

**‘A FIGHT ABOUT NOTHING’:
CONSTRUCTIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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September 2004

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ABSTRACT

The ways in which men negotiate contradictory discourses to accommodate their domestic violence into their sense of self forms the focus of this thesis. The sixty-six men interviewed for this thesis had attended a twelve-week group in an attempt to stop their violence. Forty-two of their women partners also agreed to be interviewed. Overall two hundred and fifty-nine interviews were conducted with these men and their women partners. The men were found to draw on various competing discourses in their constructions of themselves. One of the sources was the print media. A content analysis of newspaper articles over a period of twenty years revealed that popular representations of domestic violence have increased over time and have privileged physical forms of violence. Representations of the perpetrator of domestic violence featured hegemonic forms of masculinity, emphasising the physicality of men's bodies. Although the men interviewed here had agreed to attend a professional course for violent perpetrators, they were selective in which professional discourses they used to explain their own violence. The thesis outlines legal, medical and human services discourses, focusing on selected interventions, and identifies weaknesses such as the use of prescriptive definitions of domestic violence and the reliance on women to report on their own and their partner's feelings and behaviours. Finally, women's and men's own representations of their experiences revealed that the domestic relationship is a complex entity – where contradictory scripts for masculinity and femininity are acted out.

Feminist and masculinity theories of power and subjectivity are coupled with Foucauldian thought to provide a theoretical framework capable of untangling the contradictory issues expressed in these discursive spaces. A key contradiction occurs between an aspect of the male gender role discourse in which men are expected to 'look out for number one', which requires enacting high levels of self-control and control-over others. This is juxtaposed with the desire for men to exercise non-violent forms of control and an ethic of care for others as well as themselves. Even though women are often identified as the caregivers in the family, a significant finding of this thesis was that violent men work relentlessly to construct themselves as the ethical partner.

DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Michelle Jones

Date:

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated in memory of my popa, Albert Richard Jones (1911 - 1996). My popa worked as Chaplain and social worker in Yatala Labour Prison. He taught me the importance of living a passionate life committed to social justice. My thesis journey was beginning as my popa's life journey was ending.

As my thesis journey was ending, my daughter's life journey was beginning and so this thesis is also dedicated to my daughter Audrey Iris Beasley Jones (2004 -). May she live a life free from violence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First I must thank the men and particularly the women who voluntarily shared their time and experiences with me. Their courage to do so sustained my desire for their voices to be heard.

Thanks to Dr Margie Ripper, my supervisor. I have appreciated the time and support provided to me over the years. Margie's encouragement has been unwavering and without it my involvement in and completion of this project would not have eventuated. I particularly valued her ability to help in the conceptual development of the thesis and thank her for introducing me to the world of Michel Foucault.

Thanks to Professor Chilla Bulbeck who came on board as a supervisor toward the end of my thesis journey. She helped me pull together a series of somewhat disparate chapters into a thesis. Chilla's critical feedback and timely responses helped maintain my momentum and bring closure to this project.

Thanks to a series of colleagues and friends that have provided support throughout the years and have helped me by reading drafts of chapters. Dr Francine Pinnuck provided encouragement in the early stages. Dr Fiona Verity provided enthusiasm and an example that it was possible to engage in paid work and complete a thesis. Dr Shannon Dowling provided emotional support, encouragement, humour, morale and advocacy. Many thanks also to Dr Cally Guerin for her editing skill and expertise.

Thanks to Belinda Lines, Kylie Heneker and Angella Duvnjak for our feminist and social work discussions and netball games to release the thesis tension. Thanks also to Jane Sleath, Nikki Bishop, Caroline Ward and Sarah Hill for providing many distractions, procrastination options and space within our friendships to fit a PhD thesis.

Thanks to my family. My father, David Jones and my sister, Anne Gray and her family – Dave, Ben and Sam - thanks for reminding me that I needed to finish the thesis. To my mother, Pam Jones, for whom my respect has increased over the years, I thank you for your love and support. Special thanks to Cousin Dave Harvey for financial, computer, thesaurus, emotional and technical support throughout the thesis project.

To my life partner Campbell Flower, thanks for your patience, your willingness to do both emotional and domestic labour within our relationship, your support for my dreams and goals, and most of all, thanks for believing in me. You have also helped me to keep my faith in the ‘good’ of men.

