

Fempower

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by the WAVE office



by Iris Golden and Rosa Logar, WAVE office, Austria

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INTEGRATED AND SURVIVOR-ORIENTED APPROACHES IN THE WORK WITH PERPETRATORS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE - GOOD PRACTICES, GAPS AND CHALLENGES

Working with perpetrators is still a controversial issue in the women's movement against violence in Europe. While some women's organisations support and even engage in it, others are skeptical and fear that such programmes are jeopardizing the safety of survivors' and taking away resources from women's support services. There is no conclusive evidence that perpetrator programmes are effective in stopping violence against women, and high attrition and low conviction rates show that impunity for these crimes is still widespread. Nevertheless, women's organizations in many countries do support the work of anti-violence programmes, as long as women report feeling safer and less burdened during and after the violent partner attended a programme.



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Editorial-Continuation

by Iris Golden and Rosa Logar, WAVE office, Austria



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There is a consensus that perpetrator programmes should not work in isolation, but should be integrated into a coordinated and comprehensive policy to prevent violence against women and protect survivors. "The system matters" is a central finding of one of the few longitudinal studies on perpetrator programmes (Gondolf 2001). A well-known and respected integrated programme is the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) in Duluth, Minnesota, which has been recently awarded the World Policy Award for best practices worldwide.² The standards set in this programme include, for example, the principle that the first priority of interventions should be on the protection of the victims from further harm, that victims should have access to safe emergency housing and assistance to bring their case to justice, and that the primary focus of interventions should not be to repair or to end the relationship, but to stop the use of violence. In addition, all interventions should take into account the power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim.³

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence states that "safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern" in perpetrator programmes.⁴ WAVE has been engaged for several years in promoting safety standards in perpetrator programmes and is a member of the European Network of the Work with Perpetrators of domestic violence (see first article in this edition). However, perpetrator programmes do not, per se, favor the protection of survivors; they need to integrate standards for safety and support and be carried out in close cooperation with women's support services, as the Istanbul Convention stipulates.

A feminist and human rights based approach based on the standards of the Istanbul Convention also supports the argument that it would be non-justifiable to offer assistance to perpetrators if there are not enough and not adequate services for women victims of violence. The principle "no perpetrator work without support to victims" should be implemented in every single case and be applied to all institutions working with perpetrators and all measures addressing them (justice system, social, psychiatric and pedagogical institutions, probation and anti-violence programmes).⁵

The current issue of Fempower reflects on the history, as well as on current approaches, towards perpetrator pro-

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grammes from a feminist perspective, both from a theoretical, as well as from a practical perspective: The first article by Vanessa Depeyre (Austria) provides information on the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators, its aims and main activities, and the role that WAVE takes within the network in order to ensure that a feminist perspective and the security of women victims of male violence is preserved. The article by Marianne Hester and Sarah-Jane Lilley (UK) presents different promising models of perpetrator programmes. Pascale Franck (Belgium) reflects on different approaches to perpetrator programmes and some aspects of their evaluation. In the following articles, examples of perpetrator programmes are discussed in their national context from the viewpoint of practitioners: Luisa Nieto, Estefanía Sánchez and Virginia Gil (Spain) reflect on their experiences with a compulsory programme for perpetrators sentenced for intimate partner violence, run by their organization ASPACIA. Ulrike Janz and Andrea Stolte provide insight to the functioning and the main challenges of a perpetrator programme in the county of Ennepe-Ruhr, Germany. Finally, Don Henessy (Ireland) provides a personal account of his experiences and lessons learned working in a perpetrator programme from a feminist perspective.

As always in the magazine Fempower, articles express the opinion of the authors and not necessarily of the WAVE network.

We thank all authors for their contribution. We are looking forward to feedback from our readers and hope the issue will contribute to a fruitful discussion in the field.

¹ The term victim and the term survivor are used interchangeably.

² See <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/>.

³ Ellen Pence, Michael Paymar, Domestic Violence Information Manual. The Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (1993), available at http://www.eurowrc.org/05.education/education_en/12.edu_en.htm.

⁴ The Convention was adopted in Istanbul in 2011; it came into effect on 1st of August 2014. The text of the Convention is available on the Webpage of the Council of Europe: www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/about_en.asp.

⁵ Rosa Logar, Täterbezogene Interventionen zur Prävention von häuslicher Gewalt an Frauen und Ihren Kindern, published in the Annual Report of the Domestic Violence Intervention Centre Vienna (Tätigkeitsbericht 2009, in German), p.26, and can be downloaded at the homepage of the Intervention Centre Vienna: www.interventionstelle-wien.at/images/doku/wiener_interventionstelle_tatigkeitsbericht_2009.pdf.



THE EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR WORK WITH PERPETRATORS

by Vanessa Depeyre, Austria



The Establishment of the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence

The informal WWP - European Network came into existence in 2006 as a result of the project "Work with Perpetrators," which ran from April 2006 to June 2008. This project was funded by the Daphne II of the European Commission, which aimed to increase the safety of victims of domestic violence by fostering a European exchange of good practice in the work with male perpetrators of domestic violence. The project gathered eight different partners, including WAVE, from seven European countries. The project allowed the establishment of a database and the development of guidelines for perpetrator programmes (see next section).

In April 2014, the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of domestic violence (WWP-European Network) became a legal entity, and is now an association of member organizations working with perpetrators of violence in intimate relationships and organizations supporting the victims. The network association was established by eighteen founding members from thirteen different countries and the first board of the new entity was established.¹

It was decided that three positions on the board must be reserved for specialized support services for women victims of domestic violence, of which one is designated for the WAVE network. The overall mission of the WWP-European Network is to prevent violence in close relationships and to foster gender equality.² To reach this goal, the network wants to improve the quality of existing programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence and support the development of victim-safety oriented programmes. The network aims to improve the safety of the survivors and their children and to ensure that their safety is the main concern of all programmes for perpetrators.

Guidelines for the Work with Perpetrators

Guidelines with standards for programmes working with male perpetrators of domestic violence were developed in 2008. Standards are essential to ensure the quality of the programmes and safety for victims. The guidelines are the result of the collaboration of the eight project partners but also of exchanges with international experts. The programmes that exist in Europe are different in terms of target groups, funding, tasks and work conditions and it is difficult to develop guidelines with detailed instructions. Therefore, the guidelines should be used as a framework and more specific standards can be further developed on this foundation.³

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Guidelines to develop standards for programmes working with male perpetrators of domestic violence

The guidelines were developed within the framework of a EU Daphne project and are available in 17 languages: Bulgarian, Czech, English, Estonian, **French**, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene and Spanish. They can be downloaded for free from:

<http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=29>.

