

P-04-540 Stop Sexism in Domestic Abuse – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Chair, 15.01.15

William Powell AC/AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
CARDIFF
CF99 1NA

13th January 2015

Dear Mr Powell,

Petition P-04-540 Stop Sexism in Domestic Abuse

I should like to express my sincere appreciation to the committee for allowing Healing Men (HM) more time to respond to the letter from Welsh Women's Aid (WWA) received on the 31st October 2014. I apologise unreservedly for the offence caused to the Committee and to WWA by the hasty and ill-considered remarks about commercial imperatives and motivations. These remarks were inappropriate and offensive and I unreservedly apologise to all who have been offended by them.

The purpose of HM's petition is to urge the Welsh Government (WG) to adopt a more effective approach to tackling the difficult issues that underlie domestic abuse (DA) in Wales and re-align its policies so that the WG can protect boys and girls and break the cycle of intergenerational transmission of abusive behaviours – a key determinant in perpetuating DA. HM has set out guidance and indicators to the huge body of international evidence and practice that challenges the WG's current policies and which the WG has, seemingly, not openly acknowledged or considered in its preparation of new legislation seeking to eliminate DA in Wales. HM respectfully suggests that all substantiated views and evidence need to be carefully and openly considered and to critically and objectively reviewed to ensure the principles and policies are the most appropriate and fit for purpose for Wales in the 21st century. Surely the people of Wales have a right to expect this from the WG when forming new legislation to tackle DA in Wales?

HM concurs with WWA in the ideal of seeking a world free from violence and abuse and HM would extend this to include "equality" – where each individual girl or boy is not treated less favourably to this man/women because of their sex¹. HM

¹ Equalities Act 2010

respectfully urges the Committee, the Welsh Assembly and the WG and WWA to join HM in support of the white ribbon campaign to end all violence – www.whiteribbon.org. Surely that is a vision we can all share?

It is encouraging to note that WWA describes its underpinning philosophy as an “understanding” as this opens up the possibility to discuss and debate others’ understandings including those put forward by HM as well as to consider potential “mis-understandings”. I thank the Committee for considering the depth and breadth and legitimate authority of HM’s evidence based understanding. I confirm HM’s willingness to discuss and debate WWA’s understanding and potential mis-understandings – in other words putting the needs of the people of Wales before ideology and seeking equality in a world free from violence and abuse. Surely it would be beneficial for the entire DA sector, including WWA and the WG, that such an informed and knowledgeable debate should take place?

HM acknowledges the excellent work done by WWA in raising awareness of domestic abuse (DA) with women as only victims and the provision of help line support and other interventions for women as well as the provision of places of refuge exclusively for women. HM’s view is that this does not go far enough as it’s ideological understanding is focused on responding to the consequences of DA on one particular group in society. Whilst acknowledging the benefits, HM clearly demonstrates the shortcomings of this narrow approach. HM respectfully invites the WG to take a broader perspective and to equally address the needs of the whole of the population of Wales and to look to addressing the root causes of DA in the home, where girls and boys learn abusive behaviour and are at **three times the risk** of abuse when **both parents** are abusive.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recognises the very significant incidence of DA against men ² citing 784,000 men suffering DA in 2010/11 and its prevalence in being witnessed by boys and girls;

“3.16. Domestic violence and abuse between parents is the most frequently reported form of trauma for children (Meltzer et al. 2009). In the UK, 24.8% of those aged 18 to 24 reported that they experienced domestic violence and abuse during their childhood”³

The UK national centre for the CPS also recognises male victims of DA⁴ and an extract is attached as Attachment 2. Key issues have been highlighted and include;

“Men may also be victims of domestic abuse, perpetrated by females ... Abuse may ... be physical violence, and/or non-physical behaviours linked to psychological and emotional abuse.”

² <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph50/chapter/3-context>

³ <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph50/chapter/3-context#domestic-violence-and-abuse-between-parents>

⁴ http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/d_to_g/domestic_abuse_guidelines_for_prosecutors/#a70

“... masculinity should not be used as a preconception to understanding why the abuse is occurring.”

“Prosecutors should be aware that there is a significant under-reporting of domestic abuse against male victims.”

