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A Human Ecological Systems Perspective on Family Violence in Canada's North

by

Diane Carolyn Reinke

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

in

Family Life Education

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Date: January 6, 1997

ABSTRACT

Guided by a human ecological systems perspective, this thesis sought to describe the nature and extent of family violence in Canada's Northwest Territories and to place it in its social, historical, cultural, and geographic contexts. Analysis of shelter intake data revealed that over 80 percent of shelter clients were Aboriginal, most experienced multiple forms of abuse by their partners, nearly 90 percent reported injuries, and many required medical attention or hospitalization. Many reported little support from medical staff or law enforcement officers. Lack of education, low incomes, unemployment, substance abuse, violence and substance abuse in families of origin, and physical and sexual abuse during childhood were common characteristics of abused women and their abusive partners. Placing violence in the north in its social, historical, cultural, and geographic contexts lends understanding to the problem and reveals the inappropriateness of many mainstream approaches to dealing with family violence. Initiatives consistent with a human ecological systems perspective are suggested.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

An Introduction to Family Violence in Northern Canada

It is only recently that the seriousness of the problems of family violence in the Canadian north (ie., the Yukon and the Northwest Territories) has been acknowledged. There is an abundance of anecdotal evidence about the nature and extent of family violence in Canada's northern territories, there are crime statistics suggesting serious problems with violence and sexual assault, and more recently, there are surveys of people living in the north that have exposed the high incidence of different forms of family violence. However, little research has systematically examined the nature, extent, and context of violence in families living in the Canadian north. Such research is important in developing a more comprehensive understanding of violence in families living in the north, a greater understanding of factors that have contributed to the current situation, and ways in which the northern scene differs from the rest of Canada. Approaches to addressing the problem based on southern Canada may not be applicable to the northern scene.

We typically accept the statistic that somewhere between one in ten and one in eight Canadian women have been battered within their intimate relationships (MacLeod, 1980; Statistics Canada, 1993b). And, when broader, more inclusive definitions of aggression or violence are used, this figure increases considerably. For example, when

spousal aggression or violence includes behaviors such as threatened to hit or throw something at the other, figures increase by three or four times. Canadian surveys have found that almost 40 percent of Canadian couples report that at least one partner had engaged in some form of aggression toward the other over a one year period (Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988). In most of these surveys, the incidence of wife-to-husband and husband-to-wife abuse violence was fairly similar (Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988). However, family violence seems to have more negative consequences for women. In a Canadian survey, 45 percent of women assaulted by their spouse had suffered a physical injury and four in ten women injured by their spouse had required medical attention for these injuries (Rodgers, 1994). Also, women are much more likely to be murdered by their partners than are men (Silverman & Kennedy, 1993). More than half of all Canadian female homicides are committed by spouses or lovers; whereas, only 12 percent of all Canadian male homicides are committed by spouses or lovers (Silverman & Kennedy, 1993).

Statistics on child abuse are equally alarming. Almost three percent of children will grow up having faced a parent who has threatened them at least once with either a knife of a gun and four percent of children will grow up having been beaten by a parent (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). Also, one in every four to five Canadian women have been sexually assaulted as children (Bagley &

Ramsay, 1985-86; McKenzie, 1991). And, one in five to eight men have been sexually assaulted as children (Finkelhor, Hotaling, Lewis, & Smith, 1990). It is generally estimated that about three out of every ten women and one out of every ten men sexually abused as children experienced intrafamilial childhood sexual abuse (Finkelhor et al., 1990). This means that six to eight percent of the Canadian female population and about one to two percent of Canadian males have been sexually abused by a family member.

Native leaders and women's groups have expressed concern over the extent of family violence in Native communities, particularly those in the Northwest Territories (Kakfwi, 1993; Women's Secretariat, 1986). Studies indicate that the incidence of family violence is significantly higher in Native communities and also significantly higher in the Northwest Territories. For example, the Ontario Native Women's Association (1989) reported that 80 percent of Canadian Native women have been abused by their partners. Another study using a variety of kinds of data estimated that over 70 percent of women in Fort Smith, Northwest Territories had been physically assaulted by their partner (Darkes, 1985). Based on a community survey of non-Natives in Fort Smith, 24 percent of non-Native women identified themselves as victims of spousal abuse (Darkes, 1985). Because of language problems and lack of trust, Native women did not respond to the

community. Using emergency shelter reports of the number of Native women who sought shelter from spousal abuse and estimates of the percentage of abused women who seek shelter, Darkes (1985) research suggests that 80 to 100 percent of Native women in Fort Smith may be victims of spousal abuse. Another study drawing on estimates by offenders of the percent of Native girls and boys who have been sexually abused, and on surveys of survivors, and interviews with community service agency workers, estimated that between 75 and 80 percent of Native girls and at least 50 percent of Native boys were sexually abused under the age of eight (Native Women's Association of the Northwest Territories, 1989).

To the best of my knowledge, there is no empirically reliable study that has been conducted in the Northwest Territories to assess the incidence and nature of family violence. Thus, due to the lack of such research, it is difficult to determine the exact extent of family violence these areas (Women's Secretariat, 1986). Clearly, the few studies which have attempted to investigate family violence in the Northwest Territories have revealed an alarmingly high incidence of violence, especially violence directed toward Native women and children (Darkes, 1985; Native Women's Association of the Northwest Territories, 1989).

Given the lack of empirical studies in the north and the concern by northern Native leaders and women's groups over widespread family violence in northern communities,

there is clearly a need for more research. And, because the situation in the Northwest Territories appears to be significantly different from the rest of Canada, placing family violence in its social, historical, cultural, and geographic context may provide greater insight into the problem and potential solutions. Therefore, the purposes of this thesis are as follows:

(a) to utilize data gathered by a shelter located in the Northwest Territories to describe the characteristics of those abused and their abusers, the nature and extent of abuse experienced by the shelter sample, the context in which they were abused, factors that contribute to the abuse, the kinds of assistance available to those who were abused, how and when the abused sought help and the outcomes of such help;

(b) to describe the unique issues present in communities of the Northwest Territories including the social and historical context of violence in the north, and the problems of geographic isolation and resource mobilization;

(c) to use this descriptive data and the literature review to develop a more complete picture of the context in which violence occurs in families living in the north;

(d) to apply a Human Ecological Systems perspective (which emphasizes the importance of context and identifies several levels of systems) in attempting to understand family violence in Canada's north and the context in which

it occurs; and,

(e) to suggest some policy and program approaches or initiatives consistent with a Human Ecological Systems perspective.

Thus, in the following chapters, I review theories which have been applied to explain family violence and then describe a Human Ecological Systems perspective and its helpfulness in understanding family violence and the context in which it occurs. Then, I review the social and historical context of violence in the north and the problems of geographic isolation and resource mobilization. Next, I present findings from the shelter data and integrate this data to provide a more complete picture of violence in the north and its contexts. Finally, I use the Human Ecological Systems perspective to lend understanding of violence in the Northwest Territories and suggest initiatives to deal with the violence in these areas.

It is my hope that this thesis will provide a small step toward a greater understanding of family violence in the north.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Perspectives on Family Violence

A number of theoretical perspectives have been proposed in an attempt to explain family violence. Some of the earliest attempts were to lend understanding about why women stay in abusive relationships rather than why men batter. For example, Walker's (1979) application of learned helplessness theory describes the process of how and why battered women remain in abusive relationships. According to this theory, battered women are unlikely to leave their battering relationships when they develop a belief of helplessness. Exchange theory also has been used to explain why abused women choose to stay with or return to their abusive partners. This theory postulates that people attempt to maximize rewards and minimize costs in a relationship and their assessment of the rewards and costs in any given relationship are compared to what they believe is available in other relationships (Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In this view, if an abused woman stays with, or returns to, an abusive partner, it is assumed that she perceives her alternatives as less rewarding or more costly than her current situation (Gelles & Straus, 1979; Johnson, 1992; Okun, 1988; Pfouts, 1978). Although these perspectives have helped us understand why abused women may stay in abusive relationships or return to abusive relationships, they can be criticized for focusing on the woman and her responsibility for being in, or

remaining in, an abusive situation rather than focusing on why men batter or why violent relationships are so common in our society. Furthermore, this focus on the woman can be criticized for contributing to blaming the victim.

Other theoretical perspectives have tended to focus on why men batter their female partners and why men who were abused as children or who witnessed their father abuse their mother during childhood were more likely to become abusive husbands (Coleman, 1980; Hamberger & Hastings, 1991; Johnston, 1988; Straus et al., 1980). For example, social learning theory has been used to explain how men learn violence in their families of origin and carry this learned behavior into their future intimate relationships (Bandura, 1973; Gelles & Straus, 1979; Steinmetz, 1987).

Learned helplessness theory, exchange theory, and social learning theory can be criticized for narrowly focusing on individuals (or at best, couples or families) without taking into account the social and political context. In contrast, feminist perspectives have directed attention to the patriarchal structure of western societies, traditional sex role attitudes, beliefs about family affairs being private and, until very recently, legislation that condones men's ownership of, and authority over, women and children as contributing to the tolerance of violence within families and to acceptance or normalization of women being "appropriate" victims of violence within domestic relationships (Dobash & Dobash,

1977-78, 1979).

Feminist theory, like other theoretical perspectives, can be criticized for focusing on only "one piece of the puzzle" -- the social and political contexts. All the aforementioned theories are inadequate or limited in explaining family violence because they do not consider the whole picture (including the individual, couple, familial, developmental, social, and historical contexts) in which family violence occurs.

Recently, family theorists and scholars have suggested the usefulness of holistic theories that take into account the various contexts in which families live (Doherty, Boss, LaRossa, Schumm, & Steinmetz, 1993). It is this kind of holistic perspective that I believe may be useful in helping us understand the significant problem of family violence in Canada's north. I believe that such a perspective would need to include social, cultural, historical, geographic and local community contexts in which families living in the north are situated. Considering the role these contextual factors likely play in contributing to family violence will help us understand this problem and its origins and may provide insight into the development of initiatives to address the problem.

A Human Ecological Systems Perspective

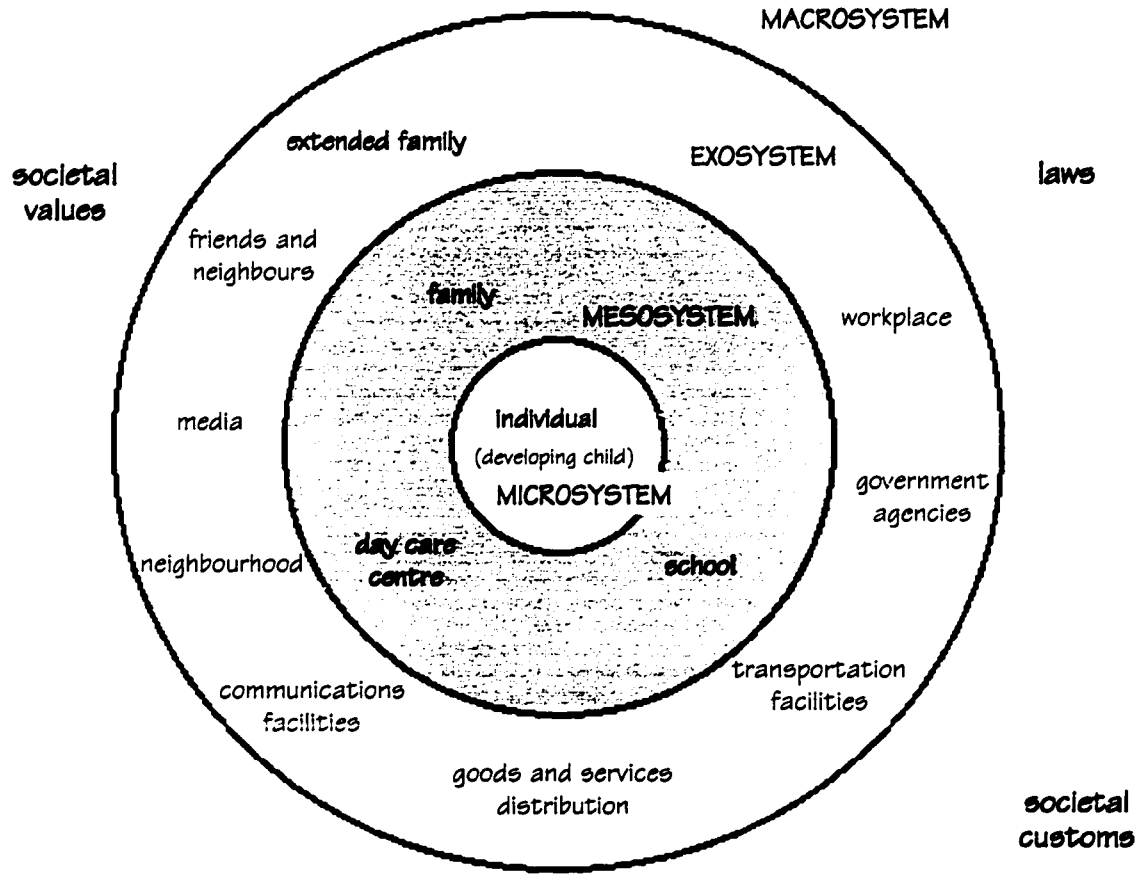
Bronfenbrenner's (1977, 1992) Ecological Systems theory focuses on the individual, the environment, and the interaction between the two. Bronfenbrenner posits multiple

levels or systems of the larger ecological environment. For Bronfenbrenner, the ecological environment is conceived as a nested arrangement of different structures, each structure within the next. This theory was developed to explain the impact of various contexts on child development. (See Figure 1 for an illustration of Bronfenbrenner's model.)

Although Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory is not specifically a theory of family process or family development, it offers a framework for examining ways in which intrafamilial processes are influenced by extrafamilial environments and conditions and can expand the contexts of individual development to family development (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). Bronfenbrenner's theory can be adapted by including concepts from Human Ecological theory to make it more comprehensive. According to Bubolz and Sontag (1993), Human Ecology theory focuses on the interaction and interdependence of people as individuals, groups, and societies with their environment. People adapting to their environment is a key process. Thus, the quality of people's lives and the quality of the environment are interdependent.

The Human Ecological concept of environment involves three distinct yet interrelated environments including the natural physical-biological, the human built, and the social-cultural (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). Although Bronfenbrenner's theory considers the social-cultural

Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

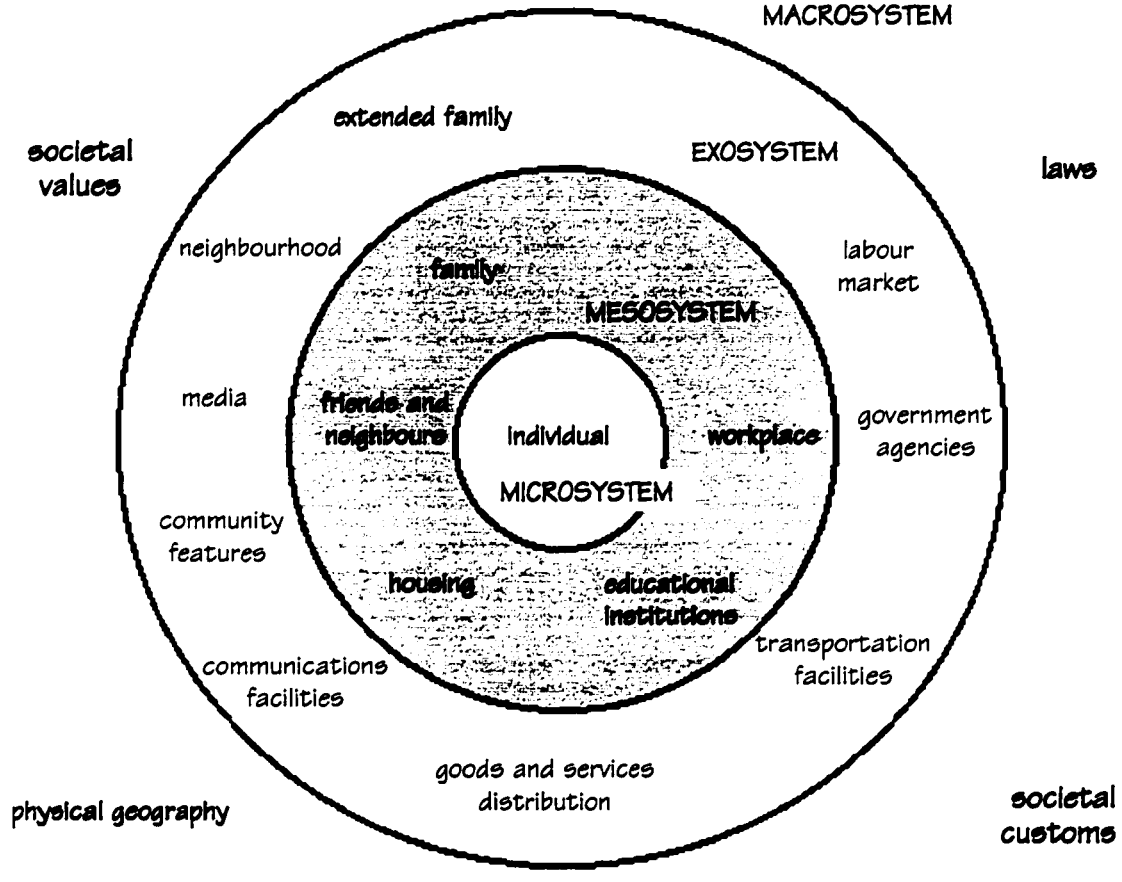


Source: Concepts taken and adapted from Bronfenbrenner, U., 1977, **American Psychologist**, 32, pp. 514-515; Bronfenbrenner, U., 1986, **Developmental Psychology**, 22, pp. 726-727.

environment, it lacks in considering the physical geography of the environment. Land, roads, housing, and urban settlements are part the environment which influence people's development and behavior (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). Bronfenbrenner's theory with some additional Human Ecological concepts can be used to consider various factors that are likely to be important in understanding family violence in northern Canada. To the best of my knowledge, such a perspective has not been used to examine spousal abuse, but Belsky's (1984) took some features of Bronfenbrenner's perspective and developed an ecological model to help explain child maltreatment and how abusive parenting strategies can be repeated from one generation to the next. Because an ecological perspective was useful in understanding child maltreatment, such a perspective also could be useful to lend understanding of spousal abuse in the north. (See Figure 2 for the Human Ecological Systems Model.)

Figure 2 illustrates a model of human development that considers various contexts impacting violent behavior. In this model, the individual in an abusive relationship is part of the microsystem. An individual is embedded in many different systems containing various settings or contexts which have an impact on violent behavior in that individual's relationship and what the individual can do about the abusive situation. The following describes some examples of how some of those settings or contexts are

Figure 2. Human Ecological Systems Model



Source: Concepts taken and adapted from Bronfenbrenner, U., 1977, **American Psychologist**, 32, pp. 514-515; Bubolz, M. M. & Sontag, M. S., 1993, in **Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods: A Contextual Approach**, edited by P. G. Boss, W. J. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. R. Schumm and S. K. Steinmetz, pp. 432-433.

important in understanding family violence in the north.

To understand family violence in the Canadian north, it is important to consider the physical geography of the north. As part of the macrosystem, physical geography can have an impact on many settings or contexts of the other systems such as transportation and communication facilities, distribution of goods and services (hospital and medical services, police and legal services, shelters, and day cares), urban settlements, and housing. For example, the physical geography of the north can determine the location of roads and land for transportation to various services. Also, the north's physical geography can have an impact on the availability of communication facilities for those who need to contact various services for help. Furthermore, physical geography can influence the distribution of goods and services throughout the north. Specifically, if an abused woman is in need of medical attention, police or legal assistance, safe refuge from her partner, or day care for her children, the location of these resources and services can determine whether or not she receives such services. Physical geography also can influence the size, demographic features, and location of communities, such as urban settlements. In turn, this can determine the location of goods and services in northern communities. Finally, the location of housing for an abused woman's living requirements can be affected by the north's physical

geography. Therefore, the isolated physical geography of the Canadian north can influence a number of factors which would be likely important to an abused woman attempting to deal with her situation.

