with a range of one to five siblings. Eleven participants were first-born children, three were middle children, and eight were the youngest child in their family. Participants' mothers ranged in age from 37 years to 66 years old ($M = 48.9$ years; $SD = 7.4$ years). The majority of mothers (19) reportedly had at least some education beyond high school/GED – some college (6), Associate's degree (4), Bachelor's degree (6), or some graduate school or Master's degree (3). The majority of fathers were the participants' biological father (16), although seven were stepfathers who were described as either their sole father-figure or played a substantial role in their upbringing. The fathers ranged in age from 39 years to 65 years old ($M = 49.3$ years; $SD = 7.2$ years). The majority of fathers (18) reportedly had at least some education beyond high school/GED – some college (7), Associate's degree (5), Bachelor's degree (5), or some graduate school or Master's degree advanced degrees (1). At the time of the interview, 9 of mothers were still married to the participants' father, 12 were divorced, and 2 were separated. Half of the participants reported that their family received at least one type of public assistance support during their childhood or adolescence, such as free or reduced school lunch (9) and food (7), health or child care (5), and/or cash assistance (2). The participants reported coming from a nearly equal distribution of rural (8), urban (7), or suburban (8) communities.

Procedure

Auburn University Institutional Review Board approval was obtained in order to protect

the rights of participants in our study. Additionally, the principal investigator obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in order to protect the collected data from potential subpoenas – an additional step to assure confidentiality. All interviews were conducted in our private, on-campus interview room. Interviews ranged from 48 minutes to 142 minutes, with the average being 88 minutes ($SD = 26$ minutes). Second interviews were conducted with two participants for the purpose of asking follow up questions or asking questions that were accidentally skipped in the initial interview. These two secondary interviews lasted 12 and 24 minutes, respectively.

Prior to beginning the interview, written informed consent was obtained. Based on a review of the DV, DV exposure, and dating violence literatures, we developed a semi-structured interview protocol that guided all of the participant interviews. This interview protocol was then pilot-tested with a young adult who met our study criteria with the exception of living in a different state. She provided feedback on the questions and total interview protocol, which was then incorporated into the final protocol for this study. Consistent with grounded theory methods, questions in the interview protocol were broad with probes to allow for elaboration (see Appendix B). The protocol begins with basic demographic/background questions for the participants, their parents, and their siblings followed by questions pertaining to their community of origin. The remainder of the protocol was broken into three sections: 1) Violence and Abuse (e.g., violence and exposure description, different types of abuse, children's involvement, causes of violence and abuse) 2) The Impact of Abuse on Family Dynamics and Functioning (e.g., family communication, cohesion, and involvement), and 3) Interpersonal Relationships (e.g., peer and romantic). Participants' description and discussion of their fathers and father-like relationship cut across all four of the protocol section, and thus, each full interview was analyzed

for father-young adult specific content.

Interviews were audio-recorded with permission and transcribed verbatim. Participants were assigned pseudonyms to assure confidentiality, which are used in the reporting of the findings. Identifying information in participants' quotes will be altered to protect confidentiality without changing the meaning. Any identifiers linking an interview transcript to a participant are kept separate and only accessible to the research team. Following completion of the interview, participants received \$25, a thank you note for their participation, and a list of campus, local, and national resources such as counseling services and domestic violence hot-line numbers.

Data Analysis

Consistent with grounded theory, data collection and analysis was initially concurrent, but data collection ceased in March while data analysis is ongoing. Multiple analytic steps were taken throughout the analysis process, including memoing, coding, and tabling, that are rooted in both grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006, Creswell, 2013) and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, the final analyses were conducted using a flexible approach to thematic analysis as we became more focused on the participants' descriptions of their fathers and dimensions of fathering as opposed to a theoretical explanation of their father-child relationships (i.e., the goal of grounded theory). Memoing, coding, and tabling are described separately, but we were actively engaged in each of these analytic techniques often simultaneously.

Memoing. Memoing served the purpose of making analytic connections between the raw data and identified themes and categories (Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008). Thus, memoing was an ongoing and core component of the preliminary analyses as we made sense of the data and constantly compared each interview with subsequent interviews. After each interview was conducted and transcribed, all research team members independently wrote a summary memo of

the interview to help us stay grounded in the participant's experience. Part of summary memoing entailed classifying each interview along a coercive control continuum. As we know from the adult DV literature, not all DV is the same, but rather there are different types of DV based on the degree of coercive control (Johnson, 2008). However, much of the research on youth exposure to DV has not distinguished between types of DV, which has been a critique of the literature (Haselschwerdt, 2014). In the early stages of analyses, each team member also classified each participants' reported exposure experiences into either coercive controlling (CCV) or situational couple violence (SCV) as well as a justification for our decision. However, classification between SCV and CCV became more difficult to distinguish for some participants. Thus, after the third interview, we switched to categorizing coercive control along a continuum of zero (no coercive control exposure) to three (high levels of coercive control exposure). This approach proved successful; on only four occasions were there meaningful discrepancies in individual classifications. During weekly meetings, we discussed each of the discrepancies and came to a consensus in our classification. Following the completion of all summary and categorizing memos, the research team concluded that zero and one (no and low coercive control) were classified as SCV and two and three (moderate and high coercive control) were classified as CCV.

In addition to the summary memos and coercive control classification, each research team member wrote a more detailed and focused memo on their assigned topical area (e.g. father-child relationship, peer relationships, or DV and coercive control). In keeping with our constant comparative analyses, after every 4th-5th interview, each team member wrote a memo comparing the analyzed interviews up to that point on their particular topical area until we finished data collection. Each memo was peer reviewed by at least two research team members

and the principle investigator on multiple occasions and comments, edits, and revisions were incorporated into subsequent drafts. The first author created a more targeted topical memo on “the angry father,” which was later transformed into “the volatile father.” This memo marked the initial writing stages for the Results section.

Initial coding. Following the completion of the first 12 comparative memos, each of the transcribed interviews was uploaded into MAXQDA, and the research team began coding the interviews into large segments (hereafter referred to as “bucket codes”). Bucket codes organized sections of the interview based on specific content areas (e.g. DV, father-child relationship, peer relationships, family dynamics). Following this bucket coding stage, each team member independently developed codes specific to DV, coercive control, exposure, and child maltreatment and abuse. The team met as a group and developed a codebook specific to these categories, which was an ongoing and iterative process throughout data collection and analysis. This specific codebook is comprised of the types of physical violence and non-physical abuse and coercive control that the participants’ reported their mother (and father) experiencing (e.g. verbal/emotional abuse, financial abuse); participants’ exposure to and involvement in the DV (e.g. hearing, witnessing, intervening, protecting mom or siblings); and, reported experiences of child abuse and maltreatment (e.g. physical abuse, spanking/corporal punishment, neglect). Each interview was coded by a primary and secondary coders who were blind to the other coders’ work. Any discrepancies in coding were addressed between the coders and in consultation with the principle investigator and entire research team during weekly team meetings.

Tabling. Following the completion of the fathering/father-child relationship memos and the DV and coercive control coding in MAXQDA, we created a table to track each participants’ description of their fathers’ general temperament, warmth and responsiveness, engagement and

accessibility, and control and abuse during three time periods – childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. The first author and principle investigator then independently completed this table and met to discuss any discrepancies within the description of each category and merged the two tables into one that was used for all further analyses. The first author then returned to the memoing process to summarize the patterns and themes identified in the table for each of the dimensions of parenting, which is consistent with final stages of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) description of thematic analysis. These memos were read and edited multiple times by the research team and principle investigator, resulting in revising and rewriting by the first author.