Please note that this statement puts the Central CPS policy in direct conflict with Mr Jim Brisbane of the Welsh CPS administration who co-authored the statement “...masculinity is associated with violence ... and all interventions must address men’s violent behaviour ...”⁵. It is with considerable concern that I note the continuing enthusiastic support of the WG in using this report⁶ containing these offensive and distressing statements as a lauded and exclusive basis for preparing new legislation. This is despite the WG having been alerted to contrary and more effective approaches, not least by HM.

It is beyond question that services to support all victims of violence should be well funded. Clearly victims’ services have to be adequately supported. There was some surprise to note that in July 2014 that WWA had accumulated £1,306,638 (incl. £493,468 in cash at bank) from WG funding in just 26 months of operation as a limited company⁷ and the realisation that 1 month’s income from the WG would more than fund four men’s help lines for a full twelve month period each. Very few organisations that are heavily reliant on government funding can demonstrate such apparent underspends in a period of severe public sector cut backs, job losses and service cuts. Surely this disparity and funding profile invites curiosity and concern by those responsible for safeguarding and administering public funds especially given the narrow focus on one particular sector of Welsh society?

HM’s understanding and petition seeks to open the very defined confines of WWA’s understanding and seeks to open and give voice to a broader understanding of DA in order to address the intimate and personal nature of DA, its root causes and its toxic effect on the current and future generations of girls and boys in Wales. Surely this is an approach that deserves deep and careful consideration and discussion by the WG?

Whilst fully acknowledging the inclusive statements made by the WG and also WWA in the above letter, it is in the practical application of these statements that HM finds concern and sees difficulties in addressing issues of equality, fairness and effectiveness. Indeed, there is an informed and knowledgeable understanding that the WG and WWA are creating barriers to equality for men and boys in the implementation of the WG/WWA understanding and current policies. Surely this must be a troubling concern for all those involved in setting public policy in Wales and particularly for those who are responsible for ensuring that the WG complies with its Gender Equality Duty?

⁵ Task and Finish Group Report, August 2012

⁶ Task and Finish Group Report, August 2012

⁷ Company No. 07483469, Audited accounts to 31st March 2013

HM acknowledges that the Dyn Project, to which WWA refer, helps some male victims of DA in Wales. However, the Dyn Project is intricately connected with the WWA/Safer Wales partnership and, despite being a help line for vulnerable and distressed men suffering from DA, is founded on the same gendered understanding as WWA i.e. men and only men are violent and women are only, ever victims. This understanding could easily give rise to a conflict of principle and interest and result in policies and implemented practices that may not be necessarily in the [male] callers' best interest. It is a matter of the deepest concern to HM that this premier national Welsh help line for vulnerable and distressed men in Wales, screens callers (men) using a pre-prepared check list ⁸ to determine if the [male] caller may be deemed to be an initiator of DA pretending to be a victim. *"I wanted help and I felt that I was being interrogated"* was one distressed caller's experience. How can it be right that any distressed and vulnerable callers taking the courage to seek help and support are treated in this discriminatory way?

HM's petition cites established and evidenced findings that some 40% of all incidences of DA are bi-directional (mutual abuse between female/male partners) so it is hardly surprising that some 47% of their vulnerable male victim callers were deemed by the Dyn Project to be initiators⁹. There is some considerable confidence in predicting a similar, or a higher figure, if such a practice was to be applied to female callers seeking help – but callers to women's help lines are not, and never have been, screened at all for initiating DA because of the ideological prejudice and bias in WWA's understanding. HM is concerned about the potential for creating an unhelpful circular and closed dynamic within Dyn/WWA/Safer Wales whereby almost half of male callers are deemed to be questionable and this is cited to support the continued use of this practice without gathering the corresponding information from female callers. Is this possibly a practical example of an understanding creating a mis-understanding and thereby creating barriers to equality for vulnerable and distressed people in Wales because of their sex?

I have asked the DYN project to clarify its policy on sharing client information with other agencies and have not received a response.

[section deleted by the author]

HM firmly holds the view that this practice is entirely inconsistent with equality and ethical and responsible practice when operating a help/support line for those suffering from DA and where men in particular have additional barriers to equality in taking the first steps and coming to face their experience of DA. HM firmly holds the view that such gendered ideological practices sets the Dyn Project in Wales at odds with nationally accepted standards of good practice and the basis and validity

⁸ An updated version of the Inventory shown in Appendix J, p77 - Robinson & Rowlands (2006) The Dyn Project: Supporting Men Experiencing Domestic Abuse -

⁹ Task and Finish Group Report – August 2012

of the DYN policy has been questioned by those connected with providing genuine helplines dedicated to supporting men in distress.

