Original Article

Toward a gendered Second Generation CPTED for preventing woman abuse in rural communities

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Abstract Informed by several studies of woman abuse in rural settings, the main objective of this paper is to discuss how key principles of Second Generation Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) can be applied to help design appropriate community-based prevention strategies for improving the security of women living in rural places from abuse by spouses and partners in both ongoing and terminated relationships. The gender-sensitive version of CPTED recognizes that communities are contested places where differing strands of values, norms, beliefs and tolerance for crime influence the security of rural women. Hence, some forms of social organization or collective efficacy (not social disorganization) may promote and condone rural woman abuse, and other forms serve to prevent and deter it. We propose a Second Generation CPTED framework that considers the utilization of four main strategies, each tailored to directly address feminist concerns and enhance a locality's collective efficacy to increase women's security: community culture; connectivity and pro-feminist masculinity; community threshold and social cohesion.
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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to propose and discuss a framework for the development of appropriate prevention strategies and actions to improve the security of rural women.[1] Specifically, we focus on violence against rural women by intimate partners in both ongoing relationships and in the context of women who are attempting to separate/divorce from abusive partners.

As Weisheit *et al* (2006, p. 2) correctly point out, 'In the minds of many, the crime problem is, by definition, an urban problem.' This notion of 'crime free' rural communities is perpetuated, in part, by the mass media (DeKeseredy, 2007), and both fictional and non-fictional accounts of rural places as displaying a slower, more peaceful way of life, with

tight-knit communities, strong family ties, picturesque churches, photogenic farms and values based on self-sufficiency and individualism (Frank, 2003; Lichter *et al*, 2003).

However, equally culpable (if not more) for this neglect of rural crime are criminology and criminal justice scholars themselves. We attribute part of this neglect to the way criminology developed in the twentieth century, especially in the United States (Donnermeyer, 2007). Greatly influenced by the Chicago School of Sociology, one prominent criminology theory that gained credence was the social disorganization theory, which, in its revised, contemporary form as collective efficacy, remains a major theoretical focus today (Tittle, 2000; Cao, 2004). Social disorganization argues that as the cohesion or collective efficacy of places, large and small, decreases, crime is likely to increase. Cohesion, for example, may be diminished by rapid population turnover (for example, people moving in and moving out), high levels of poverty and high unemployment, among other factors. Unfortunately, it is a perspective that most scholars over the decades would view as better suited to the urban milieu than to the popular and scholarly stereotypes of rural places (Donnermeyer *et al*, 2006). Thus, most scholars assume that rural places possess more collective efficacy or organization than urban places, and have less crime. We call both assumptions into question, and propose a Second Generation CPTED as a framework to address violence against women.[2]

Research and Theory on Rural Woman Abuse

Since the 1990s, a growing number of criminology and criminal justice scholars in various countries have expanded rural crime research and discovered that rural crime rates are not universally lower than urban crime rates, and for particular types of rural communities and for specific types of offenses, the level of crime may be higher, and even much higher (Donnermeyer, 2007; Donnermeyer and DeKeseredy, 2008). Also, some of this rural-oriented research has begun to challenge the notion that disorganization and its conceptual variants creates crime, as evidence indicates that it is forms of cohesion and integration that, in reality, facilitate the occurrence of crime (Barclay *et al*, 2004; Donnermeyer, 2007).

Nevertheless, the bulk of these rural scholars' theoretical and empirical work ignores gender-related issues, especially violence against women (DeKeseredy, 2007). Consider, however, the available evidence on abuse against women in the rural context (DeKeseredy, 2007). Studies from rural Appalachia alone by Gagné (1992), Websdale (1995a, b) and DeKeseredy and associates (DeKeseredy and Joseph, 2006; DeKeseredy *et al*, 2006, 2007) reveal that sexual and other assaults against rural women by intimate partners is frequent.[3] Many feel more unsafe in their homes than at places beyond their homes, and feel as though friends, family, neighbors, church leaders, local law enforcement and others are either unsympathetic to their plight and/or slow to respond with any kind of help. DeKeseredy and associates research specifically suggests that a dangerous time for these abused rural women is during attempts at separation/divorce. These studies tell vivid stories of women who want to leave but cannot, trapped by a nexus of physical and social isolation, and with few alternatives for starting their lives over at another place, free from their abusive partners and ex-partners.

