

# **EXTENDED RESEARCH PROJECT**

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN – IS IT A FORGOTTEN CRIME?**

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## **Abstract**

This study considers whether domestic violence (DV) against men is a significant problem and if it is being forgotten by police, the criminal justice system and the wider society. The research is based on a summary of available academic papers and also on a questionnaire that has been sent to police forces and support groups to find out how they record DV against men and their perceptions of the current situation. The review of the historical background and statistical information indicates that it has been prevalent for many years, but has been under reported, especially by the victims themselves. The reasons for this and why females become abusers are described, together with the possible criminological causes. The results from the questionnaire are analysed and recommendations for further research include the need for improved coordination of all the services.

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# **Domestic violence against men – Is it a forgotten crime?**

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Introduction**

*“An evil that doesn’t sleep – a crime”*. These were the words from an anonymous male speaker at the Mankind Initiative Conference (2012) to describe his female, abusive partner. Eventually he and his child (the reason he stayed in the relationship) were removed by the police. Another victim described his nine year period of physical and emotional torment that he had suffered, including being arrested 26 times after he had contacted the police, but his partner had then self-harmed to make him the ‘guilty’ party. When he had gone to the police station on one occasion, covered in blood from an assault, he was told to go home as it was ‘not their problem’. It was only after a Custody Sergeant, who himself had suffered abuse, recognised the regularity of the problem, that the police acted to remove the man, only then to put him into overnight accommodation, allowing the female back into his property which she then ‘trashed’. I decided to undertake my dissertation on domestic violence against men after I attended a psychology lecture, by Dr. Abigail Thornton, during which she described to the group a man who was abused by his girlfriend so horrifically that he had to contact the police. However when the police arrived at the house the woman was only arrested for being unruly towards a police officer. In addition the male victim did not have a helpline to contact and the only group he was able to attend was for perpetrators of violence towards women. George (2007:2) stated to the Home Affairs Select Committee “A number of sources all indicate that male victims experience prejudice and discrimination in the apparatus of the modern State.” It is within this context that this extended research project seeks to consider whether there is sufficient knowledge about the scale of male victims of abuse and whether there is adequate recognition from the criminal justice system and support services that there is a significant problem.

According to the National Police Improvement agency (NPIA) (2008:7) the shared Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Government definition of domestic violence (DV) is:

*“any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality.”*

The words ‘regardless of gender’ are important as a study by Carlson and Worden (2005:1213) found that “respondents would judge women’s aggressive behavior differently from that of men. As hypothesized, respondents are more likely to label behaviors as DV or Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), and to presume them to be unlawful, when presented with a male rather than female perpetrator. This so-called double standard may simply reflect unspoken assumptions about men’s greater potential for inflicting injuries, projections about likely police reactions to these briefly described incidents, or internalization of public education and media images of DV as a crime committed by men against women.” One of the support services who responded to the questionnaire in the primary research used the following definition, which follows more practical guidelines:

*“Any violent, abusive or controlling behaviour by someone close to you – usually a partner or an ex-partner or a family member – is domestic violence and abuse. The abuse can be physical, emotional, verbal, sexual or financial. It can include bullying, threats, humiliation and isolation – you can experience domestic violence and abuse without having broken bones and bruises.”*

Several of the respondents to the questionnaire also noted that ‘coercive control’ is an important factor that is not included in the ACPO/Government definition. This raises issues for police who from the evidence of the questionnaires and in literature, will only act if there is evidence or risk of physical assault. Smartt and Kury (2007) state that in the UK and Germany 30 men die each year (compared to 100 women) from DV and in describing the legislative process in both countries to support women, such as the German ‘He who assaults – goes!’ policy, they identify that there is very little support for male victims.

The definition of Domestic Violence is further confused as HM Crown Prosecution Inspection Service (HMCPIS) (2004:7) stated in their joint report on domestic violence that:

*“There is no statutory or common law offence as such of ‘domestic violence’. The term is generally used to cover a range of abusive behaviour, only some of which is criminal. Abuse can be physical, on a spectrum from a minor blow through sexual assault to murder – all of which are subject to legal sanction. But the abuse may be non-physical – for example, threats (to a partner or children in the household), intimidation, verbal harassment, isolation or enforced financial dependence, not all of which are subject to legal sanction.”*

The report that was conducted with HM Inspector of Constabulary, calls for a better definition that will provide for improved monitoring of cases and prosecutions.

Therefore the consideration of domestic violence against men is made even more complex by the lack of definition of what should be a chargeable offence and the ‘double standards’ in public assumptions.

The aim of this research is to consider whether domestic violence against men has been forgotten by the criminal justice system, by the wider public and through the media. Cook (2009: 52) states that “Male victims who have been interviewed seem to share a common outcome. They are, indeed, bewildered. For them, there are no rules as to how they should act or respond. They seem to be searching for a set of guidelines that do not exist.” This is further highlighted by Curran (2010:13) who found that a far greater proportion of men consider that violence against them is not a crime, but just wrong or ‘something that happens’.

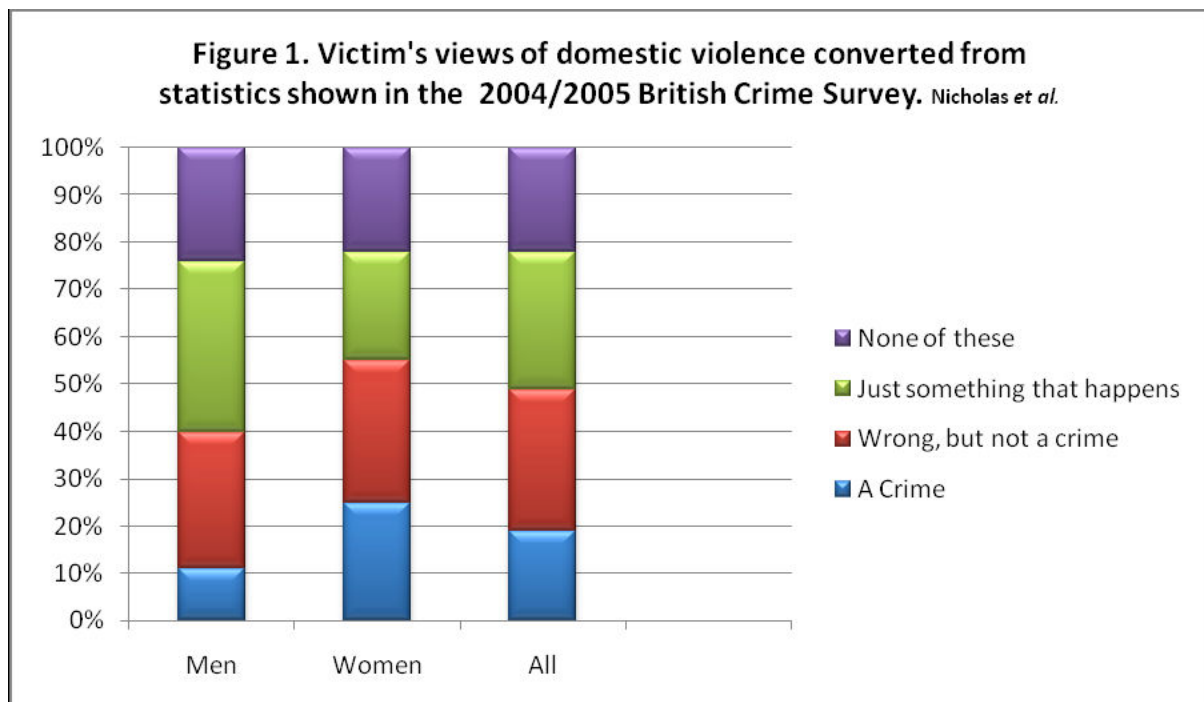


Fig: 1 (Curran 2010:13)

This assignment will include primary research based around an anonymous questionnaire that was sent to the relatively small number of support groups that exist and to police organisations with expertise in male victims of DV, to find current and historical details of their work in this area. The first aim of the questionnaire was to find out how they record domestic abuse and if they separate out male abuse. The next aim was to discover if there has been an increase or decrease in abuse, to get the details about the support available and finally, to research the perceptions of the support and criminal justice agencies. The overall aim was to update the statistics on abused males, also to obtain details of how they are treated within the criminal justice systems and to provide information that will enhance the current research available from secondary sources.

The secondary literature research will include academic papers from the USA, UK and Europe and consider the history of domestic violence especially in the context of female perpetrators, rather than the traditional male view. There will be a review of the available statistical base, comparing male and female violence, both as crime statistics and as reports from victims, using the broadly based self completion survey from the British Crime Survey. This is followed by a range of comparative evidence as to why females commit DV, its links with other issues such as drug abuse and its

treatment in the media. Finally there will be a review of the researched response by the police and criminal justice system, both in terms of policy and what actually happens at local level. Welby (2009) estimated that the total cost to the UK economy of Domestic abuse in 2001 was £23bn, much of which could not be separately identified for violence against men. This total had reduced to £16bn by 2009 due to the reduction in domestic abuse cases reported, although the cost of public services involved with abuse cases rose in the period from £3.1bn to £3.9bn. Based on this fact alone, if DV against men represents a significant proportion of the total cost, then a greater awareness of the social and criminal cost must be addressed.