Is it any wonder then, that the Dyn Project shows a relatively low rate of need and response as indicated by WWA when compared with the incidence of DA affecting men and their families in the UK as disclosed by the 25 Key facts¹⁰ compiled by the Mankind Initiative and the statistics quoted by the Central CPS and NICE.

Men face further barriers to equality in DA. Men are twice as likely not to tell someone in authority even though men are nearly as likely as women to be victims of severe force.

There are also other factors; ;¹¹

- **Maleness**
 - Do not recognise they are a victim
 - Shame, embarrassment, masculine identity and pride.
 - Concern about being believed by friends, family, work colleagues, police, councils, GP's, help lines etc (you must have done something to deserve it)
 - Fear of being falsely accused
 - Fear of losing contact with children
- **Societal**
 - [Lack of awareness from] Friends, Family, Work Colleagues
 - Lack of media or public policy coverage
 - View; men should stick up for themselves
 - What did you do to provoke/must have deserved it
 - Lack of fundraising/donations
 - Lack of services
- **Public Policy**
 - Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (one of 88 actions relate to men)
 - Non-ideological and gender neutral laws and aims converted to ideological and gender definitions and strategies
 - Women's Aid and Refuge trying to marginalise male victims
 - Lack of understanding of Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty
 - Lack of training for front line staff - HMIC report and NICE guidelines
 - Lack of a public story and awareness campaigns
 - **Outcome = Circle is never broken**

¹⁰ 25 Key Facts – Mankind Initiative – freely available on request

¹¹ Edited from - Mankind Initiative – presentation to Police, CPS and others.

These issues affect almost 50% of the electorate. Surely these issues need to be addressed by their elected representatives in Wales?

However, these issues have now been extended into the political arena in England with the formation of the Justice For Men and Boys (and the women who love them) political party (J4MB) who will be contesting a number of key marginal seats at the General Election in 2015 with the potential to look for regional “protest vote” and proportional representation seats in the Welsh Assembly elections in 2016. J4MB’s submission to the Westminster consultation on DA is freely available on request.

Domination by an ideological understanding can be used coercively to present only that narrow understanding and to deny others access to salient and pertinent information that is not compliant with that narrow understanding. By way of example, HM refers to the statistics quoted by WWA and refers to work done by Dr Louise Dixon¹² which finds that;

... Recent research has further highlighted the necessity to measure the reciprocal nature of violence within relationships, showing it results in high levels of injury and increases risk of physical harm to boys and girls present in the household.

These findings are not replicated in surveys which only ask about victimisation, such as the National Violence Against Women Such surveys typically find high rates of female victimisation and male perpetration.

However, if surveys fail to ask questions about perpetration (and perpetration by both members of the couple),..., underreporting is likely to be common, particularly in respect to female perpetration and male victimisation.

Furthermore, the structural mechanism by which research is channelled into a particular ideological understanding is revealed by Professor Murray Straus and Dr Nicola Graham Kevan in their papers “Processes Explaining the Concealment and Distortion of Evidence on Gender Symmetry in Partner Violence”¹³ and “Distorting Intimate Violence Findings: Playing With Numbers”¹⁴ in which 8 methods are revealed and explored;

1. Suppressing evidence (that does not comply with the feminist [ideological] understanding)
2. Avoid Obtaining Data Inconsistent with the Patriarchal Dominance Theory

¹²Browne, K.D., Beech, A.R., & Craig, L. *Assessment in Forensic Practice: A Handbook*. Wiley-Blackwell. – Chapter; L. Dixon, Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence,

¹³ Professor Murray Straus - *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* – copies to PC Office

¹⁴ Dr Nicola Graham Kevan – *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* – copies to PC Office