INTRODUCTION

Sarah read from Patrick's diary:

'July 10 1995 - Sarah and I had a fight about nothing'. [She recalls thinking] 'How could Patrick call that nothing? Like trying to strangle me, how could he call that, nothing?'
A211F¹

This eloquent albeit brief statement from Sarah lays bare the very different and gendered interpretations of the one incident – for Patrick the fight was described as 'nothing', whilst for Sarah it was a near-death experience. This statement reveals the dangers and risks to women's lives within heterosexual domestic interactions. Further to this, it reveals how subjective experience has the capacity to shape and be shaped by language, thus enlisting poststructural theoretical understandings of discourse, power and the subject. This thesis examines the various discourses that men draw upon as they participate in or subvert the construction of themselves as violent subjects. This thesis therefore contributes to feminist and pro-feminist scholarship on men's violences².

Understandings of domestic violence have primarily been informed by women's voices, such that women have been used to tell not only their own story but also as informants about men's experiences. Professionals intervening in domestic violence have also had a role in providing insights into how domestic violence is experienced and understood. However relying on women and professional narratives has left a gap in the understanding of men's experiences of themselves as violent. Knowledge about how men understand themselves as violent subjects will provide an alternative picture, enabling new

¹ The coding system used with the interview material maintains the couples' confidentiality. It allows for the tracking of the three interviews (pre, post and 18 month follow-up), the group attended, the couple number and whether it is the male or female interviewee's data.

understandings of this social problem. This thesis provides a space for men's narratives about their relationships, their use of violence and the meanings they attribute to it. In doing this I have adopted a view of the subject which recognises the multiple and competing discourses available to the man in his construction of self. This thesis is therefore an analysis of some of the competing discourses which inform the construction of the male perpetrator of domestic violence. In gaining insights into alternative ways of understanding the male perpetrator, our knowledge about this social problem will be augmented, which will in turn affect the ways we may choose to intervene.

SECTION 1: Thesis Locale

Feminist Virginia Woolf wrote that 'women do not write books about men' (1977, p. 28) and as a feminist I have surprised myself in writing a thesis about men. But this thesis is not just about men: it is about men's relationships with themselves and also with women. I have personal, political and theoretical motivations for conducting this research. As the feminist mantra claims: 'the personal is political'. I have a personal commitment to social justice, feminism and non-violence. My decision to become a social worker was political; I want to challenge oppression and bring about social change through non-violent means. As a social worker I have worked in the field of gendered violence, specifically with victims of rape and sexual assault. In this crisis work I have borne witness to the emotional and physical costs to women (and men) of men's violence. My social work practice has complemented my research interests in gendered violence.

² I, like masculinity theorist Jeff Hearn (1998), use the term 'men's violence' as a means of attributing the violence and responsibility for it to men. This term also recognises the many and varied strategies and tactics of physical violence, manipulation and control – the plurality of men's violence.

My involvement as interviewer and PhD candidate in an evaluation project titled 'Domestic Violence: What difference do men's groups make?' has been central to my research direction. This evaluation project was a longitudinal qualitative and quantitative study of the effectiveness of men's groups. The intervention under investigation in the evaluation is men's groups, a series of twelve-week programs run in Adelaide in 1996 for 'men who are troubled by their violence'³. These men's groups proved to be a site wherein men's violent subjectivities were challenged. The group leaders worked with the men for two and a half hours per week (for twelve-weeks) to encourage the men to acknowledge, take responsibility for and change their violent behaviours. The group environment aimed to be a productive site where the men were engaged in changing and making sense of themselves and their violence. My research focus developed from my involvement in this project and I draw on the interviews I conducted with men and their women partners.