## CHAPTER 2

### **Literature Review – Secondary Research**

This chapter will consider the research that has been carried out both to review female domestic violence against men and also to place it in context against the far bigger body of work that has studied male violence against women. It is not without significance that there is only one book that fully concentrates on the subject – ‘Abused Men’ by Philip Cook (2009:xv) – and he acknowledges in his Introduction that “This book is a first. There have been a number of published research articles regarding men who have been physically abused by their domestic partners and a few books with chapters on the subject, but no previous book had focussed on this issue in a comprehensive way.” Cook is a news reporter and has seen at first hand the evidence of this abuse and felt that it was a hidden problem that researchers have neglected. The literature review will analyse the history of domestic abuse and the available statistics, the reasons why women abuse men and why men stay in the relationship and also considers the limited media coverage of DV against men. Finally this chapter examines the role of the criminal justice system, although criminal activity study is made difficult, as reported by Nowinski and Bowen (2011:37), because “crime victimisation surveys frame questions about IPV in the context of a crime, which may inadvertently exclude some male victims, who do not classify or report their abuse as such.” The final aim of the literature review will be to highlight the context for comparison between published information about DV against men and the findings of the primary research.

#### **Section 2:1**

##### **Historical perspective**

George (2002:3) reports that the history of domestic violence is linked to the patriarchal society view of men always being the perpetrators, as in earlier periods women had fewer rights than men and were subordinate to them in the home. He argues however that “English historical evidence, and later analysis of it, shows that in the Nineteenth century and before there was not only concern for male violence

against wives, but also considerable concern for the violation of Patriarchal norms of the violence of wives against husbands.” George (2002) researched back into common law of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to find the much reported legal ‘approval’ for men beating their wives, but actually found that there were legal restraints and convictions for male abuse of women going back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century there were a series of laws that gave rise to harsh prison sentences or public floggings for men who committed violence against their wives. George (2002) states that the work of Steinmetz (1977) highlighted the ‘chivari’ customs in Central Europe which ridiculed men who were beaten by their wives and included public humiliation. In the West of England during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century there are recorded examples of the ‘Skimmington’ procession where a man is paraded riding backwards on a horse or donkey, incurring the public ridicule of neighbours. This appears to have had the public approval of the senior figures in society as they felt it was against natural law for a woman to be the stronger character in a marriage. Johnson (2005) also refers to the work of Steinmetz (1977) who first described ‘battered husbands’ syndrome and the impact that this had on the view of domestic violence as a solely male against female action. She reported that violence against men by women was as common in the USA as men against women. As reported by Allen-Collinson (2009:1) “Concepts of intimate partner abuse and violence are shifting, complex, situational and multifaceted. Whilst women's narratives of abuse have provided much needed insights into the subjective experience of intimate partner abuse, men's accounts of female perpetrated abuse have been slower to emerge, generating much controversy and hostility.”

The evidence from this research indicates that there are many myths about men having always been the perpetrators of domestic violence and in reality there have been laws against men committing this offence going back many centuries, but if men are being abused they are often vilified. Changes in this perception did not really occur until the 1970s, when the growth of feminism led to a social and criminal justice concentration on violence against women. This gave rise to the work of Steinmetz (1977) who suffered a terrible backlash from her work that indicated that men were also victims. Kelly (2003) describes how Steinmetz received verbal abuse and bomb threats and efforts were made to remove her from her academic posts.

Other researchers in the same field backed away from this area because of the feminist lobby. In the historical context Kelly (2003:801) contends “Criticisms have ranged from personally attacking the researchers, to more academic efforts directed at attacking the work itself by denying the validity of the reports, to an outright defense of the violent behavior of women or otherwise minimizing its significance.” However the evidence demonstrates that there is now a recognition that a serious problem exists with every type of domestic violence by whichever gender, although the police and support services have not fully responded to the change.

## Section 2:2

### Statistical analysis

A Home Office paper (2004:34) states that “The British Crime Survey shows that less than one in four women and one in ten men (23% and 8% respectively) of the worst cases of domestic violence were reported to the police, so solely relying on police data means that many cases of domestic violence will not be recorded.” However Britton (2012) in the latest analysis of the British Crime Survey (BCS) self completion survey on intimate violence, comments that although the under-reporting of crime to the police is especially prevalent with domestic, intimate violence, that the BCS self completion survey has the advantage of being able to gain more information not reported to the police. He states (2012:83) that “around six percent of women and four percent of men had experienced partner abuse in the last year, equivalent to around 900,000 female and 600,000 male victims.” Non physical abuse, such as emotional or financial, was the most common type with about 57% of women and 46% of men experiencing this. Since the age of sixteen, 24% of women and 12% of men have experienced non-sexual partner abuse which is the equivalent of 4.3m women and 2.3m men. Over the last seven years of the BCS survey, violence against men is reported to have fallen by 32% and against women by 18%. Although females are more likely to experience sexual assault, the levels of partners experiencing both minor and serious force, are about the same with 29% of men and 27% of women experiencing severe force (see Fig 2 below).

**Fig: 2. Type of abuse suffered by partner abuse victims, by sex and type of abuse**  
England and Wales, adults aged 16 to 59

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>All</b>
<u>% victims once or more</u>			
<b>Non-physical abuse, threats or force (non-sexual)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>82</b>
Non-physical abuse	46	57	53
Threats or force	39	49	45
Threats	5	27	18
Force	37	40	39
- Minor	19	26	23
- Severe	29	27	27
<b>Any sexual assault (including attempts)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>
Serious sexual assault (including attempts)	1	8	5
Less serious sexual assault	4	9	7
<b>Stalking</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>

Fig 2 (British Crime Survey 2012 self completion survey : 105)

In terms of how this abuse is reported, the survey found that more than twice as many females (44%) reported incidents to professional organisations compared to men (19%) and were three times more likely to tell the police – female (29%) and male (10%). There are no separate figures for police action, but of the total reported 39% received a warning, 31% were arrested and 12% charged. This confirms the findings from the primary research (section 4:2 Q15 and 17) and as reported in Section 2:3 that men are reluctant to report abuse for fear of not being believed or because of discrimination. In the case described in the introduction, the second victim also said that none of his neighbours reported the abuse that they knew was going on, although once this had been recognised by the police, they were ‘queuing up’ to give evidence against the female perpetrator.

There has been much debate about the prevalence of male domestic abuse by females and the BCS shows that this represents 40% of the total in 2010/11. A Scottish survey (2010) showed the figure at only 15% in 2009/10 although this was up from 8% in 2000/2001 and represents only those reported to the police. Jaden and Thoennes (2000) argue that the original work of Straus (1977-1978) indicated

that women and men are equally violent towards their partners, but that this has been contradicted by others who contend that the level of violence differs greatly between men and women. They report that various studies in the USA and Canada show male victims as only between 8-12%, but they conclude that this wide variation may be to do with the actual study methods, with the lower figures reflected in studies of both victimisation and physical assaults and the higher figure for victimisation only. These variations are obviously a cause for concern in terms of ensuring that the victims of DV receive the required recognition and support and Chan (2011) notes that there are two reasons for them. Firstly, that the quality of measurement is inadequate and secondly that the sampling methods are not appropriate. She also notes that most studies rely on self-reporting and research has indicated that men and women will report DV in different ways with factors including dependency, affection, blame and excuses all having an impact, with men tending to under report. Muftic et al (2007:754) state that women are under-represented as perpetrators of violence, reporting that in 2002, about 20% of all aggravated assault arrests, 24% of other assault arrests, and 2% of forcible rape arrests involved a female offender (Uniform Crime Reports, 2003).

DeLeon-Grenados et al (2006:359) state that in California during 1987 – 2000: “The period began with a ratio of 18 male arrests per 100,000 men for every one female arrest per 100,000 women and ended with a ratio of 4.52:1”. The Mankind Initiative (2012) quote from the British Crime Survey (2010/11) that the number of women convicted of DV has more than quadrupled from 2004 (806 cases) to 2010 (3968 cases), but it is still the case that in the same period male violence convictions tripled to 55,122 cases which shows that female arrests are only 7% of the total. In addition Dobash and Dobash (2004:15) have analysed the levels of reported violence by women on men and found that “the vast majority of both women (82.0 percent) and men (66.1 per cent) describe men’s violence as either ‘serious’ or ‘very serious’, whereas only 36.0 per cent of women and 28.5 per cent of men describe women’s violence similarly.” Ultimately even though there is a lower proportion of serious violence by women the Mankind Initiative, one of the leading support organisations for men who suffer domestic abuse, in their ‘21 key facts’ (2012) publication state the final tragic statistic that: “21 men and 94 women were murdered by a partner/ex-

partner (classified as the key suspect) in 2010/11. This equates to one man every 17 days.”