During this memoing and writing process, we began identifying additional themes specific to marital violence exposure and particular father characteristics that were essential to understanding the young adults’ perceptions of their fathers’ parenting. Thus, we created Table 1 in keeping with Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña’s (2014) template-matching technique with the goal of systematically examining the dimensions of parenting for each participant in conjunction with marital violence exposure and their fathers’ characteristics. To further understand and address our second research question, we created Table 2 to examine differences both within and across the coercive control groups according to the fathers’ characteristics and dimensions of fathering. The creation of these tables allowed for a more detailed analysis and greater depth in the memos, which ultimately resulted in the findings for this study and is consistent with the sixth phase of thematic analysis – producing the report.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, or the degree to which qualitative findings are supported by evidence and can be trusted as accurate reflections of participants’ beliefs and experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), was achieved in three ways. First, as previously mentioned, all interview transcripts

were independently coded into MAXQDA by at least two research team members. The first author's initial memoing was peer reviewed by multiple research team members including the principle investigator, and the tabling and template matching were conducted independently by two research team members. There were few discrepancies within the team members coding and interpretations throughout this research process, but any discrepancies were discussed at weekly meetings until arriving at a consensus. Second, the principle investigator thoroughly documented the data collection and analysis process through the use of methodological memos to keep track of any changes throughout the study. Third, trustworthiness was established by utilizing direct quotes from the participants as evidence of the findings.

Results

The young adult women in this study described their fathers and stepfathers (hereafter referred to as fathers) according to their general temperament, warmth and responsiveness, engagement and accessibility, and control and abuse. Although these dimensions of fathering and fathering styles are described separately, they do overlap and influence one another. For example, it does not seem possible to separate out descriptions of fathers' volatility from their use of child abuse and control. However, for the sake of clarity, we describe the three dimensions separately. Before delving into the description of these fathers and their fathering styles, we provide a brief description of the physical violence and coercive control that the young adults reportedly were exposed to as this context cannot be truly disentangled from the participants' memories and recollections of their fathers.

Violence and Coercive Control

The young women in this subsample were exposed to a range of physical violence and coercive controlling behaviors during their early childhood through the present time. Twenty participants were directly exposed by witnessing and/or hearing the physical violence; twenty participants were indirectly exposed by learning about physical violence episodes from a third party, seeing pictures of their mothers' injuries, and/or through a parent being arrested or taken to jail. Most participants ($n = 17$) were exposed directly and indirectly at various points throughout their childhood. The physical violence to which they were exposed ranged in severity and frequency with twelve participants describing exposure to severe (i.e., likely to cause or caused injury) and frequent (i.e., regularly occurring) violence, eight described exposure to mild

and infrequent violence, three each described exposure to severe and infrequent violence and mild and frequent violence. All violence was described as father-perpetrated physical violence with the exception of three mothers who reportedly used violence in self-defense at least once.

All of the participants were categorized along a continuum of zero (*no coercive control exposure*) to three (*high coercive control exposure*): seven participants were categorized as *high coercive control*, eight participants were categorized as *moderate coercive control*, six were categorized as *low coercive control* exposure, and two were categorized as *no coercive control* exposure. Participants from low to high coercive control describe similar domains of coercive controlling behaviors (e.g., financial and psychological abuse), but the intensity, frequency, and explicit intentionality of coercive controlling behaviors differentiated the *high coercive control* group from the others. For example, fathers classified as *high coercive control* were distinct from the other groups in that they made explicit threats (e.g., cook dinner how they want it) and followed through on threats with physical violence. In addition, these fathers reportedly used surveillance and monitoring to track the mothers' time and their whereabouts and explicitly restricted their relationship with others, which was not detailed by the other young adults. Coercive control was associated with physical violence in that those who were identified as being exposed to moderate or high levels of coercive control were also exposed to the most severe and frequent physical violence. However, a few participants ($n = 3$) did not fit this pattern. For example, Briana was categorized as *no coercive control* exposure, yet she recalled being exposed to severe and frequent physical violence.

Maritally Abusive Fathers and Their Fathering Styles

The young adults in this study describe their maritally abusive fathers' parenting styles in regards to their volatility, their warmth and responsiveness, their engagement and accessibility,

as well as their control and abusive behaviors. Other factors such as the fathers' substance abuse issues and mental health disorders influenced the young adults' perceptions of their fathers and their fathers' reactions to them.

Volatile fathers. Twenty young adults described fathers who were highly volatile. Fathers' volatility was described as part of their general temperament as well as how the fathers' emotionally engaged and responded to the participants. Young adults described these fathers as always, easily, or quickly angered and irritated as well as explosive or having an explosive temper. The fathers' volatility was expressed through yelling, screaming, throwing things, verbally lashing out at family members including the participant, and using physical violence. Mary Beth's father was often so volatile that neighbors would call the police. She compared his volatility to a "steam pot lid" blowing up, and explained how he would "just go crazy... Screaming at the top of his lungs for like 4 hours – would not stop – knocking stuff over in the house, destroying stuff. Just (pause) being absurd." Participants recalled how their fathers were unpredictable – often unsure what would trigger or not trigger their anger and violence. Mia explained, "It's really hard to pinpoint what makes him angry. . . . We can't do anything around him because literally anything could make him angry or set him off; neither my mom nor I know what that trigger is."

The role of substance abuse and other mental health issues. Eleven volatile fathers reportedly had substance abuse issues (hereafter referred to as alcohol abuse given the frequency [$n = 12$ alcohol] compared to drug use [$n = 1$ drug]) and six reportedly had additional mental health issues such as depression, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Substance abuse and additional mental health issues were not mutually exclusive; five of the fathers who reportedly had mental health issues also had substance abuse issues. The young adults perceived their

fathers' alcohol use and additional mental health issues as related to their volatility. For example, Taylor recalled how her father was "so sweet when he wasn't drinking." She explained how he was very sweet during the day since he never drank during the day, but he became volatile and violent at night when he began drinking. Although these young adults recalled how their fathers' volatility escalated when abusing substances, they also provided examples of volatility when sober.

Private versus public persona. All of the volatile fathers were reportedly easily angered in the privacy of their homes; however, eight young adults recalled how their fathers frequently demonstrated their ability to contain their volatile personality in public. These fathers were described as "two-faced" by their daughters based on their private versus public behavior. Annie said, "He knows when he has to put on a good face and behave himself, I guess." By being actively involved in their community (e.g., church, school, children's sports), holding respected jobs in the community (e.g., youth pastor, teacher), and by maintaining friendships with community authority figures (e.g., police officers), these fathers were able to keep up their dual personas. For example, Stephanie described her father's public persona as "the 'All-American' kind of father" and explained how others, outside the family, would see him and think, "Wow, he really treats his family really well!" Dual personas also carried over when visitors came to their house or the fathers were meeting the young adults' friends or significant others for the first time. Barbara explained how her father would be "very careful not to do something that would make them think that something was going on" when visitors came over. These examples highlight how at least eight of the fathers were reportedly able to manage or control their anger under certain circumstances in order to uphold their positive images outside the home. Two of these participants, Sarah and Annie, described how this dual persona could also play out while

they interacted with their fathers – how they could switch relatively quickly from funny and goofy to angry and volatile. Annie explained, “There are sometimes when he’s a great dad and he’s happy and acts really goofy and then it just switches to him being just like, really angry.”

Managing their fathers’ volatility. Fathers’ volatility and unpredictability created a very tense and stressful home environment for the young women. Daughters of volatile fathers described being fearful of them due to their unpredictable actions and moods; the unpredictability was very confusing, stressful, and anxiety provoking. Aside from being fearful, many young adults recalled feeling very anxious or tense while at home. In response to their fathers’ volatility, the women recalled “walking on eggshells,” “gauging his mood,” and avoiding home with the goal of trying to contain their fathers’ volatility. Many young adults recalled trying hard to alter their fathers’ behaviors as some believed that they were causing the volatility. Barbara said, “I was always trying to do what he wanted to make him happy and it was never good enough. I love my father because he’s my father, but he’s terrifying to me.” Other young women tried talking to their fathers about their volatility or tried on their own to figure out what was going on, but these efforts were described as largely ineffective. Mary Beth explained, “I would try to figure out what was wrong with the situation and want to talk to him about it so that we can fix it so it doesn’t happen again and again and again.”

