

All About Power? Age Gaps, Relationship Qualities, and Sexual Risk-Taking in Adolescent
Dating Relationships

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Abstract for PAA

Studies of teen sexual activity, contraceptive use, and pregnancy find increased sexual risk-taking in older male-younger female relationships. These studies imply that the relationship between age differentials and sexual risk-taking is due to power differences between partners. However, measures of power are not typically included in such studies. We use data from the Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study (n=495) to examine two research questions. First, we present differentials in relationship qualities reported by females dating older vs. similarly-aged or younger males. These qualities include power differentials, conflict, involvement, and commitment. Second, we analyze sexual activity and condom use within these relationships, determining whether or not measures of power differentials and other relationship qualities mediate relationships between having an older boyfriend and sexual risk-taking. Results indicate few differences in relationship qualities by partner age, and that relationship qualities do not mediate the relationship between sexual activity and having an older male partner.

There is a growing body of research documenting increased sexual risk-taking during adolescent relationships in which the male partner is significantly older than the female partner.^{1,2} Such research is usually based on the assumption that the male partner will be inclined toward riskier sexual behavior. Their female partners' ability to avoid such risk-taking is dependent on her power in the relationship, which is assumed to be lower in older male-younger female couples. In fact, recent years have seen an increased interest in the enforcement of statutory rape laws as a teen pregnancy prevention strategy.³

This paper empirically tests the assumption that the age-gap between partners signifies a power differential. We first determine whether or not an age difference between partners predicts power differences favoring the male partner. We also assess whether the age gap between partners is related to other relationship qualities that influence the likelihood of sexual activity. Second, we whether or not an age gap predicts sexual activity and contraceptive use, and, if such a relationship exists, whether or not it can be explained by relationship qualities such as power imbalances.

BACKGROUND

Female teens typically date, and have sex with, males who are somewhat older. For example, according to the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth, 4 out of 5 first sexual partners for teen girls were older, including 59% who were 1-3 years older, 15% who were 4-5 years older, and 8% who were 6 or more years older.⁴ Dating an older partner has been consistently associated in the literature with the likelihood of having sex^{1,5,6} and being diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease.^{2,7,8} Findings on use of condoms/contraception are less clear: some studies find a negative association between having an older partner and contraceptive

use^{9,10,11,12,13,14,15} while other studies find no significant relationship^{16,17,18,19,20} and some find mixed results.²¹ Multivariate analyses tend to find no significant association between having an older partner and becoming pregnant,^{22,23,24} although estimated pregnancy rates (calculated without taking into account covariates) are higher for female teens with older partners.²⁵

This final point illustrates one possible explanation for the increased sexual risk-taking among females with older partners. It's possible that there are selection effects, that is, certain characteristics that are associated on their own with sexual risk-taking are also associated with choosing an older partner, but that there is no direct relationship between having an older partner and engaging in sexual risk-taking. For example, several studies have found an association between having an older partner and having a history of forced sex^{5, 25}, which is a known risk factor for future risky sexual activity.²⁶ The same is true for other characteristics that predict both having an older partner and sexual risk-taking, such as permissive sexual attitudes among the respondent and her peers²⁷, perceptions among male partners that their female partners are sexually inexperienced¹⁷, early age at menarche^{15,27}, family structure¹⁵, and race/ethnicity.^{15,27}

However, it is also plausible that having an older male partner has a direct effect on female teens' sexual behavior. This hypothesized effect is usually explained in terms of power differentials between partners. An older male partner may bring more resources to the relationship, both instrumental, in the form of a car or greater personal income, and social, in the form of cachet within one's social circle for dating a more mature male. These males' older age might also give them an advantage in terms of greater experience and skills in navigating romantic relationships. Assuming that females will have more favorable attitudes than males toward safer sex practices², older males having additional power in these dating relationships implies that females' ability to enforce their wishes regarding safer sex will be limited.