## Section 2:3

### Why do women commit domestic violence?

One reason why women abuse men is, at its simplest - “because they can” (Corry et al 2002: 1). They continue “Primary aggressor laws usually result in arrest of the male and ignore research showing 50% of domestic assaults are mutual combat. The woman is thus encouraged to abuse her partner further until finally he will take no more.” The research by Carrado et al (1996 in Corry, Fiebert and Pizzey 2002:2) (Fig 3 below) was conducted in the UK and suggests that 80% of the reasons for committing violence by women were for reasons other than self defence (C. and F. in the table). As can be seen there was often more than one answer given:

**Fig. 3. Results of 1994 national study from England on causes of violence**

<b><u>Reasons Given For Assaults</u></b>	<b><u>Female</u></b>	<b><u>Male</u></b>
A. Something said or threatened	53%	64%
B. Get through to.....	52%	53%
C. Some physical action. (Self-Defense)	21%	27%
D. Stop doing something	33%	43%
E. Make do something	26%	26%
F. Physical Action(self defence)	17%	21%
G. Influence of Alcohol etc	13%	35%
H. In character	16%	27%
I. Other	12%	7%
Percent of 1,978 respondents committing an assault	11%	10%

Fig 3. Corrado et al., 1996 (in Corry, Fiebert, Pizzey 2002:3)

This indicates wide variations in the reasons for DV against men but also gives validity to the point expressed by one of the respondents to the questionnaire (Section 4:2 Q19) that in fact the only reason is an imbalance of power and that all of the above list are just risk factors that emphasise the abuse.

Corry et al (2002) also report on the work of Fiebert and Gonzales (1997) who found that the main reasons that female violence against men was not seen as a problem by the aggressors were: men can protect themselves, men are trained not to hit a woman, women are equal to men, 'my brother never fought back' and it turns them on sexually. Stitt and Macklin (1995 in Gadd et al 2002: 7) stated that "Many of the men in this study claimed their partners had consciously sought to subject them to embarrassment and stigma by trying to injure them on the face and arms so that others would see. In most cases the abuse also involved verbal, emotional and psychological forms of cruelty." They argue that many of the men felt that the worst cruelty was actually the fear of future violence or emotional abuse, such as threats that they would be attacked whilst asleep, that they would convince the police that the men had been violent or that they would remove their children. Some cited causes for the violence including drink, PMT, unemployment or eating disorders, but several said there was no cause. Thompson and Kingree (2006) conversely report that, whereas alcohol use is a strong predictor of male violence against women, it is not so for women against men. However there is an indication that men are more likely to report DV if the abusive partner has been drinking, as this gives them a stronger reason to make a report that might be believed. There is also evidence of drug usage being linked with DV by females although Simmons et al (2008) found that there are significant discrepancies in the research into substance abuse links to DV. They cite some USA research as showing up to 67% of women were abusing drugs at the time of their violence, but others have shown this figure to be as low as 8%, which indicates there are no firm factors to be drawn. Henning and Connor-Smith (2011:1377) state that "Reports of aggression by the female partner were strongly associated with relationship dissatisfaction, as were high scores on scales assessing jealousy, hostile attitudes toward women, and victim blame". This is reflected in the most prevalent ages for men to be abused as shown in the research by the Scottish Government (2010), which found the most common age to be 31-40,

by which time relationships had formed and apparently then started to breakdown again, possibly as children got older. This is consistent with the results of the questionnaire (Section 4:2 Q9) which indicated that 50% were aged 31-59.

DeLeon-Grenados et al (2006:356) reflect that many feminist scholars are concerned that female arrests for domestic violence are actually as a result of a male dominated criminal justice system and “there is cause for concern whenever a patriarchal system is called on to address issues of power, violence, and control in households when such violence is seen by feminist theorists as a direct result of patriarchy itself.....Yet we also know that the criminal justice system has come to symbolize much more than a process by which we address crime.” They consider that an unexpected consequence of the increase in policies to encourage police to make arrests for all cases of domestic violence is that those whom the law was originally designed to protect – women who were suffering DV – were now being arrested. DeLeon-Grenados et al (2006:359) found that in California from 1987 to 2000: “Female arrest rates for domestic violence increased more than 500%,..... while male rates increased 136%.” And that “Expressed a bit differently, women composed 5% of all domestic violence arrests in 1987 and 18% of all such arrests in 2000.” Despite this men still had 7.5 times greater number of actual arrests. In contrast Muftic et al (2007:754) consider that another explanation could be that women are being arrested for retaliatory violence or for “defensive rather than offensive violence”. However this explanation was not borne out from my own research (section 4:2 Q 19) which showed that retaliation was only a likely factor for a third of respondents. Muftic et al (2007) also express concern that women are arrested as well as men at a time of mutual violence, but are actually committing much less violent offences. They provide evidence that police will routinely arrest both the male and the female, even if they recognise that the male is the primary aggressor, but that where the woman is arrested on her own that the level of violence will have been greater, that it will have gone on for longer and the level of recidivism will be higher.

Yet another consideration is the differing role that women have in the home compared to outside. Straus (2001) contends that there are several reasons why it is

possible for a woman to be violent to their domestic partner in the home, which does not apply outside the home (this is shown in detail in appendix 1) and includes:

- what is unfeminine outside is acceptable at home,
- a lack of physique makes women fearful outside, but not at home where they know that their partner will not retaliate
- self defence or retaliation is more likely at home
- the need for violence to correct a behaviour is less necessary outside the home
- police treat both the same outside, but men are less likely to call the police at home.

#### Section 2:4

##### Criminological reasons

Further consideration should be given to the criminological reasons why women abuse men and there seems to be very little academic analysis. White and Kowalski (1994:488) present arguments for the application of social learning theory and the different behaviours in men and women. They quote from the work of Bandura (1973) who considered that: “as role expectations of women and men become more similar, female and male patterns of aggressive behavior will become more similar” They propose three possible causes of female violence: masculinisation, where the female takes on a more masculine role as they play a more masculine role in society. Secondly, as an opportunity based crime as described by Felson (1998 in Cope 2008:420) where offenders “typically behave like criminals only in certain settings, that is, slices of time and space within which relevant people and things are assembled”. White and Kowalski (1994) also draw from social learning theory to consider that as females move into the male workplace they experience role strain which will increase the likelihood of them taking out anger and frustration on their male partner. Thirdly they consider the opposite tendency, where there is frustration at not being able to participate in a male work environment that leads to aggressive behaviour to obtain money and power from the male partner. None or all of these theories may be relevant to why females commit DV, as Corry, et al (2002:3)

observe after the results tabled in Fig 3 (page 8) “these women hit, kicked, threw something, and bit their male partners when they were furious, jealous, high on drugs or alcohol, frustrated, in need of control, or had impulse problems.”

## Section 2:5

### Media Coverage

Media coverage of domestic violence against men was first brought to national attention in the UK by a Channel 4 Dispatches programme in 1998. Following an initial programme on male DV, they received over 100 phone calls from men saying that they had been abused. Dr. Kevin Browne, a Home Office Advisor, was asked to analyse the results from a subsequent questionnaire and found a range of responses. Browne (2008) noted the following points: it affects all classes in society, 90% of the men were bigger and taller than their partner, the violence was as serious as in wife abuse with two thirds being threatened with a weapon and in 95% of the cases police did not take them seriously. In 2009, BBC Radio1 featured a documentary ‘Big boys don’t cry’ which featured a range of victims and support services. There are a relatively small number of reports in the press, such as Graham – Kevan (2011) who describes the problem: “women are as likely to use domestic violence as men, but women are twice as likely as men to be injured or killed during a domestic assault. Men still represent a substantial proportion of people who are assaulted, injured or killed by an intimate partner (50%, 30% and 25% respectively).” She goes on to describe the increase in cases against women, but expresses surprise at how few are prosecuted and what changes will be needed to recognise the scale of DV against men and that: “The dual stereotypes of the violent man and passive woman have undoubtedly obscured the existence of male victims of domestic violence in the past.” Campbell (2010) also describes the problems and reports on the work of one of the support groups, Parity, who state: “Their plight is largely overlooked by the media, in official reports and in government policy, for example in the provision of refuge places – 7,500 for females in England and Wales but only 60 for men.” This detail regarding the number of refuge places is also not just as it seems as confirmed at the Mankind Initiative conference (2012) where it was stated that of these 60 places, only 11 were exclusively for men, with

none for men and their children. The Mirror (2011) has different figures for refuges, provided by the Montgomery Family Crisis Centre in Wales, who report that there are 7,000 refuge places in Britain for women, but only 20 for men with children. They argue that many victims choose not to use them as this would mean they have to move a long way from their homes. They also report that it is very difficult for men to take custody of their children, even when the female is drunk and violent. One victim told the Mirror that he *“tried to leave with his baby daughter, but when he went to social services to ask for help he hit a brick wall. “The social worker looked at me as though I was making it up,” he says. “If a woman had walked in there with a black eye, she would have been helped immediately. But they took one look at me – 6ft 4in and 16st – and thought that I was lying. I walked out of those offices feeling like the world was against me.”* It was only when his partner was finally arrested for assault that he was able to take his child.

From internet searching for news and media coverage of male DV, any reports certainly seem to be sporadic, expressing surprise that there is a problem and in small numbers compared to coverage of male violence against women. This was confirmed by the response to the questionnaire where 90% of the responders thought media coverage was average or worse.