Gauging fathers’ mood. Since efforts to stop or understand the volatility rarely yielded positive responses and sometimes unintentionally made the situation worse, these participants developed strategies such as reading their fathers’ body language and listening to whether their parents were fighting as ways to gauge their fathers’ moods. The women used these strategies as a way to determine whether they could engage their fathers or whether they should keep their distance. Taylor described looking at her father’s eyes because they would “get a little bit

darker” when he was angry. Using these cues were essential in gauging their fathers’ mood in that if their fathers’ mood seemed volatile the participants might stay in their rooms for the evening to avoid interacting with their fathers. Some would choose to leave and go to a friend’s house. Taylor, the only participant who reported seeing a therapist or professional to help her manage her home life, relied on a safety plan (i.e., going to a friend’s house) that she made with her therapist for when she suspected her stepfather would become violent. Many women reported not wanting to be at home with their fathers because of how stressful it was to wonder what would be happening at home when they got home – would it be a relatively calm night, or would something set him off and violence would ensue? Not only did they not want to be at home with their fathers, but many women didn’t want to have friends over to their house because they were afraid of what their fathers might say or do that would embarrass them. In contrast to the fathers who had nonviolent personas outside of the home, some fathers, like Blair’s, did not actively hide their volatility and violence in front of others. Blair said, “A lot of people know how my dad acts and they kind of want to stay away.”

Volatility, warmth, and responsiveness. The fathers’ volatility also extended to how warm, emotional, and nurturing they were to their daughters. Seventeen of these fathers were described as volatile as well as unaffectionate and lacking in warmth or responsiveness – or simply, cold. Indicators of coldness or emotional unresponsiveness were displayed through the fathers’ lack of physical (e.g., hugging, kissing) and verbal (e.g., saying ‘I love you’) gestures. For example, Jasmine’s father never told her that he loved her nor hugged her until she hugged him first and told him “I love you” during college. Four participants questioned or doubted whether their fathers ever loved them at all. Mia said, “I really still feel like my dad does not like me, or that he doesn’t love me. Just because he’s not emotional in any way; the only emotion I

got from him growing up was anger.” Amelia believed her stepfather “hated [her] for some reason” and wondered whether it was because “[her] mom wouldn’t give him authority over [her] or because he just really didn’t like [her].” In contrast, three women had a more nuanced view of their fathers’ temperaments in that they perceived their fathers as volatile as well as emotionally accessible, loving, and supportive. London, Ellie, and Briana described how their fathers have always been warm and responsive throughout their lives. Nevertheless, these young women still expressed being fearful and anxious around their fathers while living at home.

Although the majority of the participants described their fathers as volatile and emotionally unavailable, three participants described their fathers as standoffish, stoic, and mild-mannered – not angry, loud, nor unpredictable. In addition, Lauren and Victoria’s fathers were described as cold and unresponsive. Lauren described her father as “just not emotional” and explained, “It’s like he doesn’t show any emotion. If he’s sad, he doesn’t look sad. If he’s angry, he doesn’t look angry. It’s like he’s the same all the time. He’s just odd; never very loving.” Keli’s father was described as unaffectionate but emotionally responsive and supportive, especially in contrast to her mother. Despite these fathers’ reported lack of volatility, the women all described being regularly fearful or afraid of their fathers’ use of violence towards the family – highlighting the pervasiveness of fear and anxiety surrounding the maritally abusive fathers’ behavior regardless of reported volatility.

Disengaged and inaccessible fathers. Paternal engagement and accessibility was described on a continuum from largely disengaged ($n = 10$) to always engaged ($n = 2$) with nearly half of the participants reporting that their fathers’ engagement and accessibility decreased as they entered adolescence ($n = 11$). Father’s engagement and accessibility is detailed from

childhood through adolescence with a brief summary of the fathers' current degree of engagement.

Disengaged during childhood and adolescence. Ten fathers were described as disengaged and disconnected from the rest of the family; they did not regularly participate in daily family life or only did so begrudgingly. Participants described how their mothers, like Jasmine's "made [her father] participate" or facilitated their fathers' involvement. The depth of engagement that the fathers reportedly had with their daughters ranged from very superficial or surface level to non-existent and absentee. Disengaged fathers kept to themselves when at home and rarely participated in family events, showing minimal interest in their children's daily lives, schooling or extracurricular activities. Although working long hours or even in another state kept the fathers away from their families while they were financially providing, young adults also described how their fathers were not "there" even when they were physically present, or they chose to spend time with their friends instead of the family. Many of the participants said that it felt like their mothers were single mothers, having to do the day-to-day child rearing without their fathers' help. The perception of single motherhood also extended to how others outside the family may have perceived the participants' families as it was rare for their fathers to join them for dinner or run errands with the family. Blair summarized this sentiment:

A lot of people don't understand when I say that, but I'm like, she's a single mother. . . .
Like I never saw him as a father figure, kind of more like he's my dad that lives in the house with us. He's kind of a roommate type thing, and you just run into him every now and then.

With the exception of Blair, the young adults with disengaged biological fathers reported feeling more connected to their fathers than the young adults with stepfathers. In general, these fathers

were largely inaccessible with a few exceptions, for example when Blair's father showed up at her graduation because she was Valedictorian. Many stepdaughters of maritally abusive men perceived their presence as generally unwanted or that they were "baggage" brought by their mothers into the new marriage. In contrast, young adults with disengaged stepfathers recalled how engaged these men were with their biological children – underscoring their ability to be an engaged father. Similarly, Mia and Lauren described how their fathers were more engaged with their brothers. They rationalized their fathers' closeness with their brothers by suggesting that by being male, their fathers had more interests (e.g., sports, science) in common with their brothers.

Engaged only during childhood. Eleven participants' fathers were engaged during their childhood, but their engagement steadily decreased as they entered into pre-adolescence and adolescence. In contrast to the always disengaged fathers who were equally split – biological and stepfathers, all but one of these men were biological fathers. Participants with childhood engaged fathers described their interactions as being largely limited to recreational activities and hobbies. For example, these daughters provided positive memories and stories of their fathers as coaches of their sports teams, going on fishing and hunting trips, and working together on cars. Annie recalled, "He coached softball for me for like years... He cared about our grades and he would go to school things with us." Despite being aware of their children's interests, hobbies, and grades in school, these fathers were reportedly not present for the daily grind of parenting, such as scheduling doctor's appointments, helping with homework, or taking care of them when they were sick. Four women referred to themselves as a "Daddy's Girl" when they were younger, meaning they were very close to their father and spent a great deal of time with him. These women would enjoy spending time with their fathers and really looked up to them. Aaliyah said,

“Before he started drinking and stuff, I was daddy’s little girl and everywhere he went I was always with him.”

However, the feeling of being a “Daddy’s Girl” decreased over time and the general shift from engagement to disengagement occurred for a variety of reasons, including young adults’ changing perceptions of their fathers, fathers’ increased alcohol abuse and violence escalation, and likely the women’s growing awareness of their parents’ marital and family dynamics. Aaliyah recalled how her perception of her father shifted as she began recognizing differences in what her mother did for her as compared to her father:

He would be there for the fun things. . . It is easy to be there for the good stuff and the fun times. You know, when you’re sick and that kind of thing, that’s my mom there taking care of us. She would stay up late and do homework with us. That’s something my dad would have never done.

For many of these participants, the marital violence began escalating (or at least became more common and apparent) as they got older, which impacted their relationship with their father. Additionally, five of the fathers reportedly had serious alcohol abuse issues or diagnosed alcoholism, which also impacted the women’s desire to be around their fathers. Thus, their shifting perceptions of their fathers were likely entangled with their fathers’ ongoing or escalated use of violence as well as some fathers’ alcohol abuse issues. By adolescence, these young women described father-daughter relationships similar to those with always disengaged fathers.

Always engaged. Ellie and London were the only two participants who described their fathers as being generally engaged, accessible, and connected with them throughout their childhood and adolescence. Ellie’s father was her “running buddy” who would wake up early to go running with her before work. London’s stepfather was temporarily less engaged during his

military deployment and entirely disengaged for a year when her mother divorced him and he was banned from contacting her due to a protective order. However, once London was allowed contact with her father again, their relationship returned to the way it was prior to this separation.