The power differential explanation is consistent with feminist perspectives on the family and intimate relationships.^{28,29} Feminist theory suggests that the home life and intimate relationships are not realms where general societal patterns of male dominance are replicated. Young adults generally do report greater male power in their romantic relationships.^{30,31} However, new research has suggested relationship patterns may be more prevalent in early adolescence that actually give girls greater power. Differential socialization of youth, with girls having more experience through dyadic friendships, may translate into greater confidence in navigating this new type of dyadic relationship.³²

Little research has examined power differentials and safer sex practices in adolescent relationships. A study by Tschann, et al., found that it was not having greater decisionmaking power that allowed a partner to get his or her way about condom use, but instead it was the partner who was less emotionally invested in the relationship who tended to get his/her way.³³ This paper, however, did not examine age differences between partners. In one of the few studies of older partners and sexual risk-taking discussed above that included any sort of measure of power, DiClemente et al. found that those who typically had older partners reported having greater fear of negative reactions from partners if they suggested condom use, as well as perceiving greater partner-related barriers to condom use.¹⁰ The authors hypothesize that these factors may explain the lower condom use among those with older partners, although they do not explicitly test this theory in a multivariate context.

This research attempts to integrate the theoretical literature on male power in relationships, and empirical research on older male partners. Specifically, we examine two research questions. The first is whether or not it is accurate to assume that male power in adolescent dating relationships is greater when the male partner is older. Second, we test

whether or not including measures of male power in models of sexual risk-taking accounts for the increased risk among adolescent females with older partners.

DATA AND METHODS

Data

These analyses are based on Wave 1 of the Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study (TARS), a random sample of youth registered in grades 7, 9, and 11 in the Lucas County (OH) school district in 2000-2001. The analytic sample is limited to female respondents, those who had dated in the past two years, and those who provided valid responses on the pertinent questions about their most recent dating relationship, for a final sample size of 495. For analyses of condom use, the sample is further restricted to those who had vaginal sex in their most recent relationship, $n=132$.

While these data are not nationally representative, Lucas County does mirror national statistics on key variables such as median income and racial/ethnic composition. Furthermore, TARS was designed to complement surveys such as the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, including both behavioral measures and the respondent's perceptions of their relationships with parents, peer, and romantic partners. These measures include a number of measures of power imbalances between dating partners, as well as other relationship qualities such as love, enmeshment, conflict, and jealousy.

Measures

Having an older partner is coded yes (1) if the female partner's age subtracted from the male partner's age is 3 or more. A three-year minimum is commonly used as a definition of an

older partner, and the average of all age differentials mentioned in state statutory rape laws is 3.46.³⁴

We include a variety of measures of different relationship qualities to paint a comprehensive portrait of these adolescent females' romantic relationships. Relationship qualities fall into the domains of control/power, conflict, asymmetries, jealousy, communication, enmeshment, and emotionality/commitment.

We include two measures of control. *Partner's attempts at control* is based on summing Likert responses to the statements “[partner] sometimes wants to control what I do” and “[partner] always tries to change me” ($\alpha=.79$).³⁵ *Actual partner control* is measured separately from attempts at control, via the summing of Likert responses to the statements “I sometimes do things because [partner] is doing them” and “I sometimes do things because I don't want to lose [partner]'s respect” ($\alpha=.63$).³⁶ Power is based on two items. *Partner usually wins arguments* and *partner wins arguments on sex* are based responses to two items from Blood and Wolfe's Decision Power Index³⁷—“if the two of you disagree, who usually gets their way” and “if the two of you disagree on how far to go sexually, who usually gets their way”—dichotomizing responses to compare those who say their partner gets their way more than they do, with all others.

Conflict is measured using *amount of conflict* as the sum of responses to two items, “how often do you and [partner] have disagreements or arguments” and “how often do you and [partner] yell or shout at each other” ($\alpha=.84$). The final two scales include four items from the Conflict Tactics Scale, frequency of throwing something, pushing/shoving/grabbing, slapping, and hitting, both in terms of *partner's violence* ($\alpha=.92$) and *respondent's violence* ($\alpha=.91$).³⁸

We include five measures of relational asymmetry. The *alternative partners* scale is a two-item scale based on Likert responses to the statements, “I could find another girl/guy as good as [partner] is” and “It’s likely there are other girls/guys I could be happy with” ($\alpha=.80$). We asked *who was more “into” the relationship*, the respondent, the partner, or both equally, and for the purposes of this paper we compare those who said that they were more “into” the relationship with all others. We also include three single items measuring different aspects of relational asymmetry, all with responses on a Likert scale. These statements are “[partner] is not good enough for me,” “my friends are impressed that [partner] is going out with me,” and “I am lucky to date [partner].” The scale that contains these items has a low value on Cronbach’s alpha in this analytic sample, indicating that these questions all measure different concepts and cannot be combined into a single scale.