## Section 2:6

### Police and Criminal Justice response

Kwan (2009:18) states that with regard to domestic violence “Britain in this respect has been a pioneer to identify the problem, discuss it and have put in place a system to deal with it when there is a need of the criminal justice system.” Robinson (2007) refers to the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004:357) as “the biggest overhaul of legislation on domestic violence in over 30 years”. Several aspects of the Act have direct relevance to civil justice. For example, the Act makes the breach of a non-molestation order a criminal offence, punishable with a term of imprisonment, or a fine (or both), rather than as contempt of court”, which is especially important as it includes same sex couples and couples who are not married or living together. However Robinson persistently only refers to the effects on women and also comments on the report by Rt. Hon. Dame Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, former President

of the Courts service, (2003 in Robinson 2007:357) who stated that “In dealing with the effects of domestic violence, it would not be unusual for a woman to make multiple visits to a range of courts, at increasing emotional and financial cost” with no reference to similar problems for men. Jaden and Thoennes (2000:146) state that “analyses of police and court records in North America and Europe have persistently shown that women constitute more than 90% of partner violence victims reported to the police.” Corry et al (2002:9) argue that if a man does call the police having been subjected to partner violence “If the police ... find probable cause, which is often loosely and subjectively defined, there is an 80-90% chance the male present will be arrested whatever the evidence and circumstances” and they continue that most police officers will believe the woman’s story. In the HMCPIS report (2004:82) only 5 of the 325 cases that they investigated were by females against males, “However, there were numerous instances where counter allegations were made by male defendants against female partners either at the time of reporting the incident or later during interview.”

The Crown Prosecution Service Policy (2009: 5) on domestic violence states that “We are aware that there are a number of myths and stereotypes surrounding domestic violence. We will not allow these to influence our decisions and we will robustly challenge such attitudes in the courtroom”. Whilst the Association of Chief Police officers (ACPO) (2008:36) policy acknowledges that domestic violence can be against men and women, their guidance on establishing Risk Factors goes on to say: “Most of the available research evidence, upon which the following factors are based, is focused on male abusers and female victims in a current or previous intimate relationship.” It would seem to be clear that there is considerable research, as evidenced from both academic studies and the British Crime Survey, that there is a significant level of DV against men, which is being ignored by ACPO. One of the Questionnaire responses from the Metropolitan Police included the graph shown in fig. 4 indicating the number of male victims of DV over the 5 years from 2007 – 2011, which although apparently declining, still shows a high number of cases.

#### Male victims of abuse 2007-2011 – Metropolitan police area.

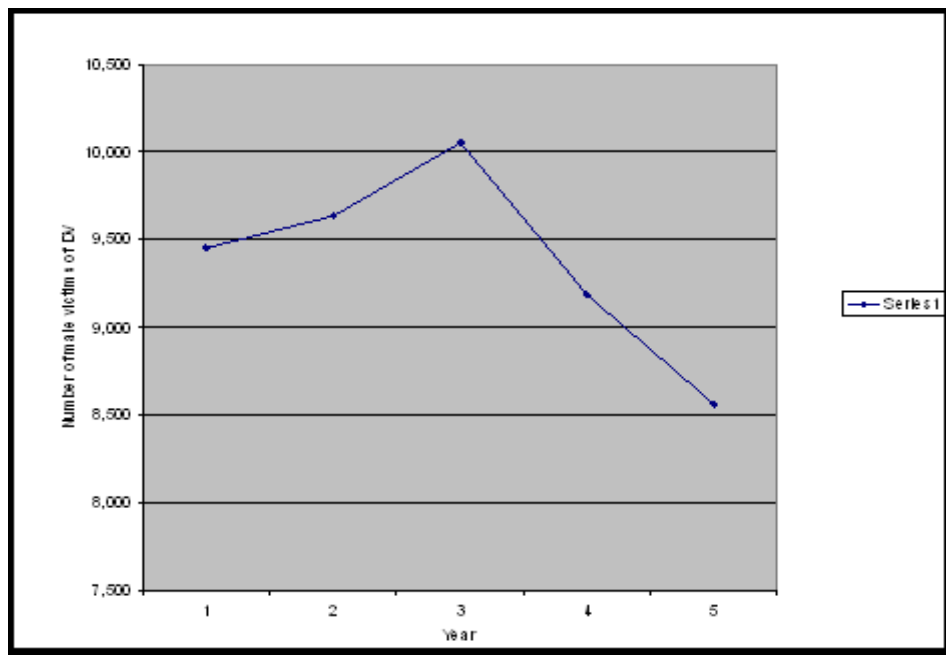


Fig: 4 (Source: A Police response to questionnaire)

However it was evident from the questionnaire responses that the police record the least information with respect to a breakdown description of the victims of abuse, but they do record in detail the nature of the criminal allegations and the severity of any violence. Although they gave no reason for this, Neyroud and Disley (2007:562) describe the dilemma that the police face with domestic violence, where despite the fact that “current government and police policy strongly favours intervention”, they recognise that this could result in further violence at a later stage. Therefore the front line officers have to assess the potential criminal nature of any offences, rather than the social nature of the domestic situation. This would seem to be being ignored by ACPO in their guidance which clearly indicates the risks surrounding pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, social isolation, sexual isolation and religious or cultural difficulties, but never mentions the risk from female abusers and males who may be afraid to report their abusive partners.

Kelly (2003) reports that in the USA the original police response to DV was to encourage mediation, however many US states started to introduce mandatory arrest policies, under pressure from women’s groups. In 1984 there was the ‘Minneapolis experiment’ that looked at the deterrent effect of arrest and although

the findings were inconclusive there was a recognition that arresting offenders did have a deterrent effect if only by showing that police were getting tough on domestic violence, “for they reject the traditional treatment of domestic violence as a private matter and openly acknowledge domestic violence as a public crime” (Kelly 2003: 828). However she goes on to argue that these policies are almost always led by the feminist debate and that violence by women is not properly acknowledged, thus “feminist theory has debilitated the treatment of both domestic violence batterers and victims” (Kelly 2003:841). George (2007:2) argues that whatever the Government and other state bodies may say, prejudice against male victims is “severe and extreme” which leads to under reporting by the police and a greater willingness to put men into the criminal justice system if counter charges are made against them. George and Yarwood (2004: 12), on behalf of Dewar Research, conducted a study in 2001 which included male victims’ responses to police actions. The results included the following response examples from English and Welsh victims:

- about 35% claimed that the police had totally ignored what they had to say
- 21% had themselves been arrested
- 29% claimed that the police had only spoken to the female partner and ignored actual evidence that the male victim had been assaulted
- about one third of those arrested were male victims either simply for ‘breach of the peace’ or because the female assailant had pressed for it
- 27% reported that they had been arrested because the police had said that ‘they had to arrest someone’
- 48% suffered 10 assaults or more before first calling the police and suffered for an average of about 3 years

Despite this body of evidence of the failings of the police to support male victims, George (2007:4) argues that, whilst professionals have a strong chance of being able to recognise ‘dangerousness’ in male offenders, they have much more difficulty in assessing female offenders and “even highly qualified medical professionals would be better off using a blindfold and a pin to assess which females are potentially violent according to this research. This state of affairs results from an obsession within the field of criminality and violence research on male violence such

that the characteristics of the violent male are well established, yet almost unresearched in the case of violent females.” George goes on to state: “Given this it is no wonder that Police Officers, for instance, often get it wrong when attending domestic incidents where the victim is male.”

## Section 2:7

### The context of the Primary research within the literature research

The literature research identifies the long history of DV against men and the statistical justification that it is a serious issue, despite many attempts to minimise it, or as is frequently the case in the media, to ignore it. The police and criminal justice system seem to have an ambivalent response to this problem, both in terms of the reluctance of men to report abuse and in their own prejudices in dealing with it until there is unmistakable evidence. Based upon the relatively limited range of research material and agencies that are committed to the support of male victims of DV, the primary research undertaken for this assignment was designed to gain information about three key aspects of the subject. Firstly, there is a need to determine how organisations record different aspects of domestic violence and the changes in the levels of recording over recent years, including ethnicity and sexual orientation. Secondly, there is research into how and whether victims are supported and finally there is a review of the perceptions that organisations have about the victims and the treatment they receive in society and the criminal justice system. All of these areas are linked into the recognition of DV against men as a crime and the response of organisations including the police. As one police officer reported in the questionnaire, front line officers do not separately record whether victims are men or women, but do relate solely to the level of violence/injury and the criminal allegations “such as common assault, actually bodily harm, GBH or other offence i.e. criminal damage.” By conducting this research it is intended to identify whether there is a current understanding of the level of DV against men and if the limited support for the problem is being recognised. Within the resources available it will also highlight where more in depth research should be taking place.

## CHAPTER 3

### **Methodology**

The Chapter will describe the strategy used when formulating the primary research method and structure, the design of the questionnaire, how the participants were identified and the method of distribution and analysis.