Values, customs, and laws of a particular culture or society are also part of the macrosystem which can influence contexts of other systems. Northern culture, particularly Aboriginal culture, can play a role in the kind of services that are appropriate for an abused woman in the north who needs help. In addition, Aboriginal culture can influence the role of the extended family on assisting an abused woman and her immediate family. Furthermore, the laws of Aboriginal culture can determine an abuser's accountability and how they are held accountable for their abuse. Hence, various cultural aspects of the north are also important to consider in understanding family violence in the Northwest Territories.

Contexts within the north's exosystem also can impact contexts within the mesosystem. For example, the availability and distribution of communications, transportation facilities, and various goods and services throughout the north can determine the availability of these resources within an abused woman's local community or neighbourhood. If such resources and services are not immediately available in her community, this can have an influence on whether or not an abused woman can leave her abusive partner. Moreover, funding from various

governmental agencies and departments can influence availability of goods and services throughout the north, especially in an abused woman's local community. Again, this can determine the availability and access to these resources. Because of their impact on an abused woman's options, different contexts in the mesosystem are also important to consider in understanding family violence in the Northwest Territories.

As illustrated, this Human Ecological perspective suggests the importance of considering the role that familial, social, cultural, historical, political, and geographic contexts would likely play in contributing to family violence in Canada's north and in considering initiatives to address this problem. However, this perspective does not have the characteristics of a formal theory that would allow for specific predictions. It is a theoretical framework which is useful for its explanatory ability.

In the following two chapters, I review what is known about social and historical contexts of violence, various social and socio-economic conditions, and the problems of geographic isolation and resource mobilization in the Northwest Territories.

CHAPTER 3

The Social Context of Violence in the North

The Current Situation

The Canadian north is a place of violence and social problems. Recent crime statistics show that the Northwest Territories has the highest overall crime rate in Canada and also the highest violent crime rate in Canada (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 1995a). The overall crime rate in the Northwest Territories is about three times the national average and the violent crime is more than five times the national average (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 1995a). The sexual assault rate is over eight times the national average and the average annual homicide rate in the past decade is six times the Canadian average (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 1995a; 1995b). Table 1 summarizes these statistics.

Moreover, as described in the introduction, there are also significant problems of family violence in the Northwest Territories. Although only a handful of studies have investigated family violence in the Northwest Territories, they all have revealed a high incidence of wife abuse and child sexual abuse in northern communities. And, community leaders, particularly Native leaders, have expressed considerable concern about the high levels of family violence in the Northwest Territories (Kakfwi, 1993; Women's Secretariat, 1986).

Several factors have been considered by experts and

Table 1

Crime Rates[a] for the Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) and Canada

Type of Crime	N.W.T.	Canada
Overall (1994)[b, c]	24,661	9,002
Violent (1994)[b, d]	5,543	1,037
Sexual Assault (1994)[b, e]	904	108
Homicide (1984-1993)[f]	14.60	2.42

[a] Rates per 100,000 population

[b] Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. (1995a). Table 7. Selected Criminal Code incidents, Canada and the Provinces/Territories, 1994, p. 32.

[c] Includes incidents of violent crime, property crime and other criminal code incidents (excluding traffic offences). Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. (1995a), p. 32.

[d] Offences involving the threat or actual application of force to a person (homicide, attempted murder, various non-sexual and sexual assaults, robbery, and abduction). Statistics Canada. (1994b), p. 11.

[e] Includes Levels 1, 2, and 3. Level 1: threat, attempt, or actual sexual assault. Level 2: sexual assault which involves using a weapon, threatening a third party or causing bodily harm. Level 3: sexual assault which involves wounding, maiming, disfiguring, or endangering the victim's life. Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (1994), p. 2.

[f] Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (1995b). Table 1. Homicides by Province/Territory, 1993 and 1994, p. 4.

northern leaders to contribute to the violent nature of the Northwest Territories (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Griffiths, Zellerer, Wood, & Saville, 1995; Kakfwi, 1993; Task Force on Spousal Assault, 1985). Such factors are family breakdown, loss of traditional cultural values (elimination of cultural pride), low self-esteem, loss of sense of family, loss of parenting skills, self-destructive behavior, and internalizing white man's devaluation of women. The following is a discussion of these factors.

Historical and Psychological Factors Contributing to Northern Violence

Although it is not clear whether the residential school experiences augmented any existing violence in Native communities or if these residential school experiences caused violence which did not exist before in these communities, family breakdown has been considered as one of the main contributors to the current high levels of violence in Native communities (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Traditionally, the extended family was the main provider and educator of Native children and it was a cohesive unit (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; York, 1990). Before the missionaries' arrival, Native children learned by observing their parents and elders within their extended family (York, 1990). Thus, the extended family and community were intimately involved in children's education (York, 1990).

Once colonization took place, Native children were separated from their families and sent to residential schools for most of the year (Canadian Council on Social Development & Native Women's Association of Canada, 1991; Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Coates, 1991; York, 1990). From the late 1800's until the late 1960's, residential schools were the main institution in Native communities across the country (York, 1990) and the north (Coates, 1991). The schools were founded and operated by Catholic, Protestant and Anglican missionaries and the churches were allowed by the federal government to control Native education (Coates, 1991; York, 1990). Priests and nuns were the teachers at these residential schools (York, 1990; Hodgson, 1990). The main purpose of these residential schools was to prepare the Native children for mainstream white society (Bell, 1995; Canadian Council on Social Development & Native Women's Association of Canada, 1991; Wassaykeeic, 1995; York, 1990). This was done by civilizing "barbaric" and "savage" Native children into faithful Christians (York, 1990). This approach resulted in destroying much of their Native culture (Canadian Council on Social Development & Native Women's Association of Canada, 1991; Coates, 1991; Wassaykeesic, 1995; York, 1990).

Numerous residential school survivors have testified to this. For example, "the government wanted to turn us into white people" (Bell, 1995, p. 10).

> "...The residential school system was engaged in a campaign to eradicate Native culture...the federal government was attempting to assimilate Native people into the dominant society."
> (Wassaykeesic, 1995, p. 138)

Much abuse was suffered by these children in attempts to assimilate them (Knockwood, 1992; York, 1990). Native children were not allowed to speak in their Native language or practice their Native customs (Canadian Council on Social Development & Native Women's Association of Canada, 1991; Canadian Panel on Violence Against women, 1993; Coates, 1991). Often, the children were physically punished to prevent them from doing so (Hodgson, 1990).

> "The major emphasis in the language program seemed to be to prevent the students from speaking Cree or any other Native language. Any student caught speaking an Indian language was punished on the spot....A boy... started speaking Ojibway ...Before he could be warned he was hauled out of line and strapped."
> (Funk, 1995, p. 67)

Ruby Dunstan, who attended a residential school from 1948 to 1953, said "We couldn't eat our own foods, they wouldn't let us pray in an Indian way, they whipped the hell out of us..." (York, 1990, p. 35). There are also documented cases of sexual abuse of the Native children by some priests (Hodgson, 1990; York, 1990) and dormitory supervisors (Hodgson, 1990; York, 1990).

As a result of the separation from parents and the abuse experienced in residential schools, many Native children suffered significant negative psychological effects, even years later as adults. Many experienced elimination of cultural pride and developed a sense of

inferiority and low self-esteem. "My experiences at residential school taught me to be insecure, to be unsure of myself, to be uncertain of me" (Fontaine, 1995, p. 54).

> "There was never anything that represented a positive reinforcement of who we were...,so we never developed a positive image of ourselves. We were taught to forget who we were and to accept everything about the outside so we could emulate the non-Indian."
> (Fontaine, 1995, pp. 49-50)

> "A lot of us left residential school as mixed-up human beings, not able to cope with family or life. Many of us came out with a huge inferiority complex...We had been made to feel as inadequate people unable to cope with life."
> (Guss, 1995, p. 85)

Others felt disconnected and alienated with no sense of family.

> "My spirit was broken by the age of nine. I didn't know where I belonged. I had no home or family left. I was ashamed of who I was. My loneliness was great. I couldn't talk about anything as fear had taken over my life."
> (Charland, 1995, p. 30)

> "At home I learned certain things about love and how it was expressed, but that was cast aside when I went to residential school. There, I was completely cut off from my parents and I lost a lot. I lost my sense of family..."
> (Fontaine, 1995, p. 53)

Another serious consequence of growing up in residential schools was the inability to parent because they were without healthy role models for parenting or caregiving. This inability to parent then became part of a cycle of violence.

> "I did a terrible job as a parent...I was that ugly person I had been told I was since a child. My anger and rage were killing me and killing my children's spirit. Many times I tried to commit suicide in an attempt to stop all the pain and hurt in my life. I didn't teach my children any values, beliefs, culture, or language. I didn't have anything to give except my rage."
> (Charland, 1995, pp. 31-32)

> "Some looked on the school as a refuge from homes where they were abused, frequently by parents who had themselves attended the school and learned physical punishment as a method of child-rearing."
> (Knockwood, 1995, p. 156)

> "...Alcohol became my crutch and a way of life for me. I lived to have fun and to drink myself into oblivion. I did that for years."
> (Fontaine, 1995, p. 55)

Not only did children separated from their extended families lose their cultural values, cultural pride, and sense of family, but it has been argued that colonization has negatively affected all Aboriginals, particularly the value of Aboriginal women within their own communities (Canadian Council on Social Development & Native Women's Association of Canada, 1991; LaRocque, 1993). Before colonization, Aboriginal women enjoyed comparative honor, equality, and political power in their communities (LaRocque, 1993). During these traditional times, women within the extended family and community were decision makers and the planners (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Mancini Billson, 1990). They participated in the governing process and they were considered as the life-giver of the people (Canadian Council on Social Development & Native Women's Association of Canada, 1991). Although

violence against women in Aboriginal communities did occur in those traditional times before colonization (LaRocque, 1993; Task Force On Spousal Assault, 1985), including northern Aboriginal communities (Griffiths et al., 1995; Task Force on Spousal Assault, 1985), it is believed that the European invasion exacerbated the extent, nature and potential violence in traditional Aboriginal culture (LaRocque, 1993). In addition, it is argued that Aboriginal men adopted or internalized the white man's cultural devaluation of women which has further contributed to the violence in Aboriginal communities (LaRocque, 1993). Many argue that these changes had negative influences in northern Native communities and have contributed to the current problems of spousal assault (Task Force on Spousal Assault, 1985).

Current Social Problems Contributing to Northern Violence

According to Sellars (1995), suicide, alcoholism, Natives' low self-esteem, sexual abuse, loss of cultural values and language, loss of pride, loss of parenting skills, family breakdown, dependency on others, and other social problems that Native peoples experience can be traced back to the abuse suffered at those residential schools. Furthermore, a number of these problems have been cited as contributors to the current violent context in the Northwest Territories (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Griffiths et al., 1995; Mancini Billson, 1990; Task Force on Spousal Assault, 1985). The following is a

description of alcohol abuse, lack of education, unemployment, and poverty in the Northwest Territories (particularly among Aboriginals).

Alcohol abuse

In 1989-90, the Northwest Territories had the second highest alcohol consumption per capita in Canada (Addiction Research Foundation, 1992). Specifically, the consumption of alcoholic beverages in drinks per week per person was 14.1 in the Northwest Territories and 10.8 for Canada (Addiction Research Foundation, 1992). Only the Yukon had higher alcohol consumption per capita than the Northwest Territories (Addiction Research Foundation, 1992).

In addition to alcohol abuse, people in the Northwest Territories, especially Aboriginals, face problems which negatively affect their standard of living or financial quality of life.

Lack of education

Although Aboriginals across Canada tend to have lower levels of education than non-Aboriginals, the difference is more pronounced in the Northwest Territories. Almost half of Aboriginals in the Northwest Territories have less than grade nine education compared to about three percent of non-Aboriginals (Statistics Canada, 1995). And, only one percent of Aboriginals in the Northwest Territories have a university degree while about 20 percent of non-Aboriginals in the Northwest Territories have a university degree (Statistics Canada, 1995). See Table 2 for details of

education levels.

Table 2

Education Levels[a] for the Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) and Canada

Education Level	N.W.T.		Canada	
	A	N-A	A	N-A
Less than grade 9	45.9	3.1	18.4	13.8
Grades 9 to 13				
No certificate	20.8	17.0	32.2	24.0
Certificate	4.0	12.1	10.7	14.9
Trades certificate/Diploma	3.5	3.6	3.4	4.0
Other non-university				
No certificate	8.6	5.8	8.3	6.5
Certificate	14.0	24.5	14.8	15.8
University				
No certificate	1.0	6.2	3.8	4.4
Certificate	1.4	7.5	3.7	5.1
Degree	1.0	20.3	4.7	11.6

[a] Percentages of population 15 years and over calculated from data presented in Statistics Canada. (1995). Profile of Canada's Aboriginal Population (1991 Census of Canada). Ottawa: Industry, Science of Technology Canada. pp. 16-17, 240-243.

A = Aboriginal
N-A = Non-Aboriginal

Unemployment

In a survey of northern communities, including the Northwest Territories, northern Labrador, and Nunavik (northern Quebec), unemployment was identified as a serious problem (Pauktuutit, 1990). The Northwest Territories unemployment rate of 13.3 percent is noticeably higher than the overall Canadian rate of 10.2 percent (Statistics

Canada, 1995). Higher unemployment rates in the north are completely accounted for by Aboriginal peoples. For instance, the unemployment rate among Aboriginals in the Northwest Territories is almost six times the unemployment rate for non-Aboriginals (Statistics Canada, 1995). See Table 3 for details on unemployment rates.

Table 3

Unemployment Rates for the Northwest Territories

Ethnicity	Gender		Total
	M	F	
Aboriginal[a]	26.1	22.0	24.3
Non-Aboriginal[b]	3.6	4.8	4.1

[a] Rates per 100 population 15 years and over presented in Statistics Canada. (1995). Profile of Canada's Aboriginal population (1991 Census of Canada). Ottawa: Industry, Science & Technology Canada. pp. 242, 244.

[b] Rates per 100 population 15 years and over calculated from data presented in Statistics Canada. (1995). Profile of Canada's Aboriginal population (1991 Census of Canada). Ottawa: Industry, Science & Technology Canada. pp. 242-245.

Poverty

Poverty is a problem resulting from lack of employment. Although Statistics Canada (1994d) does not identify a poverty level for the Northwest Territories, an examination of income data reveals much higher percentages of individuals in the Northwest Territories with incomes below $10,000 (Statistics Canada, 1995). Again, more Aboriginals than non-Aboriginals are represented in the

lower income levels in the Northwest Territories. Almost half of all Aboriginals and about 14 percent of non-Aboriginals have incomes of less than $10,000 (Statistics Canada, 1995). In contrast, approximately five percent of Aboriginals and about 30 percent of non-Aboriginals have incomes of $50,000 and over (Statistics Canada, 1995). See Table 4 for details of income levels for the Northwest Territories.

Table 4

Income Levels[a] for the Northwest Territories

Income Level	Ethnicity		Total
	A	N-A	
Less than $10,000	47.9	14.3	32.1
$10,000 to $19,999	21.5	13.0	17.5
$20,000 to $29,999	11.0	13.6	12.2
$30,000 to $39,999	8.8	14.8	11.6
$40,000 to $49,999	5.5	13.8	9.4
$50,000 and over	5.3	30.6	17.2

[a] Percentages of population 15 years and over calculated from Statistics Canada. (1995). Profile of Canada's Aboriginal population (1991 Census of Canada). Ottawa: Industry, Science & Technology Canada. pp. 252, 253.

A = Aboriginal
N-A = Non-Aboriginal

And, although the income of Aboriginal men and women across Canada is less than non-Aboriginals, this discrepancy is exaggerated in the Northwest Territories. In the Northwest Territories, Aboriginal men earn less than half of what non-Aboriginal men earn and Aboriginal women earn about half of what non-Aboriginal women earn

(Statistics Canada, 1995). See Table 5 for details of annual incomes.

Table 5

Annual Incomes ($) for the Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) and Canada

Gender and Ethnicity	N.W.T.	Canada
Male		
Aboriginal[a]	18,480	20,578
Non-Aboriginal[b]	41,476	30,481
Female		
Aboriginal[a]	13,627	13,489
Non-Aboriginal[b]	27,143	17,704

[a] Average income for population 15 years and over presented in Statistics Canada. (1995). Profile of Canada's Aboriginal population (1991 Census of Canada). Ottawa: Industry, Science & Technology Canada. pp. 28, 252.

[b] Average income for population 15 years and over calculated from data presented in Statistics Canada. (1995). Profile of Canada's Aboriginal population (1991 Census of Canada). Ottawa: Industry, Science & Technology Canada. pp. 18, 19, 28, 29, 242, 243, 252, 253.

In the Northwest Territories, many people, including Aboriginals, face socio-economic conditions within the context of violence. The violence and socio-economic conditions that people living in the north may create an atmosphere of despair and hopelessness which contributes to a tolerance of these conditions, particularly a tolerance of violence.

Tolerance of Violence

Northern Native leaders claim that a "conspiracy of silence" or a tolerance of violence, particularly family

violence, exists within the northern context of violence and socio-economic conditions (Kakfwi, 1993). This tolerance of violence is partly related to Aboriginal family values. Dependence on one's family has been the sole means of economic and social survival and Aboriginal women have been taught to uphold the tradition of the family, even at their own safety's expense (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Although Aboriginal families are traditionally known for providing nurturing, love, and protection for its members, Aboriginal female victims of wife abuse are often ostracized by their families if they disclosed their abuse because such an admission would publicly shame their families in the eyes of the Aboriginal community (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). To avoid shaming their families, many abused women do not say anything about their abuse (Mancini Billson, 1990). In particular, they risk being stigmatized, shunned, and criticized by their family and community if they seek a divorce to halt their partners' assaultive behavior (Mancini Billson, 1990). Also, families of the batterers sometimes pull together in order to protect the batterers and may reject female victims because they are viewed as "outsiders" or those who have turned against their people (Y.W.C.A., 1990). Aboriginal women are often forced to abandon their community, their home and often their children to seek refuge in a larger community to escape retaliation from their batterers and/or

their families (Griffiths et al., 1995).

Often, there is great pressure placed on Aboriginal women to remain in their abusive situations or return to their partners (Griffiths et al., 1995). Through threats of losing their children to the authorities, many Aboriginal women stay with their abusive partners for the sake of keeping the family together (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Aboriginal victims' family, including parents and grandparents, encourage them to stay with or return to their partners for the children's, families', and communities' sakes (Task Force on Spousal Assault, 1985). Thus, many Aboriginal victims refrain from making complaints, looking for help, or leaving their abusive partners (Task Force on Spousal Assault, 1985). Women also may believe that is not possible to survive outside their families or relationships (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Therefore, these women stay in abusive relationships due to low self-esteem, fear, threats, intimidation, pressure from their families and community (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993).

In addition, Aboriginal women may feel that no one is available in their communities to help them or that no one will even believe that they need help (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). For example, not only is there a shortage of available police services in the Northwest Territories, but some R.C.M.P. officers in northern communities tolerate the violence by not

responding to calls for help. "There is only one person to police the whole town. Anytime I call the police, they don't bother to come" (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p. 123).

> "The R.C.M.P. is an accomplice to the crime when they ignore my call for help. They say they can't do anything until the crime is committed. That is too late."
> (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p. 170)

> "As my partner and I were patrolling, we saw a man beating up a Native woman. When I wanted to interfere, my partner said, `No, he'll take care of it.' The man dragged the woman by the hair into an apartment building, and my partner said, `See, he took care of it.'"
> (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p. 171)

In small northern communities, Aboriginal police officers can be reluctant to press charges because they know the abusers as friends or family (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). In fact, the police can be abusers themselves (Griffiths et al., 1995). Also, these officers may be under political pressure by the chiefs and council members to whom they report (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Such a lack of support is one of the main reasons for the underreporting of violence against women (Griffiths et al., 1995).