Jealousy is measured by two single items, both with Likert responses. *Respondent’s jealousy* is measured by reactions to “when [partner] is around other girls, I get jealous” and *partner’s jealousy* is measured by reactions to “when I am around other guys, [partner] gets jealous.”

We analyze two measures of communication. The first is the *Intimate Self-Disclosure* scale ($\alpha=.85$), based on frequency of respondent talking to the partner about three issues: “something really bad that happened,” “your home life and family,” and “your private thoughts and feelings.” The second is the *Communication Awkwardness* scale ($\alpha=.70$), summing Likert reactions to five statements such as “Sometimes I don’t know quite what to say to [partner].”³⁹

We include three measures of interaction. The first measures the *amount of time the couple spends together* in a typical week, specifically time alone, time at the partner’s home, and time out with the partner ($\alpha=.79$). We also capture instrumental support via two sets of five

questions summing the frequency of the *partner providing instrumental support* ($\alpha=.87$) and the *respondent providing instrumental support* ($\alpha=.87$), measured as frequency of giving gifts, paying for food or snacks, paying to see a movie or some do other fun activity, and buying clothes for the other partner.

We include three items measuring emotionality and commitment. The first is an abbreviated version of Hatfield and Sprecher's *Passionate Love* scale ($\alpha=.84$), calculated by summing Likert responses to four statements, such as "I am very attracted to [partner]" and "I would rather be with [partner] than anyone else."⁴⁰ A single item measures *partner's caring* via Likert responses to the statement, "[partner] cares about me." *Relationship salience* is based on the response to, "How important is your relationship with [partner]." There are five possible responses ranging from "not at all important" to "very important."

Four measures of relationship demographics are included. The first two are measures of relationship longevity, with one being *relationship duration* and the other a variable indicating whether or not the *relationship was current (vs. having ended)* at the time of interview (because respondents discussed their most recent relationship, even if it had ended at some point before the interview). The other two demographic variables for the relationship measure heterogamy on aspects other than age: specifically, whether the two partners *are of different racial/ethnic groups*, and whether or not they *attend the same school*.

We include a number of measures of the respondent's background characteristics. These include *age*, measured in whole years, and *race/ethnicity*, recoded from separate questions on Hispanic ethnicity and race into four categories: Hispanic, non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, and non-Hispanic Other.

Family measures include family structure, parent's education (as a proxy for SES), and parenting practices. *Family structure* is based on questions about the respondent's living situation at the Wave 1 interview and collapses 25 response options into single (biological) parent, two (biological) parents, step family, and some other living situation (e.g. grandparents, other relatives). *Parental education* is taken from the parent questionnaire, the vast majority of which were filled out by mothers, and is recoded into four categories: less than a high school education, high school degree or GED, some training beyond high school but no 4-year degree, and 4-year degree or higher. *Parental monitoring* is a six-item scale ($\alpha=.80$) based on questions that ask how often adolescents are allowed to make their own decisions on issues such as how late to stay out and what to wear. Items are reversed so that higher scores indicate higher levels of monitoring from parents. *Parental caring* is a five-item scale ($\alpha=.78$) based on Likert responses to items such as "my parents trust me" and "I feel close to my parents." *Parental communication* is a six-item scale ($\alpha=.74$) including statements such as "my parents sometimes talk to me about sex" and "my parents like to hear about the guy/girl I like," with Likert responses.