#### Section 3:1

##### Strategy

The original basis for the research topic about DV against men was to consider the criminological factors relating to a potentially under- recognised social problem. The apparent availability of only minimal amounts of research data meant that both primary and secondary research would be challenging, but could actually make a contribution to those organisations who work in this field. Primary research was carried out to investigate current areas of the recording and analysis of data. It was felt that an anonymous questionnaire sent by email, was the best and most efficient method of data collection as this would allow participants to gather information from internal resources, taking whatever time was needed. It was however recognised that “because the researcher does not meet the respondent and because the answers are given ‘at a distance’, the researcher cannot rely on a number of clues that an interviewer may have about whether the answers are genuine or not” (Denscombe 2007:171). It was felt that whilst the data collected by this method would be quantitative, there was the opportunity to gain qualitative information about trends and attitudes, by free text options, which would be of great value from a limited sample. The sensitive nature of the topic meant that it was not felt appropriate or ethical to carry out individual interviews – a theory that was later confirmed by attendance at a Conference on the topic, where one of the abused males felt unable to speak or answer questions in front of the audience, but had to be remotely interviewed in another room. Ethical approval was sought and granted on 2/11/2011, making it clear that the questionnaire would only be sent to organisations, not to individuals and responses would be anonymised. King and Wincup (2008) point out

that the value of interviews and personal contact is that the requirements can be explained and it has been a concern that the questionnaire would not get the information that was required and so pilot work was undertaken to ensure that meaningful answers were obtained. The analysis of the results would be vital, because of the likelihood of there being relatively few responses in this under resourced field. Kaplowitz et al (2004) states that responses to email questionnaires tend to be about 20%, compared to 31.5% for mailed ones. Whilst the questionnaire used gained a response of 35% (see section 4:1) it remained a concern due to the small potential number of recipients. Denscombe (2007:159) advises that the background and purpose of the questionnaire needs to be clearly stated and this was done through an accompanying email (see appendix 3), which generally seemed to be well appreciated by respondents, even if they were unable to complete the questions. The list of addressees was found both by internet research and subsequently with help from respondents who passed it to colleagues or other interested parties.

### Section 3:2

#### Design

The questionnaire (appendix 2) was designed as a word document to be sent as an attachment to an email as this allowed them to be completed electronically or printed for off-line completion. The accompanying email was used to explain the background to the request for information, the University course being undertaken, type of study, the elements of confidentiality, response time and a request for it to be passed to colleagues if appropriate. Denscombe (2007) points out that a disadvantage of questionnaires as email attachments is that they might be complicated to download, complete and reattach, but this did not appear to be a problem either during the test phase or for respondents. King and Wincup (2008:35) stress the importance of piloting any research questions, "so that you can test not only their reliability and validity but also the analysis that can be carried out on the data." The design was trialled with five participants: an ex-police officer, a teacher/special police officer, a criminology academic (from another University), a forensic social worker and a

paralegal. They were asked to review the draft questionnaire for layout, clarity of questions, ease of completion and response method. As they were not necessarily familiar with the subject matter they were not asked for the relevance of the questions although some responses were received where they wished to contribute. On the basis of the responses the questionnaire was redrafted three times before the final version was sent to potential participants.

Questions are split into four identifiable topic sections: the nature of the organisation, their methods of recording DV, how they support male victims and the organisations perceptions of DV against men. There were a total of 21 questions that consist of factual and opinion based quantative questions and additional qualitative questions to refine the answers given. Denscombe (2007: 164) states that “if the respondent is immediately faced with the most complex of the questions at the start of the questionnaire, this might deter him or her from going any further. However, if the questionnaire starts with straightforward questions and then gradually moves towards such questions at a later stage, there is a greater likelihood that the recipient will persevere.” This guidance was incorporated into the questionnaire used in this research.

### Section 3:3

#### Participants

The participants for the questionnaire were selected from internet research of appropriate organisations, police forces and other parts of the criminal justice system that appeared to have a specific interest in the field, wider enquiries into lead bodies and subsequently from referrals by participants. (For a list of organisations contacted and responses see 4:1). A total of 49 were contacted, which of itself is not a high number but is a reflection of the small number of organisations that provide support in this field and could, for example, be compared with the 500+ organisations supported by the Women’s Aid charity alone. The invited participants are split into 39 support groups and 10 police forces. The Home Office, Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts Service were all invited to take part, but I received no response.

### Section 3:4

#### Method and procedure

The questionnaire was emailed to the support groups using contact details from their websites. A number of police services were contacted to ask who would be the most appropriate person to send the questionnaire to and based on their reply, it was sent out. Lead organisations were also contacted to ask for the appropriate person. Any responses or replies were then dealt with and upon the return of questionnaires another email of thanks was sent. Where an organisation stated that they could not respond, this was also acknowledged with thanks. Further 'chasing' emails were sent after four weeks. Upon receipt of completed emails, the quantitative answers were analysed and the qualitative answers were recorded (see section 4:2).

## CHAPTER 4

### Responses and results

#### Section 4.1

#### Questionnaire recipients and responses

There were a total of 49 questionnaires sent out to Police Forces and Support agencies. Response communications were received from 24 of them (50%) and completed questionnaires from 17 (35%). Three support agencies said they were too small to be able to complete the questionnaire. Despite being followed up, a number from both groups who had shown initial support, failed to return a questionnaire.

Fig: 5 Questionnaire recipients and responses

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>RESPONSE</u>	<u>QUESTIONNAIRE</u>
<b><u>Support agencies</u></b> M=Male specific			
Abused Men M	Scotland	yes	yes
Adam Project M	Leicester	yes	yes
Amen M	S. Ireland	yes	yes
Bedfordshire Domestic abuse Partnership	Bedford	yes	yes
Broken Rainbow M	National	yes	No- too small
Corporate alliance against domestic violence	London	no	no
Domestic Abuse Family Safety Unit	East Cheshire	no	no
Domestic abuse partnership	Cheshire	yes	no
Domestic violence integrated response project	Leicester	no	no
Domestic Violence Service	Liverpool	no	no
Dyn M	Wales	yes	no-too small, sent general information
Essex Gay Men M	Essex	no	no
Esteem Men M	Cornwall	yes	yes
Everyman Project M	London	yes	no
Families Need Fathers M	Wales	yes	no
Fylde support	Lancashire	no	no
Hidden Hurt	National	yes	yes
MyHarbour Counselling	Cleveland	no	no
Liverpool Domestic Abuse Service	Liverpool	yes	No- women only

Living without abuse	Loughborough	no	no
Mankind <a href="#">M</a>	Somerset	yes	Yes plus additional information and conference
Mens adviceline <a href="#">M</a>	UK	no	no
National Centre for Domestic Violence	Surrey	no	no
New Paths	Essex	no	no
Next step against abuse	Derbyshire	no	no
Parity <a href="#">M</a>	Surrey	no	no
Respect	London	yes	no
Safe Services	Exeter	no	no
Sandwell against domestic abuse	West Midlands	no	no
Stop abuse for everyone	Devon	yes	yes
Support line	Essex	no	no
Survivors uk	London	yes	no
Trident Reach	West Midlands	yes	yes
Tyangle project	London	no	no
Victim Support	Birmingham	yes	yes
Walsall Domestic Violence	West Midlands	no	no
WAVE Domestic Violence Service	Lancashire	no	no
White ribbon	Yorkshire	no	no
Womens aid	Bristol	yes	no-small central staff
<b><u>39</u></b> <a href="#">M = 12</a>		<b><u>19 (50%)</u></b> <a href="#">M = 9 (75%)</a>	<b><u>10 (25%)</u></b> <a href="#">M = 5 (42%)</a>
<b><u>Police Forces</u></b>		<b><u>Response</u></b>	<b><u>Questionnaire</u></b>
ACPO	London	no	no
Gwent		Yes-ACPO lead	no
Metropolitan Police		yes	yes
Norfolk		no	no
Surrey		yes	Yes-3 responses
Sussex		no	no
West Yorkshire		Yes-helpful contacts	no
Warwickshire		no	no
West Midlands		no	no
Wiltshire		yes	no
<b><u>10</u></b>		<b><u>5 (50%)</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b> from 2 forces (20%)
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b> <b><u>49</u></b>		<b><u>24 (50%)</u></b>	<b><u>14 (29%)</u></b>

## Section 4:2

### Detailed analysis of Questionnaire responses

(for Questionnaire design blank: see appendix 2)

*(Numbers in boxes represent the number of organisations responding. Some questions allowed for multiple answers)*

### **Your Organisation**

1. Please indicate what type of organisation you represent:

Police	4
Support Agency	6
Other	4

2. The job title of the person completing this questionnaire?

Support worker.	3
Outreach worker,	2
Trustee/owner	3
Police Constable.	2
Service Delivery Manager	2
Service lead	2

### **This section aims to find out how your organisation records and monitors domestic violence against men**

3. Does your organisation define domestic violence? If so, please state:

Responses included:

- ACPO/Government definition (as used in Ch1:1)
- Include emotional, physical, financial and sexual abuse.
- Coercive Control. Regardless of marital status or gender.
- References to children and young people living in an abusive environment.