Even when abusers are charged, the court system also demonstrates a tolerance for violence by handing down lenient sentences for the crime (Griffiths et al., 1995). In fact, sentences of the Territorial Court in the Baffin region were perceived as inappropriately lenient by Inuits

and non-Inuits (Griffiths et al., 1995). There is concern about the lack of offender accountability as reflected in the following: "...He was given two months custody for assaulting his wife and he was given four months custody for beating the dog to death" (Griffiths et al., 1995, p. 135); "...A man beat his wife and caused a great deal of physical harm. He got thirty days" (Griffiths et al., 1995, p. 135). Other examples of lenient sentences for offenders of wife abuse include a man with a history of violent crime received a 20 month jail sentence for slicing the throat of his common-law wife while she played cards and another man was sentenced three and a half months for violating a restraining order and assaulting a woman for the third time in less one year (Feschuk, 1993). Not surprisingly, female victims of violence in northern communities have little faith in the criminal justice system to provide protection for them or to intervene with the perpetrator to decrease the probability of abuse (Griffiths et al., 1995). Thus, it is difficult for Aboriginal women to get police and legal assistance because the tolerance of violence among the officers and justice system.

People in leadership positions are also tolerant of violence in their own communities. Recently, it has been reported that some elected Aboriginal leaders and politicians physically and sexually abused Aboriginal women and children (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women,

1993). For example, one-sixth of Northwest Territories members of legislature have been charged with, or convicted of, violent crimes and at least two government members have been convicted of spousal assault (Feschuk, 1993). According to Feschuk (1993), such rates among members of legislature do not exist anywhere else in Canada. In addition, it also has been reported that Aboriginal leaders have abused their positions of authority and the public's trust by exonerating family and friends of wife assault, sexual assault, and child sexual assault charges (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Abusers have been found to be ministers, mayors, and officials of various agencies and organizations in the Northwest Territories (Griffiths et al., 1995). Because of the social status of these people, attempts at disciplinary action against them by victims resulted in the victims' personal property being destroyed and in the victim's receiving threats of physical violence (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). This kind of power dynamic makes it extremely difficult for women to report violence against themselves and receive justice, especially if outside authorities are afraid to challenge political power (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993).

> "Big name persons, leaders, councillors, teachers, are abusing their wives and kids. No one will talk; they think that the big name person is more important than the victims, and they are afraid..."
> (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p. 135)

Summary

When one considers the historical and social context of violence in the Northwest Territories, it is perhaps not so surprising that there are significant problems of violence and social conditions. Experts claim that the high crime rates, pervasiveness of family violence, incidence of alcoholism and suicide, high unemployment rates, lack of education, and poverty in northern communities are considered to be a result of the residential school experiences of Aboriginals. The current atmosphere of despair and hopelessness may create a tolerance of violence, particularly violence against women and children. Ironically, the tolerance of violence in northern Aboriginal communities is among people in positions of power and authority, the very same people meant to provide protection of the citizens they serve. Tolerance of violence among police, court judges, politicians and Aboriginal leaders contributes to the perpetuation of the victimization of Aboriginal women and children.

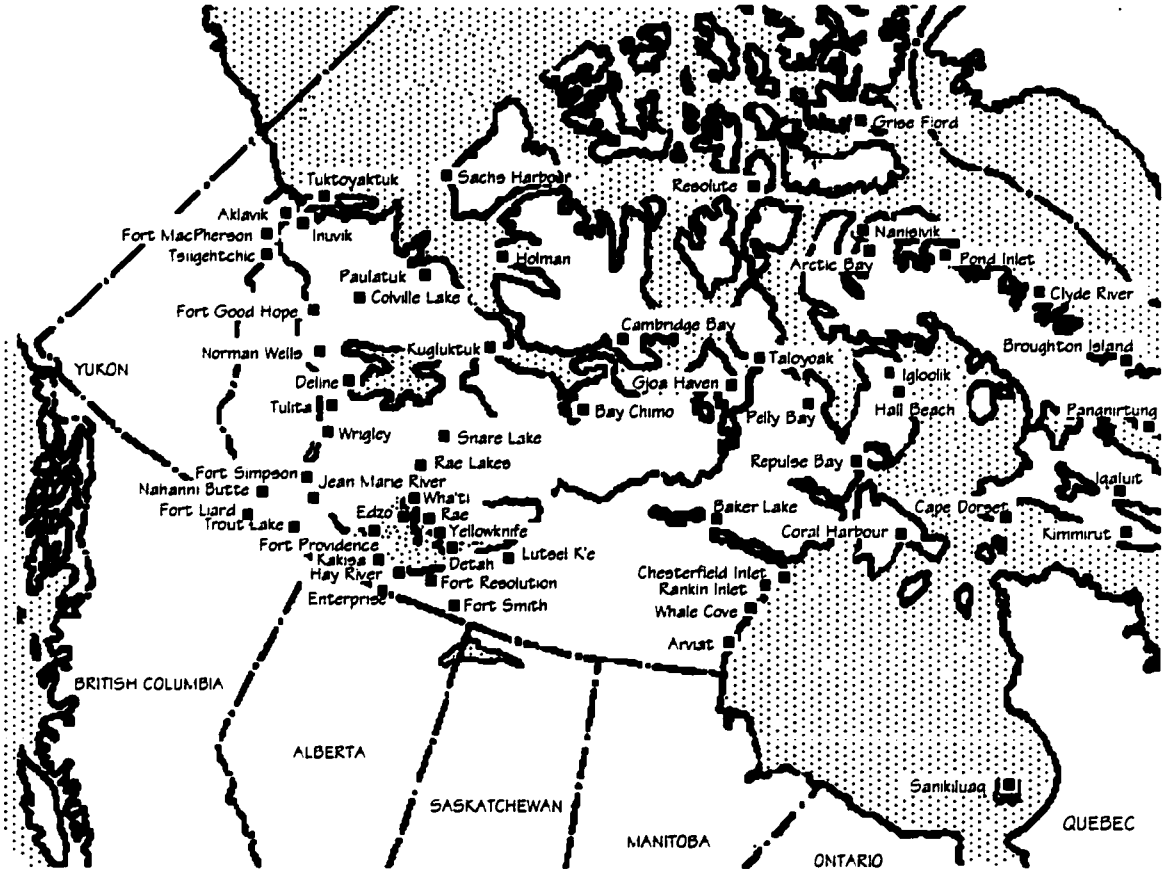
CHAPTER 4

Geographic Isolation and Resource Mobilization

The Canadian North is a vast area consisting of two territories: the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. According to the most recent census data, the Yukon is 531,843 square kilometres and has a population of 27,797 (Statistics Canada, 1992). Twenty-three percent of the Yukon's population is Aboriginal (percentage calculated from Statistics Canada, 1994a, p. 97). The Northwest Territories is significantly larger and covers 3,246,389 square kilometres and has a population of 57,649 (Statistics Canada, 1992). Sixty-two percent of the population of the Northwest Territories is Aboriginal (percentage calculated from Statistics Canada, 1994a, p. 97). The Northwest Territories has 60 communities with the majority consisting of populations between 100 to 1000 (Northwest Territories Data Book 1990/91, 1990; Statistics Canada, 1992). See Figure 3 for a map of the Northwest Territories. As you can see from examining Figure 3, communities are spread all over the Northwest Territories and are often separated by vast distances across land and/or water.

The geographic location of some Aboriginal communities in Canada is a condition which results in unique problems for the people of these communities. In particular, Aboriginal communities in the Northwest Territories experience a number of problems which are unlike problems

Figure 3. Communities of the Northwest Territories



Map adapted from Northwest Territories Data Book, 1990/91. Outcrop Ltd. 1990. p 236

of Aboriginal communities in more central or southern parts of Canada. As a result of geographic isolation, many northern Native communities have a lack of resources or inadequate resources and lack of access to resources such as communication, transportation to services, law enforcement and legal services, medical services, shelters, housing, employment opportunities and training programs, child care, coordination of services, and Aboriginal services and workers. The following is a discussion of problems in accessing resources in Canada's North that we often take for granted in the rest of the country.

Communication

If one is experiencing a problem or crisis such as violence by one's partner or threat of violence, it is important to have some means of contacting or accessing help. In most parts of Canada, the telephone is the primary means by which we access help or we physically go to the location where the resource is housed. Both of these means of accessing resources in the Northwest Territories are limited because of the sparse population spread out over a vast geographic area. It is simply not feasible to physically house a wide range of resources for all communities. Moreover, the physical geography and dramatic seasonal changes can impede easy travel from one community to another. Thus, telephone communication becomes a critical means of accessing resources. Yet, telephone services have limitations in northern communities

(Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Twin, 1992). Many homes do not have telephones and even when there is access to a telephone, it is likely to be on a party-line in which there is the risk of others in the community overhearing the call (MacKenzie, 1988; Task Force on Spousal Assault, 1985). An abused woman may be reluctant to call because she is fearful of people in the community knowing about her situation (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996). Furthermore, the geographic distance of some communities would mean long distance phone calls to reach services or facilities for help or information (M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). Thus, abused women may have problems privately contacting police or medical services for help or obtaining information about shelters, employment and other resources.

There are nine crisis lines operating in the Northwest Territories, half of which operate out of Yellowknife. Some crisis lines are to provide assistance for a range of problems; whereas, others are specific to abused women (such as the ones operating out of the women's shelters in Yellowknife, Fort Smith, and Hay River). Some crisis lines are available on a 24 hour basis; whereas, others operate only during certain hours. Some are specific to particular regions and others are available to residents from all over the territory. Finally, some crisis lines are available through calling collect and others have a toll-free number (M. Lamon, personal communication, December 29, 1995; N.

McRee, personal communication, November 15, 1995).

Although there are a number of crisis lines available, many individuals are not aware of them, may not have free access to them, or understand how to operate them (M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). Because crisis lines vary in the target populations they are intended to serve, in times available, in regions they serve, whether they also have a toll-free line and/or a regular line, and whether collect calls are accepted, individuals may be confused about resources available to them. Also, because of low incomes, many cannot afford to pay for long distance phone calls and the phone company limits their service to local calls (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996; M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). As a result, abused women are not always aware of available services in other communities or how to get in touch with them (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996; M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996).

In addition, in the Northwest Territories, almost half of Aboriginal people reported an Aboriginal language as a home language and 14 percent of Aboriginal people have no knowledge of French or English (percentages calculated from Statistics Canada, 1995, pp. 236, 238). This means that some will experience language barriers when attempting to access crisis lines. All of these factors can contribute to a lack of communication facilities and services (or a

perceived lack of access to services) which increases an abused woman's physical and psychological isolation. The result is real or perceived barriers to accessing help which contributes to women staying in abusive relationships.

Transportation to Services

Not only is it difficult to reach services through telephone crisis lines, but transportation to various facilities creates problems due to the geographic distances between communities in the north. Some communities are several hundred kilometres or more from the closest community, town, or city (Griffiths et al., 1995). For example, in the Northwest Territories, an abused woman living in Wrigley would need to travel more than 900 kilometres to reach a shelter in Fort Smith. Furthermore, public transportation, such as buses, may be available, but connections may not always be convenient or direct (M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). "It's a great injustice to make a woman and her children stand on a highway in the cold weather at two a.m. waiting for a bus to Fort Smith..."(Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p. 171). Therefore, such long and inconvenient trips for women and their children would cause inevitable delays in getting help and also may reduce the likelihood of seeking help (M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996).

Another inconvenience for abused women who wish to

access services in the Northwest Territories is the lack of roads. Because roads do not exist in some northern communities, such as those on the Baffin Island and those on the eastern coast of the Northwest Territories, women and their children often need to be transported by plane to the nearest facility and this kind of transportation is very expensive (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; M. Argue, personal communication, April 1; M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996; Twin, 1992). For instance, "if a doctor does not agree with your choice of care, there is nobody else. You have to pay $2,500 for air fare and expenses to get a second opinion" (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p. 129). Considering that the annual income of Aboriginal women in the Northwest Territories is $13,627 and $27,143 for non-Aboriginal women (Statistics Canada, 1995), travelling by air would be a transport option only a few could afford. Not only could a woman's financial situation severely limit her transportation options, but abused women in areas without roads could feel isolated with no place to go and unlikely to seek help from services available in other communities (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996; A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996; M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996).

In addition to financial problems, there are other problems or barriers related to seeking help by flying to a larger community, such as Yellowknife or Iqaluit in the

Northwest Territories. For example, flying to another community removes the woman from her family and friends, removes her children from school, may involve disruption or termination of her employment which further contributes to financial problems (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Mancini Billson, 1990), and may involve relocation which would interfere with reconciliation attempts with a partner through professional assistance (Mancini Billson, 1990). Furthermore, the travel required to reach geographically distant services or facilities also creates a psychological isolation for women and children (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Therefore, the lack of services in their own communities coupled with the distant location of services and lack of convenient, direct transportation increases the psychological isolation of abused women and the likelihood that abused women and their children will remain in their abusive situations.

Law Enforcement and Legal Services

Law enforcement such as police is another resource which is lacking in northern Aboriginal communities. Although there are 48 R.C.M.P. detachments in the Northwest Territories, some communities such as Pelly Bay, Wrigley, and Colville Lake do not have R.C.M.P. detachments (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995). Also, officers are not always available on a 24 hour basis (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8,

1995). Due to a lack of available police services and geographic isolation of these communities, slow response times of police can range from as little as a half hour to as much as two weeks (A.R.A. Consultants, 1985; Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). The following demonstrates such problems with police services in the North: "There is only one person to police the whole town. Anytime I call the police they don't bother to come" (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p. 123); or, "Often you just get a recording, and the cops only answer it if they get bored" (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p. 123). Such inconsistent police availability makes police intervention an unlikely meaningful deterrent to family violence in many areas of the territory because abused women may not receive help when they call or they may not call at all (A.R.A. Consultants, 1985).

Limited legal services in the Northwest Territories also makes it difficult for abused women to get any legal assistance in their situations. Even though there are many legal clinics in the Northwest Territories, their services are not specifically for abused women (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995). There are only four Territorial courts which are located in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Hay River and Iqaluit with a total of five judges and only one Supreme Court located in Yellowknife with four judges. Justices of the Peace are available in

most communities and there are a few other courtworkers including defence lawyers and prosecutors who work mostly in Yellowknife (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication November 8, 1995). Due to the small populations of northern communities, competition between defendants and prosecutors for available legal services is not uncommon (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Often, there are conflict of interest situations between lawyers and courtworkers who represent abusers with peace bonds and also represent the victims (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993).

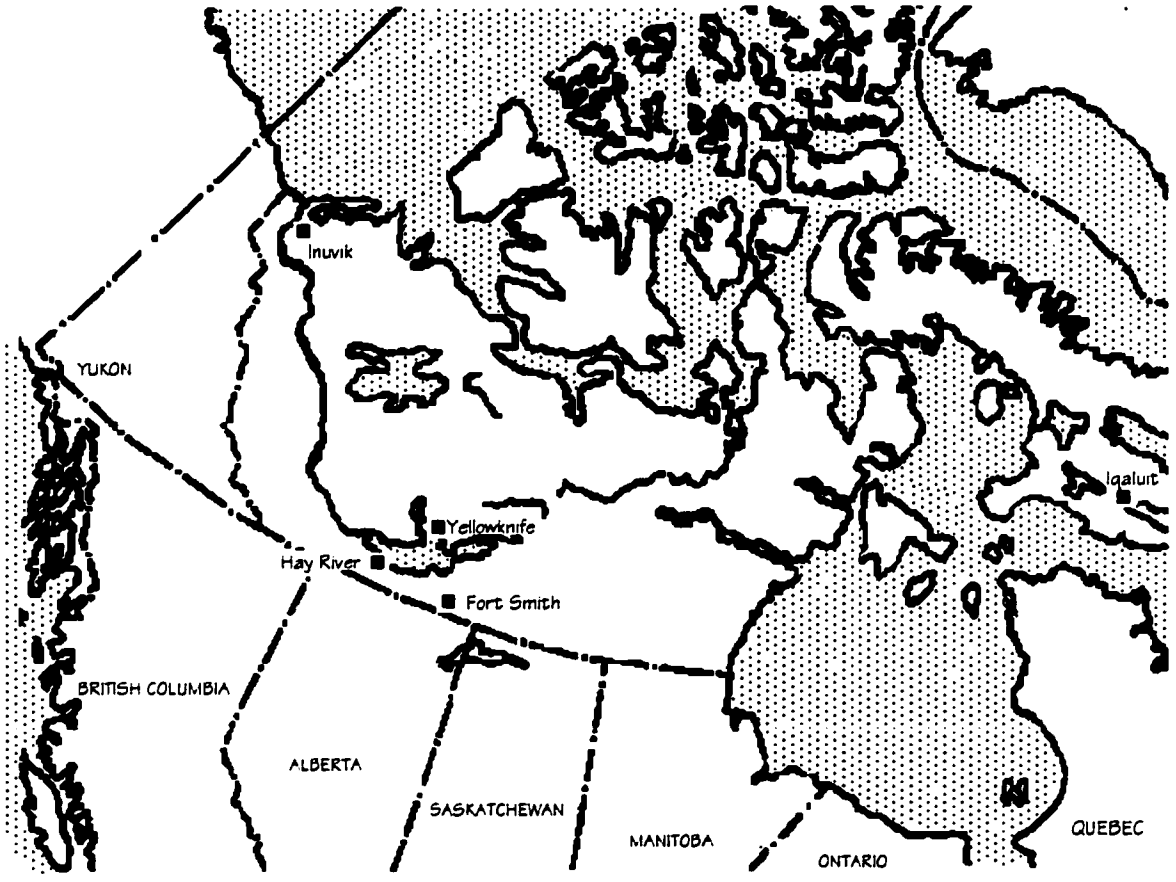
Because of the limited number of courts and courtworkers available in the Northwest Territories, Crown attorneys, judges, Justices of the Peace and defence counsel are flown into northern communities when needed (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Griffiths, 1985; Griffiths et al., 1995; S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995). For instance, court personnel are transported by plane from Yellowknife to Kugluktuk, Holman, Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, Pelly Bay, Taloyoak and then back to Yellowknife (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995). This is called the Circuit Court System (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Griffiths, 1985; Griffiths et al., 1995; S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995). A circuit court depends on the number of charges in communities. If there are too few, then no court personnel

are flown to communities because it would be too costly (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995). Even if there is a charge against an abused women's partner, limited legal services can create lengthy delays before receiving any assistance from the court system (Griffiths et al., 1995). All these problems contribute to difficulties for abused women in obtaining the legal assistance they need and increase the likelihood that abused women will not attempt to pursue legal action in their situations (Griffiths et al., 1995).

Medical Services

Not only are police and legal services limited in the Northwest Territories, but there is also a serious lack of medical services (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993 Canitz, 1990). For example, there are limited regionally based hospital services in Inuvik, Iqaluit, Hay River, Fort Smith, and Yellowknife (M. Argue, personal communication, November 1, 1995). See Figure 4 for locations of hospitals in the Northwest Territories. If one considers the location of these five hospitals relative to the location of the many small communities of the Northwest Territories, it is easy to see that many communities do not have easy access to hospital facilities. However, almost all communities have a Health Centre staffed by at least one nurse and sometimes as many as five or more nurses (M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995). Health care largely provided by nurses and they

Figure 4. Hospital Locations in the Northwest Territories



Map adapted from Northwest Territories Data Book, 1990/91. Outcrop Ltd., 1990. p. 236

tend to work only a few years at community nursing stations and then move on to work elsewhere (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Canitz, 1990). General practitioners come into communities to visit Health Centres only once every one or two months (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Canitz, 1990; M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995). Some specialized clinics are set up for a day or so in communities, but those who need medical attention must go to the closest clinic before it moves on to provide specialized services in another community (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Canitz, 1990). In the Northwest Territories, the direction and control of the majority of nursing stations are centralized in the cities of Yellowknife and Iqaluit (Canitz, 1990). Due to few resident doctors and medical services in northern communities, travel is required to these larger centres to receive medical attention (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Canitz, 1990; M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995). If necessary, patients are flown to hospitals outside of the Northwest Territories such as Edmonton, Churchill, Winnipeg and hospitals in Ontario (M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995). Again, limited medical services and their geographic locations may contribute to abused women's feelings of isolation and decrease the likelihood of seeking needed medical attention (M. Argue, personal

communication, November 1, 1995).