The first part of the guidelines is dedicated to the preconditions for the work with male perpetrators and the second part focuses on the important principles for working with male perpetrators. The guidelines include the following principles, among others:⁴

- Increasing the safety of the victims of violence is the main goal of the work with male perpetrators
- Perpetrator programmes should not be funded at the expense of victim support services, but by additional sources
- Perpetrator programmes should be an integrated part of an intervention system; cooperation with services for women victims is essential
- The basis of any perpetrator programme must be the understanding that violence against women and children is not acceptable under any circumstance and that violent men are always responsible for using violence
- Every perpetrator programmes should be based on explicit theoretical understandings (gender theory, definition of domestic violence, causes and mechanisms leading to violence...)
- Partners of perpetrators should be contacted and supported
- Perpetrator programmes should include a child protection policy
- Systematic risk assessment should be implemented
- Staff should be highly qualified
- Perpetrator programmes should include quality assurance, documentation and an evaluation.

Impact Project

In the framework of the Network, seven organizations decided to develop the project “Evaluation of European Perpetrator Programmes (IMPACT).” This two-year project (2013-2014), funded by the Daphne III Programme of the European Commission, aims to enhance and harmonise the outcome of monitoring European programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence. The fundamental goal of the project is to promote the safety of women and children from domestic violence.

While the evaluation of the perpetrator programmes is considered to be essential in order to assess whether the programmes really contribute to the safety of the victims and their children, it has been noted that there was lack of knowledge concerning the evaluation at the European level. The objective of the project was to fill this gap of knowledge and contribute to the harmonization of outcome monitoring.⁵ To reach these goals, the project has four specific objectives:⁶

- Provide an overview and analysis of the current practice of outcome monitoring in European perpetrator programmes
- Provide an overview and analysis of research studies evaluating perpetrator programmes
- Identify possibilities and obstacles for multi-country European outcome research studies and for centralized analysis of comparable outcome data
- Develop a toolkit model for evaluating perpetrator programme.

The Final IMPACT-Conference 2014 “1st European Congress on the Evaluation of Programs for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence” took place in Barcelona/Spain on the 21st of October 2014.

Results of the project, reports and working papers see: <http://www.impact.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=14>.

Standard Setting in the Istanbul Convention for the Work with Perpetrators

The Council of Europe Convention to prevent and combat violence against women (Istanbul Convention) was adopted in 2011 and came into force on 1st of August 2014. The Convention is the first legally binding instrument of its kind in Europe and sets comprehensive standards in eliminating violence against women and domestic violence. The Convention has so far been signed by 22 member states of the Council of Europe and ratified by 15 (Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, France, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey).

Istanbul Convention

Article 16 – Preventive intervention and treatment programmes

1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing

further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.

2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending.
3. In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims.

The text of the Convention in different languages is available on the website of the Council of Europe:

http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/about_en.asp

Conclusions

Collaborating with the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators is of high importance for WAVE. The partnership between the programmes for perpetrators and the women support services is essential to ensure the safety of the victims, and it is required by the Istanbul Convention. It is of primary importance to know the point of view and the perspective of the victims before any programme with perpetrators can operate; the women support services are present in the network to bring the victim's point of view. The collaboration at the European level between programmes for perpetrators and the women support services aims to provide good examples and to encourage this collaboration at national or local levels also.

¹ The founding board is composed of: Neil Blacklock, Respect, London, United Kingdom (Chair); Rosa Logar, WAVE, Vienna, Austria (Vice Chair); Alessandra Pauncz, C.A.M., Florence, Italy (Secretary); Heinrich Geldschläger, Conexus, Barcelona, Spain (Treasurer); Marianne Hester, Centre for Gender and Violence Research, Bristol, United Kingdom; Dean Ajdukovic, SPA, Zagreb, Croatia; Eha Reitelmann, Estonian Women's Shelters Union, Tallinn, Estonia; Lene Stavngaard, AskovFonden, Copenhagen, Denmark; Olga Persson, SKR, Stockholm, Sweden; Ralf Puchert, Dissens, Berlin, Germany (Executive Director).

² See the mission Statement of the network at <http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=61&L=0>.

³ See the Guidelines to develop standards for programmes working with male perpetrators, available at <http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=29>.

⁴ See more in detail at <http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=29>.

⁵ See <http://www.impact.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=17>.

⁶ Ibid.

'PROMISING' PERPETRATOR INTERVENTIONS AND HOW THEY WORK TO INTERRUPT THE PATHWAYS TO VIOLENCE

by Sarah-Jane Lilley and Marianne Hester, UK

On 1st August 2014, the Council of Europe's Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) - the first legally-binding instrument in Europe in the field of violence against women and



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domestic violence - entered into force. Rooted in the desire to develop a response to individual men who use physical, psychological or sexual violence against women, Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention requires member states to set up or support programmes targeting domestic violence perpetrators (Article 16, paragraph 1).

The guidance on Article 16¹ suggests that using an ecological model, such as the model developed by Carol Hagemann-White (2010) provides key issues for working with domestic violence perpetrators. The Hagemann-White model locates perpetration influences or ‘factors’ on four levels:

- **Macro** (Society) i.e. the structures in social order e.g. gender inequality, media, impunity, lack of respect
- **Meso** (Institutions, agencies and social environment) i.e. social norms and practices that regulate daily life e.g. entitlement, honour codes, poverty, social exclusion and education
- **Micro** (Face-to-face social groups) i.e. day-to-day interactions in the immediate environment e.g. peers, stereotypes, myths, family stress, expectations and opportunities for VAW
- **Ontogenetic** (Individual life history) i.e. the masculine self, emotional and cognitive deficits, stimulus abuse and early exposure to violence in the home.

Many preventive interventions aim to interrupt the pathways to perpetration of gender-based violence at the societal, cultural and institutional levels (e.g. challenging gender inequality and stereotypes through legal reforms and regulation in the media or through anti-discriminatory policy within education, the labour market and the criminal justice system). Measures that aim to avoid further victimisation – such as direct work with perpetrators – need to also address the ‘factors’ of perpetration that are formed through interaction with peers and/or family, such as stereotypes they have of gender and sexuality, approval by the men’s peers that supports hostility towards women, and the personal, economic or perceived social rewards for violence and abuse. These factors may also further reinforce or mitigate other factors that contribute to an individual’s disposition to violent behaviour (e.g. childhood exposure to violence and abuse, cognitive distortions of others, lack of empathy and stimulus abuse) (Hagemann-White 2010).