We also include three individual characteristics often hypothesized to be related to sexual risk-taking and/or having an older partner. *Self-esteem* is a six-item scale ($\alpha=.71$) that includes Likert responses to statements such as "I am able to do things as well as other people" and "I take a positive attitude toward myself."⁴¹ *Grades* are captured on a nine-point scale, ranging from "mostly A's" to "mostly F's," which is then reverse coded so that higher scores on the variable indicate higher grades. *Delinquency* is a ten-item scale ($\alpha=.87$) asking the frequency of engaging in various delinquent acts, such as drinking alcohol and damaging property. Females are asked how old they were when they had their first menstrual period, and responses to this

question are recoded to compare those who had their *first period before age 12* and those who had their first period at later ages, or had not yet begun by the wave 1 interview.

Finally, our analyses include two measures of sexual risk-taking, whether or not sex occurs in the relationship and consistency of condom use. *Sexual activity* is determined by the following question: “Have you ever had sexual intercourse (sometimes this is called “making love,” “having sex,” or “going all the way”) with [partner]?” Virgins, who were not asked this question, are also coded as not having had sex with their partners. Respondents who had ever used condoms in the relationship were asked how often they use condoms, with 6 response options ranging from “a few times (1-10%)” to “every time we have sex.” A seventh response option “never” was created for those who do not use condoms at all. Two versions of *consistency of condom use* are used in analyses: both a continuous measure and one comparing consistent users to all others.

Analytic Strategy

We will first present univariate statistics, as well as bivariate statistics for older male vs. similarly-aged couples. We next present regressions (OLS and logistic) using an age gap between partners to predict a variety of relationship qualities. Finally, we will use logistic regression to predict sexual activity and consistent condom use, with the age gap between partners, relationship qualities, and respondent characteristics as independent variables. An alternate OLS regression of frequency of condom use, using the continuous measure of consistency, will also be presented.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the sample, overall and according to partner age gap. Overall, 13.5% of respondents' relationships are with males 3 or more years older.

[Table 1 approximately here]

The control indicators have relatively low mean values and do not differ according to age gap. However, the power indicators significantly differ according to age gap. Girls with older partners are more likely to say that their partner usually wins arguments, in general and specifically arguments about how far to go sexually. The amount of conflict is higher in older male-younger female relationships. In addition, while male respondents' violence toward their partners is not significantly different by age difference, females are more likely to be violent when they have an older partner.

The next set of relationship qualities are relational asymmetries. Girls with older partners less often feel they have relationships alternatives and more often state that they are more into the relationship. These measures suggest that the male partner may more often be the individual of "least interest" in older male-younger female relationships. Females with older partners are no more or less likely than females with same age partners to say that their partner is not good enough for them, or that they feel lucky to date their partners, but they are more likely to say that their friends are impressed that they are dating their partners.

Respondents' level of jealousy does not vary according to partner age. However, older male partners are marginally more jealous, according to the respondent, at least at the bivariate level.

Communication does differ according to partner's age. Respondents with older partners report greater levels of self-disclosure. The levels of communication awkwardness do not significantly differ according to age of the dating partner.

Measures of interaction are higher for females with older partners. They spend more time with their partners, and both receive and give more instrumental support.

Girls' feelings about their boyfriends significantly differ according to the age of their partner. Females with older boyfriends report feeling higher levels of passionate love themselves, higher levels of caring from their partners, and greater relationship importance, than girls with younger or same-age boyfriends.

The demographic characteristics of these dating relationships differ significantly according to partner's age. Relationships with older partners are more likely to be intact at the interview, and have longer mean durations. Girls dating older boys are more likely to be heterogamous with their partner in other ways as well, with the respondent and partner being more likely to be of different racial/ethnic groups, and less likely to attend the same school.

Regarding respondent characteristics, respondents are, on average, 15.4 years old at interview, and girls with older partners are older than those with similarly-aged partners. The majority (68.6%) are non-Hispanic White, and girls with older partners are less likely to be non-Hispanic White and more likely to be Hispanic or non-Hispanic Black. About half (46.2%) live in two-parent families, with girls who have older partners being less likely to live in two-parent or step families, and more likely to live in single parent homes or in some other living situation. The majority of custodial parents report having a high school education (33.6%), or having some training beyond high school but no Bachelor's degree (32.5%). Girls who have older partners

are more likely to have parents with some education beyond high school, or to have parents with less than a high school education.