These studies also point to one key factor in understanding rural women abuse that can be framed as part of a social ecology of violence (Heise, 1998). This factor is rural

patriarchy (Websdale, 1995a; DeKeseredy *et al*, 2007). For example, Websdale (1995a), citing the work of Walby (1990) on patriarchy, identifies it as something that is a patterned feature of rural social structure, hence, the behavior of abusive men is not abnormal, but rather is embedded and reinforced within rural culture and society. Likewise, DeKeseredy and associates discovered in their study from the Appalachian region of Ohio that male peer support among abusive men is a key factor in understanding violence against rural women (DeKeseredy, 2007; DeKeseredy *et al*, 2007).

Utilizing an ecological or place-based perspective, Heise (1998, p. 273) defines the exosystem as informal and formal networks that create local norms for the control (or lack thereof) of behavior. Hence, as a feature of the exosystem of a rural place, patriarchy provides rationalizations and support for abusive behavior among localized networks of certain rural men, much like peer delinquent groups in the sense of Sutherland's (1947) classic work on differential association. Heise (1998) expands the ecology of abuse with an additional circle of factors that she calls 'macrosystem.' The macrosystem is a 'broad set of cultural values and beliefs that permeate and inform … ' the inner circles of her ecological framework, such as peer associations (exosystem), the microsystem (such as family factors) and personal histories of both victims and perpetrators (Heise, 1998, p. 277). At the macro level, rural patriarchy is a feature of a cultural milieu that cuts across rural communities, but frames what actually happens locally, and how specific cases of rural women abuse are addressed at specific places.

Hence, one of the key determinants suggested by those who have focused on woman abuse in the rural context is a particular type of 'collective efficacy' or social organization that encourages the violent victimization of women. Collective efficacy is a concept typically used in urban crime research and is defined as 'mutual trust among neighbors and a willingness to act on behalf of the common good, specifically to supervise children and maintain public order' (Sampson *et al*, 1998, p. 1). However, data gathered and analyzed by DeKeseredy (2007) and DeKeseredy *et al* (2007) indicate that one type of collective efficacy in the rural Ohio study sites neither prevents nor deters separation/divorce sexual assault, and instead encourages or facilitates this crime. Eighty-one per cent of the interviewees stated that they personally know other women who were sexually assaulted, suggesting that the victims were reflecting a community-wide problem. Consider too, 47 per cent indicated they knew that the male friends of their ex-partners engaged in woman abuse. Further, some of the interviewees described sexual assault incidents in which the perpetrator enlisted the help of male peers (DeKeseredy *et al*, 2006). It should also be noted that 84 per cent of the participants stated that they could not count on their neighbors to help solve their personal problems because they adhere to and enforce 'nonintervention norms' as a way to maintain public order (Browning, 2002). Further, as Websdale (1998) earlier discovered in rural Kentucky, in many places men can rely on their friends and neighbors, including those who are police officers, to support a violent patriarchal *status quo* even while they count on the same individuals to help prevent public crimes (for example, vandalism), which to them is acting on 'behalf of the common good.'

These findings point toward the idea that collective efficacy comes in a multiplicity of forms, not just one as the quote by Sampson *et al* (1998) above suggests. Hence, multiple forms of collective efficacy exist, side by side, in the same rural communities. They do not uniformly lead to less crime. Some forms do, and some forms do not, depending upon the specific characteristics of a place and the people and groups who live there, and the

particular type of offense under consideration (Donnermeyer *et al*, 2006). Interestingly, the findings of DeKeseredy and colleagues about collective efficacy are similar to conclusions about its influence reached by Barclay *et al* (2004), based on their research of a very different type of crime on the other side of the world from rural Ohio, namely, theft against farms in rural Australia. In their research, police officers judged the legitimacy of a farmer's allegations of cattle and sheep theft by a neighbor by considering their relative social status in the community. Not only was it a case of one farm neighbor suspected of stealing from another based on intimate knowledge of routines and when opportunities would arise, but recourse to law enforcement was less available to the victim if the victim was a more marginal member of the community, or the suspected perpetrator was a more respected member of the community. Hence, they dubbed this phenomenon the 'dark side' of *gemeinschaft* (Barclay *et al*, 2004).