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The majority of existing domestic violence perpetrator programmes in Europe are based on cognitive-behavioural, therapeutic and teaching techniques and are heavily influenced by the Duluth model of practice². Applying the Hagemann-White model (2010), this type of approach can work to disrupt the ‘pathways’ to gender-based violence by addressing the ‘masculine self’ and ‘emotional and cognitive deficits’ which result in a lack of empathy and respect for women and girls. Such programmes can also address ‘stimulus abuse’, ‘intimacy deficit’ or ‘depersonalised sexual socialisation’ which can lead to a desire for sexual conquest and control.

There is a number of well-designed European perpetrator programmes, including:

- **The Domestic Violence Intervention Programme (DVIP)** (UK) is a long-standing community-based integrated intervention approach which aims to increase the safety of women and children, empower women to make safer choices, help perpetrators stop their violent and controlling behaviour, provide increased referral options to child protection services, and reduce repeat victimisation. The service comprises three core elements: expert risk assessment; structured intervention with perpetrators in groups using cognitive-behavioural techniques; and a women’s support service. This multi-faceted intervention works to disrupt the pathways to violence at different levels. At the institutional level, by working in partnership with other agencies, the programme provides risk assessment and advice to agencies on how to manage that risk. This helps to support and inform the practice of professionals working with vulnerable women (and safeguarding children at risk). Raising awareness and improving other professionals’ understanding of domestic abuse offers an important contribution to a wider community response, such as improved knowledge and understanding to inform local agency/ services policies and practice. At the peer group level, group work with perpetrators challenges men’s attitudes and behaviours within a peer setting – challenging stereotypes, myths, and peer approval and support for negative attitudes and violence towards women. At the individual level, the programme works to reduce the perpetrators’ propensity to violence by directly addressing the individual factors that contribute to their attitudes and violent behaviour, such as childhood exposure to violence in the home, cognitive distortions and/or stimulus abuse.



DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMMES FOR PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

by Pascale Franck, Belgium

- **The Contexto Programme** (Spain) is a community-based intervention programme for men convicted of domestic violence offences, which aims to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors for interpersonal violence against women. The intervention works to disrupt influences at the individual level, such as victim-blaming attitudes, stress and social support that can lead to a pre-disposition to violence against women. Reducing or eliminating victim-blaming may improve the effectiveness of interventions that aim to change attitudes and behaviour. Examining psychosocial factors (traditionally linked to gender-based violence) the evaluation results indicated a positive change in attitudes, reductions in feelings of jealousy, anger and hostility, less emotional abuse, improved partner relationships, acceptance of responsibility and increased empathy for the victim.

Also in Spain there exists a wide programme of treatment based on a cognitive-behavioural model for male prisoners convicted for gender-based violence. Group work intervention (delivered by a male and a female facilitator) covers motivational aspects, such as acceptance of responsibility and motivation for therapy; treatment of psychopathological symptoms associated with violent men, focusing on empathy, skills training and modification of cognitive distortions related to gender violence; and relapse prevention such as identifying high risk situations and teaching adequate alternative coping strategies to violence.³ The intervention aims to disrupt the pathways to violence at the peer group and individual level by modifying perpetrators' negative attitudes towards women, victim-blaming and the use of violence as a way of conflict solution. Positive results suggested that participants tended to show a greater level of emotional stability, which is encouraging as a suppression of emotions such as anger and aggression can lead to emotional disturbance and is an important factor in an individual's propensity to violent behaviour.

While reviews of evaluations from Europe and North America have failed to discern which approaches to working with perpetrators are more effective than others⁴ intervention with perpetrators may play a potentially positive role in the overall response to gender-based violence against women.⁵ Such programmes are not the "cure-all" solution, but may lead to behavioural change that is necessary to reduce domestic and sexual violence. To be effective however, they must form part of a co-ordinated, inter-agency intervention that works to interrupt the pathways to violence at all the levels identified by Hagemann-White (2010), that is, societal, institutional, community and individual levels.

¹ Hester, M and Lilley, SJ (2014) Domestic and sexual violence perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention. A collection of papers on the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Council of Europe, http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/thematic_factsheets/Article%2016%20English.pdf.

² <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/about/>.

³ A more detailed description of specific components of the treatment programme can be found in Echeburúa, E. and Fernández-Montalvo, J. (1998). "Hombres maltratadores. Aspectos teóricos". In E. Echeburúa & P. Corral (eds.), *Manual de violencia familiar*. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 73-90.

⁴ Akoensi, TD., Koehler, JA., Lösel, F., and Humphreys, DK (2013) Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programs in Europe, Part II: A Systematic Review of the State of Evidence. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 57 (10) pp 1206-1225.

⁵ Dobash R.P et al. (1999), "A research evaluation of British programs for violent men", *Journal of Social Policy*, April 1999, vol. 28, issue 02, pp. 205-33.

1. Programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence

A range of treatments and programmes exists for perpetrators of domestic violence, and more specifically, for partner violence. These are offered in a voluntary framework (for example after referral by a GP, through a perpetrator's own initiative...), or they are mandatory in a judicial framework (for example under probation, or release under conditions or parole). In addition, there are situations in which a treatment starts under "urge": the environment of the perpetrator demands from the aggressor to change the violent behaviour (e.g. the victim wants a divorce if the violence does not stop, special child/youth protection measures require change of violent behaviour, etc.).

From our experience in international cooperation we have learned that access to programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence varies by country and even region, often in number, but also in form, ideology, and duration. This is partly determined by local prioritization, project grants, and partnerships. The possibilities for referral of perpetrators to programmes are often limited. There are currently very few scientifically gathered figures on the percentage of perpetrators referred to a programme. The limited number and capacities of perpetrator programmes mean that only a minority of offenders can make use of such a possibility. Even more, programmes seem to aim at certain categories of perpetrators and some of them cannot attend a programme due to lack of language skills, lack of motivation or insight, mental limitations, psychiatric diseases, or substance use.