4. Do you separately record the incidence of adult domestic violence by category of the victim?

Yes	8
No	4
Don't know	0

5. If yes, what are the categories used?

Women by men?	5
Women by women?	5
Men by women?	8
Men by men?	7
Age of victim?	6
Ethnicity?	6
<u>Other?</u>	
Location of offence	1
Nature of offence	1
Repeat offences	2
Disability	4
Referral source	1
Employment	2
Immigration status	1
Sexual orientation	3
Drug/alcohol issues	1
Children involved	1
Honour/forced relationship	1

6. What other categories are used? (tick one or more where applicable)

Regularity of incidents?	8
Reported only - no action	6
Reported and charged	7
Reported, resulting in a conviction	6
<u>Type of violence:</u>	
Physical – minor	10
Physical – severe	10
Mental	8
Verbal (inc. email/text etc)	9
Retaliation	6
<u>Other</u>	
Sexual abuse	3
Risk factor	3
Period of abuse	2
Court involvement	2
Criminal allegations	2

7. In the last 5 years, according to your records, has the frequency of all domestic violence against men changed? (approximately):

Increased	1
Decreased	0
Stayed the same	2
Not recorded/Don't know	11

8. In the last 5 years, according to your records, has the frequency of domestic violence against men, by male partners changed? (approximately) :

Increased	0
Decreased	0
Stayed the same	2
Not recorded/Don't know	12

9. If you record the age of victims, please indicate % in the following age groups (approximately):

<u>Age range</u>	<u>Av. %</u>
Under 18	5
18 - 30	35
31 - 59	50
Over 60	10

**This section aims to find out what support is available to male victims of domestic violence**

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
10. Are victims encouraged to report incidents to the police?	10	1
11. Are victims encouraged to contact a support organisation?	13	1
12. Does your organisation have staff trained in supporting:		
a. All victims of violence?	11	2
b. Male victims of violence?	13	0

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
13. Are you aware of 'safe' refuges in your area for the male victims of violence?	7	6	1
14. Can they take their children?	1	2	8

**This section explores your (or your organisations) perceptions about domestic violence against men.**

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
15. Is there a reluctance by men to report domestic violence against them?	13	0	1
16. Is there a greater reluctance by men to report domestic violence against them by male partners?	6	2	6

17. If the answer to 15 is '**YES**' can you say why? Do they feel:

a. Less likely to be listened to than women?	10
b. Fear of discrimination by police and support staff?	7
c. Fear of discrimination in criminal justice system?	7
d. Fear of media reporting?	5
e. Male peer group pressure?	6
f. Intimidated if English not first language?	4
g. Other intimidation (family, work etc)?	8
h. Absence of support services?	6
i. Others?	
Fear of Counter accusations	1
Feminist based support only	1
Not recognised as abuse	1
Don't want to show weakness	2

18. Are there cultural/ethnic group differences regarding domestic violence against men?

**YES** 5      **NO** 1      **DON'T KNOW** 8

If '**YES**', are there any cultural groups in which domestic violence against men is more prevalent?

Chinese	0
Asian	3
African	2
Caribbean	1
Irish	0
Other	0

If '**Yes**' how are these differences demonstrated?

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW</b>
a. Number of incidents?	2	1	0
b. Severity of incidents?	0	2	0
c. Reporting of incidents?	3	0	1
d. Available support?	0	1	1
e. Prosecutions?	0	2	0
f. Other?			
Afro-Caribbean masculine culture	1		
Asian forced/honour marriages	1		

19. What are the likely causes of domestic violence against men?

(Not likely 1 2 3 4 5 Very likely)

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. Partner's general history of violence			1	4	8
b. Drug/ Alcohol abuse			2	6	5
c. Financial worries	1		4	5	2
d. Employment problems	1	2	3	5	1
e. Relationships (affairs, previous partners etc)		2	1	6	4
f. Retaliation against man's violent behaviour	4	2	3	3	1
g. Issues with children in relationship	2		5	4	2
h. Lack of support in criminal justice system	4	1	4		2
i. Absence of alternative, safe accommodation	2	2	1	3	2
j. Other – Cultural acceptance				1	

20. How are male victims of domestic violence treated by the following organisations? (leave blank if Not Known)

(Not well 1 2 3 4 5 Very well)

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. Police		1	5	2	3
b. Social Services		3	5		2
c. Support Groups		2	3	5	1
d. Courts		3	6	1	1
e. Legal profession/CPS	1	2	3	3	1
f. Politicians	3	3	3		
g. Society in general	4	4	2		
h. Media	1	5	3	1	

21. Have perceptions of domestic violence against men changed in the last 10 years?

**YES** 13      **NO** 0      **DON'T KNOW** 1

If 'Yes' how have they changed?

(Not at all 1      2      3      4      5 A lot)

	1	2	3	4	5
a. Recognition that this happens		1	1	6	5
b. Compared to DV against women	1		4	4	1
c. Recognition as a crime	1	1	4	4	3
d. Support for police action		1	4	5	2
e. Need for support groups	1	4	3	2	3
f. Other					
Men need practical not emotional help				1	
Confusion over who is perpetrator				2	

### Section 4:3

#### Summary Analysis of questionnaire responses

- 60% of respondents recorded the sex of the victim and 40 % did not, which seems a surprising omission
- Of those who did, they generally record all aspects of perpetrator and victim
- Many also recorded other details including disability, immigration status, drug/alcohol use, police record and if there were children in the relationship
- Type of violence is usually recorded including physical (both minor and severe), mental and verbal. Support agencies also recorded included length of abuse, control and risk factors, court involvement, hospitalisation.
- Several used Home Office reporting structures and the police DASH® form (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment – example in Appendix 4)
- 13 of the 14 respondents did not have any record of whether the frequency of DV against men had changed over 5 years. One said it had increased but no statistics.

- The main ages when DV against men occurs is 31-59 (50%) and 18-30 (35%). This very strongly agrees with the research carried out by the Scottish Government (2010) which showed that the main ages were 31-40 (32%) and 41-50 (24%), with fewer for 22-30 (23%)
- Most respondents encouraged male victims to report incidents and that they had trained staff to deal with them.
- Very little knowledge of safe refuges for men and if they can take children, especially by police.
- General acceptance that men are reluctant to report DV against them, citing 'less likely to be listened to than women' and 'possible discrimination by police, support staff and the CJS' as the main reasons.
- Fear of intimidation by family, friends, media and peers was rated as high.
- Many simply do not think they are being abused.
- There was little knowledge of cultural differences, although some referred to Afro-Caribbean culture and Asian/African forced marriages.
- However, evidence made available via the questionnaire, from a police researcher, indicates that in the Metropolitan police area, reported victims of DV against black men can be as high as 1 in every 264 men, with Asians at 1 in 430, compared with 1 in 516 amongst white males. Although these figures reflect rates considerably lower than the BCS (see section 2.2), this highlights a range of victimisation within ethnic groups that cannot be ignored. The cultural elements of forced or arranged marriages, which may lie behind some of this abuse, as it does for violence against ethnic women, requires further research to ensure common criteria.
- In terms of the causes of DV against men; history of abuse, drug/alcohol and other relationships scored the most highly, with financial and employment worries following those.
- One agency did not respond to the question of causes, stating that the only cause is an imbalance of power and control and that the reasons given in the questionnaire were risk factors not causes.

- In terms of respondents' perception of treatment - Police and support groups were generally well thought of – although this is perhaps not surprising as they were the main recipients of the questionnaire!
- Politicians, media and society in general were all thought of as treating this issue poorly
- All agreed that perceptions have changed in recent years, with recognition that DV against men actually exists being the highest response. Support for police action and the recognition that it is a crime was also high.
- Problem areas still exist in terms of the presumption that the male is the perpetrator, the lack of safe refuges and the 'hijacking' of services by men who are actually the perpetrator pretending to being abused.

#### Section 4:4

##### Reliability and validity of the results

It must be recognised that due to the small number of respondents, extrapolation of any quantative results is both difficult and potentially dangerous. The response data shown in section 4.2 will only apply to the sample population, but there are a significant number of areas identified in this project where the questionnaire responses coincide with other research data and therefore it is reasonable to consider it to be a barometer of opinion to a wider research population. It is certainly the case however that there are only a limited number of groups that have any expertise in this area and some of these are very small. Whilst every police constabulary has to deal with domestic violence, only a few appear to have any particular expertise and knowledge in the area of male DV victims and those that did respond went to great lengths to signpost other research and resources. The National Audit Office (NAO) (2000:11) describes this limited sampling method as Convenience Sampling as it is "readily available", but "sample results cannot be extrapolated to give population results" and "may be prone to volunteer bias". This bias can best be seen in the qualitative response to the perceptions of treatment given by different groups, which scored highly for police and support groups, when they were the two groups represented in the sample. However

Denscombe (2007: 28) argues that “a small sample size is quite in keeping with the nature of qualitative research” but only if, as in this case, the sample can be seen to be a reasonable cross section of the potential number of participants.