Similar to Barclay *et al*'s (2004) commentary on *gemeinschaft*, Websdale (1995a, b) and DeKeseredy (2007) cite rural patriarchy as one feature of the rural scene that forms the basis of support for abusive behaviors against rural women. It is embedded in the local culture, but is not its sum total. In a sense, norms and values promoting abuse exist side by side in rural places with norms and values that can be used to prevent and deter abuse. Hence, security issues related to woman abuse in the rural context are two-fold. First, there are the more direct and immediate threats to specific rural women in abusive relationships, and actions of one type can be taken there. Second, there are the cultural and community factors that define a level of rural patriarchy which implicitly and even explicitly condones violence against women if not contested.

What is to be done about the plight of many rural women described by DeKeseredy and his colleagues, Gagné (1992), Websdale (1995a, b, 1998), and other researchers (for example, Navin *et al*, 1993; Krishnan *et al*, 2001; Logan *et al*, 2004, 2005)? Here, we contend that some key principles of Second Generation Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) can be modified to help reduce violence against women. First we define rural, followed by a description of a gender sensitive version of CPTED, and then offer four kinds of strategies that address feminist concerns about the security of rural women.

Conceptualizing Rural

Defining rural is not an easy task because rural communities themselves are quite diverse (Donnermeyer *et al*, 2006; Weisheit *et al*, 2006). By virtue of smaller populations and population densities, we assert that people who live in rural areas are more likely to 'know each other's business, come into regular contact with each other, and share a larger core of values than is true of people in urban areas' (Websdale, 1995a, p. 102), which variously can be referred to as a higher density of acquaintanceship, collective efficacy and *gemeinschaft*, even though each has slightly different meanings in the sociological and criminological literatures (Amato, 1993; Barclay *et al*, 2004; Cancino, 2005; DeKeseredy *et al*, 2007). Second, rural communities are susceptible to outside influences, more so today than in the past because of a globalized economy and a pervasive mass media. Finally, the standardization of education, communication, transportation and economic modes of production has reduced the prominence of some of the unique expressions of localized rural culture, and

with it, rural-urban differences in lifestyles have narrowed. Yet, rural people tend to be more politically conservative and hold more strongly to values extolling the importance of individualism and self-sufficiency (Fisher, 1995; Krannich and Luloff, 2002).

Our work borrows from Liepins' (2000) conceptualization of rural communities as places where people and groups engage in the construction and continuous revision of meanings based on networks of groups and individuals. This includes networks of individuals who live within the community, but can also include individuals with ties to larger networks of individuals which extend well beyond borders of specific places. Whether entirely local or only partially so, these networks are representative of the shifting arrangements of political, economic and social power within rural communities that, in turn, are reflective of larger social structural and cultural systems. In this sense, Liepins' (2000, p. 30) definition of a rural community as a place where 'temporally and locationally specific terrains of discourse and power' occur, is similar to Heise's (1998) ecological framework used to explain the etiology of violence against women. Hence, rural communities are indeed contested places in which instigated or purposive change to reduce violence against women is always possible, no matter how dark and foreboding localized expressions of rural patriarchy appear to be.

There is now sufficient evidence from the few rural-located studies of woman abuse that patriarchal male peer support, neighbor non-intervention and rural norms of patriarchy and privacy, all of which are expressions of one kind of collective efficacy, are significant threats to the security of rural women (Miller and Veltkamp, 1989; Gagné, 1992; Websdale, 1995a, b, 1998; Krishnan *et al*, 2001; DeKeseredy and Joseph, 2006; DeKeseredy *et al*, 2006). These new ways of thinking about rural communities and collective efficacy have profound implications for the development of appropriate responses to curbing women abuse.