In the past feminist practitioners and researchers, when responding to domestic violence, have usually centred on women's experiences as the focus of their interventions. As a means of shifting responsibility for the violence back to men, men's groups have been established with the aim of preventing and changing men's violent behaviours (Baum et al. 1987, p. 175). Men's groups were first funded by the State government in South Australia in 1983. In the late eighties and early nineties, the efficacy and outcomes of the groups was increasingly questioned, predominantly by feminist and pro-feminist community workers. Some of the common misgivings about the groups included: the detracting of funding from women-centred services; that men learn new 'tricks'; men only change in the short term; men's violence, which in other contexts would be considered criminal assault, is trivialised; men may attend the group but do not really change nor are

³This term has been taken from a Community Health Centre flyer advertising the men's groups.

they capable of change. As the following quotations demonstrate, a climate of uneasiness and suspicion emerged in response to the men's groups – 'the programmes would seem to be leading the women into a trap' and 'programmes for women are arguably a more efficient and productive use of resources than for men' (McFerran 1989, p. 4). Such criticisms extended to suggestions that men's groups were accessing funds that should have been directed to women victims of domestic violence (Summers 2003, p. 98). The main cause for concern was the efficacy of the groups. Questions were raised such as 'Can violent men change?' (McFerran 1989, p. 4); 'Is it appropriate to psychologise and pathologise violence rather than sending violent men to prison or be dealt with through the criminal justice system rather than counseling system?' (Frances 1992, p. 11); and 'Do they work?' (Laing 2000, p. 10). Contributing further toward this climate of uneasiness about the men's groups, the Howard Federal Government has continued to prioritise funding to the groups. The continuing animosity about this direction of resources is evidenced in the following quotation:

The federal government in recent years has favoured a so-called 'perpetrator approach', funding programs to *try* to treat male offenders. 'Working with men' was one of the priorities of PADV2 [Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Stage 2⁴]. ... It is of course highly desirable that perpetrators change their ways but it is no good taking a naïve and simplistic approach to behaviour which is often ingrained and unaccompanied by remorse.

Summers 2003, p. 98

The groups were framed within the discourse of prevention which was valorised at the time over 'reactive' or 'bandaid' service responses which were regarded as not reaching the heart of the problem: men's behaviour. The political reality was that the so-called 'reactive' services were mostly women-centred crisis management services, such as women's refuges. In the public and policy debates the shelter services were increasingly

described as having ‘failed’ to address the problem (that is, stopping men’s violence), and hence were said to be focused on the symptom and not the cause. The shift of resources to men’s groups was hotly contested. These questions reflect a debate or dilemma identified by feminist practitioners working with the results of men’s violence and forms part of the context within which my research has arisen.

The question ‘do the men’s groups work?’ is not the central question of this thesis; however, it does form part of the direction for the thesis. Evaluations of the men’s groups have been undertaken to assess their usefulness as an intervention. The evaluation process of these groups provides many methodological challenges and has come under much criticism (Tolman and Bennett 1990; Gondolf 1993; Frances 1994; Tolman and Edleson 1995; Russell and Jory 1997; Keys Young 1999; Laing 2002). The challenges to the process have included questions about the measures of success – for example, is success a reduction or is it the total cessation of men’s physical violence, or does success require an increase in women’s physical and emotional safety (Gondolf 1993, p.6; Laing 2002, p.9). Other methodological concerns include: the reliance on self report or partner reports or police records alone; a focus on completers, high drop-out rates in the group; short term follow-up; and lack of control groups (Keys Young 1999). So while I do not directly answer this question with a definitive yes/no response, my research indicates some helpful and/or unhelpful aspects in the delivery of the men’s groups, which in turn may contribute to their ongoing development and direction.

A further contextual influence on my research is the so-called ‘crisis in masculinity’. That masculinity is seen to be in crisis suggests an opportune time for this research, as points of

⁴ Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (1997-2000) is a funding initiative recommended by the domestic violence summit in 1997 and established by the Howard Government. The second stage extended funding from 2000-2003 (and subsequently June 2004).

crisis often provide opportunities for change and re-negotiation. The focal point of the crisis is the questioning and confusion about the true nature of manhood which is said to be occurring worldwide, particularly within western societies such as America, Canada and Australia (Kimmel and Kaufman 1994, p. 261). Several structural factors have been identified in popular discussion as the root causes for the crisis, including: the changing nature of labour and the workforce reducing men's economic autonomy; the rise of the women's movement; the rise of the gay and lesbian movements; and the civil rights movement. Pro-feminist masculinity theorists Kimmel and Kaufman (1994, pp. 261-262) argue that these factors have resulted in challenges to class, gender, race and heterosexist assumptions about societal and personal power. These changes have the capacity to influence relationships at all levels, such as global, state, familial and inter-personal (Connell 1995, p. 86). Sociologist Robert Connell (1995, p. 84) prefers to talk about a crisis in 'the gender order' rather than a crisis in masculinity per se; he argues that masculinity is a configuration of practices within a system of gender relations and hence both men and women are engaged in the construction of the gender order. As a result of the questioning of the nature of manhood, multiple (and often competing) masculinities have been identified within the gender order, rather than presuming there is a singular or true masculine nature. There are, however, dominant forms of the performance of masculinity which reproduce heteronormativity, as well as hierarchies of race, culture and sexuality.