2. Development of interventions addressing perpetrators of domestic violence

In the seventies of the last century, violence against women (and intimate partner violence) was put on the public and the political agenda by the activists of the second feminist wave. The programmes and help centres focused on empowering and supporting women to escape violent relationships. Before that, the abusive partner had forfeited his rights by his violent behaviour, even his rights as a father of the children, and in public services, the violence was often not even recognized as a problem.¹

The recognition of the need for addressing perpetrators of domestic violence only grew after quite some years, mostly as a result of the growing understanding that the violent behaviour did not stop if the perpetrator did not change his behaviour and continued to subject his partner to violence. In this context, programmes for violent men were born.

The first pioneers in this field were often pro-feminist men's groups. Violence by men against their female partner was seen as an expression of a generally accepted dominance and ex-



exercising control of men over women. The pioneers started with discussion groups, where male dominance was addressed.²

In the USA in the 1980s, two approaches to address violent behaviour of men against their partner were developed. First, a cognitive-behavioural group approach, focusing on the handling of emotions and appropriate social skills, gained attention. The women's movement also demanded that perpetrators be held accountable by the justice system, and eventually, the recognition of partner violence as a judicial matter led to referring offenders to programmes. The first cognitive-behavioural treatment models were developed in the USA (the work with perpetrators in Duluth is by far the most well known – see section below). As a second model, voluntary groups aimed at developing skills for conflict management were established.³

Starting from these ideas, different programmes, often project-based and with different characteristics, e.g. voluntary or compulsory programmes were established.⁴

3. The Duluth Model

A milestone in the development of perpetrator programmes was the introduction of the Duluth model at the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project in Minnesota in 1993.⁵ This programme is the first model of a coordinated community response, based on the idea that all agencies involved in the prevention of domestic violence should respond to the problem in a coordinated way, with the goal to stop the violent behaviour, to empower victims, and to hold perpetrators accountable. Within this model of a coordinated community approach, a perpetrator programme was established. It combines the cognitive-behavioural approach with a pro-feminist theory. The programme works on the premise that violence is committed by men against women as an expression of the patriarchal society structure and that it is about male control and dominance. Violence is seen as intentional: men choose to act violently to secure their dominant position.

The programme aims to “re-educate” the perpetrators, by effective exercises, and using tools such as role plays or “time-out”.⁶ In this context, there is no room for couple counselling or family therapy – rather, the model focuses on the belief system of perpetrators and the attitude that it is legitimate and their right to exercise power and control over women. The ‘Wheel of Power and Control’, which is well known in domestic violence programmes, was developed within the Duluth model. Both in the USA and in Europe, the model has inspired the work with perpetrators.

4. Systemic Approach

A rather new approach in the field is the system-oriented method to address domestic violence.⁷ Programmes based on this approach focus on the context of all family members involved in a violent family setting and their mutual relations. The development of this systemic approach was established after discovering that a large number of families and couples were not being helped through the existing interventions. The recognition of the need for a “multi-focus” programme grew, with the focus on

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the man as the perpetrator, the woman as the victim, and the children involved as witnesses and victims, and with a view to the coordination of support to all parties. Stopping the violence and providing security planning is a priority and comes as a first step.

The programmes focus on the incidents and escalation of violence and its effects. The goal is to offer insight into the mechanisms of the escalation of the violence. A next step is incorporating safety mechanisms, for example by installing a “time-out” (see section 5 of this article for more details).

The decision whether to end the relationship, or to stay together as a couple, is taken by the family members. Measures for ensuring the security of the woman is, where necessary, accompanied by measures to support the recovery of the relationship (as partners decide to stay together, or in case of divorce on the further education of the children in a non-violent climate).

There was and still is opposition to a systemic approach of partner violence. This opposition is not so strong when violence against children is at stake: here the idea is more common that it is necessary to involve the whole family system in ending the violence. According to opponents, the systemic approach provides perpetrators with the ability to maintain the unequal power relationship between the partners and to avoid or avert their responsibility. It can be observed, however, that the opposition to the systemic approach is not as strong anymore in every context, due to the observation that many couples choose to stay together despite the violence (at least for the time being).

The system-oriented approach, along with other influences from for example therapeutic settings, also provided a space for developing a range of methodologies, for different profiles of perpetrators of intimate partner violence. The “perpetrator” as a product of the patriarchal society was supplemented with a variety of profiles, which brought about an offender typology.

Various authors describe categories of perpetrators, based on the violence used, the context of the violence, personality disorders, and psychopathology or antecedents of the author. This led to the development of programmes and interventions with more specific profiles, from a more contextual approach.⁸

5. Time-Out method

In the 1990s, the principle of “time-out” was developed to assist couples with an abusive relationship.⁹ Couples were taught to recognize ascending tension and to avoid escalation.¹⁰ In this context, the violence, as well as exercising control and the loss of control, are the focus.

This principle nowadays is often the basis of the first step in programmes on partner violence. Time-out programmes mainly represent a very accessible group-oriented intervention. The intervention also points to a systemic approach, in which the victim is involved to some extent. The purpose of this relatively short-term intervention is stopping violence. The method involves a psycho-educational approach, leading to behaviour change.

6. Evaluation of perpetrator programmes

Starting from the 1990s, there have been multiple efforts to measure the validity of the perpetrator programmes. The assessments give highly contradictory conclusions. It seems very difficult to measure the results and the effectiveness of the programmes. One of the main reasons is the lack of control groups. To gauge the effectiveness, one would have to compare the population that finished a programme with a group that commits the same acts, in the same context, but without any other intervention. The establishment of such a quasi control group is not possible.

Research shows that the effect of perpetrator programmes as a standalone activity is not as high. Offender programmes have meaning if they are part of a larger intervention plan, aimed at addressing different family members and placing the safety of victims at the centre. This gives the discussion on the validity of offender programmes a very different meaning.

The fact that in most countries no variety of perpetrator programmes exists, makes a comparative study difficult. In addition, in most countries only a limited number of the perpetrators are referred to a perpetrator programme, often because of lack of funding.

Various international studies allow us to draw some conclusions:

- Perpetrators with a heavy addiction (to drugs, alcohol, gambling) show higher recidivism and are less positive about the treatment received.¹¹
- The more severe the physical, sexual, or psychological partner violence, the higher the chances of relapse after the programme are.
- General criminal recidivism predictors (such as psychopathology) cannot consistently be associated with relapse of partner violence after following a perpetrator programme.¹²
- There is a correlation between relapse after an offender programme and development of a criminal behaviour.¹³

In 2012, research was conducted with European resources (DAPHNE) on 54 offender programmes related to partner violence in 19 European countries.¹⁴ Most programmes used

cognitive-behavioural therapy (70%). In about one out of two programmes pro-feminist methods were used, and one third rely on a psychodynamic approach. In many cases in Europe, the pro-feminist approach is combined with a cognitive-behavioural or psychodynamic approach. The Duluth model is most often referred to as reference programme.