Applying Second Generation CPTED to Rural Woman Abuse

As noted by Saville (2004, p. 1), 'There is this persistent belief that CPTED ends at the physical environment; that our responsibility stops by modifying the built environment to reduce crime opportunities.' Further, CPTED, in its original form, focused mainly on curbing public crimes in socially and economically disenfranchised urban communities, such as improving the territorial control people have over their buildings (DeKeseredy *et al*, 2003), and ignored more private crimes, such as violence against women. As well, there were concerns that the first generation of CPTED merely displaced crime and that demographic, economic, sociological and cultural features of a place were far more predictive of crime and criminal opportunities than a locality's physical dimensions (Brassard, 2003; Cozens *et al*, 2005).

Reacting to these limitations, scholars have created a Second Generation CPTED, one that focuses heavily on generating the kinds of collective efficacy through community capacity building that can act as a counterforce to rural patriarchy and other forms of rural social organization that perpetuate women abuse (Cleveland and Saville, 2003). Second Generation CPTED is similar in some ways to the concept of community readiness (Donnermeyer *et al*, 1997; Edwards *et al*, 2000). The idea of readiness is that there are levels or stages of relative support for localized interventions and preventive actions among neighborhood and community leaders. Actions that enhance the readiness of local

leaders/elites to take women abuse seriously are key to building positive forms of collective efficacy and strengthening specific actions among all citizens (both leaders and followers) that may be undertaken to reduce women abuse.

Second Generation CPTED is about developing and improving forms of defensible space through engaging in community level activities that create forms of locality-based discourses concerning norms, beliefs and values about various security issues which can function to deter potential offenders (Cleveland and Saville, 2003; Saville, 2004). In this paper, we focus on rural communities and the idea that rural patriarchy, as a form of collective efficacy, may be diminished and even eliminated through appropriate activities that strengthen other forms of collective efficacy which enhance the security of rural women and deter abusive/violent behavior by rural men. Moreover, DeKeseredy *et al* (2004) have already provided examples of how this new variant of CPTED can be modified to help reduce private violence against women in North American urban public housing.

Implications for Security

We build from the conceptual framework of a gendered Second Generation CPTED, supplemented by the concept of community readiness, to define four interrelated strategies to combat violence against women and improve their security, namely, community culture, connectivity and pro-feminist masculinity, community threshold and social cohesion.

Community culture

This element calls for the development of a 'shared history' through the use of festivals, sporting events, music and art (Cleveland and Saville, 2003). Occasionally defined as 'placemaking' (Adams and Goldbard, 2001), this strategy involves the use of plays, concerts and paintings that sensitize rural residents about the pain and suffering associated with woman abuse. Such cultural work, including designing tee shirts and quilts to memorialize women's victimization, could be done in schools, places of worship, county fairs, community centers and other visible places with the assistance of community members. This type of cultural work is routinely done in many parts of Ohio, which is deemed to be 'a Mecca for the quilt community' (Feldman, 2004, p. 4).

Although the activities may appear mundane and traditional, perhaps even trivial, their revised context represents one set of strategies for breaking down rural patriarchy and promoting greater awareness of woman abuse by giving public voice to the issue and confronting public expressions of rural patriarchy. As well, they serve to increase the readiness of communities to sustain actions on a wider scale (Donnermeyer *et al*, 1997), supported by law enforcement, elected officials and other local elites because it is expedient and in their vested interest to conform to new standards, rather than clinging tightly to anachronistic forms of patriarchy.

Connectivity and pro-feminist masculinity

Abused rural women suffer from higher levels of social and geographic isolation than their urban counterparts (Logan *et al*, 2004; DeKeseredy, 2007). Thus, it is necessary to build

easily accessible women's centers in rural communities or very close to them (Hornosty and Doherty, 2002). The creation of these safe places should be done with private and public support, and they do not have to focus only on issues related to abuse. For example, with the assistance of US Department of Labor demonstration grants, similar to Job Readiness Programs offered in Kentucky woman abuse shelters,[4] women's centers could offer educational programs aimed at training unemployed women for jobs contributing to their economic independence.