Shifting levels of engagement during college. Engagement and accessibility was relatively static for participants with always disengaged or always engaged fathers during childhood and adolescence in comparison to the fathers who were only engaged during childhood. However, since leaving home for college, over half of the young adults ($n = 13$) reported a change in their father's engagement and accessibility. For the thirteen participants who described change in their fathers' engagement, there was still variability in the degree and type of change. Seven participants described having essentially no contact or very limited contact with their previously disengaged fathers. Four of these seven fathers were stepfathers who are no longer married to the participants' mothers, making the decision to sever ties with their fathers more logistically possible. The remaining three biological fathers are now divorced from the participants' mothers, likely easing their decision as compared to participants' whose parents are still married. In contrast, six participants described how their fathers (only one stepfather) are more engaged now than during adolescence, but there is still great variability despite improvement. Three of the young women described a rather large shift, whereas the remaining three described slight improvements in their fathers' level of engagement. For example, Sarah, whose stepfather underwent therapy and receives medication for his mental illness, now has a very close relationship with her stepfather: "I actually call to talk on the phone with him a lot – you know, 30 minute conversations a few times a week," despite him being previously disengaged. In contrast, Mia's dad has become more engaged but much less so than Sarah's stepfather. She explained:

Maybe it [leaving for college] has lessened the pressure on him a little. . . . Maybe picking up the phone and talking to me is much easier than talking to me face to face. We don't talk about anything serious, just maybe his job or, I don't know, the news or sports or something. Like, never anything beyond surface level, so he is still easing into it.

Eight participants reported little to no change in their fathers' disengagement at the time of the interview. This translated to limited contact and interactions unless necessary or if the participant felt the need to be in contact out of obligation. The continued stability of disengagement appeared to be related to their fathers' ongoing use of marital violence, lack of help-seeking for alcohol abuse, and an absence of apologies for past behaviors – or no catalyst for change and improvement. Elizabeth summarized this collective sentiment:

He just frankly didn't care. I still don't know if he knows what I'm majoring in no matter how many times I've told him. I mean, hell, I've been dating my boyfriend for now for about a year and I've talked about him on multiple occasions like over the summer when he is there and I have to talk to him, and like, I don't think he knows his name. So, he's very absentee.

Finally, there was no reported change for participants with always engaged fathers; these fathers continued to be engaged and actively involved in their daughters' lives.

Controlling and abusive fathers. Although parental control can serve as a protective factor used to monitor children's safety and well-being (Barber, 1996, 2002), within the context of marital violence, fathers' use of control over the young women was likely perceived as more potent and dangerous. Fifteen of the participants provided examples of paternal control – behavioral and psychological – that was excessive and developmentally inappropriate. Indeed, participants provided numerous examples that are better categorized as child maltreatment and

abuse as opposed to control. The participants' fathers used a variety of behavioral and psychological control tactics ranging in severity – controlling but protective in nature to moderately or severely abusive and injurious – and frequency – rare, isolated events to more frequent behaviors.

Behavioral control and abuse. Behavioral control refers to parental behaviors aimed at controlling or managing the behavior of the participants. Within this realm of control, the fathers' behaviors ranged from abusive behaviors (e.g., physical child abuse) to intrusive and controlling behaviors (e.g., no friends, dating, tough on grades) with other behaviors in between but closer to abusive (e.g., corporal punishment and harsh punishments).

Physical child abuse and corporal punishment. Seven young adults reported being physically abused by their father. The physical abuse ranged in severity and frequency. For the purpose of these comparisons, severe physical abuse is classified as violence that has the potential to or did cause injury to the participants. Two of the participants reported experiencing severe acts of physical violence on one occasion. Keli's father reportedly followed her to her room and punched her in the head while she called 9-1-1 in response to his violence against her mother. During a verbal argument, Mary Beth's father attempted to choke her:

One time he did grab me around the neck and I was... I just like, punched him in the stomach and make him stop. He realized what he did and I was like "If you ever... freaking touch me like that again..." Oh my goodness. That one time was the only time that he ever grabbed me.

Two additional participants recalled experiencing severe physical abuse by their fathers, and this abuse was more frequent or regularly occurring. For example, Caitlin's father had reportedly thrown her against the wall, thrown things at her, and dumped a boiling pot of water on her head.

Barbara's father utilized very harsh, physical punishments that we categorized as physical abuse given their potential lethality and long lasting physical impact. Although both needed to seek medical treatment as a result of their fathers' abuse on multiple occasions, neither participant received medical treatment for their injuries. Caitlin explained how her father would "bandage her up and stuff" after he abused her because he had paramedic training. Emma reported similarly frequent abusive behaviors by her step-father, but his abusive behaviors were less severe than Barbara and Caitlin's – nevertheless, Emma recalled often having bruises the next day. Over time, she has come to describe his behavior (e.g., flicking her between the eyes) as abusive, but she did not perceive it this way as a child. Although Emma's examples of physical abuse were not as severe as the other two women, her experiences spoke to the pervasiveness of her stepfather's abusive behavior and use of physical violence in order maintain control over the family. In contrast, Allison and Lauren's fathers reportedly slapped or smacked them on a few occasions and once, respectively, in response to them talking back or just talking more than their fathers preferred.

Despite providing examples of physical abuse, many of the young adults minimized the severity of their fathers' actions by comparing the abuse to other, more serious actions. Allison stated how her stepfather "never punched [her] or hurt [her] in any way, shape, or form, or fashion," but he had "smacked [her] a couple of times" stating that she "probably deserved it for being a smart ass." This minimization of their fathers' use of violence against them was largely associated with fathers' use of corporal punishment (i.e., spanking). Similar to Allison, five additional participants reported being spanked as a form of punishment. However, we suspect that these numbers likely underrepresent the true number of spanked participants as they perceived this to be normative parenting practices; thus, they were less likely to disclose

spanking as part of their fathers' use of controlling or abusive behaviors towards them and their siblings. Seven participants also reported that their siblings experienced physical abuse or "got into physical fights" with their fathers during adolescence.

Harsh punishments for failing to meet expectations. In the context of marital violence as well as the physical abuse that these young adults' reportedly experienced, their fathers' use of control and harsh punishments pertaining to their expected academic performance as well as failure to abide by their rules was salient to their experiences and relationships with their father. Three of the young women reported their fathers being controlling and utilizing harsh punishments (e.g., not being allowed to eat dinner, taking away all personal belongings) when they did not meet their fathers' academic expectations. One father reportedly also kicked his barefoot daughter out of the house when he learned that she was pregnant in high school, forcing her to walk to a friend's house for shelter.

Limiting normative, developmentally appropriate social activities. Seven fathers used overtly intrusive and controlling behaviors that limited the young women's ability to partake in normative, developmentally appropriate social activities during childhood and adolescence. For example, the participants described not being able to go to friends' houses after school, partake in extracurricular activities, date or socialize with boys during high school, or do much outside of the house except for go to school. Lauren said her dad was "very controlling" over her and only "wanted [her] to stay home and study and not really have a social life." The fathers' control over their daughters' social lives and whom they spent time with and talked to occasionally escalated to incidents of physical violence. Many of the participants chalked up their fathers' controlling behaviors as safety concerns or normative, parental monitoring while they were growing up but have since perceived these limits as too controlling. Emma explained:

He was very controlling. At the time, I didn't realize it because I was a child; I was really naïve. I just thought that, "Oh that's the man of the house, you know, he is supposed to say, 'Hey, do this, do that!'" But looking back on it, I'm like that is not normal. Way out of the ordinary.

Two of the participants' parents were first-generation immigrants to the United States, so their restriction of social activities and spending time at friends' houses may be more complicated as these fathers, in particular, were concerned about their immigration status, others' perception of them in their neighborhood since they were outsiders, and also concerns regarding safety and lack of trust as they moved into more dangerous neighborhoods upon arrival to the United States. In addition, four participants recalled how their socialization and interactions with peers was limited due to factors aside from their fathers' explicit limiting of their socializing. These young women felt or were made responsible for housekeeping (e.g., cooking, cleaning), caretaking (e.g., drunk fathers, siblings), and intervening in violence to protect their mothers or siblings, which indirectly controlled their time for socializing, dating, and extracurricular activities.