Shelters

Shelters for abused women are another limited resource in northern communities (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Griffiths et al., 1995; Kakfwi, 1993; Northwest Territories Status of Women, 1990). Specifically, there are nine shelters with a total of 69 beds in the Northwest Territories. See Table 6 for the number of beds in each shelter.

Table 6

Number of Beds in Each Shelter in the Northwest Territories[a]

Name of Shelter	Location of Shelter	Number of Beds
Alison McAteer House	Yellowknife	14
Hay River Women's Resource Centre	Hay River	10
Inuvik Transition House	Inuvik	10
Qimaavik	Iqaluit	10
Sutherland House	Fort Smith	10
Katimavik Centre	Cambridge Bay	7
Rankin Inlet Crisis Centre	Rankin Inlet	7
Innuitit Women's Group	Taloyoak	4
Tuktoyaktuk Crisis Centre	Tuktoyaktuk	4

[a] Information provided by M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995.

Although these nine shelters are spread across the territory (see Figure 5 for locations of the shelters), there are vast areas of the territory which are great distances from the nearest shelter.

Generally, these shelters provide emergency living, security and counselling services for victims of all forms of family violence including physical and sexual assault. The shelters in Yellowknife, Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik, and Iqaluit have a six week program with support services to deal with child sexual abuse, offer victim assistance, provide life skills counselling, and offer community presentations on family violence. The Hay River Women's Resource Centre has a second-stage housing unit for outreach clients and clients who have been in the shelters. The shelters in Tuktoyaktuk, Cambridge Bay, Taloyoak, and Rankin Inlet are emergency shelters where abused women can find refuge overnight or for a few days, have their basic needs met on a short term basis, and receive crisis intervention (M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995). Clearly, these shelters are few and far between with limited beds and long-term services to accommodate abused women.

Unfortunately, some communities do not have shelters, including Aklavik, Fort Providence, and Fort Good Hope, but these communities do have counsellors who provide counselling to victims and abusers who request help, assist people in the community to get referrals to a shelter when

Figure 5. Shelters in the Northwest Territories

Map adapted from Northwest Territories Data Book, 1990/91. Outcrop Ltd., 1990, p. 236

in need, and promote awareness of problems that occur during and after family violence (M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995). Furthermore, there are private homes in these communities that take women and children in crisis (M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995); however, such private homes are limited and few families are interested in offering accommodation to abused women because family members feel threatened or at risk of harm by the women's partners (Griffiths et al., 1995; M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). As a result, abused women may have nowhere to go except to the available shelters in other communities (Griffiths et al., 1995).

Unfortunately, available shelters in northern communities are overcrowded on a regular basis (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Kakfwi, 1993; M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995; Peterson, 1992; Northwest Territories Status of Women, 1990). For instance, occupancy rates for shelters in Yellowknife and Iqaluit average well over 100 percent (Peterson, 1992). Many desperate women seeking refuge are turned away (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995; Northwest Territories Status of Women, 1990). Between April 1992 and March 1993, 71 women were refused accommodation at the Alison McAteer House in Yellowknife (M. Lamon, personal communication, December 29, 1995). Even in such cases,

every effort is made to refer these women to other shelters (M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995), such as the Yellowknife Women's Centre which provides emergency shelter for abused women who cannot access shelters that are full (A. Hache, personal communication, December 14, 1995). However, women often need to be flown into an area where there is a shelter (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Canitz, 1990; Griffiths et al., 1995). In addition, abused women in the North tend to stay at shelters for only a few days because they are usually seeking refuge for a short time period and then return to their partners when they feel safe to do so (M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). Due to overcrowding at shelters, the travelling required to shelters in larger centres, and lack of long term counselling services, abused women often feel isolated and do not leave their violent situations (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Griffiths et al., 1995).

Housing

Another deterrent to leaving an abusive partner is the serious lack of general housing in northern communities (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Pauktuutit, 1990). According to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (1992), more than 3500 affordable, adequate, and suitable housing units are needed in the Northwest Territories. Thus, if there are few or no homes available for comfortable living, then it becomes difficult

for abused women to establish a home of their own away from violence.

There is also a serious shortage of second stage housing units to help women become independent and live away from abusive partners (A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996; M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995). Second stage housing units are available for the purpose of long-term secure placement (N. McRee, personal communication, November 15, 1995). In the Northwest Territories, the Hay River Women's Resource Centre provides one second stage housing unit (N. McRee, personal communication, November 15, 1995). (See previous Figure 5 for location of the Hay River Women's Resource Centre.) Like with the shelters, this housing unit may be full on a regular basis so that some women may need to be put on a long waiting list and some women would need to travel great distances to access this housing unit (A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996; N. McRee, personal communication, November 15, 1995). Clearly, the lack of general housing, and in particular second-stage housing, must deter abused women from leaving their violent relationships.

Employment Opportunities and Training Programs

It is also important for women to have employment and attend training programs to gain employment in order to establish financial stability outside the relationship. Due to the high unemployment rates in the Northwest

Territories, especially for Aboriginals (Statistics Canada, 1995), abused Aboriginal women have limited success in finding employment (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Employment is scarce, short term or make work in nature and many employers hire non-Aboriginals from the Southern provinces (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). In addition, there is a lack of training programs to prepare them for employment (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Training programs provided by the government are the main source of income and employment in the majority of Aboriginal communities, but they are usually 20 to 40 weeks long, often are not accredited by a post-secondary institution, and do not provide adequate work-related experience expected by employers in public and private sectors (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993).

There are very few communities in the Northwest Territories where abused women can go for assistance in seeking employment and job-training. The Yellowknife Women's Resource Centre provides information and resources to women and their families and offers literacy and tutoring programs with an employment and job training service (A. Hache, personal communication, December 14, 1995). Also in Yellowknife, the Native Women's Association of the Northwest Territories provides a life skills program which includes job training and assistance with writing resumes (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996).

A life skills program is also available in Inuvik (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996). In 1994, the Hay River Women's Centre also provided abused women with job training to re-enter the workforce (N. McRee, personal communication, November 15, 1995). The Hay River Friendship Centre provided such training and programs in 1995 (N. McRee, personal communication, November 15, 1995). Again, the problem is the location of these places and therefore, interferes with women's ability to attend such programs. See Figure 6 for locations of employment and job training services.

Child Care

Another resource which is often totally inaccessible in northern Aboriginal communities is emergency child care (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996; Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). Such a resource is available at the Yellowknife Women's Centre in order for abused women to look after themselves emotionally and physically, and attend various appointments or training programs such as life skills (A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). Many licensed day care facilities are available in the Northwest Territories, especially in Yellowknife, but they are fee for service (L. Hancock, personal communication, November 6, 1995). Given the lack of employment opportunities for employment, low incomes of Aboriginal women in the North, and a severe lack

Figure 6. Location of Employment/Job Training Services in the Northwest Territories

Map adapted from Northwest Territories Data Book, 1990/91, Outcrop Ltd., 1990, p. 236

of facilities for child care, many women are unable to go to work, other appointments, or seek employment and pay for day care services (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Thus, it becomes difficult for women to coordinate their activities when they cannot find any emergency child care or affordable day care facilities (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996; A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996).

Coordination of Services

In addition to a lack of many services and resources in northern Aboriginal communities, there is also little coordination among services which means difficulty in meeting an abused woman's various needs. In order for a woman to receive appropriate and efficient services, communication between the woman, referring service, and receiving service is imperative. However, geographic distances and lack of communication systems in these communities results in fragmented services throughout the North (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Kakfwi, 1993). It has been suggested that Aboriginal service providers play a key role in coordinating the few existing services (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993).

Aboriginal Services and Workers

Not only is the lack of many resources in northern communities a problem, but few facilities and services exist which are culturally sensitive to the needs of

Aboriginal women experiencing violence (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). For example, some shelter workers do not speak any Aboriginal languages and require interpreters to communicate with the abused women who do speak such languages (A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). Facilities which are isolated in larger communities tend to be structured around the needs of non-Aboriginal women, and thus, Aboriginal women are sometimes reluctant to attend those facilities (A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). Aboriginal women often seek refuge in shelter for different reasons than non-Aboriginal women. For instance, Aboriginal women may not want to attend mandatory counselling services that may be available at some shelters because they only want a place to stay overnight to be away from the abuse (A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). Aboriginal women also tend to feel alienated from others in shelter facilities and experience racism from other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women at shelters, including workers (Courtrille, 1991; A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). In addition, non-Aboriginal shelters and services do not fully use Elders and extended family as part of their intervention to provide culturally sensitive services (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996; Twin, 1992).

Some facilities in the Northwest Territories do have

Aboriginal workers (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995; M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). However, Aboriginal workers are generally lacking in professions such as police, court personnel, social services, and medical professions including nurses, nursing assistants, and doctors (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996; A. Hache personal communication, April 2, 1996; S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995; M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). For example, there is one Aboriginal defence attorney, about 12 Aboriginal R.C.M.P. officers, but no Aboriginal judges or prosecutors in the Northwest Territories (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995). A significant problem resulting from the lack of Aboriginals in such professions is language barriers (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Griffiths et al., 1995; A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). If service providers do not speak Aboriginal languages, then needs of abused Aboriginal women can be misunderstood (A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996). Furthermore, most of the available Aboriginal service providers work under great stress, are overburdened by responsibility, are severely restricted by lacking professional services, are isolated from other Aboriginal workers, and are generally undervalued and underpaid which results in a high burnout rate (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996;

Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Canitz, 1990).

The lack of Aboriginal service providers means more non-Aboriginal workers in northern communities. There tends to be a high turnover rate of non-Aboriginal workers (M. Argue, personal communication, April 1, 1996; Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Many of them are in northern communities for the short term in order to gain experience and, therefore, they do not have the expertise required to deal with the social problems these communities entail (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). Since there is no long term commitment on the part of such workers (Twin, 1992), trust may not develop between workers and victims (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993).

Summary

Aboriginal communities in northern parts of Canada are severely deficient in many resources. Abused women without financial resources to travel long distances to get to facilities such as shelters and legal clinics further prevents them from seeking help when they desperately need it. Furthermore, the geographic locations of communities isolates women from police, court, and medical services in which there are delays in receiving assistance from those services. Not only is there geographic isolation from the few available resources, but psychological isolation also exists for these women. Being unable to rely on any

coordinating system of services, travelling long distances to reach facilities in other communities, and interacting with few Aboriginal workers who understand unique Aboriginal needs, such as language, can make an abused woman feel isolated and trapped in her violent relationship. Finally, limited opportunities for transition/long-term housing, training programs, employment and child care also make it extremely difficult for abused women to move out of their violent situations and build better lives for themselves and their children or to get the kind of assistance that is effective in helping abusive partners break the cycle of family violence.

CHAPTER 5

Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology of this research study, the ethical issues, and the study's limitations.

Research Approach and Sample

This research study is a descriptive study of abused women and their abusive partners based on secondary analysis of shelter intake data. This sample includes 56 women who sought safe refuge from their partners at Alison McAteer House, a women's shelter in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories from August 1991 to August 1992, and with whom shelter staff employed an extensive intake form. (Shelter staff reported 120 women to have entered the shelter from August 1991 to August 1992 and this number is substantiated by the number of women who entered the shelter between April 1, 1991 to March 31, 1992. However, we only received 56 copies of the extensive forms. We do not know if the remaining 64 women who entered the shelter were not asked questions from the extensive intake form. Thus, there are only 56 cases for which the long form exists or if there was some problem in shelter staff locating all the eligible files and forwarding them for inclusion in the study.)

Using the extensive intake form, shelter workers collected demographic information about the women and their partners, specific information about recent and past maltreatment in the women's relationships (physical,

sexual, psychological/emotional, verbal, and financial), types of injuries suffered by the women and medical attention sought as a result of the abuse, women's and men's involvement with the law and legal system, women's and men's history and nature of past significant relationships, women's and men's childhood history of maltreatment, information about the nature of parental violence and substance abuse in women's and men's families of origin, women's current health condition, and risk assessment of the abusers. (See Appendix pp. 138 to 164 for a copy of the intake form.) These data were collected in multiple interviews with the women during their stay at the shelter and were generally initiated upon their arrival. Thus, the information collected on both the women and their partners was based on self-reports by the women. However, shelter workers who completed the intake forms determined the risk assessment of the abusers as appropriate.

This research study involved analyzing 56 of these intake forms which were provided by the Yellowknife Y.W.C.A., the operators of the shelter. These intake forms were in various stages of completion. Many sections were poorly completed, particularly the section on the family of origin. The reason given by the shelter workers for the low rate of completion of these intake forms was that many of the women had left the shelter before all the information could be collected.

Ethical Issues

Since there was not any contact by the current researcher with the abused women staying at the shelter, approval to obtain and use the information collected in these intake forms for research purposes was arranged with the Yellowknife Y.W.C.A., the operator of the shelter. As a precaution in protecting the women's and men's identities, their names, names of children, specific addresses, home and work phone numbers, and any other identifying information were concealed by shelter staff prior to sending copies of the intake forms to the University of Alberta. To ensure further confidentiality, the intake forms were kept in a file cabinet in a locked research room which could only be accessed by the principle researcher and her research team.

Delimitations

There were several delimitations of this research study. First, this research was limited to analyzing information collected by the shelter workers on the intake form. Given the way the information was collected, there were some concerns about the reliability of the data. Thus, the data often were not collected in the detail or form one might desire for a research study. For example, the information collected on childhood abuse only identified whether or not the respondent had experienced each of five types of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, and abandonment), but did not provide any detail on

severity, frequency, duration, etc. Second, the data were based on women's retrospective reports of the abuse which happened during their relationships with their partners, of their own childhood abuse, and on their second-hand knowledge of their partners' childhood. Thus, information may be incomplete and its accuracy cannot be validated. Third, many of the women in the sample left the shelter before all of the information could be collected by shelter workers. This means that there were missing data for a significant portion of the sample on those questions contained in the latter pages of the intake form (in particular, the section on family of origin and childhood abuse). Finally, because the study was based on a convenience sample of abused women from a women's shelter, the sample cannot be considered representative of the general population. Thus, caution must be used in drawing conclusions and generalizing findings to the population of the Northwest Territories.

CHAPTER 6

Results

The following is a description of the women and their partners based on the shelter intake data. Where possible the sample's characteristics were compared with census data to show how this sample may differ from the Northwest Territories' general adult female and male populations and the Northwest Territories' Aboriginal female and male populations. This section describes demographic characteristics of the women and men (Aboriginal status, education, employment status, student status, income levels, and income sources), home communities of the women, the nature and extent of abuse experienced by the women, the results of abuse, involvement of the law, the use of substances during past and recent abusive incidents, family histories of the women and the men, childhood maltreatment of the women and the men, and the women's future plans upon leaving the shelter.

Demographic Characteristics of the Women

The majority of the women in the sample (84%; n=38) were Aboriginal and 16% (n=7) were non-Aboriginal. About 62% of the total population of the Northwest Territories is Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 1994a). This sample over-represents Aboriginal women. Thirty-two percent (n=16) of the sample were from urban areas and 68% (n=34) were from rural areas. These percentages are very similar to the total population distribution for the Northwest

Territories, which has 37% of the population living in urban centers and 63% of the population living in rural areas (Statistics Canada, 1994d).

Many women who stayed at the Alison McAteer House came from different communities across the territory. Out of the total sample, 86% (n=48) reported a home address. Among these women who did so, 23% (n=11) reported Yellowknife as a home address. Other locations included Fort Resolution, Lutsel K'e, Rae, Tuktoyaktuk, Fort Good Hope, Deline, Fort Providence, Fort Simpson, Cambridge Bay, Inuvik, Fort Smith, Iqaluit, Kugluktuk, Aklavik, Gjoa Haven, Holman, Baker Lake, Rae Lakes, Wrigley, and Labrador City, a city outside of the Northwest Territories. Of course, specific box numbers or street addresses in larger communities had been deleted by shelter staff before sending files to us. However, our intention in examining home addresses was to identify the woman's home community at the time the abuse occurred so that the distance she had travelled reach the shelter could be described. See Figure 7 for locations of shelter clients' home communities. You can see that some women travelled vast distances to the shelter in Yellowknife.

Generally, the women reported fairly low levels of completed education. Over 40% had obtained less than grade nine. This is one and a half times the percentage of the general population of women in the Northwest Territories who report this education level (Statistics Canada, 1993a).

Figure 7. Location of Shelter Clients' Home Communities in the Northwest Territories

Map adapted from Northwest Territories Data Book, 1990/91. Outcrop Ltd. 1990. p. 236

And, more than half of the Aboriginal women in the sample had completed less than grade nine which is a somewhat larger percentage than the percentage of Aboriginal men and women in the Northwest Territories who have completed less than grade nine. See Table 7 for shelter clients' education levels and their comparison to the Northwest Territories population statistics.

Table 7

Education Levels of Shelter Clients Compared to Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) Population Statistics

Education Level	Shelter Sample*		N.W.T.*	
	T (n=50)	A (n=37)	T[a]	A[b]
Less than Grade 9	42	54	28	46
High School[c]	42	35	28	25
Trades/College[d]	12	8	26	26
University[e]	4	3	17	3

[a] Percentages based on Northwest Territories total female population, 15 years and over (Statistics Canada, 1993a).

[b] Percentages based on Northwest Territories total Aboriginal male and female population, 15 years and over (Statistics Canada, 1995).

[c] Some high school with or without diploma.

[d] Some post secondary including trades training, college with or without certificate or diploma.

[e] Some university with or without certificate or degree.

*Due to rounding, columns' percentages may not add to 100.

There were also high levels of unemployment in this sample of women. Over 60% (63%, n=30) of women reported being unemployed, 10% (n=5) reported being full-time students, 6% (n=3) reported being part-time students, 13% (n=6) reported being employed full-time, and 8% (n=4) reported being employed part-time. It is interesting to note that no clients reported being both employed and a student. The percentage of employed clients is less than half the total percentage of women employed in the Northwest Territories (21% vs. 59%) (Statistics Canada, 1994d). It is also interesting to note that the percentage of shelter clients from this Yellowknife sample who are employed is very similar to the percentage of Alberta shelter clients who report being employed (Burger, 1988).

The women's gross family income, their personal contribution to family income, and their personal sources of income were also examined. The majority of this sample were low income. The gross family income for half of the women was less than $10,000 per year. Exactly 75% of women had gross family incomes of less than $20,000 per year. As shown in Table 8, the distribution of Aboriginal women across income categories is virtually identical to the distribution of the total sample across income categories. However, when the sample's incomes are compared to territorial census data (Statistics Canada, 1994c), clients' families are over-represented in the low income categories. In fact, the mean family income in the

Northwest Territories in 1991 was $55,795 (median family income was $48,762) which is significantly higher than the shelter sample's family incomes.

It is important to point out that in a presentation of some of this data to the Canadian Association for Research in Home Economics Annual Meeting, June 1994, a member of the audience who lived in the north pointed out that one must use caution in comparing income statistics of families living in the north with the rest of Canada because a number of families in the Northwest Territories have other sources of income, food, etc. that are not captured by income statistics (such as trapping for food, furs, and bartering). Thus, assuming that income is the sole means by which families in the north meet their basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter may underestimate the standard of living of some of these families. With this qualification in mind, Table 8 presents shelter clients' gross family income levels and compares them to the Northwest Territories population statistics.

Table 8

Gross Family Income Levels of Shelter Clients Compared to Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) Population Statistics

Gross Family Income Level	Shelter Sample*		N.W.T.*	
	T (n=40)	A (n=34)	T[a]	A[b]
Less than $10,000	50	50	7	-
$10,000 to $19,999	25	24	13	-
$20,000 to $29,999	3	3	12	-
$30,000 to $39,999	8	6	10	-
$40,000 to $49,999	3	3	9	-
$50,000 and over	13	15	49	-

[a] Percentages based on Northwest Territories census data (Statistics Canada, 1994c).

[b] Family income was not available separately for Northwest Territories Aboriginal population.

*Due to rounding, columns' percentages may not add to 100.