Respondents report relatively high levels of parental monitoring, parental caring, and communication with parents about dating and sexual activity. Reported communication is marginally lower among girls with older partners ($p < .10$), and there are no significant differences by partner age in parental monitoring or caring. Self-esteem also does not vary by partner age, with both groups reporting fairly high levels (average=23.6). The average response for grades is between “mostly B’s” and “mixed B’s and C’s,” with girls who have older partners reporting significantly lower grades. Respondents with older boyfriends also reported higher levels of delinquency and were significantly more likely to begin menstruation at a relatively young age.

The bivariate differences in relationship qualities support, in part, the notion that relationships between older males and younger females are more likely to have power imbalances that, by favoring the male partner, might lead to increased sexual risk-taking. However, other findings, such as increased love and communication, seem to run counter to the notion that relationships with an age gap are of a poorer quality and are less desirable for adolescent females. Moreover, we can see in Table 1 that the likelihood of having an older partner is not the same for all females; that is, background characteristics may influence the probability of dating an older partner. These same background characteristics may also influence the qualities of that relationship, as well as predicting the likelihood of sexual risk-taking.

Multivariate Results

Table 2 presents regression analyses using the age gap, respondent characteristics, and relationship demographics to predict relationship qualities. Each cell in Table 2 represents a regression analysis, with the dependent variable in the leftmost column – for ease of presentation

we provide only the coefficient for the age gap variable. (Full regression results are available from the authors.)

[Table 2 approximately here]

At the zero order, control and power measures are not significantly different according to partner age. Only two measures of conflict are significantly different by age gap in zero-order regressions: the amount of conflict, and the female partner's violence toward her boyfriend ($p < .01$). These two relationships weaken to marginal significance ($p < .10$) with the addition of respondent characteristics: age, race/ethnicity, family structure, parent's education, the three parenting variables, self-esteem, grades, delinquency, and early first period. Female's relationship violence remains marginally significant after the addition of the relationship demographic variables—relationship length, if the relationship is current, if the couple is of different racial/ethnic groups, and if the couple attends the same school—while amount of conflict becomes nonsignificant with the addition of these variables into the model.

At the zero order, friends being impressed that the respondent is dating her boyfriend is the only significantly different measure of asymmetries for females with older partners ($p < .05$). This difference remains significant after the addition of respondent and relationship demographics. Two other relationship asymmetry items become significant with the addition of respondent demographics: females with older partners have lower perceptions of alternative partners ($p < .05$), and are marginally more likely to agree that they are lucky to date their partners ($p < .10$). However, coefficients for both of these variables return to nonsignificance with the addition of relationship demographics.

Partner's jealousy is marginally higher at the zero order in older male-younger female relationships ($p < .10$), but is not significantly different with the addition of respondent demographics. Intimate self-disclosure is significantly higher in relationships with an age gap, at the zero order ($p < .001$) and with the addition of respondent demographics ($p < .01$). The relationship between these two variables weakens to marginal significances ($p < .10$) with the addition of relationship demographics.

Having an older partner is not a significant predictor of time spent together at the zero order, but is associated with increased time together once we control for respondent characteristics ($p < .001$) and relationship characteristics ($p < .05$). Instrumental support is higher in older male-younger female relationships at the zero order. With the addition of respondent characteristics, female partners no longer provide significantly more instrumental support to their male partners. Male partners' provision of instrumental support remains significantly higher for relationships with an age gap ($p < .05$) after addition of respondent characteristics to the model, but becomes nonsignificant with the addition of relationship demographics.

Having an older boyfriend is associated with higher scores on all three measures of emotionality and commitment. However, after the addition of respondent characteristics only the Passionate Love scale is significantly higher for females with older partners. This relationship becomes nonsignificant with the addition of relationship demographics.

Sexual Activity and Condom Use

Table 3 presents regression results for sexual activity and condom use in respondents' dating relationships. In a zero-order model, having an older partner is associated with an increased risk of having vaginal sex with that partner ($p < .001$). This relationship remains with the addition of respondent demographics, relationship demographics, and relationship qualities.