One of the important conclusions is that many programmes are not aimed at a specific audience, for example based on perpetrator profiles. Most programmes are developed for a large group (with different violent profile, age, and motivation for the programme). At the start, there were no clear criteria developed in terms of target audience. This is identified as one of the weaknesses: the treatment programme needs to be based on the profiles of the perpetrators; there is no model suitable for all.

There appears to be too little research, assessment tools, and methodology description focusing on the individual situation of offenders in perpetrator programmes. Twelve of the 54 programmes used an evaluation method that foresees in a larger insight in the results of the programme. The timing of the evaluation (directly after the programme, or within 12 months after completion) does not allow for conclusions based on the long-term results of the programmes. The most important conclusion is that perpetrator programmes are only partially evaluated. Organizations running the programmes rarely have funding for evaluation and possibilities to measure the (long-term) effects. Crucial to this is the lack of evidence-based methodological tools to measure and monitor these effects.

Another important evaluation of the Duluth-method has been done by Gondolf.¹⁵ He concluded the majority of perpetrators benefited from the programmes and stopped using violence. Four years after the programme, 90% of the participants in the follow-up group did not use physical violence, and other forms of violence have also been significantly reduced. The most significant result was the increased feeling of safety of the women and their opinion that the violence would not occur anymore in the future. Gondolf evaluated perpetrator programmes using the same approach, but differing in duration. He concluded that the results of a programme were not so much determined by the different settings, but much more by the context or system (e.g. through the justice system) in which a programme was offered. In addition, the profile of the perpetrator is significant for the results of the approach.

7. Concluding remarks

In the last two decades, different approaches for perpetrators of domestic violence have been developed. Although the goal is generally the same, namely stopping the violent behaviour, we find very different starting positions. This article is certainly not exhaustive in its description, but gives a picture of the most common programmes.

For the evaluation of the different programmes, only very few scientifically-based assessments exist. This makes evaluation, and even more comparison, of the approaches very difficult. The main barrier to gathering data is the difficulty in establishing instruments to evaluate the programmes. Additionally, there is a

lack of resources for longitudinal research (over several years) on a larger survey population.

An important conclusion is the fact that most programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence only make sense if they are part of a larger approach. Programmes that show positive results (dropping recidivism, increasing safety and well-being of family members involved) are not stand-alone projects, but come together with additional aspects, such as empowerment, safety measures and therapy.

Another conclusion is that no programme fits every perpetrator. It is necessary to focus on categories of perpetrators, and offer different approaches for different types, also as a part of a larger approach.

¹ DIJKSTRA, S., "Begeleide terugkeer na partnergeweld en de betekenis van tijd", *Systeemtheoretisch Bulletin*, 2011, Jaargang 11, p 157-173.

² KRAUS H., Trainingsprogramm zur Beendigung von gewalttätigem Verhalten in Paarbeziehungen, Interne Evaluation (1999-2012), Männerberatung, Vienna, 2012.

³ DUTTON, D.G., GOLANT, S.K. & PIJNAKER, H., *De partnermishandelaar, een psychologisch profiel*, Houten/Diegem, Bohn Stafleu Van Loghum, 2000.

⁴ FLIKWEERT, M. & LÜNNEMAN K., Hulp verlenen aan het gezin, literatuurstudie naar systeemgerichte benadering in geval van huiselijk geweld, Verwey-Jonkers, 2003.

⁵ SHEPARD, M. F. / PENCE, E. L. (Ed.) (1999): *Coordinating Community Response to Domestic Violence – Lessons from Duluth and Beyond*, Thousand Oaks/London/New Delhi.

⁶ AERTSEN I., KUMPS N., LEMBRECHTS L. & OFFERMANS A.M., Evaluatie van de Belgische experimentele projecten daderhulpverlening/therapie inzake Partnergeweld, KULeuven, Afdeling Strafrecht, Strafvordering en Criminologie, Onderzoeksgroep Penologie en Victimologie, februari 2005.

⁷ See, for example, FLIKWEERT, M. & LÜNNEMAN, K. (2003). Hulp verlenen aan het gezin, literatuurstudie naar systeemgerichte benadering in geval van huiselijk geweld. Verwey-Jonkers; KIK, H. & BAARS, J. (2003). Systeemtherapeutisch behandelen van fysiek geweld in partnerrelaties. *Tijdschrift voor Systeemtherapie*, 12(3), 162-179; GENETELLO, H. (2009)., *Kinderen en partnergeweld: wat nu? methodisch kader?*(www.steunpunt.be/library/16)

⁸ Rodney VLAIS, "Domestic violence perpetrator programs: Education, therapy, support, accountability 'or' struggle?", *No To Violence*, Victoria, 2014, Australia.

⁹ Virginia GOLDNER, Ackerman Institute, New York: <http://www.ackerman.org>.

¹⁰ DIJKSTRA S., cfr 2.

¹¹ DUNFORD, F. W, "The San Diego Navy experiment: An assessment of interventions for men who assault their wives" *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68, 468-476, 2000.

¹² MURPHY, C. M., MORRELL, T. M., ELLIOTT, J. D. & NEAVINS, T. M., "A prognostic indicator scale for the treatment of domestic abuse perpetrators", *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 18, 1087-1105, 2003.

¹³ GONDOLF, E.W., *Batterer Intervention Systems: Issues, Outcomes and Recommendations*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, 2002.

¹⁴ AKOENSI, T., KOEHLER, J.A., LÖSEL, F.A., & HUMPHREYS, D.K. (2012). Domestic violence perpetrator programs in Europe, Part II: A systematic review of the state of evidence. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*.

¹⁵ GONDOLF, E.W, *ibid*.

- Support programmes for women and children victims of gender-based violence (GBV)
- Intervention programmes for male perpetrators of GBV.