Although there are variations in the pro-feminist men's movement, a general point of agreement is that men must take an active role in stopping woman abuse and eliminating other forms of patriarchal control and domination throughout society (DeKeseredy *et al*, 2000). Most men do not beat or rape female intimates and sizeable portions of them are eager to eliminate woman abuse (Katz, 2006). Moreover, we are increasingly seeing 'the presence of alternative masculinities incompatible with violence in rural communities,' which offers hope that 'large-scale transformations in the rural gender order are possible over time that may in turn lead to reductions in gendered violence' (Hogg and Carrington, 2006, p. 183). Still, regardless of where they live, most anti-sexist men do not frequently socialize with other males who are concerned about enhancing women's health and well-being (DeKeseredy *et al*, 2000). Thus, formal pro-feminist men's organizations, such as the National Organization of Men Against Sexism should be invited to hold town hall meetings in community centers, at church events and regular meetings of civic and business organizations, and other settings where it is possible to increase awareness of the problem and its impact on women, children, schools and the community at large. As well, it provides an opportunity for local networks of pro-feminist men to get together and develop individual and collective strategies to reduce woman abuse, and to partner up with established community organizations.

Pro-feminist men are involved in an ongoing process of changing themselves through self-examination and self-discovery (Funk, 1993), with the ultimate goal of shedding their 'patriarchal baggage' (Thorne-Finch, 1992). Moreover, they continue to take great strides in their day-to-day life to escape from the 'man box' and to move from being simply 'well-meaning men' to becoming pro-feminist men. The 'man box' is a term created by Tony Porter (2006a) and in this box are the following elements of 'hegemonic masculinity' (Connell, 1995): avoid all things feminine; restrict one's emotions severely; show toughness and aggression; strive for achievement and status; exhibit non-relational attitudes toward sexuality; 'measure up to the patriarchal view of the ideal masculine body;' and actively engage in homophobia (Messerschmidt, 2000, p. 93).

According to Porter (2006b, p. 1), a well-meaning man is:

> a man who believes women should be respected. A well-meaning man would not assault a woman. A well-meaning man, on the surface, at least, believes in equality for women, a well-meaning man believes in women's rights. A well-meaning man honors the women in his life. A well-meaning man, for all practical purposes, is a nice guy, a good guy.

However, well-meaning men also directly or indirectly collude with abusive men by remaining silent. As Bunch (2006, p. 1) correctly points out, 'When we remain by-standers we are making a choice to support the abuse.' Hence, pro-feminist men's organizations at the local level represent another form of placemaking (Adams and Goldbard, 2001) by

building new networks of individuals who publicly display similar beliefs, values and behaviors (Kimmel and Mosmiller, 1992). Pro-feminist men are vocal about ending male privilege, woman abuse, and other highly injurious symptoms of patriarchy, and work collectively to get this done (Thorne-Finch, 1992). For example, pro-feminist men boycott strip clubs, confront men who make sexist jokes and who abuse their female partners, support and participate in woman abuse awareness programs, and express their views by supporting and voting for local officials who believe the same and are ready and willing to implement policies and actions that breakdown rural patriarchy related to violence against women (Funk, 2006; Katz, 2006). Initiatives such as these, according to proponents of Second Generation CPTED, bring people together 'in common purpose' and connect them with outside groups that can help them acquire financial and other forms of support for their efforts (Cleveland and Saville, 2003). Outside groups such as the Ohio Domestic Violence Network can also help people avoid 'reinventing the wheel.' Still, regardless of which strategies are suggested, they must be tailored specifically to meet the unique needs of each rural community.

Community threshold

Rural researchers argue that fear of crime may be increased in rural communities by low levels of policing, the absence of streetlights and other factors (Weisheit *et al*, 2006). As in North American public housing estates, vandalism is a powerful determinant of women's fear of crime in rural areas (Donnermeyer and Phillips, 1984; DeKeseredy, 2007).[5] Regardless of what motivates it, fear of crime in public places of any population size influences people to stay inside. Similarly, fear tactics by abusive men force their female victims to remain indoors, making it even harder to obtain knowledge about services available to abused women, and for them to develop social ties with neighbors who might be willing to confront the men who assault them in their homes or elsewhere.