3. Cite Only Studies that show Male Perpetration (NB – DYN assessing or screening male callers¹⁵)¹⁶
4. Conclude That Results Support Feminist Beliefs When They Do Not
5. Create “Evidence” by Citation (the “Woozle Effect” where repeated assertions, including, for example, from the World Health Organisation, are cited as facts even though there is no scientific basis for the claims) (NB – WWA citing the United Nations, the Council of Europe and UK Government as well as the CPS even though Central CPS Guidance as above is contrary to WWA’s understanding)
6. Obstruct Publication of Articles and Obstruct Funding and Research That Might Contradict the Idea That Male Dominance Is the Cause of PV (Partner Violence)
7. Harass, Threaten and Penalise Researchers Who Produce Evidence That Contradicts Feminist [ideological understandings and] Beliefs. (Erin Pizzey [see below] makes reference to credible death threats, police protection and fleeing the UK ¹⁷)
8. Playing with Numbers (making women’s victimisation more visible while obscuring men’s)

Straus observes “*[These methods] have created a climate of fear that has inhibited research [and] ... I have not covered the even greater denial, distortion and coercion in prevention and treatment efforts” to which is added “.. [such] active suppression and subversion .. have no place in academia or governmental responses to the problem of family violence” by Dr Graham Kevan. Surely the WG’s avoidance of these challenges to its current policy and the WWA’s understanding is becoming unsustainable?*

HM accepts WWA’s statement that WWA also supports boys. However, HM have some reservations about how this is implemented, given the ideological understanding that underpins all WWA’s work.

Some practical issues may help illustrate HM’s concerns.

- Hypothetically: A mother escapes from an abusive and violent domestic situation and is taken to a safe refuge with her twin children who are aged 13. The mother and her daughter are accepted into the safe refuge and her son is refused sanctuary because he is a 13 yr old boy – and for no other reason than he is a boy. It is noted that WWA has ignored this point in their response. Is this not an ideologically sexist act and the creation of a barrier

¹⁵ DYN Final Evaluation Report, 2006. A Robinson Cardiff University, J Rowlands DYN Project – Appendix J, Page 77 and

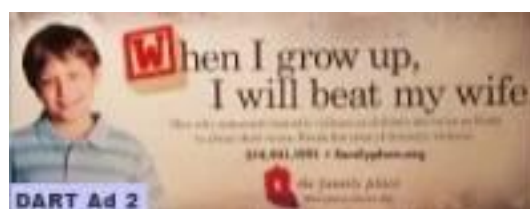
¹⁶ <http://www.dynwales.org/default.asp?contentID=586>

¹⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IxoStFBrjo - timing – 16m:40s – 21m:39s

to equality by implementation of the WWA's understanding? Surely such discriminatory practices cannot be condoned, let alone designed and implemented by WWA, in seeking equality and a world free from abuse and violence?

- As reported to HM: A few months ago a speaker recently came to give a talk about DA at a comprehensive school in South Wales. The speaker pointed out some boys, one at time and only boys, and suggested “*you may be become a perpetrator*” and (to another) “*you could become a perpetrator too*”.

This follows the same principle as followed some years ago in a widely displayed advert in Texas and which is referenced in HM's petition (- see illus).



Is this not violence in and of itself? Surely such abuse, effectively violence, cannot ever be condoned whatever the underpinning ideology and understanding?

- As reported to HM: At a WG Consultation event a delegate described the introduction of an ideologically based programme called “Building Healthy Relationships” for schools. The interactions with boys were described as “*difficult*”. Not only were boys, and only boys, singled out, but a particular school and a particular pupil were named. There was widespread laughter from the prominent practitioners, opinion makers and people in authority in Wales following some very inappropriate remarks.

How can a boy or girl have a “healthy relationship” with masculinity when ideologically based and senior movers and shakers feel it is a good joke to blatantly breach professional ethics, boundaries and confidentiality in order to openly discriminate against a group with protected characteristics¹⁸. Such jocularly against people of colour would, I suggest, be grounds for dismissal but this ideological understanding facilitates such insidious discrimination against masculinity (boys) by those who are in authority and who would otherwise take action. How can an ideological understanding that promotes and encourages such prejudice be able to effectively address the complexities of the human suffering in abuse in intimate partner relationships?