Psychological control and abuse. Psychological control refers to parental behaviors aimed at controlling or interfering with the child's psychological well-being and emotional development. Thirteen young adults recalled how their fathers used psychological control; five participants reported that their fathers verbally and/or emotionally abused them. These fathers also reportedly were emotionally and verbally abusive by making fun of their physical appearance, controlling what they wore and how they wore it, doubting their ability to make friends, forcing their religious beliefs on the family, and mocking their children's feelings and emotions. These abusive behaviors extended to some of the participants' siblings as well.

Elizabeth recalled how her father taunted his depressed son when he was on the phone with his

therapist. He said, “why don’t you f---ing do it [attempt suicide]! You’re just trying to get sent to the psych ward again.” Other fathers used guilt, manipulation, and love withdrawal as a way to influence or limit their daughters’ ability to make their own decisions. For example, when Sarah got pregnant in high school, she recalled how her father was “in [her] face, yelling at [her], telling [her] that [she’s] tearing his family apart.” These fathers also used intimidation and threats (e.g., sending them away) to get what they wanted. Following separation or divorce, many fathers used guilt as a way to coerce their daughters into spending more time with them or by threatening to withhold money and gifts. The most extreme example of guilt-tripping and following through with threats was Barbara’s father who legally disowned his children because they did not visit him and his new girlfriend often enough. She recalled:

He sat us down and asked us why we didn’t want to live with him. He was trying to say that he was the one who clothed us all those years, and he was the one who took care of us. He left out all the parts where he also disciplined us and tried to control us. And he tried to make us feel guilty for not wanting to live with him.

The fathers’ threats, both during marriage and after separation, must be considered within a larger context of marital violence, as most women had seen their fathers use physical violence against their mothers; therefore, the threats were attached to memories of previous violence which amplified their effectiveness in invoking fear in the participants.

Dimensions of fathering by level of coercive control. As previously mentioned, the young adults reported variability in their degree of exposure to DV and coercive control. The young adults were classified into mutually exclusive, coercive control exposure groups: no coercive control ($n = 2$), low coercive control ($n = 6$), moderate coercive control ($n = 8$), and high coercive control ($n = 7$). Although the participants described differing narratives of DV that

guided our distinctions in their types of coercive control exposure, there appeared to be less salient differences across types of coercive control as it pertains to fathering dimensions and styles over time. Nevertheless, we identified some similarities and differences in the fathering dimensions both across and within the four coercive control groups (see Table 2 for a breakdown of the fathering dimensions by level of coercive control).

Fathers' volatility largely cut across all four levels, yet all of the fathers in the moderate and high coercive control groups were categorized as volatile, where as the only three non-volatile fathers were in the no and low coercive control groups. Given the small number of participants in each of the groups, we cannot confidently conclude that there is a strong association between degree of coercive control and perceived fathers' volatility. However, we can confidently state that the fathers in our study were by and large volatile – their anger was unpredictable and explosive – and lacking in warmth and responsiveness. It is possible that volatility as a general descriptor of the fathers' temperament as well as a dimension of parenting was driven by additional factors such as being exposed to severe physical violence. For example, five out of the eight participants in the lowest coercive control groups described having volatile fathers. These fathers may be perceived as volatile based on other factors such as their use of severe physical violence or substance abuse issues and not coercive control. Further, all of the participants who reported exposure to severe physical violence described having a volatile father except for London.

Similar to volatility, descriptions of disengaged fathers cut across the four coercive control groups. None of the fathers in the low nor high coercive control group were engaged during childhood and adolescence as compared to the no and moderate coercive control groups that had participants with some engaged fathers at least during childhood. Thus, disengagement

as a dimension of fathering, may describe maritally abusive fathers more holistically as opposed to distinguishing between specific groups or types of maritally abusive fathers. Factors such as the participants' relationships to their fathers, biological or through remarriage/repartnership, may better distinguish between engaged versus disengaged fathers as there was a notable trend in which biological fathers were generally more engaged with their daughters when compared to the stepfathers. We did identify stepfather-daughter relationships, such as London's, that were particularly engaged and connected, highlighting the variability that exists within these relationships.

Unlike volatility and engagement, we identified strong patterns associated with degree of coercive control exposure and controlling and abusive fathers. For example, none of the participants in the no coercive control group reported any physical child abuse, and the two participants in the low coercive control recalled one experience of physical child abuse each. This does not diminish the salience of these events, but those patterns do stand in contrast to the frequent reports of physical abuse in the moderate and high groups. In general, the women in the moderate and high coercive control groups reported the highest levels of physical abuse and other controlling behaviors including harsh punishments as compared to no and low groups.

Although there were less notable patterns in volatility and engagement across the groups, the cumulative impact of more severe physical violence and coercive control exposure on top of directly experiencing abusive and controlling fathering likely differentiate the experiences of young adults in the two higher coercive control groups. Their holistic descriptions of their fathers and the levels of fear they experienced during childhood and adolescence highlight the particularly detrimental impact of living in a home with any marital violence but especially severe and coercive violence. These comparative findings are further complicated by most of the

women's decisions to have an ongoing relationship with their fathers or step-fathers, although those exposed to more severe and coercive violence were more likely to have either severed their relationship with their fathers or actively work to limit their ongoing relationships at the time of our interviews. Some of these men have made strides to become better fathers from their daughters' perspectives, while others have made less improvements but remain connected, in some capacity to their daughters during college.

Discussion

This study examined young adults' perceptions of fathering and their father-daughter relationships in the context of marital violence, applying Lamb and Pleck's tripartite model of father involvement (Lamb et al., 1985; Pleck, 2010). The current study found that most maritally abusive fathers are highly volatile, but that their levels of engagement and their methods of control vary. Women who were exposed to the highest levels of coercive control were more likely to have volatile fathers who were disengaged, controlling, and abusive, while women exposed to no or low coercive control were more likely to have fathers engaged in childhood, less controlling and abusive, though still very volatile. These findings are consistent with the clinical literature by Bancroft and colleagues on the parenting styles of maritally abusive fathers (Bancroft, 2002; Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, Silverman, & Ritchie, 2012), and yet, these findings offer additional complexity and nuances consistent with the few studies examining maritally abusive fathers from the perspective of their children (Peled, 1998, 2000).

Maritally Abusive Men as Fathers

Despite sharing many similar patterns over their now young adults' development, maritally abusive fathers are rather heterogeneous. Factors such as their reported use of physical violence and coercive control, dimensions and styles of fathering, substance abuse and other mental health issues as well as their biological relationship to the child contributed to the heterogeneity in their fathering and their subsequent father-child relationship over time. Yet, maritally violent fathers are highly volatile and low in warmth with a few exceptions. Most of the fathers in our study had explosive albeit unpredictable tempers that instilled fear in their

daughters. Our findings are consistent with Harne's study (2003) in which the wives and former spouses of maritally violent men talked about their husbands' quick and unpredictable temper, which led to the young children being afraid of their fathers. Our results are also similar to Bancroft and colleagues' findings from their clinical work with maritally abusive men which describe them as generally angry and short-tempered fathers (Bancroft, 2002; Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, Silverman, & Ritchie, 2012). However, these studies describe only one side of maritally abusive fathers, whereas Peled (1998, 2000) has found that many children have two versions of their maritally abusive father: the 'good, loved father' and the 'bad, abusive father.' Similar to Peled's studies, the present study found that DV-exposed young adults often have complicated and conflicting views of their fathers, because although volatile, many of the fathers were engaged in their daughters' lives at various points from childhood through present. Previous studies have mostly documented the father-child relationship at one time period, whereas our participants described their relationship with their fathers over several time periods of their lives – allowing us to capture changes in the father-child relationship. Specifically, a substantial number of participants described their fathers becoming more engaged at the time of the study as compared to during their childhood and adolescence.