Considering victim's protection as a leading principle and understanding perpetrator programmes as complementary actions to the work with victims of GBV, Aspacia, in coordination with victim's support programmes¹, implements a programme for male perpetrators of GBV. Aspacia envisions perpetrator programmes as measures aimed, not only to rehabilitate perpetrators, but also to protect victims and to prevent future GBV. Based on this premise, Aspacia provides interventions for male perpetrators of GBV under two different programmes:

- Compulsory intervention programmes for men sentenced for intimate partner gender-based violence offences (IP-GBV). Such programmes are alternative measures to imprisonment.
- Voluntary therapy (group or individual) for male perpetrators that demand more therapy after completion of their compulsory programme or for men that contact on their own initiative Aspacia to get help.

The current article covers Aspacia's experience in intervention programmes for men sentenced for intimate partner violence/gender-based violence offences and provides information on the main challenges that we face in providing such compulsory intervention programmes.

The compulsory intervention programme is funded by the General Secretary of Prisons and this institution has developed a specific programme (and its manual) called PRIA² (Intervention Programme with Perpetrators - "Programa de Intervención con Agresores"). Aspacia has identified some gaps or aspects that could be improved in the PRIA that will be outlined in the following pages. However, before we start discussing PRIA, we would like to highlight that we fully advocate for perpetrator programmes in addition to imprisonment penalties, but never as alternative measures to imprisonment³.

PRIA is a nine-month programme (25 group sessions of two hours plus two individual sessions) and it has a cognitive-behavioural and psycho-educative approach to transform all psycho-social components that contribute to violent behaviour. The programme focuses on four dimensions to change beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours that are the substratum for GBV: cognitive, emotional, behavioural, and ideological dimensions. The intervention programme is divided into three stages: an initial evaluation (the duration of which can vary from group to group), a period of weekly group sessions through six months, and a follow-up stage that lasts three more months.

After analysing PRIA's methodology and topics covered, it can be noted that it is focused on eradicating violent behaviour by working on emotions, cognitive distortions, relational skills, and peace and conflict resolution processes through assertive communication skills. However, despite PRIA's self-proclamation as a gender sensitive programme, we observe a lack of a gender perspective within the programme:⁴

KEY CHALLENGES IN WORKING WITH PERPETRATORS - ASPACIA'S EXPERIENCE

by Luisa Nieto, Estefanía Sánchez and Virginia Gil, Spain

The Foundation for Coexistence Aspacia (in the following: Aspacia) has developed two complementary lines of work in the provision of services within the gender-based violence field:



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Although a specific unit to work on gender issues and GBV is included, this unit addresses GBV with the same intervention techniques that other problems are treated with, forgetting the special characteristics of such phenomena. GBV is “a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of women's full advancement (United Nations, 1996)”, and not an individual problem. **Perpetrator programmes must address inequality between men and women in order to be effective.** Since GBV is rooted in a patriarchal system - a form of political, economic, religious and social organization whose goal is to protect men's privileges associated to masculine gender roles - it is key to ensure that concepts such as gender, equality, patriarchy, feminism, gender roles and stereotypes, prejudices, power relations, gender perspective, and GBV as a violation of human rights are analysed in depth and incorporated by men during the programme.

Thus, in our work with perpetrators our intervention applies a gender perspective in a crosscutting manner from the beginning of the programme and throughout all the process to address PRIA's contents.

Another challenge we face is the tight timeframe. The way PRIA is currently designed limits sessions to 50 hours over nine months. Keeping in mind that each men's group has specific characteristics and dynamics, that they evolve at a different pace, and that their needs and demands will switch along with the process, PRIA should not be time-limited. In Aspacia we try to overcome this problem by having professionals adjust the interventions to meet men's needs, working more on the particular topics that the therapist assesses as more important.

A further shortcoming that we observe within PRIA is that it does not include any content or proposal to analyse the dominant masculinity role, and therefore no alternative masculinity models are offered. **It is critical to make perpetrators understand how the patriarchal system works, how masculine identity is built up in opposition to feminine identity within a patriarchal structure that creates and perpetuates GVB.** In this sense, deconstructing myths and masculine stereotypes, what it means to be a man within a given society and historical moment, how relationships among men and



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between men and women work, and the dominant concept of masculinity as well as alternatives to such models, all become critical elements for an effective intervention.

In addition, to achieve a real change in perpetrators, it is a requirement that the professional holds perpetrators accountable for their actions. Only through accountability and responsibility will we be able to improve our patients' skills and provide tools to prevent their violent behaviour. This accountability process requires to go through different stages such as helping them understand what impact violence has had on their lives; working to change their abusive behaviour, both socially and intimately, as well as to prevent them from self-abuse; raising awareness of the link between abuse and emotional bonds and the use of micro-violence; and finally, highlighting what the characteristics are that can create an intimate partner relationship free of violence and promote healthy, equal and autonomous relationships.

In summary, **two main gaps or deficiencies** observed in the PRIA must be pointed out:

- **A lack of gender perspective** that impedes an understanding of the current unequal power relations between men and women, and
- **A lack of alternative masculinity models** that would allow men to deconstruct the dominant masculinity role.

However, as it has been described, Aspacia's holistic approach to GBV and the strategies we have implemented – such as a cross-cutting gender perspective, deconstructing dominant masculinity and offering alternative masculinities, and holding perpetrators accountable for their actions – are aimed at trying to overcome the PRIA's shortcomings and achieve positive outcomes.

¹ To victims of GBV whose partners are attending our groups and request support, we offer risk assessment, information, advice and referral to relevant services. In cases of high risk we contact directly the victim to offer such services.

² PRIA is a programme based on a cognitive-behavioural model for male perpetrators convicted for gender-based violence. PRIA is designed to work with those perpetrators convicted and subjected to alternative measures (suspension or substitution of imprisonment). PRIA is the programme that it is being used in all the Spanish territories where General Secretary of Prisons is competent. Aspacía runs this programme in Madrid, Lanzarote and Málaga by agreement with General Secretary of Prisons and it is funded through yearly income tax grants.

³ Although there are perpetrators programmes for offenders in custody (those sentenced to more than 2 years and a day of imprisonment), we work only with those sentenced to penalties up to 2 years of imprisonment (who usually never goes to prison if it is the first crime).

⁴ A good indicator of this is that the PRIA requires a qualified psychologist to implement the programme, but it is not a requirement that professionals are trained on gender issues and GBV. Please, note that Aspacía's policy is to hire only professionals trained in GBV and gender issues.

⁵ Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing, China 4-15 September 1995, New York, p. 49.

viewed, but no training group has started yet. In the article, we describe the planned content and structure of the perpetrator programme, TONI, and steps to implement it.