The Advertising Standards Authority assess “normalisation” when considering widespread controversial promotions – somehow the message, even if negative, perversely suggests that “*everybody is doing it ...*” prompting the notion “*... so why*

¹⁸ Qualities Act 2010

not me?". Widespread gendered policies (as manifested above) may have perverse, unintended and damaging consequences;

- Stereotypes boys, men and masculinity and encourages the fashion that *"its alright to hit boys ... he probably deserves it anyway"*¹⁹. This is effectively a licence to girls (women in waiting) to abuse boys and go on the commit DA²⁰ in their adult lives
- It "normalises" DA - "[it seems] every boy/man does it - its ok because [authority tells us] that's what men do ..."
- Denies girls/women's responsibility for their behaviour in intimate partner relationships
- Has no positive effect on the key issue of intergenerational transmission
- Undermines a boy's sense of "self" and closes down his ability to thrive and find his place in the world. This phenomenon is described in the petition citing the well known *"Blue eyes, Brown eyes"* experiment²¹. HM's petition describes how this abuse is deeply pernicious when sanctioned and supported by authority, i.e. the WG, schools, "authority" as cited above and other established organisations (Please also refer to male suicides as below). How can this barrier to equality of opportunity be sustained and supported given WWA's stated support for boys?

The pervasive nature of gendered understanding is graphically illustrated in the two minute Mankind video *"Violence is Violence"*. The smirks and grins are sickening. The video has had a total of some 8,000,000 views and can be found on the Mankind Initiative website (www.mankind.org.uk/media and link to the YouTube video or at the link below²²). Is it not shocking that we have come to promote such divisive and discriminatory attitudes in such a long standing, proud, cultured and tolerant nation as the UK?

Adopting, promoting and embedding the WWA's gendered ideological understanding by the UK and Welsh governments, the United Nations, The Council of Europe and, disturbingly, the Welsh administration of the UK Crown Prosecution Service has damaging consequences and creates discrimination, barriers to equality, violence and abuse. As a man, I experience the gendered understanding on which WWA operates as abusive and to be committing a violence against me for *no other reason* than I am a man. Where is the humanity in the understanding that divides the entire world's human population of over 7,000,000,000 people into two - one of whom is labelled *"associated with violence"*²³ on no other factual basis than

¹⁹ Dr Erica Bowen, Coventry University – Mankind Conference on DA – October 2013

²⁰ **Testing Predictions From the Male Control Theory of Men's Partner Violence.** Dr Elizabeth A. Bates, Dr Nicola Graham - Kevan, Professor John Archer. Wiley Periodicals Inc., 2013

²¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Elliott

²² ManKind #violenceisviolence video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jy5vRGtKPY0>

²³ Task and Finish Group Report – August 2012

having a penis? How has this become enshrined in the policy of the WG? How can WWA hope to achieve a world free from violence and abuse when the fundamental understanding on which WWA is founded is seen and felt to be violent and abusive in and of itself? How can this gendered and discriminatory understanding bring the insight necessary to reduce or eliminate intergenerational transmission of DA and violence in Wales, given the intricacies of intimate human relationships as recognised by the UK centre of the CPS?

Ground breaking research by Dr Elizabeth Bates sought to prove the patriarchal understanding and found, instead, that:

- DA is initiated by abusive people – and is not gendered
- Men tend to be more abusive to other men than in their relationship with a female partner
- Women are more abusive to their male partner than their male partners are to them, and women are less abusive than they are to their partners to any group outside the relationship, including men.

The Huffington Post review is attached at Attachment 3. Copies of the research are freely available on request.

Erin Pizzey accidentally founded the world's first women's refuge in Chiswick, London in the early 1970's. She carefully studied and puzzled over the revelations that were being presented to her in this new situation and has continued to be active and widely acclaimed in this field ever since. Ms Pizzey now has control of www.whiteribbon.org and offers the following somewhat forthright commentary²⁴;

"The purpose of this [whiteribbon.org] campaign is to ask everyone to contribute to the now universal truth: Domestic violence is not and never has been a gender issue. For over forty years men have been demonised and pushed out of family life often separated from their boys and girls and many men have killed themselves so bereft that they saw no other way out.

The pages of the white ribbon campaign will be in the forefront of evidence based truths. For me it is recognising that violence in the family is a generational issue. Children born to dysfunctional families, marinated in violence and sexual abuse will often grow up to repeat these patterns. I have always advocated that all victims of domestic violence need a therapeutic approach in order to find their way out of violence.