Despite some fathers' engagement at various points throughout their daughters' lives, most were not engaged in the same way that their mothers were. In fact, few fathers were reportedly involved in the day-to-day care taking associated with being a parent. Instead, most fathers, even the most engaged, were the "fun parent" who did activities and went to events with their children. Along those lines, many participants considered themselves "Daddy's Girl" remembering times when their fathers were engaged (e.g., fun activities). These findings are consistent with the literature on the engagement levels of maritally abusive fathers (Bancroft &

Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, et al., 2012; Cater & Forssell, 2014; Dick, 2005; Edleson & Williams, 2007) as well as the literature comparing fathering and mothering, despite recent increases in father involvement in daily caretaking (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Many of the young women in our study seemingly held their fathers to a lower standard in what they expected of them as a parent as compared to their mothers. For example, fathers were expected or assumed to be the financial providers, while mothers were the day-to-day caregivers and nurturers. Thus, the fathers' lack of engagement as far as caretaking may not be held against them in the same way that it would have been for the mothers. In addition, it is plausible that fathers' engagement during their childhood provided some participants with good memories of their time with their fathers (e.g., fishing together), contributing to greater complexity in how they perceived the father-daughter relationship over time. These participants may have then clung to the good memories of their fathers whenever they were being volatile or abusive as a way to make sense of this other seemingly contradictory side of them that they did not understand or could not make sense of. Even though some fathers were engaged during childhood or later in their daughters' lives, the majority of the fathers were disengaged or relatively absent, which aligns the study findings with the comparative literature on abusive and non-abusive fathers (Bancroft, 2002; Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Bancroft, Silverman, & Ritchie, 2012). Our results help shed light on the variability of what it means to be a maritally abusive father in that there was a wide range of paternal engagement, unlike the homogeneity portrayed by the current literature.

Lastly, in terms of fathers behavioral and psychological control, we found that fathers' behaviors ranged from controlling but protective in nature (e.g., paternal coaching) to controlling and developmentally inappropriate behaviors (e.g., corporal or harsh punishments) to behaviors

that can be considered child abuse and maltreatment (e.g., physical abuse). Previous research indicates that there is roughly 40% co-occurrence between children who witness marital violence and experiencing child abuse (Appel & Holden, 1998; Edleson, Mbilinyi, & Shetty, 2003). For women who were exposed to DV and were abused by their fathers, their threats of violence are likely more potent and their fathers are perceived as more dangerous as their fathers have demonstrated their capability of physically harming them. These findings highlight the salience of examining the likely differential impact of exposure to DV with and without the added impact of child maltreatment and abuse.

Marital Violence Dynamics and Perceptions of Fathers

The dynamics of the marital relationship such as the severity and frequency of physical violence as well as the level of coercive control present in the marriage did influence aspects of the young adults' perceptions of their fathers and their relationship with their father. Fathers' volatility cut across all four coercive control groups in our study. It may be that nearly all maritally abusive fathers have explosive and unpredictable tempers, or are perceived that way given their use of physical violence against their wives. The main difference between the groups of fathers was in regards to their levels of engagement when their daughters were growing up, as women with the most coercive controlling fathers tended to have generally disengaged fathers or fathers who were only engaged briefly during childhood. This variation in engagement within a group of all maritally abusive fathers demonstrates the importance of better understanding the contextual factors of marital violence that led to different outcomes for our participants in terms of how they viewed their fathers and in their relationships with their fathers.

There also seems to be a difference in the father-child relationship based on type of violence the daughter was exposed to – situational couple violence versus coercive controlling

violence. From the adult DV literature, we know that these two types of violence impact their partners and the overall home environment differently (Johnson, 2008); thus, it is logical that their children would have different outcomes and father-daughter relationships. The young adults exposed to high levels of coercive control and physical violence (i.e., coercive controlling violence) were more likely to have volatile, disengaged, and controlling and abusive fathers than young adults classified as having been exposed to situational couple violence. These women's experiences seemed to align with Øverlien's (2013) sample of children and adolescents specifically exposed to coercive control (referred to as patriarchal terrorism in the study). Solely focusing on the individual dimensions of fathering would have limited our ability to extrapolate to the differential impact of DV types, but the cumulative examination and comparison of the three dimensions highlighted the seemingly large differences between participants reportedly exposed to coercive controlling versus situational couple violence. Fathers who are volatile and controlling and abusive, in particular, create home environments that are especially hostile and un conducive to positive child development. Thus, our findings suggest that there is something above and beyond a fathers' use of marital violence that distinguishes the participants' recollections of their fathers and their relationship with them over time.

Limitations & Contributions

The results of the present study should be considered in the context of several limitations. First, interviews with our participants were retrospective in nature. Although the participants seemingly were able to easily recall very detailed memories from their childhood, we could not fully rid retrospective bias in that they may have inadvertently recalled memories that align with their current relationships with their fathers. Since many of the participants have ongoing relationships with their fathers and others report that their fathers have made tremendous changes

(e.g., abstaining from substances, no marital violence), their recollections may reflect these positive changes. However, consistent with previous researchers' hypotheses (Black, Sussman, & Unger, 2010), these young adults were able to recall and process exposure to DV and coercive control in a more sophisticated way than they would have at a younger age, which is an added strength of the current study. Second, participants reported on the marital violence and coercive control that they were exposed to, but we cannot determine whether their memories and interpretations of their fathers' actions are consistent with how their mothers would report their victimization. Thus, these findings must be considered as the participants' reports of DV exposure as opposed to the actual DV exposure in their home. Nevertheless, children and adolescents' perceptions of DV and DV exposure have been found to be better determinants of their subsequent well-being and adaptation over time as compared to descriptors of violent incidents (e.g., frequency, Grych, Jouriles, Swank, McDonald, & Norwood, 2000). Third, the number of participants who were classified as having not been exposed to coercive control was substantially smaller than the other three groups, which limited our ability to make as clear of comparisons across the groups of coercive control. Theoretically, future studies should sample young adults exposed to physical DV without additional coercive control, although it may be likely that this is simply a rare group of individuals as DV is likely rooted in at least some coercive control. In addition, it is possible that these young adults were in fact exposed to more coercive control than they recognized or reported.

Despite these limitations, the present study adds to what is currently known in the general fathering and maritally abusive fathering literature in several important ways. First, we found that the father-daughter relationship has the potential to change over the course of childhood to young adulthood depending on multiple, interacting factors that are seemingly out of the

daughters' control. Indeed, this relationship is not static; future research should continue examining this dyad over time to fully capture the heterogeneity in maritally abusive fathers. Second, few studies have studied maritally abusive fathers from the perspective of their young adult children, although researchers have hypothesized that this particular developmental period is ideal for examining the complexity of DV exposure beyond physical violence (Black, Sussman, & Unger, 2010). Our study answered Black and colleagues' call for future studies examining this topic from a young adult perspective – highlighting their ability to recall and process abusive tactics utilized over time and in the context of coercive control. Lastly, the DV exposure literature is relatively unsophisticated and rarely takes into consideration the context in which the DV occurs (Haselschwerdt, 2014). Our study begins to address this limitation by examining the young adults' relationships with their father in the context of highly variable DV experiences, which underscores the heterogeneity in maritally abusive men and maritally abusive dynamics over time. In addition, our findings emphasize the similarities and differences in fathering and the father-daughter relationship depending on whether they described exposure to coercive controlling versus situational couple violence, which contributes to calls for studies examining these complexities of DV context from the perspective of the children in the home (Johnson, 2008).

Conclusions

Maritally abusive men generally share many commonalities such as volatility and low levels of warmth as well as differences such as levels of engagement over time and their use of controlling and abusive behaviors. These varying and complex dimensions of parenting are influenced by multiple factors including the DV and marital dynamics, fathers' substance abuse and mental health issues, and their biological relationship to their daughters. Young adults who

described exposure to high levels of coercive control and physical violence during childhood and adolescence were more likely to describe fathers who were highly volatile, disengaged, and controlling and abusive as compared to young adults describing no or low levels of coercive control and physical violence exposure. These factors also influenced the current father-daughter relationship such that those who experienced dual exposure to marital violence and child abuse were less likely to have an ongoing relationship with their fathers at the time of the interview. Nevertheless, some fathers were reportedly engaged, warm and responsive, and not controlling or abusive to their daughters despite their use of violence towards their wives. Taken together, the findings underscore the reported and perceived heterogeneity in maritally abusive fathers from the perspectives of their young adult children.

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Appendix A – Tables

Table 1.