2. Institutional context of the planned programme

One of the first steps was to recruit facilitators who will carry out the training. Experienced counselors, one male and one female, were hired and attended a training led by a well-known expert in the field, Roland Hertel, from the Federal Association of Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Germany ("Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Täterarbeit"- BAG). BAG is a network that applies a pro-feminist and victim-centered approach and cooperates closely with feminist women's support services in Germany. Within this cooperation, the association developed common standards for the work with perpetrators.⁴ Our association has been participating in this process for years and felt ready to start the practical experience of running a programme for perpetrators.

Basic funding for setting up the programme is provided by a programme of the Federal Ministry of Justice. Work with perpetrators is performed in a location separate from the venue where the counseling of women takes place, in order to ensure a safe environment for women survivors of violence.

3. Basic objectives and principles in the work with perpetrators of intimate partner violence

The ultimate aim of any intervention against domestic violence is to stop violent behaviour. The aim of targeting perpetrators is to further challenge the attitudes justifying violence and to build their skills in dealing with conflicts in a non-violent way. The training should allow them to adopt violence-free behaviour, which eventually should lead to a complete cessation of violence. Because of its focus on changing violent behavior and actions, TONI is called a "crime-oriented" (not "perpetrator-oriented") programme. Addressing violence serves as a clarification of social standards: conflicts and arguments occur in every partnership or family, but violence is never an acceptable reaction and it is a punishable crime.

We apply an integrated approach, which requires continuous cooperation and networking between the perpetrator-oriented measures and the support programme for victims. In our county, this requires a close cooperation between colleagues working in the perpetrator programme and those active in the women's counseling center.

TONI's aims are, as stated, to eradicate all acts of physical, psychological, and emotional violence in the behavior of perpetrators and to teach non-violent behavior based on equal partnership. For women and children who are victims, support, safety, and empowerment are the priorities. The programme should also contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of victims, including children, and also of perpetrators.

4. Structure and setting

The programme has an open group setting, which can take in new participants at certain times. The groups are facilitated by one male and one female counselor and apply a structured programme consisting of a modular system. The group

WORKING WITH PERPETRATORS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN – THE EXAMPLE OF "TONI"¹

by Andrea Stolte and Ulrike Janz, Germany

1. Introduction

A women's shelter has been operating in the county of Ennepe-Ruhr-Kreis (EN-county), a rural area in the western part of Germany, since 1992 and a counseling center for women, since 1996. Both institutions are projects operated by the non-profit association "Frauen helfen Frauen e.V." (Women helping Women).² The services are mainly funded by the county, the province, and other donors.

While the scope of the services offered for women and children by the counseling center have been extended constantly in the course of time, and considering the longstanding expertise the organization has on the issue, it has also become important to address perpetrators of violence, with the aim of improving the safety of victims.³ Working with perpetrators was seen as a necessary step towards the integrated approach against domestic violence the women's counseling center was striving to achieve, and thus the organization decided to set up and supervise a project to work with perpetrators.

The set up for the perpetrator programme began in winter 2012 and preparations were carried out. It turned out, however, that it is not an easy task to get violent men to participate in the programme. If they come on a voluntary basis, their motivation is not sufficient to actually attend the programme. On the other hand, referrals by the justices system or other institutions are scarce. This is the reason why until now, several men who are interested in the programme have been inter-



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will consist of eight to ten participants who have to attend 26 weekly sessions. The course will usually last six months, but may be extended for one to two months due to absences for holidays, illness, or work. Group cohesion is important and thus during the first three months, new members may not join. After three months, the group will open to new members and then close again. Every group member is required to complete all training modules. As a result, at any given time, participants may be at different phases in the programme, and this should allow them to support each other during the training and also beyond.

Every participant will have to pay at least a minimal fee based on his income.

Admission

There are several pathways for admission to the project:

- Judicial or prosecution order
- Youth welfare service order
- Referral by the police
- Referral by other institutions and organizations
- Volunteer participation

The programme involves the following phases:

- Clearing phase
- Group training,
- Final diagnostic
- Follow up

The clearing phase starts after the first interview and consists of three to five one-on-one sessions. It involves a process of assessing the eligibility of the candidate. After the assessment, candidates are either admitted to the programme or referred to other institutions for individual counseling or therapy.



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After the intake, the series of 26 training sessions will start. At the end of the programme, an evaluation will be carried out in the form of a final diagnostic procedure. The programme will also offer a follow-up after three months in the form of four additional group sessions.

5. Support programme for women survivors of violence

Support for women victims of violence, the partner or the ex-partners of the perpetrators, is an integral part of the programme. The women’s counseling center provides this support and offers the following services:

Any time a perpetrator is admitted to the programme, the women’s counseling center is informed. A counselor contacts the woman as quickly as possible and offers support. Information is provided about the content, aims and limits of the perpetrator programme. The woman is then invited to a personal talk and receives information about legal measures for safety and the possibility of an individual safety planning. Her needs are assessed and if she wishes, she can be referred to another service, such as a women’s shelter or a clinic.

It is of central importance, that the woman is informed promptly if the participant drops out of the programme or talks about committing violence in the group sessions.

Additional support is available for women survivors of violence in the form of individual counseling and group support. Safety planning and support concerning the children involved are also offered.

It is important to mention that the offer of support for the partners or ex-partners is voluntary and free of charge, and that the support continues even after the programme for the perpetrator has ended.

6. Challenges and conclusions

As stated in the beginning, the work on setting up and implementing the programme started in the winter of 2012. The start was accompanied by public relations activities such as the dissemination of flyers, writing of articles, in order to spread the word about the new measure.

The programme received a lot of attention from the very start, but we had to learn – not unexpectedly – that there are substantial challenges to overcome. Professionals such as judges, prosecutors, or children protection authorities, are not easily convinced that perpetrators should be mandated to take part in an anti-violence training programme and that this is a useful measure to prevent violence. As far as the voluntary participation is concerned, starting a group turns out to be more difficult than expected because while many show an interest in the programme, most perpetrators prefer to avoid the effort involved in participating in a long process and do not show up any more after the first interview.

Despite all these challenges, an important start has been made and a first group is now planned for the end of 2014. A number of men got interviewed by the TONI-Team as a first step in the process. We are convinced that TONI will eventually become a vital part of our integrated approach to intervention against intimate partner violence.

¹ German acronym for “Tat- orientierte Intervention” – crime-oriented intervention.