## CHAPTER 5

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Kelly (2003:852) draws the distinction between the previously held, often feminist, theories about domestic violence being based on a patriarchal view of male dominance and the reality that “To the extent violent behavior is indiscriminate, or a product of either a physical or mental disorder, no patriarchal charge can be made”. Thus she goes on “it logically follows that violence may be committed by women as well as men”. This understanding of the research undertaken reveals that many stereotypes of domestic violence are not valid. Statistically Britton (2012) in the British Crime Survey states that over 600,000 men have been the victim of some sort of DV. Thus it seems to be well recognised that there is intimate, domestic partner abuse by females, but the reality is that, with the exception of a small group of support organisations, little is being done about it. The Police and the rest of the criminal justice system seem to display very little empathy toward victims as evidenced by the ACPO policy in 2008, which virtually discounts it through lack of research. The frequent response from men, both in the Dewar research in 2001 and in the questionnaire replies to Q17 (section 4.2), is that they are ignored and disbelieved at a time when they are at their most vulnerable and confused. The fact is that the woman is much more likely to be believed and treated sympathetically, whatever the apparent evidence. However the responses to the questionnaire would point to the fact that the police will only get involved at a level related to the crime committed and will not (or cannot) take on a ‘social’ role. So the ‘myths and stereotypes’ reported by the CPS must be challenged if there is to be a way forward. This must be done by training and awareness, especially prompted by the two bodies who received the worst references from the questionnaire – the media and politicians, both of whom should be at the forefront of raising awareness and are not. The confusing figures and questionnaire responses to DV against men in ethnic groups both highlight a further significant area for more research, as well as the fact that these other elements to the lack of awareness cannot go on being ignored.

Whilst the responses and undoubted efforts of the support groups are valuable, it is also clear that there is a lack of continuity to their efforts and that this contributes to the lack of political, police and CJS response, as pressure is applied in a highly fragmented way. It was very evident at the Conference run by the Mankind Initiative that not only was there no police, national or local politicians represented, but that the responses across the range of other groups in attendance were uncoordinated. There is no comparison with the position of groups working with female victims, where, for example, the Women's Aid organisation alone has over 500 affiliated groups all working to a common agenda and a powerful campaign style, including high profile celebrity support. This has recently been forcibly evidenced by Vivienne Hayes, the chief executive of the Women's Resource Centre, which represents yet another 350 small charities and community groups, who said: "Government cuts have impacted more negatively on women than men. You have to wonder whether this is a case of institutional sexism." Based on the targeting of Steinmetz and others by feminist campaigners, is it still too difficult for public figures to take up the cause of male victims?

The responses to the questionnaire, although from a small sample, do reflect the opinion expressed in other research and therefore should be used to inform subsequent debate and awareness. There is no doubt that whilst there is research available, although limited compared to that for female abuse, statistical evidence is becoming more worthwhile, but there are a number of areas that would benefit from coordinated, additional research. Firstly there should be a verifiable unified collection of data on male abuse, including levels, age significance, types of abuse and consequences for police and CJS action. Secondly this should be extended into ethnic communities to try and establish how different cultural groups are affected and why. Thirdly there should be criminological research into the causes; the police can only deal with any form of DV on the basis that the law has been broken and as with every other form of illegal activity it would be helpful to understand the risk identifiers and consequences. The questionnaire found that in terms of the causes of DV against men, history of abuse, drug/alcohol and other relationships scored the most highly with financial and employment worries to follow. Retaliation and child issues were less likely, which does not conform with some other research such as Muftic et

al (2007 – see section 2:3 above), although Corry et al (2002:2) state that “There does not seem to be any support in the available data for the feminist proposition that women only use violence against men in self defense”. If this myth is no longer supported, the police and support agencies need to understand the real causes and risk factors.

Therefore I believe that it is now an undisputable fact that there is a significant problem of DV against men and it is at a level that, if it were any other crime, there would be a far greater social and criminological response. The fact that it is in the ‘shadow’ of male violence against women means that it is under resourced and misunderstood by the CJS and largely ignored by politicians and media. The efforts by the few support groups are uncoordinated and the social resources, particularly the availability of safe refuges for men and their children, are minimal. It is a forgotten crime and awareness and training is the key. Cook (2009) described this as the ‘Hidden side of domestic violence’ and goes on to say (2009:110): “The situation of the abused male... and of the issues that must be confronted, is more similar to his female counterpart than it is different.” Therefore they should be treated in the same way by the whole of society and the criminal justice system and not ignored.

## Appendix 1

(Straus, M. 2001)

WHAT EXPLAINS EQUAL ASSAULT RATES BY WOMEN IN THE FAMILY, BUT MUCH LOWER RATES ELSEWHERE?	
<u>INHIBITORS OF ASSAULT BY WOMEN OUTSIDE THE FAMILY</u>	<u>FACILITATORS OF ASSAULT BY WOMEN WITHIN THE FAMILY</u>
A. <u>CULTURAL NORMS:</u> "Unfeminine" for women to hit, but "manly" for men	A. <u>CULTURAL NORMS:</u> An indignant women slapping a man's face epitomizes femininity to many ·"if he gets fresh, slap him" ·survey data "ok for a wife to slap" ·examples in media
B. <u>LESSER SIZE AND STRENGTH:</u> Makes women fearful of retaliation and injury by someone who is not committed to them	B. <u>LESSER SIZE AND STRENGTH:</u> "I knew I wouldn't hurt him"
C. <u>SELF DEFENSE OR RETALIATION:</u> Low because women assaulted less often (Except for rape)	C. <u>SELF DEFENSE OR RETALIATION:</u> High because women assaulted frequently by partners
D. <u>GENDER NORMS FOR CONFLICT:</u> Outside the family, women interact more with women and men more with men and male culture is more Pro violence as a means of conflict resolution	D. <u>GENDER NORMS FOR CONFLICT:</u> In couple relations, male partners may be less reachable with non-violent problem solving that works in woman-to-woman relationships. This increases probability of violence to force attention to the problem
E. <u>SOURCE OF IDENTITY:</u> Women's identity is not as strongly based on extra family interests. Therefore less need to defend interests and reputation by violence	E. <u>SOURCE OF IDENTITY:</u> Women's identity is as strongly or more strongly based on family than men's. Therefore equal need to defend interests and reputation
F. <u>VIOLENCE LEVEL OF SETTING:</u> Women are less often in high violence occupations: those requiring violence (police, military, some sports) and jobs with high violence rates such as heavy physical labor jobs	F. <u>VIOLENCE LEVEL OF SETTING:</u> Women spend more time at home, and 90% hit toddlers. Mothers get five to 14 years of practice in hitting as morally correct through corporal punishment of their own children
G. <u>CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT</u> Police involvement not greatly different for men & women	G. <u>CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT</u> ·Men not likely to call the police ·Police not likely to arrest women So women can get away with it even more than men

© 1999 by Murray A. Straus, from *The Controversy over Domestic Violence by Women* from Arriaga, X. B. & Oskamp, S. *Violence in Intimate Relationships*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999)

## **Appendix 2**



### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

##### **Your Organisation**

1. Please indicate what type of organisation you represent:

- b. Police ☐
- c. Social services ☐
- d. Support agency ☐
- e. Other ☐

Organisation name (Optional).....

2. The job title of the person completing this questionnaire? .....

##### **This section aims to find out how your organisation records and monitors domestic violence against men**

3. Does your organisation define domestic violence? If so, please state: (if not put N/A)

.....  
.....

4. Do you separately record the incidence of adult domestic violence by category of the victim?  
(E.g. Women, men?)      Yes    ☐      No    ☐      Don't know    ☐

5. If yes, what are the categories used?

- a. Women by men? ☐
- b. Women by women? ☐
- c. Men by women? ☐
- d. Men by men? ☐
- e. Age of victim? ☐
- f. Ethnicity? ☐
- g. Other (e.g. Age, occupation)? .....

6. What other categories are used? (tick one or more where applicable)
- a. Regularity of incidents? (E.g. one off, multiple, recent, long period?) ☐
  - b. Reported only - no action ☐
  - c. Reported and charged ☐
  - d. Reported, resulting in a conviction ☐
  - e. Type of violence:
    - i. Physical – minor ☐
    - ii. Physical – severe ☐
    - iii. Mental ☐
    - iv. Verbal (inc. email/text etc) ☐
    - v. Retaliation ☐
    - vi. Other (please state).....
7. In the last 5 years, according to your records, has the frequency of all domestic violence against men changed? (approximately):
- a. Increased? By? (%).....
  - b. Decreased? By? (%).....
  - c. Stayed the same? ☐
  - d. Not recorded/Don't know. ☐
8. In the last 5 years, according to your records, has the frequency of domestic violence against men, by male partners changed? (approximately) :
- a. Increased? By? (%).....
  - b. Decreased? By? (%).....
  - c. Stayed the same? ☐
  - d. Not recorded/Don't know. ☐
9. If you record the age of victims, please indicate % in the following age groups (approximately):
- a. Under 18 .....%
  - b. 18 – 30 .....%
  - c. 31 – 59 .....%
  - d. Over 60 .....%

**This section aims to find out what support is available to male victims of domestic violence**

10. Are victims encouraged to report incidents to the police? Yes ☐ No ☐
11. Are victims encouraged to contact support organisation? Yes ☐ No ☐
12. Does your organisation have staff trained in supporting
- a. All victims of violence? Yes ☐ No ☐
- b. Male victims of violence? Yes ☐ No ☐
13. Are you aware of 'safe refuges' in your area for the male victims of violence?
- Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐
14. Can they take their children? Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

**This section explores your (or your organisations) perceptions about domestic violence against men.**

15. Is there reluctance by men to report domestic violence against them?
- Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐
16. Is there a greater reluctance by men to report domestic violence against them by male partners?
- Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐
17. If the answer to 15 is 'Yes' can you say why? Do they feel:
- a. Less likely to be listened to than women? ☐
- b. Fear of discrimination by police or support staff? ☐
- c. Fear of discrimination in criminal justice system? ☐
- d. Fear of media reporting? ☐
- e. Male peer group pressure? ☐
- f. Intimidated if English not first language? ☐
- g. Other intimidation (family, work etc) ☐
- h. Absence of support services? ☐
- i. Other? .....
18. Are there cultural/ethnic group differences regarding domestic violence against men?
- Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

If 'Yes', are there any cultural groups in which domestic violence against men is more prevalent?