Template Matching: Young Adults' Reports of Marital Violence Exposure, Father Characteristics, and Dimensions of Fathering

Participant	Coercive Control	Marital Violence Exposure				Fathers' Characteristics		Dimensions of Fathering		
		Physical Violence		Exposure		Biological Father	Mental Health/ Substance Abuse	Volatile	Disengaged	Abusive and/or Controlling
		Severe	Frequent	Direct	Indirect					
Lauren	1			X		X	X		X	X ^A
Elizabeth	1	X			X	X	X	X	x	
Jasmine	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Barbara	3		X	X	X	X		X	x	X ^A
Sarah	3	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Briana	0	X	X	X		X		X ^W	x	
Mia	1		X	X		X	X		X	X
Keli	2	X	X	X	X	X		X	x	X ^A
Ellie	2			X	X	X	X	X ^W		
Blair	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Caitlin	3	X	X	X	X	X		X	x	X ^A
Annie	1				X	X	X	X	x	X
London	2	X	X	X	X		X	X ^W		
Victoria	0			X	X	X	X		X	
Taylor	3	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Aaliyah	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	x	
Alexis	3	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Stephanie	1			X	X	X	X	X	x	X
Mary Beth	2	X	X	X	X		X	X	x	X ^A
Rebecca	2			X	X	X		X	x	X
Emma	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X ^A
Allison	1	X		X	X	X		X	X	X ^A
Amelia	2	X		X	X		X	X	x	

Note. X^W = volatile and warm; x = engaged only during childhood; X^A = reported experiencing physical child abuse

Table 2. *Template Matching: Marital Violence Exposure, Father Characteristics, and Dimensions of Fathering by Degree of Coercive Control Level*

Participant	Marital Violence Exposure				Fathers' Characteristics		Dimensions of Fathering		
	Physical Violence		Exposure Type		Biological Father	Mental Health & Substance Abuse	Volatile	Disengaged	Abusive and/or Controlling
	Severe	Frequent	Direct	Indirect					
<i>No Coercive Control Exposure</i>									
Briana	X	X	X		X		X ^W	<i>x</i>	
Victoria			X	X	X	X		X	
<i>Low Coercive Control Exposure</i>									
Lauren			X		X	X		X	X ^A
Elizabeth	X			X	X	X	X	<i>x</i>	
Mia		X	X		X	X		X	X
Annie				X	X	X	X	<i>x</i>	X
Stephanie			X	X	X	X	X	<i>x</i>	X
Allison	X		X	X	X		X	X	X ^A
<i>Moderate Coercive Control Exposure</i>									
Jasmine	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Keli	X	X	X	X	X		X	<i>x</i>	X ^A
Ellie			X	X	X	X	X ^W		
Blair	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
London	X	X	X	X		X	X ^W		
Mary	X	X		X				<i>x</i>	X ^A
Beth				X		X	X		
Rebecca			X	X	X		X	<i>x</i>	X
Amelia	X		X	X		X	X	<i>x</i>	
<i>High Coercive Control Exposure</i>									
Barbara		X	X	X	X		X	<i>x</i>	X ^A
Sarah	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Caitlin	X	X	X	X	X		X	<i>x</i>	X ^A
Taylor	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Aaliyah	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<i>x</i>	
Alexis	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Emma	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X ^A

Note. X^W = volatile and warm; *x* = engaged only during childhood; X^A = reported experiencing physical child abuse

Appendix B. -- Interview Protocol for Young Adults Live and Learn (Y'ALL) Project

The purpose of this interview is for me to learn more about the experiences of young adults who were exposed to violence and abuse perpetrated by their father or father-like figure towards their mother. I am going to ask you to tell me about your family life while you were growing up through the present time as well as your past and current romantic relationships. I will also ask you how you managed your experiences within your family and community. I will ask about the violence and abuse you were exposed to in a variety of ways, but I'll encourage you to just share your story through the majority of our time together.

Finally, I want to let you know that I will not be judging you based on your responses. If I don't comment on certain things you tell me, it is because I am listening and want you to continue your story.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

We are going to begin with some demographic and background information pertaining to you, your parent's relationship, some specific questions about each family member, and then also a few about where you grew up, but first, how did you learn about the Y'ALL Project?

I. Demographics/Background Information

1. How old are you?
2. What is your race or ethnicity?
3. What is your highest level of education?

If participant did not indicate who his/her mother's abusive partner was/is during the initial screening, ask the following:

Over email/phone you had said that your father or father-like figure had physically harmed your mother while you were growing up, was this your biological or adopted father, stepfather, or mother's partner not from marriage?

Now I'm going to ask you a little bit more about your mom's marital status and relationship with _____ (refer to him as participant did)?

[Mother's abuser is referred to as her "partner" but will be identified according to participants' labeling during interview process]

What is your mother and her partner's marital status? [*Probe for when they got married, separated or divorced; who initiated separation/divorce; who do they primarily stay with or visit when they are home*]

[If parents separated or divorced, probe for current relationship status, remarriage, step or half siblings]

Now I'm going to ask you to tell me a little bit more about your individual family members.

1. What is your mom's age?
2. What is your mom's race or ethnicity?
3. What is your mom's highest level of education?
4. What does your mom do for a living? [Probe if these are jobs or occupations that have remained constant or have varied while growing up.]

5. What is your mother's partner's age?
6. What is his race or ethnicity?
7. What is his highest level of education?
8. What does he do for a living? [Probe if these are jobs or occupations that have remained constant or have varied while growing up.]
9. Do you have any siblings? [If yes, probe for...]
 - a. How many?
 - b. What is their age?
 - c. Gender?
 - d. What is the birth order of siblings (e.g., oldest, middle)?
 - e. Any still living at home?
10. Are there any extended family members or individuals (e.g., nanny, grandparent) who lived in your house while you were growing up? If yes, who? When did they live in your home?

Now I'm going to take the information that you gave me to draw out a picture of your family – it's called a genogram – so that I can get a picture of who is in your family and the relationships in your family. This genogram will make it easier for me to keep track of who is in your family and the relationships between your family members while you are telling me about your experiences.

Alright, now I'm going to ask you some questions about your family as a whole and the community you grew up in.

11. How would you classify your family while you were growing up? [*Probe for changes between then and present; would you classify your family as _____ at the current time?*]
Read as options, not like a multiple choice question:

- a. Impoverished/living in poverty
- b. Working class
- c. Middle class
- d. Upper-middle class
- e. Upper class

12. Did your family ever receive any of the following public assistance services? Reduced or free school lunches, cash assistance, food assistance (food stamps), health care or child care assistance, or housing assistance (e.g., Section 8 housing)? [If yes, specify which ones.]

13. In what town, village, or city did you grow up or spend the majority of your childhood?

14. What sort of setting did you grew up in (for example, was it rural, urban, or suburban)?

15. If you were an outsider (e.g., not close friend or family member), how would you describe your family?

- a. How does this compare to your perspective or the reality of your home and family life?

II. Violence, Abuse and Family Life: I am now going to ask you to tell me about your mom and her partner's relationship and how he hurt your mom, but I will also ask you some questions about your relationship with your mother's partner and the possible ways in which he may have hurt you.

1. How would you describe your mom and her partner's relationship while you were growing up? [*Probe for whether this has always been the case, or if there were ebbs and flows or patterns of change throughout their childhood*]

2. Reflecting back on your childhood, can you tell me about the first time you realized that your mother's partner was hurting your mother? [*Probe for specific age or year in school. They did not need to label it abuse at the time, but now when they reflect back*]

3. Can you describe the physical abuse against your mother while you were growing up?

- a. Moms who experience abuse often think or hope their children don't know about, see, or hear the physical abuse but research shows children and adolescents are often very aware of the abuse. Can you tell me about your experiences (and the experiences of your siblings if relevant) of witnessing or overhearing abuse towards your mom? [*Probe for whether they witnessed, overheard, saw the aftermath (e.g., bruises, property damage),*

or were told about it by someone else if they were not present; frequency; whether or not the participant or siblings intervened in any way]

1. Some children and adolescent say they sometimes tried to intervene to stop the abuse, but others have said that they did not intervene because they were too scared or thought they would make things worse. Can you tell me about your experiences and opinion about intervening?

[Probe for factors that played into their decision not to intervene; if they did intervene, did the ways in which they intervened change over time; what happened when they intervened?]