² The association has been founded in the 1980s as part of the feminist movement. In 2004, “GESINE – Netzwerk Gesundheit” (Network Violence & Health) working on the health consequences of intimate partner violence, became the 3rd „branch” of the association. GESINE is also a Wave-Focal Point. Meanwhile, the women counseling centre offers its services in three (of nine) towns in the county and has become a competence center for domestic violence/intimate partner violence.

³ The terms “victim” and “survivors” are used interchangeably.

⁴ Standards for perpetrator programmes in Germany see: http://www.bag-taeterarbeit.de/images/pdf/BAG-THG-Standards_english_V.pdf.

A FEMINIST APPROACH TO PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES IN IRELAND – EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED

by Don Hennessey, Ireland

In the context of my work in a relationship-counseling agency, I founded together with a group of colleagues, the only project in the British Isles where the team worked with both the perpetrators of violence and their targets. Called the Cork Domestic Violence project, we worked with groups of men and women each year from 1992 to 2000. We gradually realized that our efforts were ineffective and sometimes even dangerous. The project was terminated and some of my colleagues and I subsequently set up a pilot project in Dublin in 2002. This project was integrated within the criminal justice system and supported by the Department of Justice, the Gardaí (police) and Women’s Aid. Over four years the project developed an integrated approach to intimate abuse, which fitted elegantly into the Irish judicial system. The measure of success of the project was that every client took full advantage of the legal system and none of our cases were dropped. The Depart-

ment of Justice set up its own project in 2007 and stymied all our recommendations.

The following article is based on my experience of working publically with perpetrators (in groups) during both of the above projects and also my one-to-one work with intimate abusers in the counseling agency.

If we are to intervene with an abuser we must psychologically define who the abuser is. Until our understanding is clear that male intimate abusers are terrorists who rule by fear, liars who continually hide their real intentions and narcissists who are concerned with their own image, we will be repeatedly conned into colluding with them. We need to acknowledge and reveal the covert tactics used by all male intimate abusers. Men who are skilled intimate abusers work to establish their entitlements without the women or the community being aware of their methods. The abuser wants us to believe that he is both responsible and anxious. I have not encountered any intervention where the man is challenged about his motivation, which I define as entitlement and lust. I am also unaware of interventions where the goal of sexual priority is recognized. The intimate abuser wants to deny his partner any sexual autonomy.

If the goal of any intervention is the safety of women and children then we need to expose and challenge the covert brainwashing that the men use. This mind control is made easier by the intimacy of the relationship and the woman’s belief that if she reveals her thoughts and feelings she will eventually gain a sympathetic response. While her abuser appears to ignore or misunderstand her revelations he stores up the information and uses it to manipulate her thinking.

It is also essential that all professionals involved are held accountable to each abused woman. It is our inadequate response that makes male intimate abuse the most recidivist crime.

I would like to draw attention to some of the practices, which have been refined through my work over the last twenty years. I would also like to emphasize that my understanding remains incomplete and I would invite others to help me to develop my prognosis.

1. The woman’s experience

The common traits of abused women that I have worked with (over 2,000) are that these women are kind and loyal. The women see themselves as being to blame for the difficulties as though their inadequacies or their sensitivities were the cause of their suffering. They apologize for their role in the relationship and tend to excuse and pity their abusers.

Women in long-term abusive relationships blame themselves when they are first assaulted and men in these relationships know this will happen before they commit the crime. This is the outcome of the covert tactics of every male abuser.

2. Diagnose the problem

Male intimate abuse is the criminal destruction of another human being by which the man reduces the woman to a sexual



object. The process by which this is achieved is hidden from the woman and from the community. The goal of removing her sexual integrity is promoted by some cultures and tolerated by others.

Ambivalence to female sexual integrity is the foundation of women's intimate abuse.

3. Define the abuser

The man in a long-term intimate abusive relationship uses two principle traits in order for him to establish and maintain control over his partner. The man is a terrorist and a liar. As a psychopath he rules by fear and fails to acknowledge the suffering of the woman. As a sociopath he is constantly lying to her and to us. His lies are designed to enhance his image and to shift responsibility.

The ability to assess and challenge the covert tactics of the abuser is essential for any project which wants to intervene with him.

4. Covert tactics

In my experience, intimate male abusers set up the terms and conditions which define the relationship. They groom the woman and anyone who tries to interfere in the relationship.

5. Motivation and Goal

A male intimate abuser is motivated by lust and entitlement which is fed by arrogance and repeated success. His goal is sexual priority within the relationship and the denial of the woman's right to sexual integrity. All his tactics and all his excuses are designed to keep his real intentions hidden. Therapy programmes are ambivalent about male sexual priority.

6. Brainwashing

By his constant listening to her thoughts and his monitored manipulation, every successful male intimate abuser contaminates the woman's instinct and directs her into pointless analysis. I have labeled these men 'psychophiles' as they befriend the spirit of the woman.

Therapy programmes do not acknowledge his brainwashing.

7. Accountability

Professionals who wish to intervene with male intimate abuse must be accountable to each individual woman that they serve. This accountability extends far beyond 'partner contact' and places each agency with the responsibility of preventing further abuse.

Therapy programmes cannot begin until the woman is safe.

The intense intimate abuse project that we ran over ten years from 1990 to 2000 was unique in that all the team worked with both the perpetrators and their victims. We realized that the men were learning new ways of control from each other and the women were living in false hope. Any man who

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stopped being violent did so because of an agreed sanction and not because of our therapy. **We were accountable to the woman and she could decide if the man continued to attend the group.** This accountability is essential if any project is to avoid being groomed by the perpetrator.

When we realized that our work was failing, that our attempts to access the man's integrity were being frustrated by his lies, we used our time with them to study how they achieved the mind control necessary for the relationship to survive.

The use of sanctions and the development of therapies which challenge the man's entitlement and our tolerance may improve the effectiveness of male treatment programmes. **But a feminist perspective must prioritize women's safety.**

In order to hold both projects accountable to each client and to abused women as a class we set up a representative group of women's aid, refuge groups, support workers and social workers who reviewed all our policies and vetted any changes that we were considering in our policy and our procedures. I also worked with Women's Aid and other groups in Northern Ireland where the legal response is different. The most useful task was to continually review our procedures so as to maximise victim safety. This process prohibited us from ever viewing the abuser as a client.

Even when we engage with the psychophile we must keep the woman as our client and remain accountable to her. The therapy programmes that see the man as the client will be conned into minimizing the risk and tolerating the known abuse.

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