[Table 3 approximately here]

Condom use, on the other hand, is not significantly associated with having an older partner in our sample, whether measured as a dichotomous consistent/inconsistent or on a 7 point scale from never to always. The addition of covariates does not strengthen the relationship between partner age gap to the point of statistical significance, in either case.

DISCUSSION

There are many bivariate differences in relationship qualities by whether or not teen females have older or similarly-aged boyfriends. In that sense, it is true that there are often greater power differentials and increased conflict in older male-younger female relationships, although even at the bivariate level there are findings that complicate this picture, such as significantly increased levels of love, involvement, and communication in relationships with age gaps.

Most of these differences in relationship qualities are no longer significantly different by partner age in regression models that include respondent characteristics. This implies that power differentials in older male-younger female dating relationships may have more to do with the female herself, and less to do with her boyfriend or the relationship. This has important implications for providers and counselors concerned about power differentials in relationships, in that the emphasis of interventions targeted at female partners of older males should perhaps focus less on the dangerousness of that particular relationship, and more on the female's

background risk factors that she will carry with her into future relationships, regardless of partner age.

Despite the lack of differences in relationship qualities by partner age, having an older boyfriend does increase the odds that sexual activity will occur in the relationship, and this finding is not explained by the addition of respondent characteristics or relationship qualities. However, there is no difference in consistency of condom use by partner age, consistent with the mixed findings in the existing literature on this topic. Future work will include adding additional measures from the literature associated with having an older partner, such as permissive sexual attitudes, as well as testing for interactions between partner age and relationship qualities.

The question is, if having an older partner increases the likelihood of sexual activity, but not in most cases the likelihood of there being power differentials, then *why* is having an older partner risky? It may be that we need new theories to explain processes in these relationships that lead to increased sexual risk-taking, or it may mean that we need new measures of relationship qualities that capture the relational differences that lead to risk.

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Appendix 1: Tables

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Differences by Age Gap Between Partners, Female Respondents and Their Most Recent Dating Relationships, TARS Wave 1

	Total	Male Same Age/Younger	Male Older 3+ Years		Range
Male Partner Older by 3+ Years	13.5%	---	---		0-1
<i>Relationship Qualities</i>					
<i>Control</i>					
Control/Influence Attempts	3.5	3.5	3.7		2-10
Actual Control/Influence	3.8	3.7	4.1		2-10
<i>Power</i>					
Partner Usually Wins Arguments	9.1%	8.9%	12.3%	**	0-1
P Wins Arguments on Sex	9.4%	7.4%	13.1%	***	0-1
<i>Conflict/Violence</i>					
Amount of Conflict	4.2	4.1	4.9	**	2-10
Partner is Violent to Respondent	4.5	4.5	4.7		4-20
Respondent is Violent to Partner	4.8	4.7	5.5	**	4-20
<i>Asymmetries</i>					
Alternative Partners	6.7	6.7	6.2	†	2-10
Respondent More "Into It"	13.7%	12.8%	19.7%	***	0-1
Partner Not Good Enough	2.4	2.4	2.3		1-5
Friends Impressed that Dating P	2.6	2.6	2.9	*	1-5
Lucky to Date P	3.2	3.1	3.3		1-5
<i>Jealousy</i>					
Respondent's Jealousy	2.7	2.7	2.8		1-5
Partner's Jealousy	3.1	3.0	3.3	†	1-5
<i>Communication</i>					
Intimate Self Disclosure	10.5	10.3	11.9	***	3-15
Communication Awkwardness	12.1	12.2	11.4		5-25
<i>Interaction</i>					
Amount of Time Spent Together	3.6	3.4	5.2	***	0-9
Partner's Instrumental Support	10.5	10.2	12.4	***	4-20
Respondent's Instrumental Support	8.3	8.1	9.5	**	4-20
<i>Emotionality/Commitment</i>					
Passionate Love	14.2	14.0	15.7	***	4-20
Partner Cares	4.2	4.2	4.4	*	1-5
Importance of Relationship	3.9	3.8	4.1	*	1-5
<i>Relationship Demographics:</i>					
Relationship is Current (vs. Ended)	66.2%	64.2%	79.8%	***	0-1
Duration (Est. in Weeks)	24.1	22.3	36.2	***	0.5-78
Couple is of Different Race/Ethnicities	19.9%	19.3%	24.3%	**	0-1
R & P Attend Same School	54.2%	57.7%	30.2%	***	0-1
<i>Respondent Individual Characteristics:</i>					
Age	15.4	15.2	16.1	***	12-19
<i>Race Ethnicity:</i>					
- Hispanic	6.5%	6.3%	8.2%		0-1
- Non-Hispanic White	68.6%	69.5%	62.5%		0-1
- Non-Hispanic Black	21.9%	21.3%	25.4%		0-1
- Non-Hispanic Other	3.1%	3.0%	3.9%	**	0-1
<i>Living Situation</i>					
- Single Parent	26.2%	25.3%	32.3%		0-1
- Two Biological Parents	46.2%	47.1%	39.5%		0-1
- Stepfamily	13.6%	14.1%	10.1%		0-1
- Other Living Situation	14.1%	13.5%	18.1%	***	0-1
<i>Parent's Education</i>					
- Less than High School	10.9%	10.1%	15.9%		0-1
- High School	33.6%	34.4%	28.3%		0-1
- >High School, No 4-Year Degree	32.5%	31.9%	36.3%		0-1
- 4-Year College Degree+	23.0%	23.6%	19.6%	***	0-1
Parental Monitoring	22.8	22.7	23.3		6-30
Parental Caring	19.6	19.6	19.3		5-25
Parental Communication Re. Sex	20.0	20.1	19.1	†	7-30
Self-Esteem	23.6	23.5	24.2		10-30
Grades	6.5	6.6	6.0	*	1-9
Delinquency	12.7	12.5	14.2	*	10-90
First Period Before Age 12	27.4%	26.5%	33.2%	***	0-1
Approximate N	495	428	67		

† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2: Coefficients for "Older Male Partner" Predicting Relationship Qualities, OLS and Logistic Regression

	Zero Orders B	With Respondent Demographics B	With Respondent and Relationship Demographics B
<i>Relationship Qualities</i>			
Control			
Control/Influence Attempts	0.22	0.18	0.04
Actual Control/Influence	0.31	0.32	0.31
Power			
Partner Usually Wins Arguments	0.36	0.36	0.17
P Wins Arguments on Sex	0.55	0.70	0.68
Conflict/Violence			
Amount of Conflict	0.80 **	0.45 †	0.26
Partner is Violent to Respondent	0.20	0.18	0.13
Respondent is Violent to Partner	0.75 **	0.52 †	0.49 †
Asymmetries			
Respondent More "Into It"	0.37	0.32	0.34
Partner Not Good Enough	-0.08	-0.09	0.01
Alternative Partners	-0.47	-0.58 *	-0.45
Friends Impressed that Dating P	0.33 *	0.36 *	0.35 *
Lucky to Date P	0.18	0.28 †	0.21
Jealousy			
Respondent's Jealousy	0.03	-0.04	-0.18
Partner's Jealousy	0.29 †	0.20	0.12
Communication			
Intimate Self Disclosure	1.54 ***	1.19 **	0.75 †
Communication Awkwardness	-0.71	-0.38	0.19
Interaction			
Amount of Time Spent Together	1.62	1.16 ***	0.59 *
Partner's Instrumental Support	1.94 ***	1.26 *	0.44
Respondent's Instrumental Support	1.12 *	0.75	0.01
Emotionality/Commitment			
Passionate Love	1.46 **	1.16 *	0.70
Partner Cares	0.23 *	0.14	0.00
Importance of Relationship	0.31 *	0.23	0.01
Approximate N	495	428	67

† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3: Coefficients for "Older Male Partner" Predicting Sexual Activity and Condom Use, OLS and Logistic Regression

	N	Zero Orders	With Respondent Demographics	With Respondent and Relationship Demographics	With Respondent Demographics, and Relationship Qualities
Did the Couple Have Sex	495	1.7 ***	1.4 ***	1.4 ***	1.6 ***
Did the Couple Use Condoms Consistently	132	-0.1	0.3	0.5	1.1
Condom Consistency, Measured Continuously (7 point scale)	132	0.4	-0.1	-0.4	-0.3

† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$