With regard to women's personal income, 95% of the total sample had less than $20,000 and the majority had less than $10,000. These percentages are similar to the percentages of Aboriginal women in the sample with less than $10,000 and less than $20,000 personal income. Compared to the personal income levels of all women in the Northwest Territories (Statistics Canada, 1994c), women in this sample had significantly lower personal incomes. However, Aboriginal women in the Northwest Territories are also over-represented in the lower income levels

(Statistics Canada, 1995). Table 9 presents shelter clients' personal income levels and compares them to the Northwest Territories population statistics. It is clear that the total shelter sample as well as the Aboriginal shelter clients are over-represented in the low income categories relative to the Northwest Territories' general female population and the Northwest Territories' Aboriginal female population.

Table 9

Personal Income Levels of Shelter Clients Compared to Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) Population Statistics

Personal Income Level	Shelter Sample*		N.W.T.*	
	T (n=41)	A (n=33)	T[a]	A[b]
Less than $10,000	71	70	39	55
$10,000 to $19,999	24	24	19	20
$20,000 to $29,999	2	3	13	10
$30,000 to $39,999	0	0	12	8
$40,000 to $49,999	2	3	9	4
$50,000 and over	0	0	9	3

[a] Percentages based on Northwest Territories total female population, 15 years and over (Statistics Canada, 1994c).

[b] Percentages based on Northwest Territories total Aboriginal female population, 15 years and over (Statistics Canada, 1995).

*Due to rounding, columns' percentages may not add to 100.

In terms of women's source of personal income, 30%

(n=14) reported social assistance, 30% (n=14) reported wages, 17% (n=8) reported unemployment insurance benefits, and 32% (n=15) reported a variety of other sources including family allowance, student loans, etc. (These percentages do not add to 100 since clients often reported more than one source of income.)

Demographic Characteristics of the Men

As reported by the women in the sample, 82% (n=37) of the men were Aboriginal and 18% (n=8) were non-Aboriginal. Again, this represents a disproportional number of Aboriginals among the women's partners when considering that sixty-two percent of the total population of the Northwest Territories is Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 1994a).

In general, the women reported that their abusers had completed fairly low levels of education. Over 40% of the men in the total sample had completed less than grade nine. This is nearly double the percentage of the general population of men in the Northwest Territories who had completed less than grade nine (Statistics Canada, 1993a). However, the percentage of Aboriginal men in the sample who had completed less than grade nine is fairly comparable to the percentage of the Aboriginal male and female population of the Northwest Territories who had completed less than grade nine. See Table 10 for abusers' education levels and their comparison to the Northwest Territories population statistics.

Table 10

Education Levels of Abusers Compared to Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) Population Statistics

Education Level	Shelter Sample		N.W.T.	
	T (n=42)	A (n=33)	T[a]	A[b]
Less than Grade 9	43	52	25	46
High School[c]	29	27	25	25
Trades/College[d]	21	18	33	26
University[e]	7	3	17	3

[a] Percentages based on Northwest Territories total male population, 15 years and over (Statistics Canada, 1993a).

[b] Percentages based on Northwest Territories total Aboriginal male and female population, 15 years and over (Statistics Canada, 1995).

[c] Some high school with or without diploma.

[d] Some post secondary including trades training, college with or without certificate or diploma.

[e] Some university with or without certificate or degree.

Women also reported high levels of unemployment of their partners. More than 40% (44%, n=18) of the men were reported to be unemployed, 5% (n=2) were reported to be full-time students and 2% (n=1) to be part-time students, 42% (n=17) were reported to be employed full-time and 2% (n=1) to be employed part-time, and 2% (n=1) were reported as employed without specified status. Interestingly, 2% (n=1) were reported to be employed full-time and to be full-time students. The percentage of employed men as

reported in the sample is less than the total percentage of men employed in the Northwest Territories (49% vs. 68%) (Statistics Canada, 1994d).

The men's personal income levels and their personal sources of income were also examined. The majority in this sample had lower incomes as reported by the women. Sixty-six percent of the abusers were reported to have less than $20,000 and 46% were reported to have less than $10,000 in annual personal income. This indicates that abusers were over-represented in the Northwest Territories in these lower income groups compared to the total percentage of men in the Northwest Territories. Also, 74% of Aboriginal men in this sample had less than $20,000, and over half had less than $10,000. These percentages are somewhat comparable to the total percentage of Aboriginal men in the Northwest Territories in the lowest income group. See Table 11 for abusers' personal income levels and their comparison to the Northwest Territories population statistics.

In terms of men's source of personal income, the women reported that over half (57%, n=26) received their income from their own wages, about one quarter (n=11) from unemployment insurance benefits, 17% (n=8) from social assistance, almost 10% (n=4) from other sources including family allowance, student loans, etc., and very few received income from pensions.

Table 11

Personal Income Levels of Abusers Compared to Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) Population Statistics

Personal Income Level	Shelter Sample*		N.W.T.*	
	T (n=41)	A (n=34)	T[a]	A[b]
Less than $10,000	46	53	27	42
$10,000 to $19,999	20	21	17	23
$20,000 to $29,999	12	12	12	12
$30,000 to $39,999	5	3	11	9
$40,000 to $49,999	0	0	10	7
$50,000 and over	17	12	24	7

[a] Percentages based on Northwest Territories total male population, 15 years and over (Statistics Canada, 1994c).

[b] Percentages based on Northwest Territories total Aboriginal male population, 15 years and over (Statistics Canada, 1995).

*Due to rounding, columns' percentages may not add to 100.

Nature and Extent of the Abuse

For each client, there was information collected on different types of abuse experienced in past adult relationships (including abuse by current and previous partners) and the abuse experienced in the most recent incident (prior to seeking safety at the shelter). The types of abuse included physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse. To assess each of these types of abuse, the shelter workers collected information on a

variety of different specific behaviors that constituted each type of abuse. This section of the intake form appeared to have been modelled after the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus et al., 1980). As shown in the intake form on pp. 150 to 152 of the Appendix, incidents of physical, sexual, emotional/psychological, verbal, and financial abuse were listed. When the women were asked about experiencing these incidents, shelter workers checked those incidents which occurred in past incidents and in the most recent incident.

At some point in past adult relationships, all but one woman reported physical abuse, 90% (n=36) reported sexual abuse, 94% (n=34) reported psychological abuse, 92% (n=33) reported verbal abuse, and 72% (n=26) reported financial abuse as defined in the intake form. These percentages are comparable to those collected in Alberta shelters except for sexual abuse which is much higher in this sample (90% vs. 32% in the Alberta sample) (Burger, 1988). In their recent incident of abuse, 77% (n=30) of the women reported physical abuse, 77% (n=30) reported sexual abuse, 87% (n=32) reported psychological abuse, 92% (n=33) reported verbal abuse, and 57% (n=21) reported financial abuse as defined in the intake form. The next section is a description of each of these types of abuse in more detail.

Physical abuse. Physical abuse included less extreme forms of violence such as being shoved, pushed, and shook

to more extreme forms such as being hit with a closed fist, kicked, cut, burned, and choked. (See Appendix p. 150 for the list of types of physical abuse.) When asked the number of times they had been physically abused by their partner, women reported never to over 100 times.

When asked if they had ever experienced a list of a variety of physically abusive behaviors by their partners at any time in the past, over 70% of the sample reported that they had been hit with an open hand (slapped), over 70% had been hit with a closed fist, over 60% had been choked or strangled, and over 60% had been kicked by their partners. When asked about the most recent incident of abusive behavior that led the women to seek safety in the shelter, over 70% reported that they had been shoved or pushed, over 40% had been hit with an open hand, over 40% had been hit with a closed fist, over 40% had been grabbed or shook, over 40% had been thrown by their partners to the bed or floor, and 35% had been kicked. Table 12 presents a complete list of the types of physically abusive behaviors that shelter staff asked about and reports on the percentage of women reporting each type of abuse for both past incidents and for the most recent incident.

Table 12

Percentage of Shelter Clients Physically Abused by Partner in Past Incidents and in the Most Recent Incident[a]

Specific type of abuse	Past		Recent	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Hit with open hand	77	(30)	41	(15)
Hit with closed fist	72	(28)	43	(16)
Hit with object	44	(17)	22	(8)
Shoved/pushed	80	(31)	73	(27)
Pulled hair	64	(25)	41	(15)
Choked/strangled	62	(24)	16	(6)
Grabbed/shook	72	(28)	49	(18)
Threw to the bed/floor	74	(29)	49	(18)
Held/banged against wall/floor	59	(23)	24	(9)
Pushed down stairs	13	(5)	8	(3)
Pinched	39	(15)	19	(7)
Burned	8	(3)	3	(1)
Cut	21	(8)	0	(0)
Bit	10	(4)	3	(1)
Kicked	62	(24)	35	(13)
Threw objects at client	54	(21)	24	(9)
Smashed objects/doors/walls	41	(16)	22	(8)
Spit at client	15	(6)	5	(2)
Forced confinement	69	(27)	32	(12)

[a] Other category was not included since none was specified.

Forty-one percent (n=13) of women (for whom this question was completed) reported that this physical abuse had a regular pattern and 59% (n=19) reported that it occurred on an irregular basis. Table 13 illustrates the different patterns of regularity of physical abuse reported by these women. Among those who reported physical abuse on a regular basis, the majority reported it weekly.

Table 13

Frequency of Physical Abuse Reported by Shelter Clients

Frequency of Physical Abuse	Percentage* (n=13)
Daily	8
Weekly	54
Bi-monthly[a]	31
Monthly	8

[a] Because the meaning of bi-monthly was unclear on the intake form, it was the judgement of the research team to interpret it as twice per month based on how the information was recorded.

* Due to rounding, column percentages may not add to 100.

Sexual abuse. Sexual abuse included a range of experiences from sexual name-calling, partner's excessive jealousy and accusations to forced intercourse and forced group sex. (See Appendix pp. 150 and 151 for the list of types of sexual abuse.) When asked about the number of times they had been sexually abused by their partner, women reported never to over 100 times. About a quarter (26%) of

the sample reported that they had been sexually abused by their partner more than 100 times.

At some time in the past, 70% (n=28) of the women reported unwanted touching and over half reported forced vaginal intercourse. Also, 20% (n=8) reported forced oral intercourse and 13% (n=5) reported forced anal intercourse. Regarding the most recent incident, 36% (n=14) reported unwanted touching and 26% (n=10) reported forced vaginal intercourse. See Table 14 for a breakdown of past and recent sexual abuse.

Table 14

Percentage of Shelter Clients Sexually Abused by Partner in Past Incidents and in the Most Recent Incident[a]

Specific type of abuse	Past		Recent	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Unwanted touching	70	(28)	36	(14)
Forced vaginal intercourse	53	(21)	26	(10)
Forced anal intercourse	13	(5)	5	(2)
Forced oral intercourse	20	(8)	8	(3)
Forced group sex	5	(2)	0	(0)
Forced pornography	8	(3)	3	(1)
Forced bondage	0	(0)	0	(0)
Forced penetration with object	6	(2)	0	(0)

[a] This table only includes those behaviors from the intake form which meet the legal definition of sexual assault.

Forty-four percent (n=10) of women (for whom this question was completed) reported that this sexual abuse had a regular pattern and 57% (n=13) reported that it occurred on an irregular basis. Table 15 shows the different patterns of regular occurrence of sexual abuse reported by these women. Among those who reported sexual abuse on a regular basis, the majority reported it weekly.

Table 15

Frequency of Sexual Abuse Reported by Shelter Clients

Frequency of Sexual Abuse	Percentage* (n=8)
Daily	25
Weekly	63
Bi-monthly	0
Monthly	13

* Due to rounding, column percentages may not add to 100.

Verbal and psychological abuse. Verbal abuse included yelling, swearing, and name calling and psychological abuse included being threatened, terrorized, isolated, etc. (See Appendix p. 152 for list of types of verbal and psychological abuse.) When asked the number of times they had been verbally or psychologically abused by their partner, women's reports ranged from ten or fewer times to more than 100 times. In fact, more than half (53%, n=16) of the women reported that they had been verbally or

psychologically abused by their partner more than 100 times.

During some time in the past, over 80% of women reported that their partner had yelled/screamed at them, cursed/swore at them, or called them names. Recent experiences of verbal abuse were similar. See Table 16 for a breakdown of past and recent verbal abuse.

Table 16

Percentage of Shelter Clients Verbally Abused by Partner in Past Incidents and in the Most Recent Incident

Specific type of abuse	Past		Recent	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Name calling	83	(30)	78	(28)
Yelling/screaming	83	(30)	75	(27)
Swearing/cursing	83	(30)	83	(30)

With regard to past psychological abuse, over half of women in this sample reported that their partner had threatened suicide, 50% (n=18) reported that their partner made threats to kill them, 25% (n=9) had partners who threatened them with a weapon, and over 30% (n=11) had partners who threatened children or other family members. Women's recent experiences with psychological abuse were similar. See Table 17 for a breakdown of past and recent psychological abuse.

Table 17

Percentage of Shelter Clients Psychologically Abused by Partner in Past Incidents and in the Most Recent Incident[a]

Specific type of abuse	Past		Recent	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Threatened violence	72	(26)	69	(24)
Threatened to kill	50	(18)	37	(13)
Threatened with weapon	25	(9)	11	(4)
Threatened property/pets	28	(10)	20	(7)
Destroyed property/pets	14	(5)	26	(9)
Threatened suicide	53	(19)	29	(10)
Threats to children/family	31	(11)	14	(5)
Terrorizing	39	(14)	20	(7)
Threats to separate client from children	42	(15)	17	(6)
Isolation from family/friends	69	(25)	37	(13)

[a] This table only includes behaviors from the intake form which meets accepted definitions of psychological abuse.

Over 60% (n=20) of women (for whom this question was completed) reported that verbal and psychological abuse had a regular pattern and about 38% (n=12) reported that it occurred on an irregular basis. Table 18 shows the different patterns of regular occurrence of verbal and psychological abuse reported by these women. Among those who reported verbal and psychological abuse on a regular basis, over 60% (n=11) reported it daily and 33% (n=6)

reported it weekly.

Table 18

Frequency of Verbal and Psychological Abuse Reported by Shelter Clients

Frequency of Verbal and Psychological Abuse	Percentage (n=18)
Daily	61
Weekly	33
Bi-monthly	6
Monthly	0

Financial abuse. Shelter clients were asked whether they had experienced various forms of financial abuse including withholding money, money taken without consent, excessive debt, etc. (See Appendix p. 152 for the list of financial abuse behaviors.) Not all of those behaviors listed on the intake form are considered as financial abuse in the literature. Thus, Table 19 only lists those behaviors which constitute financial abuse in terms of exerting power and control over the victim and belittling the victim (as these are the forms of financial abuse described in the literature, Walker, 1979).

Table 19

Percentage of Shelter Clients Financially Abused by Partner in Past Incidents and in the Most Recent Incident

Specific type of abuse	Past		Recent	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Refused to give money	39	(14)	19	(7)
Threats to withhold money	31	(11)	14	(5)
Forced to ask for money	36	(13)	19	(7)

Health Outcomes of the Abuse

As a result of physical and sexual abuse, 87% (n=32) of the women reported being injured at some point in the past and 78% (n=25) reported being injured due to the most recent incident. See Table 20 for a breakdown of past and recent injuries.

In the past, 55% (n=16) of these women sought medical attention for their injuries, 37% (n=10) were treated in the emergency, and 19% (n=5) were hospitalized. In the past, only 21% (n=5) of women who sought medical attention for injuries reported that they revealed to medical personnel the reason for the injury and only 19% (n=4) reported that the attending physician asked about the reason for the injury. In the most recent incident, 41% (n=7) of women sought medical attention, 19% (n=3) were treated in the emergency, and 25% (n=4) were hospitalized. Furthermore, 83% (n=5) of women who sought medical

attention for their injuries revealed the reason for the injury and 60% (n=3) reported that the attending physician asked about the reason for the injury.

Table 20

Percentage of Shelter Clients Injured by Partner in Past Incidents and in the Most Recent Incident

Specific type of injury	Past		Recent	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Bruises	89	(25)	90	(18)
Black eye	68	(19)	45	(9)
Concussion	32	(9)	10	(2)
Contusions/Bumps	75	(21)	30	(6)
Sprains	29	(8)	0	(0)
Broken bones	18	(5)	5	(1)
Stiffness/Sore Muscles	85	(23)	55	(11)
Burns	7	(2)	5	(1)
Cuts/Tears/Abrasions	46	(13)	25	(5)
Loss of hearing	21	(6)	5	(1)
Vaginal bleeding/Miscarriage	25	(7)	10	(2)
Other (not specified)	11	(3)	10	(2)

Seventy-two percent (n=23) of the women reported being abused when they were pregnant. Those women who were abused during pregnancy were asked whether the abuse caused any problems with their pregnancy. Almost 30% (n=6) reported that the abuse had caused problems. In fact,

three out of the six women (50%) miscarried as a result of the abuse.

Involvement of the Law

Eighty-one percent (n=25) of the women reported that someone called the police at sometime in the past as a result of their spousal abuse. The number of times police had been called ranged from once to more than 11 times. Fifty-five percent of women reported finding the police generally supportive in the past, whereas, 45% found the police unsupportive. As a result of the recent abusive incident, about 60% (n=16) of women reported calling the police. In this recent experience, 71% (n=10) of the women found the police to be generally supportive and 29% reported the police to be unsupportive. Eighty-six percent (n=18) of the women reported having laid charges at sometime against their partner. Among those who specified the type of charge laid, 80% (n=12) reported the charge was assault with no weapon, 7% (n=1) reported the charge was assault with a weapon, and 13% (n=2) reported the charge as other.

The shelter staff also conducted an internal risk assessment. For this sample. the staff believed that 15% (n=7) of the women were at high risk, 31% (n=14) were at moderate risk, and 54% (n=25) were at low risk.

Over 30% (n=13) of the women reported that they were taking family law action. In about 70% (n=9) of those cases, the abuser was the court order subject.

Substance Use and Abuse

Ninety-six percent (n=24) of the women reported that they used drugs, alcohol, or a combination of drugs and alcohol some time in the past when they were abused and 75% (n=12) reported the use of drugs, alcohol, or a combination of both during the most recent abusive incident. Among those who reported using substances when abused in the past, 18% (n=3) reported that they always used, 29% (n=5) reported that they often used, 35% (n=6) reported that they sometimes used, and 18% (n=3) reported that they rarely used substances. When asked about the extent of substance use in the past when abuse occurred, 60% (n=12) reported using a little, 15% (n=3) reported using a lot without being intoxicated, and 25% (n=5) reported using to the point of intoxication. As for the extent of substance use during the most recent abusive incident, 50% (n=6) reported using a little, 33% (n=4) reported using a lot without being intoxicated, and 17% (n=2) reported using to the point of intoxication. See Table 21 for comparison of women's substance use during past incidents and in the most recent incident.

As reported by the women, 96% (n=27) of the men used alcohol or a combination of drugs and alcohol when they were abusing some time in the past. Also, 96% (n=23) of the men used alcohol or a combination of alcohol and drugs when they were abusing during the most recent abusive incident. When asked about the men's frequency of

Table 21

Percentage of Shelter Clients Who Reported Using Substances During Past Incidents and in the Most Recent Incident

Type of Substance Use	Past*		Recent*	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Drugs	12	(3)	13	(2)
Alcohol	68	(17)	50	(8)
Drugs and Alcohol	16	(4)	13	(2)
Neither	4	(1)	25	(4)

* Due to rounding, columns' percentages may not add to 100.

substance use when abusing in the past, women reported that 35% (n=10) of the men always used, 38% (n=11) often used, 21% (n=6) sometimes used, and 7% (n=2) rarely used substances. With regard to men's extent of substance use when abusing in the past, women reported that 8% (n=2) of the men used a little, 15% (n=4) used a lot without being intoxicated, and 77% (n=20) used to the point of intoxication. As for men's extent of substance use during the most recent abusive incident, women reported that 19% (n=4) of the men used a little, 10% (n=2) used a lot without being intoxicated, and 71% (n=15) used to the point of intoxication. See Table 22 for comparison of abusers' substance use during past incidents and in the most recent incident.