4. In addition to physical abuse, can you describe some of the other ways that your mom experienced abuse by her partner? *[Probe with examples of emotional, sexual, financial, etc. abuse, if needed. Probe for possible controlling behaviors by asking to elaborate on examples of abuse; frequency]*

- a. *[If participant does not mention control issues in the preceding questions, directly ask if such behaviors were present.]* Would you describe him as controlling of your mother or not controlling? If yes, how so? Can you give me some examples? If no, why would you say he was not controlling?

- b. Research has indicated that children and adolescents are often exposed to the physical abuse, but we do not know much about exposure to some of non-physical abuses that you described. Can you tell me about your experiences (and the experiences of your siblings if relevant) of witnessing or overhearing these non-physical but abusive behaviors towards your mom?

[Probe for whether they witnessed, overheard, or were told about it by someone else if they were not present; frequency; whether or not the participant or siblings intervened in any way; when they figured out that these behaviors were abusive]

5. From your perspective, why your mom's partner was abusive towards her or what was going on to cause or lead up to the physical and non-physical abuse? *[If necessary, probe regarding specific arguments, unpredictable violence, and violence used to control.]*

6. Some women who experience abuse respond by using violence to defend themselves or protect their children, whereas others use violence against their partner because they are angry with them or want to take control of the situation. How does your mom's behaviors align with what I just read? (Or, can you tell me about a time when your mother used acts of physical violence or other abusive acts towards her partner? *(If so, did she initiate or did he, what was her motivation for her use of violence; common? infrequent)*)

7. How has your mother and her partners' relationship changed over time? *(If divorced or separated and mom initiated divorce and/or separation. Probe for responses that indicate*

control, such as threats of violence if she left, or threats to the kids. [Probe for whether abuse continued post-separation, types of abuse]

Alright, now I'm going to ask you a set of questions asks about actions your mom may have experienced in her relationship with her abusive partner. You have already answered many of these questions these past few minutes. These questions have only been used in research with adult women who were hurt by their partner, so we want to see if the questions are useful in better understanding the experiences of young adults exposed to violence and abuse.

PMWI: Using the following scale, tell me how often each statement occurred from childhood through the present (If mom is separated or divorced from abusive partner, say: tell me how often each statement occurred from childhood through your mom and her partner's separation and divorce. You are also welcome to elaborate on or say more about any of the following items.

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently	<i>[If never]</i> Has this ever been a problem for your mom?
PMWI1. He monitored her time and made her account for her whereabouts.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI2. He used her money or made important financial decisions without talking to her about it.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI3. He was jealous or suspicious of her friends.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI4. He accused her of having an affair with another man.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI5. He interfered in her relationships with other family members.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI6. He tried to keep her from doing things to help herself. <i>(Anything that would help her improve herself or situation.)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI7. Her partner called her names.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI8. Her partner swore at her.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI9. Her partner yelled and screamed at her.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI10. Her partner treated her like an inferior	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI11. Her partner told her that her feelings were irrational or crazy.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI12. Her partner blamed her for his problems.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes
PMWI13. Her partner tried to make her feel crazy.	1	2	3	4	5	0 ___ No 1 ___ Yes

We are about halfway through the interview, do you want to take a break or keep going?

III. The Impact of Abuse on Family Dynamics and Functioning.

For the rest of the interview, I'm going to ask you some questions about your family dynamics and functioning, how you managed your experiences, and how your experiences have influenced you, particularly in terms of your view of and involvement in relationships with your romantic partners and peers.

First, I am going to start off with some questions about your relationship with your mother's partner. Just as a reminder, I am a mandated reporter of ongoing child abuse, so if you report any ongoing child abuse towards a sibling under 19, I would have to report this to the proper authorities.

1. Many people report that they have a complicated relationship with their mother's partner if he was abusive to their mother meaning that they have both a good and bad relationship with him, whereas others report all positive or all negative memories or encounters with their mother's abusive partner. Can you tell me about your relationship with your mom's partner while you were growing up?

[Probe for whether this has changed over time; probe for physical and non-physical abuse, controlling behaviors; provide examples]

- a. *[If probes did allow for information on controlling behaviors]* Would you describe him as controlling over you and your siblings? If yes, how so? Can you give me some examples? If no, why would you say he was not controlling?

2. Compared to when you were growing up, what is your relationship like with your mom's partner now or in the past few years? *[Probe for discussion of all aspects of relationship, good, bad, controlling]*

3. (Back up question if not getting enough detail) Some people believe that a husband (or partner) who is abusive can still be a good father to their children or the mother's children while others argue that the two cannot be separated. What are your beliefs on this?

I am now going to shift our attention to your family and home life in general and how you managed your experiences in the context of your immediate family members and those outside your family.

4. If you were to describe what your family or home life was like in three words, what would the three words be and why would you choose them?

5. Can you tell me about a time when you talked with another family member about your his abusive behavior? (*Who initiated the conversation, when, what was the response of the other person, did the conversation remain ongoing; messages about secrecy*)

a. *If no communication*, what do you think the response would have been had you told others about his abusive behavior?

6. (*If not covered earlier*) As I mentioned in an earlier question, some mom's feel like should keep the violence and abuse a secret from their children to protect them from knowing, but other moms talk with their children and adolescence about their partner's behavior. How would you describe your communication with your mother about the abuse she experienced?

7. Can you tell me about a time when someone outside your family learned about your mother's partner's abusive behavior? (*Who initiated the conversation, when, what was the response of the other person, did the conversation remain ongoing; any other conversations with others*)

b. *If no one ever learned*, how do you think someone outside the family would have responded had they learned about his behavior?

8. Compared to when you were growing up, what is your family and home life like now? (*Probe for mother, mother's partner, siblings; reasons for change; beneficial or detrimental change*)

IV. Interpersonal Relationships. Alright, in this final section, I am going to ask you some questions about your relationships with peers as well as romantic partners.

1. Thinking back to your childhood and adolescence, how would you describe your relationships or how well you got along with your classmates, neighbor kids, and friends that you met while growing up? [*Probe for bully perpetration/victimization, ability to maintain close friendships; changes over time*]

a. Some young adults report that their ability to develop and maintain friendships has been negatively impacted by the abuse they experienced or were exposed to, whereas other young adults report that they have many positive friendships that helped them cope and manage their abusive home life. How does your peer or friend experiences compare with these perspectives?

2. The romantic relationships, both positive and negative, that we are exposed to in our families of origin are known to impact our views of and involvement in romantic relationships. Can you talk about how your abuse exposure experiences have impacted or not impacted your decision to enter into a romantic relationship at this point in your life, your choice of romantic partner, and your interactions with romantic partners? [*If they have never been in a romantic relationship, ask them how they EXPECT the exposure will impact their choice of and interactions with a future partner*]

3. And finally, as we wrap up, if you were given the opportunity to talk with others who were exposed to violence and abuse in their family of origin, based on your experiences, what tips or advice would you share for coping and managing their experiences in a beneficial manner?

Do you have any questions or concerns for me? If not right now, please know that you can email or call if any questions arises after our meeting.

Thank you very much for your time and willingness to share your experiences with us. Please accept this thank you note, \$25 cash, and referral list.

In the future we may conduct studies similar to the Y'ALL Project, would you like to give me your contact information so we can invite you to participate in future studies? This information will be kept in a confidential file cabinet and electronic file. If we were to contact you in the future, we would be using a project name similar to the Y'ALL Project and would not identify as you a participant in the current project. If you provide your contact information, you can decline our invitation to participate in any future study. This does not commit you in any way to participating. [If the participant agrees, ask the following contact information]

Date of Participation: _____
Contact information: _____
(Email) _____
(Cell/phone) _____
(Additional contact information) _____

(Regardless of providing contact information for future studies) **Would you like me to contact you with an overview of the final results from this study?**

(If yes): How would you like me to contact you? [Regardless of contact method] I will not identify the nature of the study, but rather, I will refer to the study as the Y'ALL Project and ask to make sure you would still like me to provide you with the results via the mean of communication that you suggested today. For example, I will not just email the results to you without first checking to make sure that is what you would like.

(If yes and did not provide contact information above)

(Email) _____
(Cell/phone) _____
(Additional contact information) _____