For far too long a cynical financially driven war by radical feminists has mislead governments and the general public into believing that men have been the perpetrators of all violence. I pledge to join with everyone who cares about this issue to continue to publish the truth.

Erin Pizzey.

²⁴ <http://www.erinpizzey.com/>

Mahatma Gandhi offers the following insight into publishing the “truth”;

‘Many people, especially ignorant people, want to punish you for speaking the truth ... Even if you are a minority of one, the truth is still the truth.’

Mahatma Gandhi

However, as HM makes clear, Ms Pizey is far from being in a minority of one. There is a burgeoning and increasingly vocal challenge to the old fashioned principles on which WWA’s understanding is based from women and men from all walks of life. This challenge is based on simple humanity as well the extensive and respected work of researchers, practitioners, learned and respected academics, psychotherapists, counsellors as well as those who feel, or who have actually been, violated or touched by the manifestations of this gendered understanding.²⁵

How can such a groundswell be simply ignored by WG in formulating new legislation for the 21st century? Surely such internationally widespread and increasing evidence and practice based understanding must, at least, be recognised and discussed? Why is WWA, with its duty to the WG and the people of Wales on all issues relating to DA in Wales, silent on the fact that there are strong arguments that offer extremely credible alternatives to the understanding that is at the core of the WWA’s philosophy? Surely the people of Wales need their legislators to seek the best solutions from all sources in forming new legislation fit for the 21st century?

HM acknowledges WWA’s concern about the prevalence of male suicide. Men commit suicide after suffering DA with the resultant deaths far outnumbering women murdered by a partner or ex-partner. These men can unjustly lose their homes, their boys and girls and family – perhaps their employment and social circle – and kill themselves in despair. Suicide is the largest killer of young men in the UK and 2013 was a 15 year high in suicides – the increase coming from male suicides and with Wales suffering from the highest rate of suicide of any region within the UK. In 2010 there were 104 male suicides in Wales compared to 12 female suicides as detailed in the petition. How can these individual tragedies be overlooked given WWA’s stated concerns about boys? Is there an inherent bias intrinsic to WWA’s understanding that give rise to the practical illustrations above?

HM offers the WG an opportunity to look afresh at an aging understanding whose roots can be directly traced back some 50 years to political radicalism in the 1960s, being itself based on political ideology from the mid 1800s. HM looks forward to Wales in the 21st century and offers a new way to look at addressing the human suffering caused by DA. A new way that is more effective, humane and with proven international evidence based research and practice than the traditional orthodox understanding and one which will help intervene more effectively in the intergenerational cycle where boys and girls learn violent and abusive behaviours from their parents or carers at home. Does it not make sense to look at all

²⁵ See Attachment 1

Healing Men

PO Box 2020, Bath, BA1 1AA

www.whiteribbon.org - **take the pledge to end violence.**

instances of DA and tackle DA where it starts – in the home – and to recognise that help lines, support and refuges, whilst absolutely vital and necessary, deal with the results of DA and not the root cause?

Thank you very much for your kind consideration. Please let me know if I can provide any further information or clarification to assist the Committee in its consideration of my Petition.

Yours sincerely,

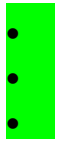
Tony Stott

Healing Men

Attachment 1.

Some key challengers, respected authorities and activists include (purely for example and wholly incomplete);

Other content deleted by the author for reasons of privacy



- Psychotherapists and Counsellors – 40 of whom have signed the petition
- etc

There are many, many more, for example, in Canada, the USA, Australia, Europe, India and elsewhere throughout the globe. This movement is established, credible, evidence based and forward facing into the 21st century and offers a reasoned, proven challenge to the WG's current understanding put forward by WWA.

Attachment 2 Central CPS Guidance to Prosecutors**Male victims**

Men may also be victims of domestic abuse, perpetrated by females. Abuse may, as with female victims, be perpetrated as physical violence, and/or non-physical behaviours linked to psychological and emotional abuse. This section focuses on male victims experiencing intimate partner violence by female perpetrators, and familial violence perpetrated by both men and women, unless otherwise stated. Further guidance relating to **same sex issues can be found in the section on same-sex, bisexual and transgender individuals.**

A male victim's physical appearance or masculinity should not be used as a preconception to understanding why the abuse is occurring. In fact, some male victims may as a result of their physical stature feel less able to report the abuse they are experiencing for a fear that they will not be believed.