Table 22

Percentage of Abusers Reportedly Using Substances During Past Incidents and in the Most Recent Incident

Type of Substance Use	Past		Recent	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Drugs	0	(0)	0	(0)
Alcohol	57	(16)	67	(16)
Drugs and Alcohol	39	(11)	29	(7)
Neither	4	(1)	4	(1)

Family Histories of the Women

The information collected on family histories of the women only identified whether or not the respondent knew of abuse between their parents, the general type of parental abuse, whether or not they witnessed parental abuse as children, whether or not there was a family history of alcohol and/or drug abuse, and which family members had a substance abuse problem. However, it appeared that no information was sought or recorded on severity, frequency, or duration of these problems. (See Appendix p. 161 for questions on client's family history.)

Sixty-six percent (n=21) of women reported that there was abuse between their parents or parent substitutes. With regard to specific types of abuse, 55% (n=17) reported physical abuse, 48% (n=15) reported psychological abuse, 58% (n=18) reported verbal abuse, and 14% (n=4) reported

sexual abuse between their parents. Among those who reported abuse between their parents, 57% (n=17) reported witnessing it as a child. See Table 23 for a breakdown of the types of parental abuse as reported by shelter clients.

Table 23

Percentage of Shelter Clients who Reported Backgrounds of Parental Abuse

Specific Type of Parental Abuse	%	(n)
Physical		
Yes	55	(17)
No	45	(14)
Do not know	0	(0)
Psychological		
Yes	48	(15)
No	42	(13)
Do not know	10	(3)
Verbal		
Yes	58	(18)
No	39	(12)
Do not know	3	(1)
Sexual		
Yes	14	(4)
No	55	(16)
Do not know	31	(9)

The majority (91%, n=30) of women reported a family history of alcohol and/or drug abuse. When asked about which family members had a substance abuse problem, 75% (n=21) reported mothers, 79% (n=23) reported fathers, 77% (n=20) reported siblings, and 75% (n=3) reported caregivers other than parents. See Table 24 for shelter clients' family histories of alcohol and/or drug abuse.

Table 24

Percentage of Shelter Clients who Reported Family Histories of Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse

Family Member	%	(n)
Mother		
Yes	75	(21)
No	25	(7)
Father		
Yes	79	(23)
No	21	(6)
Siblings		
Yes	77	(20)
No	23	(6)
Caregivers		
Yes	75	(3)
No	25	(1)

Family Histories of the Men

The women were also asked questions about their partners' family histories. Again, the information collected on family histories of the men only identified whether or not the respondent knew of abuse between their partner's parents, the general type of parental abuse, whether or not their partner witnessed parental abuse as children, whether or not their partner had a family history of alcohol and/or drug abuse, and which of their partners' family members had a substance abuse problem. Again, no detail was provided on severity, frequency, or duration. (See Appendix p. 161 for questions on abuser's family history.)

Regarding abuse between abusers' parents, as reported

by the women, 65% (n=20) of the their partners reported physical abuse, 55% (n=17) reported psychological abuse, 60% (n=18) reported verbal abuse, and 12% (n=3) reported sexual abuse between their parents. Among women who reported abuse between abusers' parents, 52% (n=16) reported that their partners had witnessed this abuse as a child. Since there is a significant percentage of women who did not know their partners' parental history of abuse, these figures must be interpreted with caution. See Table 25 for the breakdown of types of abuse between abusers' parents as reported by the shelter clients.

Table 25

Percentage of Abusers with Backgrounds of Parental Abuse

Specific Type of Parental Abuse	%	(n)
Physical		
Yes	65	(20)
No	16	(5)
Do not know	19	(6)
Psychological		
Yes	55	(17)
No	23	(7)
Do not know	23	(7)
Verbal		
Yes	60	(18)
No	23	(7)
Do not know	17	(5)
Sexual		
Yes	12	(3)
No	27	(7)
Do not know	62	(16)

Also reported by the women, the overwhelming majority (87%, n=27) of men had a family history of alcohol and/or drug abuse. When asked about which family members had substance abuse problems, 71% (n=20) reported mothers, 93% (n=25) reported fathers, 77% (n=20) reported siblings, and 33% (n=1) reported caregivers other than parents. See Table 26 for abusers' family histories of alcohol and/or drug abuse as reported by shelter clients.

Table 26

Percentage of Abusers with Family Histories of Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse

Family Member	%	(n)
Mother		
Yes	71	(20)
No	25	(7)
Do not know	4	(1)
Father		
Yes	93	(25)
No	4	(1)
Do not know	4	(1)
Siblings		
Yes	77	(20)
No	12	(3)
Do not know	12	(3)
Caregivers		
Yes	33	(1)
No	0	(0)
Do not know	67	(2)

Childhood Maltreatment of the Women

Shelter clients were also asked questions about whether or not they experienced childhood abuse and which types of abuse they experienced (physical, emotional,

sexual, and verbal). (See Appendix p. 162 for questions on client's childhood abuse.) As with the information on client's family history, this information did not provide any detail on severity, frequency, or duration of childhood abuse.

Abuse during childhood was reported by 70% (n=23) of the shelter clients. Table 27 illustrates the percentage of women who reported to have experienced each type of abuse as perpetrated by parental and nonparental figures. With regard to abuse perpetrated by parental figures, 42% (n=13) of women reported physical abuse, 45% (n=14) reported psychological abuse, 52% (n=16) reported verbal abuse, and 37% (n=11) reported abandonment by parental figures. However, sexual abuse by nonparental figures was reported by half (n=16) of the women.

Childhood Maltreatment of the Men

Shelter clients were also asked questions about whether or not their partners experienced childhood abuse and which types of abuse they experienced (physical, emotional, sexual, and verbal). (See Appendix p. 163 for questions on abuser's childhood abuse.) As with the information on abuser's family history, this information did not provide any detail on severity, frequency, or duration of childhood abuse. (Due to the amount of missing data in this section, there were problems in analyzing the data. Hence, there were concerns about the reliability of the available data and the data were not reported.)

Table 27

Percentage of Shelter Clients who Reported Backgrounds of Childhood Maltreatment by Parental and Nonparental Figures

Type of Maltreatment	Type of Perpetrator			
	Parental[a]		Nonparental[b]	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Physical				
Yes	42	(13)	23	(7)
No	58	(18)	77	(24)
Psychological				
Yes	45	(14)	26	(8)
No	55	(17)	74	(23)
Sexual				
Yes	21	(6)	50	(16)
No	79	(23)	50	(16)
Verbal				
Yes	52	(16)	29	(9)
No	48	(15)	71	(22)
Abandonment				
Yes	37	(11)	7	(2)
No	63	(19)	93	(28)

[a] Includes father, mother, stepfather, stepmother

[b] Includes male/female relative, babysitter, teacher, stranger, others

Women's Future Plans Upon Leaving the Shelter

In summary, data provided by workers at the Alison McAteer House, women reported a variety of plans for living arrangements upon leaving the shelter. Over a third (36%) reported that they would return to their spouse and slightly under a third (30%) reported that they planned to live on their own. When comparing these percentages to

plans of shelter clients in Edmonton and across Alberta, a greater percentage of those in Yellowknife reported that they would be returning to their spouse. (See Table 28 for comparison of plans of shelter clients in Yellowknife, Edmonton, and across Alberta.)

Table 28

Percentage of Clients' Plans Upon Leaving the Shelter

	Shelters		
Plans	Yellowknife[a]	Edmonton[b]	Alberta[c]
Return to spouse	36	19	24
Live with family/ friends	17	4	20
Independent living	30	54	37
Other	N/A	5	8
Unknown	15	17	11

[a] Data provided by Alison McAteer House. Year end statistics for Alison McAteer House from April 1, 1991 to March 31, 1992 (May 19, 1992).

[b] Yearly statistics comparison from 1986 to 1991 provided by WIN House, Edmonton (July 15, 1992).

[c] Burger (1988).

CHAPTER 7

Discussion

A Picture of Violence in the North and Its Context

What do we know about the nature and extent of family violence in the north and the context in which it occurs? Based on my analysis of the shelter data, an examination of the resources available to families experiencing problems with violence (primarily through the utilization of Statistics Canada data), and an examination of the social, historical, geographic, and cultural contexts in which families live (particularly Aboriginal families), the following picture emerges.

The Northwest Territories is a vast land with a sparse population which consists of many Aboriginal people. It is a place where people live within a variety of contexts. For example, the extent of violence existing in these communities is indicated by the high crime rates, the reports of childhood abuse, family backgrounds of abuse, and various kinds of abuse experienced in adult relationships. In fact, the literature indicates that incidences of wife abuse and childhood sexual abuse are higher in these northern Aboriginal communities than in other areas of the country. The current extent and perpetuation of violence against women and children in the Northwest Territories has been partly explained by the historical residential school experiences of past generations and the internalization of white man's cultural

devaluation of women.

Violence against women in the north is further complicated by the extent of alcohol abuse in the Northwest Territories, particularly in abusive relationships and family backgrounds. In addition, the problems of low education levels, low incomes, unemployment, geographic isolation, and lack of resources restrict options for abused women in terms of leaving their abusive partners and building lives free from violence for themselves and their children. For example, abused women may not be able to find work which would allow them to become financially self-sufficient and leave their abusive partners because of the overall lack of employment in their communities or their lack of skills or education required for employment. Furthermore, abused women are often required to travel great distances to reach services in other communities due to the lack of services in their own communities. A lack of communication resources, such as telephones, a general lack of coordination among services, and inconvenient and expensive modes of transportation, such as flying, can make it difficult for abused women to reach available resources. Given the way in which resources, such as shelters, medical facilities, police, housing, training programs, and child care, are primarily centred in urban centres and geographically isolated from other communities, abused women in the Northwest Territories often feel psychologically isolated with nowhere to turn.

Abused women are also faced with a tolerance of violence and lack of support from politicians, community leaders, their own families, their partners' families, and professionals including the police, the court system, and doctors. This is partly due to the cultural expectations of Aboriginal women being responsible for keeping their families together. Based on the shelter data, it seems that there was a general lack of support for abused women by physicians in past instances of abuse resulting in injury and by the police in past responses to calls of domestic abuse. This could be a barrier to contact these professionals in the event abused women need to do so.

Because of the lack of resources in communities and the perceived lack of concern and support from others, including professionals, abused women's needs are not met. For instance, the lack of culturally relevant services and Aboriginal service providers means that there are often language barriers in assisting Aboriginal women experiencing abuse and Aboriginal women's motivations for using available services and resources are not necessarily the same as non-Aboriginal women's motivations. Based on the shelter data, women who were injured as a result of physical and sexual abuse by their partners in past and recent incidents indicates their need for medical attention. In addition, the impact of abuse was evident among the women who suffered abuse during pregnancy and experienced problems with their pregnancy, including

miscarriages. Women were also in need of protection from their partners who were evaluated by shelter staff as high or moderate risk to their partners. This indicates that these women's lives were in danger. Due to the lack of police availability for protection and lack of housing in communities, women's safety and living needs were at risk. Hence, when abused women cannot have their needs met through resources and services that they require, they may be more likely to return to or stay with their partners and continue to experience violence. On the other hand, it appears that physicians and the police were more supportive of abused women in the most recent incident which could mean that abused women would be more willing to seek help from professionals or other services if they are given support.

The overall picture is one of violence, particularly violence against women and children in Aboriginal communities. This violence is compounded by alcohol abuse, low education, low incomes, unemployment, lack of resources and services for abused women, and geographic isolation of communities. A tolerance of violence and lack of support and concern from many people in communities further perpetuates violence against women which has consequences for their physical health and results in their various needs not being met. Hence, the problem of family violence in northern communities is influenced by numerous contexts and requires a perspective which considers all of those

contexts in order to fully understand the problem.

Looking Back at the Human Ecological Systems Model

Although the Human Ecological Systems model is not useful for making specific predictions, it is useful as a guide to understand the contexts or factors within each system that are important for explaining spousal abuse in the north. Based on the literature and the findings from the shelter data, it is clear that there are many contexts or factors within each system that impact abused women's situations. For example, the physical geography of the Northwest Territories and funding from governmental agencies have an impact on the location and availability of resources and services, such as shelters, medical facilities, law enforcement, housing, job training, and day cares throughout the territory and in their own communities. Availability of transportation and communication resources also determine if and how abused women are able to reach available services and resources. Cultural aspects, such as values, customs, and laws, also influence if and how extended families support the abused and the abusers and how abusers should be held accountable for the offences. Also, language needs are important to consider, particularly when many abused women in the north are Aboriginal. Support from immediate family and friends is also important in considering how abused women deal with their situations. Finally, availability of employment and educational opportunities in communities also can influence

abused women's options for living independently. These were some factors identified as important to understand the problem of spousal abuse in the Northwest Territories.

Implications

Given what is known about the nature and extent of spousal abuse in the north and the context in which it occurs, one implication is that the situation in the north is different from the rest of Canada. Thus, current mainstream responses to family violence, including different types of shelters, law enforcement and various legal responses, and treatment programs for abusers may not be particularly effective in the north because they do not take the different northern contexts or factors into account. The following is a description of these mainstream approaches, their goals as they were meant for abused women in mainstream Canada, and a discussion of why these approaches may not be as effective in the Northwest Territories.

Shelters

Shelters have been a significant response to the needs of battered women. In the attempt to meet the needs of battered women, the number a various types of shelters have increased over the years (MacLeod, 1987, 1989). In light of the increased knowledge of battered women's needs, the lack of other available community services to meet the range of their needs, and the tenacity of violence in society (MacLeod, 1989), shelters became the first major community

facilities which reached out to the wider community to help develop awareness about woman abuse (Innes, Ratner, Finlayson, Bray, & Giovannetti, 1991). The mandate of women's shelters across the country is to provide safe, short-term accommodation to abused women, to offer crisis intervention services, such as counselling and emotional support, and, where possible, to provide life skills and job training to assist women in leaving their abusive partners and in planning their futures (Health Canada, 1995; Innes et al., 1991). Therefore, shelters have been one resource where abused women can go to for services.

Shelters may not be as effective as a response to family violence in the Northwest Territories compared to other Canadian communities because according to northern experts, abused women in the north have different motivations for using shelters than women in mainstream Canada. For example, more women from the Yellowknife shelter intended to return to their abusive partners compared to abused women from shelters in Edmonton and across Alberta. The motivations of women living in the north, particularly Aboriginal women, are short-term in that they seek refuge at shelters temporarily and they do not necessarily want to take part in the services, such as counselling, or follow the rules established by shelter staff. Furthermore, even if their motivations for using the shelters (and other services) were long-term in that they attend counselling and various skills training,

shelters with such services are so limited that it would be unlikely, or at least very difficult, for these women to be successful in becoming independent (A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996; M. Lamon, personal communication, March 22, 1996). In fact, independent living as a intended plan after leaving the shelter was more common among women from the shelters in Alberta, particularly in Edmonton, compared to women from the Yellowknife shelter.

Another reason why shelters may not be an effective response to family violence in the north is that there are too few with the necessary skilled staff to provide adequate services for victims (Kakfwi, 1993). Although there is increasing demand for such services, current resources allocated to programs in northern communities are insufficient to meet each community's specific needs (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; M. Lamon, personal communication, November 6, 1995). As a result, overcrowding at available shelters means that abused women must travel to other communities to reach another shelter. Unfortunately, the geographic locations of existing shelters creates difficulty for abused women in geographically isolated communities with little or no means of transportation to travel to existing shelters in other communities.

Not only are the existing shelters few and spread across the Northwest Territories, but they tend to

structured around the needs of non-Aboriginal women. Because of the serious lack of culturally appropriate programs, services, and Aboriginal workers at these shelters, abused Aboriginal women's specific needs are not likely to be met (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; A. Hache, personal communication, April 2, 1996; Twin, 1992).

Generally, shelters are a narrow approach to dealing with family violence in the north because of abused Aboriginal women's different motivations for using shelters, the lack of available shelters and inconvenience to travel to shelters in other communities, and the lack of culturally sensitive services and Aboriginal workers to meet their particular needs.

Law enforcement, criminal justice, and legal responses

There are various law enforcement, criminal justice, and legal responses which intend to protect battered women and their children, to deter the abusing partners from further violence, and to give the message that violent behavior within the family is a crime which can be prosecuted and punished in court so that the abuser is held responsible for his behavior (Begin, 1991; MacLeod, 1989). Some of these responses include changes to charging policies, the use of restraining orders against an abusive partner, and jail sentences as punishment. Another legal response has been changes to the Divorce Act which includes reforms for ending abusive relationships. The following

describes these responses and their narrowness in dealing with family violence in the north.

One law enforcement response was the introduction and implementation of a mandatory charging policy in 1981 in London, Ontario. This was the first Canadian city where police were instructed to lay charges in all cases of family violence where there was reasonable and probable cause for laying charges without the victims' consent and without having to witness the assault (Burris & Jaffe, 1983). Prior to 1981, abused women had to lay the assault charge against their partners, but then they usually dropped the charge before the court date because of pressure and fear of threats from abusive partners (Begin, 1991). In 1983, a national charging policy was subsequently developed (MacLeod, 1989).

Despite the national mandatory charging policy, there are problems with police charging abusers in the Northwest Territories. Not only do the geographic distances between communities and R.C.M.P. detachments impede the likelihood of an abused woman receiving help from law enforcement (S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995), but police may be reluctant to charge an abuser if that abuser is personally known by the police as a friend, relative, or an authority figure, such as a community leader or politician (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). As a result, an abused woman may not always get a prompt and adequate response if she calls police for

help.

Restraining orders and jail sentences are other possibilities for abused to get formal protection from the court. A woman who is separated from her husband or who intends to separate and is afraid of continual beatings from him can apply to the court for a restraining order which prohibits him from contacting her and her children. Generally, these orders are issued for three months, but they may be extended if the violence or threat of violence continues (Alberta Law Reform Institute, 1995; Alberta Solicitor General, n.d; Freeland, n.d.). Breaching a restraining order could result in imprisonment for not more than two years, imprisonment until the accused has purged his contempt, or a fine with the default of imprisonment for not more than two years if the fine is not paid (Alberta Law Reform Institute, 1995). Hence, the court's involvement in protecting women and their children has been a significant response to abused women's safety needs.

There are reasons why the use of restraining orders and jail sentences for punishment in the Northwest Territories may not be as effective in dealing with family violence compared to communities in other parts of Canada. One reason is because of the north's physical geography. The geographic distances between communities creates inevitable delays by the circuit court system and R.C.M.P. in granting and enforcing restraining orders as well as processing cases in the event of a breach (Canadian Panel

on Violence Against Women, 1993; S. Heron-Herbert, personal communication, November 8, 1995). Second, even if there are jail terms, such as in cases of breaching restraining orders, they are relatively short sentences. For example, in 1991, jail sentences in spousal assault cases varied in length from two weeks to 18 months and the average jail sentence was four months (Griffiths et al., 1995). Such lenient sentencing reflects society's tolerance of violence against women (Kakfwi, 1993).

Not only are the short jail sentences for spouse abusers a concern, but there is also the concern that jails in the north are designed for white men of the mainstream society and their use does not fit with the Aboriginal concept of justice which includes atonement to the wronged individual or family, resolving disputes, healing of wounds, and restoring harmony in the community (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993). It has also been argued that use of jails appears to encourage offenders to commit crime in order that they can go to jail. "We hear of people who have been to jail and enjoyed the experience, who want to do it again. Others hear this and want to commit the crime so they can go down there too" (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993, p.122). Considering the conditions of poverty, unemployment, and lack of housing in the north, some prefer to go to jail which has food, recreation facilities, and educational opportunities (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 1993; Griffiths

et al., 1995). With such conditions inside prisons, the threat of incarceration is not an effective deterrent for Aboriginals in the Northwest Territories (Brennan Smart, 1989; Griffiths et al., 1995). Hence, using jails in the Northwest Territories as punishment for spouse abusers may be ineffective as a response to family violence because the short jail sentences and prison living conditions are not effective deterrents and the jail's punishment philosophy is incompatible with the Aboriginals' notion of justice.