Chinese ☐ Asian ☐ African ☐ Caribbean ☐ Irish ☐ Other ☐

If 'Yes' how are these differences demonstrated?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a. Number of incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Severity of incidents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Reporting of incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Available support?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Prosecutions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other			

(Please specify: .....)

19. What are the likely causes of domestic violence against men?

(Not likely      1      2      3      4      5 Very likely) (add 'x' on left of your choice)

a. Partner's general history of violence?	1	2	3	4	5
b. Drug/alcohol abuse?	1	2	3	4	5
c. Financial worries?	1	2	3	4	5
d. Employment problems?	1	2	3	4	5
e. Relationships (affairs, previous partners etc)?	1	2	3	4	5
f. Retaliation against man's violent behaviour?	1	2	3	4	5
g. Issues with children in relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
h. Lack of support in criminal justice system?	1	2	3	4	5
i. Absence of alternative, safe accommodation?	1	2	3	4	5
j. Other .....					

20. How are male victims of domestic violence treated by the following organisations?

(leave blank if Not Known)

(Not well      1      2      3      4      5 Very well) (add 'x' on left of your choice)

a. Police	1	2	3	4	5
b. Social services	1	2	3	4	5
c. Support groups	1	2	3	4	5
d. Courts	1	2	3	4	5
e. Legal profession/CPS	1	2	3	4	5
f. Politicians	1	2	3	4	5
g. Society in general	1	2	3	4	5
h. Media	1	2	3	4	5

21. Have perceptions of domestic violence against men changed in the last 10 years?

Yes    ☐    No    ☐    Don't know    ☐

If 'Yes' how have they changed? ('x' all that apply - on left of your choice)

(Not at all      1      2      3      4      5 A lot)

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Recognition that this happens?      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. Compared to violence against women? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. Recognition as a crime?             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. Support for police action?          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. Need for support groups?            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f. Other .....                         |   |   |   |   |   |

Thank you for your participation.

Please return the completed questionnaire by email to:

[Zoe.garratt@mail.bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Zoe.garratt@mail.bcu.ac.uk)

Zoe Garratt

3<sup>rd</sup> year student

BSc Criminal Investigation

Birmingham City University

## **Appendix 3**

### **Email sent with Questionnaire**

#### **3rd year student research: domestic violence against men**

My name is Zoe Garratt and I am a 3rd year student at Birmingham City University, studying BSc Criminal Investigation. I am also autistic and so getting this far has been a struggle but with support of the staff and family I have made it through.

I am carrying out my final year assignment on 'Domestic violence against men - the forgotten crime?' and want to send out a questionnaire to as many interested parties as I can. This will include support agencies, social workers, the police and others in the criminal justice system.

I am hoping that you would be prepared to spend a short time helping with my research by filling out this short, anonymous questionnaire? If there are any colleagues or other groups/ contacts that you have, especially in the police or social services I would be delighted if you either could send them a copy or send me their details.

I would be extremely grateful for any help you could offer and I enclose the questionnaire that can be completed electronically and returned to me. I would welcome an early response as I will have a lot of collating and writing to do!

Kind regards  
Zoe Garratt

## Appendix 4

### Police DASH© Form Example

#### Victims Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour Based Violence (V-DASH, 2010) Risk Identification Checklist

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A number of high risk factors have been identified as being associated with serious violence and murder through researching many cases. We cannot predict what will happen in your case. However, we would like you to be aware of what those risk factors are and whether they are occurring in your case.

If you have already reported to the police do not despair if you have not been satisfied with the initial police response. Keep trying to be heard. Complete the V-DASH 2010 and then take it into the Police if you answer positively to the questions. We can assure you that most police officers want to help, but they sometimes lack the tools and training needed.

If you are concerned about what is happening to you, then please complete the risk identification checklist.

CURRENT SITUATION THE CONTEXT AND DETAIL OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IS VERY IMPORTANT. THE QUESTIONS HIGHLIGHTED IN BOLD ARE HIGH RISK FACTORS. TICK THE RELEVANT BOX	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1. Has the current incident resulted in injury?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are you very frightened? Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence? (Please give an indication of what you think (name of abuser(s)..... might do and to whom)  Kill: Self <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Further injury and violence: Self <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please clarify): Self <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do you feel isolated from family/ friends i.e. does (name of abuser(s).....) try to stop you from seeing friends/family/Dr or others?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have you separated or tried to separate from (name of abuser(s).....) within the past year?	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is there conflict over child contact?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Does (.....) constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you? (Please expand to identify what and whether you believe that this is done deliberately to intimidate you? Consider the context and behaviour of what is being done.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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<b>CHILDREN/DEPENDENTS</b> (If no children/dependants, please go to the next section)	<b>Yes</b>
9. Are you currently pregnant or have you recently had a baby in the past 18 months?	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Are there any children, step-children that aren't (.....) in the household? Or are there other dependants in the household (i.e. older relative)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Has (.....) ever hurt the children/dependants?	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Has (.....) ever threatened to hurt or kill the children/dependants?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HISTORY</b>	<b>Yes</b>
13. Is the abuse happening more often?	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Is the abuse getting worse?	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Does (.....) try to control everything you do and/or are they excessively jealous? (In terms of relationships, who you see, being 'policed at home', telling you what to wear for example)	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Has (.....) ever used weapons or objects to hurt you?	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Has (.....) ever threatened to kill you or someone else and you believed them?	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Has (.....) ever attempted to strangle/choke/suffocate/drown you?	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Does (.....) do or say things of a sexual nature that makes you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else?	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Is there any other person that has threatened you or that you are afraid of?	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Do you know if (.....) has hurt anyone else? (children/siblings/elderly relative/stranger, for example) Children <input type="checkbox"/> Another family member <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from a previous relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Has (.....) ever mistreated an animal or the family pet?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ABUSER(S)</b>	<b>Yes</b>
23. Are there any financial issues? For example, are you dependent on (.....) for money/have they recently lost their job/other financial issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Has (.....) had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life? (Please tick appropriate box) Drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Has (.....) ever threatened or attempted suicide?	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Has (.....) ever breached bail/an injunction and/or any agreement for when they can see you and/or the children? (Please tick appropriate box) Bail conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Non Molestation/Occupation Order <input type="checkbox"/> Child Contact arrangements <input type="checkbox"/> Forced Marriage Protection Order <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. Do you know if (.....) has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history?	<input type="checkbox"/>
DV <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Number of ticks	

**Thank you.**

If you have scored 14 or more ticks you would be considered **at higher** risk and should seek advice/help from your local domestic violence service, Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) or go to the Police.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Request for Ethical Approval**

#### **Section 1 – to be completed by the researcher**

Full name	Zoe Garratt
Module number and title  (student researchers only)	
Research Proposal title	Domestic violence against men. Recognition within the Criminal Justice system.
Funding body applying to if applicable	N/A
Brief outline of proposal (including research questions where appropriate)  You are also asked to submit with your application copies of any questionnaires, letters, recruitment material you intend to use if these are available at the time of requesting approval	To consider the different aspects of domestic violence against men by partners or from other adult relationships, whether female or male, including causes, response, reporting, support and investigation. It will also consider the response from the criminal justice system including the police, courts and support services.

Level of research, e.g. staff, undergraduate, postgraduate, master's (award related), MPhil, PhD	Undergraduate
Please outline the methodology that would be implemented in the course of this research.	This will be undertaken by secondary research, statistical evidence and comparisons with other forms of domestic violence. There will also be confidential questionnaires to police officers and social support workers for written responses.
Please indicate the ethical issues that have been considered and how these will be addressed.	The ethical issues may include the need to maintain subject privacy when analysing questionnaires from practitioners in the field and any element of sexual bias in the research.
Please indicate any issues that may arise relating to diversity and equality whilst undertaking this research and how you will manage these.	Although the research will be into only one side of the domestic violence that occurs it will be necessary to maintain a strictly gender neutral approach to the consideration of the aspects of the violence.
Please indicate how participants will be debriefed about their involvement in the research process and or provided with opportunities for reflection and evaluation	Participants will have experience in the field of domestic violence and will have the opportunity to view the records of their evidence in order to ensure its validity.

Please answer the following questions by circling or highlighting the appropriate response:

1. Will your research project involve young people under the age of 18?

**NO**

If yes, do you have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from the Criminal Records Bureau?

2. Will your research project involve vulnerable adults?

**NO**

3. For which category of proposal are you applying for ethical approval?

**Category A**

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