Note that a key finding of Sampson *et al*'s (1998) study of collective efficacy is that community threshold can be enhanced and violent crimes can be reduced in neighborhoods of concentrated urban disadvantage when people band together for informal social control and to pool their collective power to extract such resources as garbage collection and housing code enforcement. Saville (1996) also recognizes 'tipping points,' that is, places are composed of people and groups with a capacity for action that is not unlimited. In terms of informal social control within contested communities, actions taken through Second Generation CPTED help tip the balance in favor of pro-feminist approaches. As well, these activities have positive, ancillary benefits when they are publicly visible, by symbolically declaring that women abuse is wrong and has no place in a rural community, hence, increasing the readiness of community leaders by putting pressure on them to support interventions that reduce women abuse, and ties into their vested interest to be re-elected or re-appointed (Donnermeyer *et al*, 1997).

Social cohesion

Second Generation CPTED studies show that teaching positive communication skills and conflict resolution enhances community cohesiveness (Saville and Clear, 2000). All

communities, even small ones, are composed of complex networks of people (Oetting and Donnermeyer, 1998; Liepins, 2000). Hence, reducing woman abuse in rural communities requires tapping into these pre-existing networks that already express or have the potential to more strongly take a stand and engage in positive forms of collective efficacy that fight against established forms of patriarchy. For example, schools are the primary social centers for all members, young and old, in many rural communities. Schools should build general domestic violence awareness programs into the curriculum and offer ongoing programs that encourage equal, healthy relationships between boys and girls (DeKeseredy, 2000). To supplement such programs, booklets such as *Today's Talk About Sexual Assault* should be distributed to teenage girls throughout rural areas (Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Center, 1994). The Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Center defines the specific characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships so that adolescent girls can better judge their relationships with males. It also offers advice on how to avoid abusive boys.

Conclusions

As Websdale (1998, p. 194) discovered in his study of woman battering in rural Kentucky, 'Any social policy initiatives must use the structure of rural patriarchy, in all its intricate manifestations, as an essential frame of reference.' Thus, sexism in all aspects of rural women's lives must be reduced and even eliminated, and the promotion of gender equality on farms, in workplaces, in families, in schools, athletics and so on should not be an afterthought. Indeed, there is ample evidence to support the claim that the 'institutionalization of feminist interests' remains the keystone to specific action for building up forms of collective efficacy that reduce and even eliminate woman abuse in rural communities (Mazur and McBride-Stetson, 1995, p. 10).

Hence, security issues in rural communities, and ways to address them for the prevention and deterrence of women abuse, works at two levels. The first represents all of the specific actions taken by law enforcement, shelters and other advocacy groups for women who are victims or at high risk of abuse. This first level of security can include the built environment and issues of territoriality as defined by the older or first generation definitions of CPTED. Yet, when these actions are tied to the idea that security for rural women as potential victims of violence by men occurs within cultures of rural patriarchy, they take on a different context. This leads to the second level of security, one which is an issue of local culture and the readiness of local elites and key community networks to support actions that prevent and deter women abuse and struggle against local expressions of culture and networks which condone woman abuse (Donnermeyer *et al*, 1997). This includes movements such as pro-feminist rural men who, along with women, build secure communities embedded in cultures absent of patriarchy and related male networks that support violence against women. These illustrate the development, strengthening and even reconstruction of forms of collective efficacy to improve rural women's security, hence contesting, countering, weakening and even eradicating other forms of collective efficacy that allow rural patriarchy to threaten rural women's well-being.

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2 See DeKeseredy (2007) for a review of the extant North American social scientific literature on woman abuse in rural communities.

3 Following Koss, Gidycz, and Wisniewski (1987) and DeKeseredy *et al* (2006), these behaviors include: (1) *sexual contact,* including sex play (fondling, kissing or petting) arising from menacing verbal pressure, misuse of authority, threats of harm or actual physical force; (2) *sexual coercion* includes unwanted sexual intercourse arising from the use of menacing verbal pressure or the misuse of authority; (3) *attempted rape* includes attempted unwanted sexual intercourse arising from the use of or threats of force, or the use of drugs or alcohol; and (4) *rape* includes unwanted sexual intercourse arising from the use of or threats of force and other unwanted sex acts (anal or oral intercourse or penetration by objects other than the penis) arising from the use of or threat of force, or the use of drugs or alcohol.

4 See Websdale and Johnson (2005) for more information on these programs.

5 See Alvi *et al* (2001) and Renzetti and Maier (2002) for data on women's fear of crime in North American public housing.

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