Another legal response has been changes to the Divorce Act which allows for divorce to be granted to those in abusive relationships. Changes to the grounds of divorce in 1985 included adding mental and physical cruelty and reducing the length of time of separation to one year (Bissett-Johnson & Day, 1986; Sev'er, 1992). However, because of cultural expectations to keep their families and communities intact, Aboriginal women in the north risk being shunned, stigmatized, and criticized by their family and community members if they seek divorce from their abusive partners (Mancini Billson, 1990). Thus, divorce is not an option for Aboriginal women in the north because it stands against what they are expected to do.

For the most part, mainstream responses to family violence by various segments of the legal system are narrow in their effectiveness in the Northwest Territories due to geographic distances between communities, interpersonal relations between police and abusers, cultural expectations

of Aboriginal women, lack of jail sentences' deterrent effect, and jails' inappropriateness to cultural context.

Treatment programs for abusive men

Another mainstream response to family violence has been the development various treatment programs for males who abuse their female partners. Because of pressure from women's groups (MacLeod, 1989), treatment programs for men who batter began to emerge in Canada during the late 1970's and the early 1980's (Health Canada, 1994; MacLeod, 1989). Treatment for male abusers are meant to provide a means by which they can learn alternative conflict management skills, improve their ability to recognize and express anger appropriately, and make the negative outcomes of their violent behavior important to them (Dutton, 1988).

Treatment programs for abusers may not be an effective response to family violence in the north because, like shelters for abused women, treatment programs for men who batter their partners are very few in the north (Health Canada, 1994; Kakfwi, 1993). The distant locations of these programs could also prevent referred abusers living in other communities from attending these programs (Health Canada, 1994). Also, these programs are only facilitated in English which means that they may not be possible for some Aboriginal males and often programs are not culturally appropriate for Aboriginal abusers (Health Canada, 1994). Because of the lack of such treatment programs in the north, many treatment programs are only available in other

areas of Canada and are very expensive (Kakfwi, 1993). Again, this would mean travelling great distances to those programs and requiring financial resources which may not be available. In general, treatment programs for abusive men are unlikely to be an effective response to family violence in the north due to lack of such programs, the geographic distances of available programs, and their lack of cultural appropriateness for Aboriginal abusers.

Summary of northern responses to family violence

Although shelters, mandatory police charging policies, restraining orders, jail sentences, and treatment programs for male spouse abusers are available resources in the Northwest Territories for dealing with family violence, the various northern contexts impede the likelihood of these resources being effective. Geographic, social, local community, and cultural contexts of the north create difficulty in dealing the family violence as effectively as in the mainstream Canadian communities. As a result, abused women are unlikely to receive the kind of assistance they require to break the cycle of violence in their intimate relationships with their male partners.

Initiatives from a Human Ecological Systems perspective

Given the nature of the northern contexts and their impact on the effectiveness of available responses to family violence in the Northwest Territories, another implication is developing initiatives to address the

problem from a Human Ecological Systems perspective. This perspective recognizes the importance of various contexts of the environment and how each of those contexts have an impact or influence on people's development and behavior (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1992; Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). Because of the influence of numerous contexts including culture, physical geography, local community, distribution of different resources, communication and transportation facilities, family, extended family, and friend and neighbours on people's behavior in abusive relationships, initiatives to address this problem in the north cannot be developed in isolation. For example, by considering the context of Aboriginal culture in different initiatives, specific needs of abused Aboriginal women and their abusers could be met. Particular Aboriginal customs and traditions included in initiatives may increase the likelihood that Aboriginals in abusive relationships will receive they assistance they require. In addition, culture could influence the roles of extended family in assisting abused Aboriginal women. By considering the role of the extended family in initiatives, it is possible for more than those involved in abusive relationships to be assisted. Furthermore, geographic isolation of communities needs to be considered in initiatives to resolve the psychological isolation of people in communities and the requirements of abused women to access services. It is the broader contexts, such as culture and physical geography,

which influence other contexts including media, transportation and communication facilities, goods and services distribution, and extended family. In turn, these other contexts have an impact on the immediate family and the local community which then impacts the individual in an abusive relationship. Hence, by addressing the specific contexts which contribute to the nature of family violence in the Northwest Territories, initiatives can lead to possible solutions. The following briefly describes some initiatives.

One initiative is to provide more culturally sensitive programs and services and Aboriginal workers for abused Aboriginal women. Because there is currently a serious lack of such resources in northern communities, it is important to consider and incorporate cultural aspects, such as language, in services and programs in order to help meet Aboriginal women's needs. Since current mainstream approaches are not sensitive to the special geographic needs of abused women in the north, culturally sensitive programs and services need to be in the smaller rural communities where Aboriginal women live in order for them to have better access.

Self-care programs and support networks in local communities is another initiative which could assist Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service providers in their working relationships with each other, abused women, and abusers. Again, the Human Ecological Systems perspective

recognizes the various contexts in which family violence occurs and service providers are an important part of the exosystem which involves resources. If service providers are to be effective when working with victims and perpetrators of family violence in the north, such programs would need to incorporate strategies for dealing with the geographic and psychological isolation from other workers, especially if current mainstream programs for workers do not incorporate such strategies. In addition, education programs for workers should be available to help assist them in understanding the unique needs of victims of violence in the north, especially Aboriginal victims. Since cultural aspects are part of the Human Ecological Systems perspective, programs which include relevant cultural aspects, such as language, values, and customs of particular Aboriginal cultures, would be helpful for workers to provide effective services to those people.

A third initiative is to establish a system where services are coordinated and follow-up services are available in communities where abused women live would also be useful to ensure that abused women receive the help they need. This could prevent the psychological isolation of these women and services providers. This would be important because there are numerous contexts to consider when attempting to help abused women in the north. Current mainstream approaches do not consider how to deal with some contexts, such as physical geography, which can lead to

geographic and psychological isolation. Thus, co-ordinating efforts to deal with such contexts would be relevant in dealing with family violence in northern communities.

Fourth, culturally appropriate programs for abusers, such as Aboriginal committees which focus on restoring peace in the community and resolving disputes through atonement to the wronged individual, need to be established in communities. One example would be to involve the whole community, especially recognized elders, to allow for more input in dealing with abusers (Nielsen, 1994; Stevens, 1993). Although developing and using justice systems from an Aboriginal perspective may help decrease the use of circuit court which emphasizes punishment of the accused, such community-based justice systems require financial resources and acceptance from the whole community if they are to effective (Stevens, 1993).

Another initiative is to establish culturally appropriate programs which focus on the extended family, and not exclusively on the victim and/or the abuser. Because Aboriginal culture emphasizes the importance of the extended family, it would be appropriate to include the extended family as part of culturally relevant programs in order to encourage healing and participation of all those directly and indirectly impacted by family violence. In this way, the whole family system could receive the required assistance and the victim and abuser could both find support from all family members. Furthermore, since

communities are small and basically consist of many extended families, then programs which reach out to extended families could benefit whole communities by promoting healing of all and restoring harmony within the communities.

Finally, the media could also be used as part of an initiative to address the healing and prevention of abusive intimate relationships. An example of using media in such an initiative would be the development and implementation of public education programs to educate people about family violence in the north and to promote healing of the individual, family, and community. Since the goals and values of public education programs used in other Canadian communities are likely to be different and since culture can play a role in what the media portrays, these programs would need to be designed to be culturally relevant to the target audience. Aboriginals including community leaders, former victims and perpetrators of family violence, and service workers could be involved as role models in these programs. Such participation could encourage the healing process of all impacted by family violence. Furthermore, television and radio would be possible mediums for public education programs, but only if they are available in households in remote communities. Public education programs appear to have excellent potential to the extent that they could reach people in geographically remote communities and serve as a way for Aboriginals to identify

ways to deal with their situations in a manner that is consistent with their culture.

Although these are not concrete recommendations, these initiatives may be the beginning of addressing family violence in the Northwest Territories by considering the various contexts which contribute to the problem.

Future research

There are also implications for future research. Because this research was carried out from an outsider's view on the family violence situation in the north and I attempted to present the information as fully as possible with the use of Native references to substantiate the information and findings, there is the need to carry out research from an emic or insider's perspective. Future research, particularly qualitative research, would need to incorporate input from Aboriginals living in the north. For example, one important research project for the future would be to conduct an in-depth needs assessment which clarifies the nature of needs from an Aboriginal perspective. Such an assessment would incorporate input from abused women and the abusers about the nature of their needs. Furthermore, there could be town meetings involving community members and service providers to discuss which resources they believe are needed, which barriers they perceive as interfering with needs being met, and the best ways to address and meet specifically identified needs in their communities. Thus, a large scale needs assessment

involving specific perspectives from whole communities, especially Aboriginals, on clarifying needs and how to address them with particular strategies would be the next step in research.

Based on the model and findings from this thesis, future research could examine the following proposed hypotheses. First, one might assume that support from the medical profession and/or police services would encourage women to seek help. One could hypothesize that abused women who receive support from medical professionals and/or police will be more likely to seek help than abused women who do not receive support from medical professionals and/or police. For example, seeking help could mean going to stay at a shelter and use services there or going to a hospital or health care centre for medical treatment. Therefore, testing this hypothesis would need to include the various ways that abused women seek help in attempting to deal with their situations.

Second, one would expect that abused Aboriginal women would use available programs and services which are culturally sensitive to their needs. One could hypothesize that abused Aboriginal women would be more likely to use culturally sensitive programs and services than non-culturally sensitive programs and services. This hypothesis would be difficult to test fairly, but it is possible to look at the nature and extent of utilizing such programs and services and women's level of satisfaction of

using them. Instead of using shelters for emergency or short-term accommodation, it is possible that abused Aboriginal women would be more likely to use culturally sensitive shelters for counselling and other services provided that those shelters adhere to Aboriginal values and customs and have Aboriginal workers to meet abused Aboriginal women's needs.

Conclusions

With the use of census statistics and shelter intake data, this study examined and described the different contexts which contribute to the nature and extent of family violence in the north. Based on this study, it is now known that family violence in the Northwest Territories, particularly violence against women, is a problem complicated by historical, geographic, social, and cultural contexts. The role which these contexts play in contributing to family violence in the north has not been considered in previous research. In addition, it is now known that mainstream responses to family violence in the north may not be as effective in dealing with the problem because of the complexity of the issues involved. Therefore, a holistic approach (Human Ecological Systems model) was proposed as an important framework to researching family violence in Canada's north in order to understand this problem's complexity and to develop initiatives in addressing the problem.

This study also described the detailed nature and

extent of violence experienced by women who used a northern the shelter which has not been investigated in previous northern research. However, due to the data's limitations, this study was not meant to be a study which examines the incidence of family violence in the Northwest Territories. Furthermore, various family of origin characteristics of the women and their partners were described which has not been done in previous research on northern family violence. Such information contributed to some understanding of their backgrounds and how their backgrounds could be a part of the complexity of the problem. Generally, information on characteristics of the violence in the relationships and family histories were investigated to provide a more holistic understanding of the nature and extent of violence in the north since such information has not been investigated in past northern research.

It is hoped that this thesis provides a small step toward understanding family violence in the Northwest Territories. This understanding suggests the need for people living in northern communities to work together identifying individual and community needs, resources, special challenges, and approaches to deal with the problem of family violence in a way that considers the uniqueness of the historical, social, cultural, and geographic contexts of the north.

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APPENDIX

Alison McAteer Intake Form

File #:_____

CLIENT PERSONAL DATA FORM

1. NAME _____

2. Current Address _____
(#) Street/Lot City/Country

3. Home or Former Address: (if within last year) City ____ Rural____

_____
(#) Street/Lot City/Country

4. Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____
Is it safe to call these numbers?

Home: _____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No
Work: _____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No

5. Your Age:_____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____
D M Y

6. Abuser's Name: _____ Date of Birth:____/____/____
D M Y

7. Relationship of Abuser to You:

_____ (1) Husband
_____ (2) Ex-Husband
_____ (3) Common-Law Partner
_____ (4) Ex-Common-Law Partner
_____ (5) Boyfriend
_____ (6) Ex-Boyfriend
_____ (7) Lesbian Partner
_____ (8) Ex-Lesbian Partner
_____ (9) Father
_____ (10) Step-Father
_____ (11) Son
_____ (12) Daughter
_____ (13) Other Male Relative (grandfather, brother, uncle)
_____ (14) Other (specify):_____

8. a) Are you living with the abuser? ____ (1) Yes ___ (2) No
b) If no, who left the relationship? ___ (1) You ___ (2) Abuser
c) If no, how recently did you/the abuser leave?
_____ (1) Not Applicable
_____ (2) Within a week of initial contact with this agency
_____ (3) Within a month of initial contact with this agency
_____ (4) In the last 6 months
_____ (5) In the last year
_____ (6) More than one year's separation

9. Does the abuser know of your contact agency? _____Yes _____ No

10. Physical Description of Client:
Approx. Height: _____
Approx. Weight: _____
Hair Colour: _____
Eye Colour: _____
Distinguishing Marks: _____

11. What is your highest level of education:

_____ Elementary School Grade Level
_____ High School Grade Level
_____ College _____ Area of Study
_____ University _____ Area of Study
_____ Other Training (Specify) _____

12. Are you currently a student? _____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No
If yes, Full-time?_____ Part-time?_____ Where_____

13. Employment:

a) Are you currently employed? _____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No
b) Is employment _____ full-time _____ Part-time
c) Current occupation (if applicable) _____
d) Usual occupation (if different from above) _____
e) If you are unemployed, how long? _____
f) If you are retired, how long? _____
g) If you are disabled, how long? _____ Specify type:_____

14. What is your estimated GROSS FAMILY income yearly?

_____ (1) Less than $10,000
_____ (2) $10,000 to $19,999
_____ (3) $20,000 to $29,999
_____ (4) $30,000 to $39,999
_____ (5) $40,000 to $49,999
_____ (6) Over $50,000
_____ (7) No response/don't know

15. What is YOUR CONTRIBUTION to gross family income yearly?

_____ (1) Less than $10,000
_____ (2) $10,000 to $19,999
_____ (3) $20,000 to $29,999
_____ (4) $30,000 to $39,999
_____ (5) $40,000 to $49,999
_____ (6) Over $50,000
_____ (7) No response/don't know

16. What is YOUR source of income?

_____ (01) Own wages
_____ (02) Partner
_____ (03) Parents/Guardians
_____ (04) Welfare
_____ (05) Family Benefits ____ Mothers Allowance ____ Gains-D
_____ (06) Unemployment Insurance Plan (UIC)
_____ (07) Canada Pension ___ Retirement ___ Widow ___ Disability
_____ (08) Worker's Compensation
_____ (09) Old Age Security
_____ (10) Private Pension ____Retirement ____Disability
_____ (11) OSAP
_____ (12) Other _____
_____ (13) No income

17. What is YOUR access to the family income?

_____ (1) Free and equal access
_____ (2) Free access to own contribution only
_____ (3) Access to income (both contributions) controlled by partner
_____ (4) No access to any income
_____ (5) Client responsible for expenditures

18. Ethic Origin/Citizenship Status:

a) What is your ethnic origin? _____
b) Were you born in Canada? _____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No
c) If not, how long have you been in Canada?
d) What is your current immigration status?
____ (1) Citizenship ____ (2) Landed Immigrant ____ (3) Refugee
____ (4) Refugee Claimant ____ (5) Aboriginal Group
e) If you are sponsored, who is your sponsor?_____

19. Do you have a religious/spiritual affiliation?

_____ (1) Yes (specify) _____
_____ (2) No
_____ (3) No response

20. Health/Medical Information:

a) Are you in good general health?____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No
b) Are you currently receiving medical attention? ___ Yes ___ No
c) If yes, for what condition(s)?_____
_____
_____
d) Do you have a medical condition that is magnified by the abuser?
_____ (1) Yes (specify how) _____
_____ (2) No
_____ (3) Don't Know

e) Are you currently taking medication?
_____ (1) Yes (specify name(s) and dosage(s):_____
_____
_____ (2) No
f) Name of family physician: _____
g) Name of medical specialist(s) (if applicable):_____

21. Legal Information:

a) Are you involved with the criminal justice system at this time?

_____ (1) Yes _____ As a witness? _____ an accused?
_____ (2) No
_____ (3) Don't Know

b) If an accused, do you have lawyer?

____ (1) Yes (specify name of lawyer) _____
(specify charge) _____
____ (2) No

c) Are you pursuing family law action at this time?

____ (1) Yes (specify name of lawyer) _____
For Separation: _____
Custody: _____
Support: _____
Property: _____
Restraining Order: _____
____ (2) No

d) Are you currently the subject of any court order? (Include restraining order, probation, undertaking, custody, access, support order):

_____ (1) Yes (specify type of order and conditions)
_____
_____
_____ (2) No

File #:_____

HISTORY OF SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS

1. Status of Relationship with Abuser?

   a) How long has client know abuser? ____ # years ____ # months

   b) Is client in an intimate relationship with abuser? __ Yes __ No
   If yes how long? ____ # years ____ # months

   c) Is this relationship _____ (1) heterosexual _____ (2) lesbian

   d) What is Client's Current Marital Status? Length of Time

   _____ (01) legally married/living with abuser _____
   _____ (02) legally married/not to abuser _____
   _____ (03) common-law/living with abuser _____
   _____ (04) common-law/not with abuser _____
   _____ (05) single _____
   _____ (06) separated from abuser _____
   _____ (07) separated from partner not abuser _____
   _____ (08) divorced from abuser _____
   _____ (09) divorced from partner not abuser _____
   _____ (10) widowed _____

   e) What is Abuser's Current Marital Status?

   _____ (1) legally married/living with client _____
   _____ (2) legally married not to client _____
   _____ (3) common-law/living with client _____
   _____ (4) common-law/not with client _____
   _____ (5) single _____
   _____ (6) separated from client _____
   _____ (7) separated from partner not client _____
   _____ (8) divorced from client _____
   _____ (9) divorced from partner not client _____
   _____ (10) widowed _____

   f) Has client been separated from abuser during relationships
   _____ (1) Yes (specify # of times) _____
   _____ (2) No

g) If yes, has client stayed in a shelter/transition house?