Prosecutors should be aware that there is a significant under-reporting of domestic abuse against male victims. Many victims will be reluctant to report offending in the fear that it may damage their reputation, or pride; others may be hesitant as they fear the consequences that may ensue in relation to their family settings. Prosecutors will need to deal with these issues with great care, to ensure that male victims do not feel undermined, or the credibility of their allegation not believed on the basis of their gender.

Prosecutors should also note that in some cases, female perpetrated abuse against male partners is a sensitive and complex area. Some women may use boys and girls within the relationship to manipulate a male victim, by for example threatening to take away contact rights. It is therefore essential that where such instances arise, prosecutors work very closely with the police to investigate and consider the whole picture, before any charging decision is made.

In the same way that females can be victims of familial abuse, males can also experience similar issues. Male familial abuse may be perpetrated by other males in the family to exert dominance or control, but also by females. For example, male victims may be just as susceptible to abuse perpetrated in the name of forced marriage. This may occur despite the male victim's sexual orientation or gender identity. Prosecutors should refer to the legal guidance on **Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence** for further advice on these issues.

In some instances, familial abuse may take the form of physical violence or abuse as a result of a disability, or a dominance of one male over another, in the family. Again, prosecutors will need to work very closely with police colleagues to ensure that a holistic investigation has been conducted in order to prefer the correct and most appropriate charges in these circumstances.

Attachment 3

Review of Research by Dr E Bates presented to the British Psychological Society, 2014. PA/The Huffington Post UK | Posted: 26/06/2014 ([Aggression, Men, Women, UK Lifestyle News](#))

Women Can Be 'Intimate Terrorists' As Study Reveals They Can Be More Controlling And Aggressive

The general perception of aggression in heterosexual relationships is that it seems to stem from the man, but a new study has found that actually women are more likely than men to be controlling and aggressive towards their partners.

The idea that they are the gentler sex is a myth – at least as far as partners are concerned, according to psychologists.

Far from the popular notion of women tending to be victims of "intimate partner violence" (IPV), they were more verbally and physically aggressive to their other halves than men, the findings showed.

Just as many women as men could also be classed as abusive "intimate terrorists" who coupled controlling behaviour with serious levels of threats, intimidation and physical violence.

Researchers questioned 1,104 young men and women about physical aggression and controlling behaviour involving partners and friends.

Study leader Dr Elizabeth Bates, from the University of Cumbria, said: "Previous studies have sought to explain male violence towards women as arising from patriarchal values, which motivate men to seek to control women's behaviour, using violence if necessary.

"This study found that women demonstrated a desire to control their partners and were more likely to use physical aggression than men. This suggests that IPV may not be motivated by patriarchal values and needs to be studied within the context of other forms of aggression, which has potential implications for interventions."

In the 1990s a US sociologist from the University of Michigan, Professor Michael P Johnson, coined the term "intimate terrorism" to define an extreme form of controlling relationship behaviour involving threats, intimidation and violence.

Prof Johnson found that intimate terrorists were almost always men, a view that has generally become widely accepted.

But the new research, based on anonymous questionnaire answers, found that women were equally likely to display such behaviour.

Dr Bates, who presented her findings at the British Psychological Society's Division of Forensic Psychology annual meeting in Glasgow, said: "It wasn't just pushing and shoving. Some people were circling the boxes for things like beating up, kicking, and threatening to use a weapon.

"In terms of high levels of control and aggression, there was no difference between men and women."

She added: "The stereotypical popular view is still one of dominant control by men. That does occur but research over the last 10 to 15 years has highlighted the fact that women are controlling and aggressive in relationships too.

"A contributing factor could be that in the past women have talked about it more. The feminist movement made violence towards women something we talk about. Now there is more support for men and more of them are feeling comfortable coming forward."

Dr Bates pointed out that Prof Johnson's original research looked at men in prisons and women in refuges, rather than typical members of the public.

Her study deliberately focused on young students in their late teens and early 20s because statistically they were most likely to be victims of aggression.

The analysis showed that, while women tended to be more physically aggressive towards their partners, men were more likely to be physically aggressive to same-sex "others" including friends.