_____ (1) Yes (specify which one(s))_____

_____

_____ (2) No (specify where client stayed during separation)

_____ with relatives
_____ with friends
_____ hotel/motel
_____ own home
_____ other (specify) _____

2. HISTORY OF PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIPS:	CLIENT	ABUSER
a. Have there been previous significant relationships?	___ (1) Yes ___ (2) No	___ (1) Yes ___ (2) No
b. MARRIAGES:		
#1 Length (y/m)	_____	_____
Common-Law before (y/m)	_____	_____
Separated (y/m)	_____	_____
Divorced (y/m)	_____	_____
Widowed (y/m)	_____	_____
Abusive	Yes No D/K	Yes No D/K
#2 Length (y/m)	_____	_____
Common-Law before (y/m)	_____	_____
Separated (y/m)	_____	_____
Divorced (y/m)	_____	_____
Widowed (y/m)	_____	_____
Abusive	Yes No D/K	Yes No D/K
c. COMMON-LAW RELATIONSHIPS:		
#1 Length (y/m)		
Abusive	Yes No D/K	Yes No D/K
#2 Length (y/m)		
Abusive	Yes No D/K	Yes No D/K
d. LESBIAN/GAY		
#1 Length (y/m)		
Abusive	Yes No D/K	Yes No D/K
#2 Length (y/m)		
Abusive	Yes No D/K	Yes No D/K
e. DATING		
#1 Length (y/m)		
Abusive	Yes No D/K	Yes No D/K
#2 Length (y/m)		
Abusive	Yes No D/K	Yes No D/K

3. IF CLIENT LEFT A PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIP:
   a. What helped her decide to leave? _____
   _____
   b. Did she have professional help? ____ (1) Yes ____ (2) No
   c. If yes, specify type: _____
   _____
   d. Is there contact with previous partner? ___ (1) Yes ___ (2) No
   e. Is that contact ____ (1) Abusive ____ (2) Not Abusive

File #:_____

ABUSER'S PERSONAL DATA FORM

1. NAME _____

2. Current Address (1) Same as Client's:_____
   (2) Other _____
   (#) Street/Lot City/Country

3. Age:_____ Date of Birth: ___/___/___
   D M Y

4. Physical Description of Abuser: Approx. Height: _____
   Approx. Weight: _____
   Hair Colour: _____
   Eye Colour: _____
   Distinguishing Marks:_____

5. Vehicle Information:

   a. Description: _____

   b. Vehicle Licence #: _____

6. What is the abuser's highest level of education:

   _____ Elementary School Grade Level
   _____ High School Grade Level
   _____ College (Area of Study) _____
   _____ University (Area of Study) _____
   _____ Other Training (Specify) _____

7. Is abuser currently a student? _____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No
   If yes, Full-time?_____ Part-time?_____ Where_____

8. Abuser Employment:

   a) Is abuser currently employed? _____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No

   b) Is employment Full-time _____ Part-time _____

   c) Current occupation (if applicable) _____

   d) How long at current position? _____

   e) Hours of work _____

   f) Usual occupation (if different from above) _____

g) If abuser unemployed, how long? _____

h) If abuser retired, how long? _____

i) If you are disabled, how long? _____ Specify type:_____

9. What is ABUSER'S source of income?

_____ (01) Own wages
_____ (02) Partner
_____ (03) Parents/Guardians
_____ (04) Welfare
_____ (05) Family Benefits ___(Mothers Allowance) ___ (Gains-D)
_____ (06) Unemployment Insurance Plan (UIC)
_____ (07) Canada Pension ___ Retirement ___ Widow ___ Disability
_____ (08) Worker's Compensation
_____ (09) Old Age Security
_____ (10) Private Pension ____ Retirement ____ Disability
_____ (11) Student Loans
_____ (12) Other (Specify)_____
_____ (13) No income

10. What is ABUSER'S CONTRIBUTION to gross family income yearly?

_____ (1) Less than $10,000
_____ (2) $10,000 to $19,999
_____ (3) $20,000 to $29,999
_____ (4) $30,000 to $39,999
_____ (5) $40,000 to $49,999
_____ (6) Over $50,000
_____ (7) No response/don't know

11. Ethic Origin/Citizenship Status

a) What is abuser's ethnic origin? _____
Aboriginal Group _____
b) Was abuser born in Canada? _____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No
c) If not, how long has abuser been in Canada?
d) What is abuser's current immigration status?
____ (1) Citizenship ____ (2) Landed Immigrant ____ (3) Refugee
____ (4) Refugee Claimant ____ (5) Aboriginal Group
e) If abuser is sponsored, who is your sponsor?_____

12. Does abuser have a religious/spiritual affiliation?

_____ (1) Yes (specify) _____
_____ (2) No
_____ (3) Don't Know/No Response

13. Health/Medical Information:

a) Is abuser in good general health?____ Yes _____ No _____D/K
b) Is abuser currently receiving medical attention?
___ Yes ___ No ___ D/K
c) If yes, for what condition(s)?_____
_____
d) Is abuser currently taking medication? ___Yes ___ No ___D/K

If yes, (specify name(s) and dosage(s) if known _____
_____

e) Does abuser have a history of drug and/or alcohol abuser?
_____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No _____ (3) D/K

If yes, specify type _____
_____

f) Has abuser received treatment for mental/emotional problems?

_____ (1) Yes _____ (2) No _____ (3) D/K

g) Name of abuser's family physician _____

h) Name of medical specialist(s) (if applicable):_____

14. Legal Information

a) Is abuser involved with the criminal justice system at this time?

_____ (1) Yes As the accused? _____ As a witness? _____
Charge(s) _____
Police Contact _____
Occurrence # _____
_____ (2) No
_____ (3) D/K

b) If an accused, does abuser have a lawyer?

____ (1) Yes (specify name of lawyer, if known)_____
(specify charge) _____
____ (2) No

c) Is abuser pursuing family law action at this time?

____ (1) Yes (specify name of lawyer) _____
____ (2) No
____ (3) D/K

d) Is abuser currently subject of any court order? (Include restraining order, probation, undertaking, custody, access, support order):

_____ (1) Yes (specify type of order and conditions)_____

_____

_____

_____ (2) No
_____ (3) D/K

15. Risk Assessment	Yes	No	D/K
a. Is abuser disrespectful of law/authority?	____	____	____
b. Has abuser ever been convicted?	____	____	____
Specify _____			
c. Has abuser ever breached a court order?	____	____	____
d. Does abuser practice martial arts?	____	____	____
e. Has abuser used/threatened to use weapon(s)?	____	____	____
Specify type(s) _____			
f. Does abuser have access to weapon(s)?	____	____	____
g. Is HIGH RISK NOTIFICATION needed?	____	____	____
h. High RISK NOTIFICATION COMPLETED: Date/Time	____	____	____
i. Designated POLICE HIGH RISK:	____	____	____

16. INTERNAL RISK EVALUATION:

_____ High Risk — May try to locate or contact woman or snatch children. May be physically abusive toward women, children and/or others.

_____ Moderate Risk — May try to locate or contact woman. May be verbally abusive and/or harass woman, friends, family, helpers, and/or others.

_____ Low Risk — May make little or no effort to contact or locate woman or children.

17. Does Abuser have associates who may assist him/her? ___Yes ___No
If yes, please specify below:

File #:_____

HISTORY OF ABUSE

1. When did the most recent incident occur? ___/___/___ Time: __a.m. __p.m.
   D M Y

   What events occurred BEFORE this assault?

_____
_____
_____
_____

		Most Recent	Ever in Past
2.	**PHYSICAL ABUSE**		
(01)	hit with open hand	01	01
(02)	hit with closed fist	02	02
(03)	hit with object	03	03
(04)	shoved/pushed	04	04
(05)	pulled hair	05	05
(06)	choked/strangled	06	06
(07)	grabbed shook	07	07
(08)	threw to floor/bed	08	08
(09)	held/banged against wall/floor	09	09
(10)	pushed down stairs	10	10
(11)	pinched	11	11
(12)	burned	12	12
(13)	cut	13	13
(14)	bit	14	14
(15)	kicked	15	15
(16)	threw objects at client	16	16
(17)	smashed objects/doors/walls, etc.	17	17
(18)	spit at client	18	18
(19)	forced confinement	19	19
(20)	other (specify) _____	20	20
	_____		
3.	**SEXUAL ABUSE:**		
(01)	excessive jealousy/sexual accusations	01	01
(02)	sexually demeaning jokes comments	02	02
(03)	sexual name calling	03	03
(04)	unvanted sexual touching/petting	04	04
(05)	forced vaginal intercourse	05	05
(06)	forced anal intercourse	06	06
(07)	forced oral intercourse	07	07
(08)	forced group/multiple partner sex	08	08

		Most Recent	Ever in Past
(09)	forced pornographic imitations	09	09
(10)	forced bondage	10	10
(11)	forced penetration with objects	11	11
(12)	withholding sexual attention	12	12
(13)	excessive sexual demands	13	13
(14)	other (specify) _____	14	14

4. BODY LOCATION OF PHYSICAL/SEXUAL ABUSE:

(01)	N/A	01	01
(02)	head	02	02
(03)	face	03	03
(04)	neck/throat	04	04
(05)	chest/ribs	05	05
(06)	breasts	06	06
(07)	stomach/abdomen	07	07
(08)	back	08	08
(09)	buttocks	09	09
(10)	genitals	10	10
(11)	legs/feet	11	11
(12)	arms	12	12
(13)	fingers	13	13
(14)	internal	14	14
(15)	other (specify) _____	15	15

5. WAS CLIENT INJURED?

(01)	Yes	01	01
(02)	No	02	02
(03)	N/A	03	03

6. DESCRIBE INJURIES:

(01)	bruises	01	01
(02)	black eye(s)	02	02
(03)	concussion(s)	03	03
(04)	contusions/bumps	04	04
(05)	sprains	05	05
(06)	broken bones	06	06
(07)	stiffness/sore muscles	07	07
(08)	burns	08	08
(09)	cuts/tears/abrasions	09	09
(10)	loss of hearing (temp. or perm.)	10	10
(11)	vaginal bleeding/miscarriage	11	11
(12)	other (specify) _____	12	12
(13)	N/A	13	13

		Most Recent	Ever in Past
7.	**EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE:**		
(01)	threatened violence	01	01
(02)	threatened to kill	02	02
(03)	threatened with weapon (specify)	03	03
(04)	threats to client property/pets	04	04
(05)	actual destruction property/pets	05	05
(06)	threats abuser will kill self	06	06
(07)	threats to children/family loved ones	07	07
(08)	terrorizing (speeding cars, etc.)	08	08
(09)	threats to separate her from children	09	09
(10)	isolation from family and friends	10	10
(11)	denial of and privacy	11	11
(12)	not meeting emotional needs	12	12
(13)	refusing to communicate/discuss	13	13
(14)	having sexual affairs with others	14	14
(15)	other (specify) _____	15	15
8.	**VERBAL ABUSE:**		
(01)	name-calling (specify)_____ _____	01	01
(02)	raising voice	02	02
(03)	yelling/screaming	03	03
(04)	swearing/cursing	04	04
(05)	other (specify)_____ _____	05	05
9.	**FINANCIAL ABUSE:**		
(01)	refusal to give money for rent/ food/bills, etc.	01	01
(02)	threats to deprive of money/property	02	02
(03)	client forced to ask for money	03	03
(04)	loss of possessions/home/security due to abuser's poor management	04	04
(05)	abuser's refusal to work/force client to support family	05	05
(06)	forced impropriety re:assistance	06	06
(07)	client's property sold w/o consent	07	07
(08)	client's money taken w/o consent	08	08
(09)	abuser assumes excessive debt load	09	09
(10)	other (specify) _____ _____	10	10
10.	**HAS CLIENT SOUGHT MEDICAL ASSISTANCE RE: EFFECTS OF ABUSE?**		
(01)	Yes	01	01
(02)	No	02	02

11.	WAS CLIENT:	hospitalized	01	01
		treated in emergency dept.	02	02

12. IF YES, DID CLIENT REVEAL SOURCE OF INJURY/DISTRESS?

(01)	Yes	01	01
(02)	No	02	02

13. IF YES, DID PHYSICIAN INQUIRE AS TO SOURCE OF INJURY/DISTRESS?

(01)	Yes	01	01
(02)	No	02	02

			PHYSICAL	SEXUAL	VERB/EMOT.
14.	HOW MANY INCIDENTS OF ABUSE HAVE OCCURRED WITH THIS PARTNER?				
(01)	None		01	01	01
(02)	1 - 10		02	02	02
(03)	11 - 25		03	03	03
(04)	26 - 50		04	04	04
(05)	51 - 100		05	05	05
(06)	more than 100		06	06	06

15. DOES THE ABUSER OCCUR:

(01)	regularly (i.e a pattern)	01	01	01
(02)	irregularly (i.e. no perceived pattern)	02	02	02

16. IF REGULARLY, HOW OFTEN?

(01)	daily	01	01	01
(02)	weekly	02	02	02
(03)	bi-weekly	03	03	03
(04)	monthly	04	04	04
(05)	bi-monthly	05	05	05
(06)	other (specify) _____	06	06	06

17. WHEN DID THE ABUSE BEGIN IN THE RELATIONSHIP?

(01)	from the beginning	01	01	01
(02)	within 1 year of beginning	02	02	02
(03)	after marriage/cohabitation	03	03	03
(04)	when client became pregnant	04	04	04
(05)	after child(ren) born	05	05	05
(06)	with new significant external stress (specify) _____	06	06	06
(07)	gradual increase over time	07	07	07
(08)	when client makes significant change (e.g. starts school, job) (specify)_____	08	08	08
(09)	other (specify) _____	09	09	09

18. DRUG/ALCOHOL USE AT TIME OF ABUSE:

CLIENT			ABUSER	
Most Recent	Ever in Past		Most Recent	Ever in Past
01	01	(01) drugs (specify) _____	01	01
02	02	(02) alcohol	02	02
03	03	(03) drugs & alcohol	03	03
04	04	(04) client doesn't know	04	04
05	05	(05) neither	05	05

EXTENT OF USE

CLIENT			ABUSER	
Most Recent	Ever in Past		Most Recent	Ever in Past
01	01	(01) a little	01	01
02	02	(02) a lot/not intoxicated	02	02
03	03	(03) intoxicated	03	03
04	04	(04) client doesn't know	04	04
05	05	(05) N/A	05	05

HOW FREQUENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH ABUSE

01	(01) rarely	01
02	(02) sometimes	02
03	(03) often	03
04	(04) always	04
05	(05) client doesn't know	05
06	(06) N/A	06

19. WHERE HAS ABUSE OCCURRED?

		Most Recent	Ever in Past
(01)	couple's residence	01	01
(02)	client's home	02	02
(03)	abuser's home	03	03
(04)	in a vehicle	04	04
(05)	friend's home	05	05
(06)	relative's home	06	06
(07)	public place (specify)_____	07	07
(08)	other (specify) _____	08	08

		Most Recent	Ever in Past
20.	DID ANYONE ELSE WITNESS THE ABUSE?		
(01)	no one	01	01
(02)	child(ren)	02	02
(03)	friend(s)	03	03
(04)	relative(s)	04	04
(05)	neighbour(s)	05	05
(06)	other(s) (specify) _____	06	06

21. WAS THE MOST RECENT INCIDENT OF ABUSER DIFFERENT FROM THE PAST EXPERIENCES?

_____ (01) Yes _____ (02) No

22. IF YES, HOW DID IT DIFFER?

_____ (01) It was the first incident.
_____ (02) It was the first incident of that type of abuse.
_____ (03) Abuser threatened to kill client.
_____ (04) Abuser threatened to or did hurt children.
_____ (05) Client was more frightened this time.
_____ (06) Client decided not to tolerate abuse any longer.
_____ (07) Abuser did not follow through on promises to change.
_____ (08) Client's stated limits overstepped by abuser.
_____ (09) Other (specify)_____

23. WAS CLIENT EVER ABUSED WHILE PREGNANT?

_____ (01) Yes _____ (02) No

24. IF YES, DID ABUSE CHANGE DURING PREGNANCY?

_____ (01) start at this time
_____ (02) suddenly stop during pregnancy
_____ (03) increase in severity
_____ (04) decrease in severity
_____ (05) remain the same
_____ (06) change in nature (e.g. physical to verbal, etc.)
_____ (07) other (specify) _____

25. IF YES, DID ABUSE CAUSE ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE PREGNANCY/BIRTH?

_____ (01) Yes (specify) _____
_____ (02) No
_____ (03) N/A

26. HAS CLIENT EVER SOUGHT SUPPORT/COUNSELLING FOR SELF, ABUSER, CHILDREN?
A ROUND THE ABUSE? _____ (01) Yes _____ (02) No

FOR WHOM?

_____ (01) Self
a) Type of Counselling _____
b) When _____
c) Outcome _____

_____ (02) Abuser
a) Type of Counselling _____
b) When _____
c) Outcome _____

_____ (03) Couple
a) Type of Counselling _____
b) When _____
c) Outcome _____

	Most Recent		Ever in Past	
27. HAVE THE POLICE EVER BEEN INVOLVED?	Yes	No	Yes	No
IF YES, WHO CALLED THE POLICE?				
(01) client	01		01	
(02) abuser	02		02	
(03) child(ren)	03		03	
(04) friend	04		04	
(05) relative	05		05	
(06) neighbour	06		06	
(07) helping professional	07		07	
(08) other (specify) _____	08		08	
IF YES, HOW MAY TIMES?				
(01) once	01		01	
(02) twice			02	
(03) 3-5 times			03	
(04) 6-10 times			04	
(05) 11 + times			05	
POLICE RESPONSE:				
(01) charged abuser	01		01	
(02) took abuser from scene (no charges)	02		02	
(03) took client from scene (no charges)	03		03	
(04) took client for medical attention	04		04	
(05) took client to shelter	05		05	
(06) advised client to charged abuser	06		06	

		Most Recent	Ever in Past
(07)	advised client to seek "peace bond"	07	07
(08)	charged client	08	08
(09)	detained client (no charges)	09	09
(10)	detained abuser (no charges)	10	10
(11)	called in Family Consultants	11	11
(12)	did nothing	12	12
(13)	other (specify) _____	13	13

WERE POLICE OFFICERS

(01)	generally supportive of client	01	01
(02)	generally unsupportive of client	02	02

POLICE CONTACT NAME: _____

OCCURRENCE NUMBER: _____

CHARGES LAID: _____ (01) Yes (specify) _____
_____ (02) No

COURT DATE (if known) _____

WAS ABUSER RELEASED ON AN UNDERTAKING?

_____ (01) Yes (specify terms) _____

_____ (02) No
_____ (03) Client doesn't know.

CHARGE(S): OUTCOME(S):

COMMENTS RE: CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES AND CLIENT'S EXPERIENCES:

File #:_____

CHILD(REN)'S PERSONAL DATA FORM

1. Does client have any children? ____ (1) Yes State #_____
   ____ (2) No

2.

FULL NAME FIRST LAST	AGE	D.O.B.	STATUS	SEX	SCHOOL AND CONTACT PERSON ADDRESS, PHONE NO.	L	C

Status:
(1) Natural
(2) Stepchild
(3) Fosterchild

Living Arrangements:
(1) Living with client
(2) Living with abuser
(3) Other

Custody/Access
(1) Interim
(2) Final
(3) Sole
(4) Joint
(5) Non-Declared

3. Physical Description of child(ren):

4. Special Needs and Concerns re: Children:

5. Medical Information re: Children

CHILD'S NAME	MEDICAL CONDITION	MEDICATION(S) - TYPE & DOSE

6. Name of Child(ren)'s Physician:_____

7. Support Agencies Involved with Family:

AGENCY	CONTACT	PURPOSE	DATE

8. Has/have child(ren) witnessed violence between client and abuser?

_____ Yes (Specify child(ren))_____
_____ No
_____ D/K

9. Does abuser have any children from a previous relationship who have never or do not now live with you?

_____ Yes _____ No

10. Is FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES involved presently, or have they ever been involved? ____ Yes ____ No

File #:_____

FAMILY ORIGIN

1. Siblings:

	YES/NO	#SISTERS	#BROTHERS	#STEP/HALF SISTERS	#STEP/HALF BROTHERS	CONTACT FREQUENCY
CLIENT						
ABUSER						

2. Birth Order: CLIENT _____ ABUSER _____

3. Parents:

		Still Living	If not, when died	Living Together	Separated /Divorced	New Partner	CONTACT FREQUENCY
CLIENT	Mother Father						
ABUSER	Mother Father						

4. Who was principle caregiver for CLIENT: _____
ABUSER: _____

5. Was there abuse between parents/parent substitutes? ___ Yes ___ No

	Physical			Emotional			Sexual			Verbal			Child Witnessed		
	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K
CLIENT															
ABUSER															

6. Is there a family history of alcohol/drug abuse? ____ Yes ____ No

	Mother			Father			Siblings			Caregiver (if diff.)		
	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K
CLIENT												
ABUSER												

7. Was CLIENT abused as a child/teenager? ____ (1) Yes ____ (2) No

	Physical		Emotional		Sexual		Verbal		Abandonment	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Father										
Mother										
Step-Father										
Step-Mother										
Foster Parent										
Male Relative										
Babysitter										
Teacher										
Stranger										
Other										

8. Was ABUSER abused as a child/teenager? ___ (1) Yes ___ (2) No

	Physical			Emotional			Sexual			Verbal			Abandonment		
	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K
Father															
Mother															
Step-Father															
Step-Mother															
Foster Parent															
Male Relative															
Babysitter															
Teacher															
Stranger															
Other															

Health Status

How is your health? _____

_____

Do you eat a well-balanced diet? _____

DO YOU:	Yes	No	How Long	How much	Changed in patterns (incr., decr.)
SMOKE TOBACCO					
DRINK ALCOHOL					
USE CAFFEINE (coffee, tea, cola, chocolate)					
USE RECREATIONAL DRUGS					
EXERCISE REGULARLY (1/2 hr/day/3 x a wk)					
EXERCISE TOO MUCH					
DIET TO CONTROL WEIGHT					
EAT TOO MUCH					
EAT TOO LITTLE					
EAT EXCESSIVE SWEETS, JUNK FOODS					
SLEEP TO MUCH					
HAVE INSOMNIA					
HAVE ACCIDENTS					
THINK OF HURTING SELF					
THINK OF KILLING SELF					