In this thesis I examine how male perpetrators of domestic violence attempt to achieve a view of themselves which accommodates their violence. In doing this I also examine the extent to which women who are targets of the violence accommodate the violence in their view of the male perpetrator and/or themselves. To undertake this examination I explore the influences on and ways in which perpetrators of domestic violence construct their own

identity and subjectivity. As mentioned above, I adopt a poststructural understanding of the subject which acknowledges multiplicity, rather than the view of one true or essential identity. To gain an understanding of the influences on this self construction, I examine the multiple and competing discourses made available to the male perpetrator. This thesis is therefore an analysis of the competing discourses which inform the construction of the male perpetrator of domestic violence. Philosophical theories from Michel Foucault have been used to explore these discourses and provide insights into power relations within the domestic relationship. A tri-partite examination of discourses is undertaken in this thesis which includes public, professional and private discursive spaces.

This discussion of the construction of the male perpetrator of domestic violence in Australia is uniquely located. Research of a similar type has been conducted in both the United Kingdom (Hearn 1998) and the United States (Anderson and Umberson 2001). This study stands apart in that multiple discourses (public, professional and private) have been examined to provide greater breadth and also to locate masculinities within the Australian cultural context. Masculinities have been studied within Australia (Jenkins 1990; Connell 1987, 1995, 2000, 2002; Pease 2000a, 2000b) and violent masculinities have formed part of these studies. However, the series of in-depth interviews with perpetrators of domestic violence which form the basis of this study has provided a unique site for the examination of violent masculinities within the domestic space.

A central objective of this thesis is to contribute to how the male perpetrator of domestic violence is understood and understands himself in an attempt to eliminate men's violence against their intimate women partners. Hence this research is political in nature. While there are male victims of domestic violence (where the perpetrator is either male or female), the vast majority of victims of domestic violence are female (Ferrante et al. 1996,

p 121; Taft, Hegarty and Flood 2001, p. 500). In this thesis I unapologetically focus on the male perpetrator of domestic violence within the heterosexual relationship.

Throughout the thesis I have interchanged my use of the terms ‘men’s violence’ and ‘domestic violence’. However, I do acknowledge that the term men’s violence has much greater scope because it refers to men’s violence toward not only their female intimate partners but toward other men (intimate or not), children and themselves. In this thesis, unless otherwise stated, my use of the term men’s violence refers specifically to men’s violence toward their intimate female partner.

In this research my political goals are also to contribute to the emancipation of women and men from limiting notions of a singular or ‘true’ identity as ‘victim’ or ‘perpetrator’ respectively. In the field of domestic violence, positioning the woman as ‘victim’ has subsumed the woman’s identity, presenting a singular and stereotypical identity. This singular identity has provided limits to her agency in that she is considered to be weak, unable to fight back and powerless. Researchers working with women victims of domestic violence have found that women reject this identity and alternatively accept notions of ‘survivor’ or ‘strong woman’ (Power 1998). In contrast, the notion of a singular identity has provided men with a form of protection against allegations of being a perpetrator. By protection I mean that men have been able to claim a singular public identity which has the effect of disqualifying their private persona. To adopt the notion of multiple subjectivities would result in the men being able to be both upstanding citizens in public relationships, and violent and abusive in private relationships. This in turn could possibly enable men to take responsibility for their ‘private’ violence without losing other positive aspects of their self. Within my research I use aspects of the theoretical work of French

philosopher Michel Foucault in conjunction with poststructural feminist thought to examine subjectivity and domestic violence discourses and practices. This union of perspectives could be considered tenuous at best; however, my thesis explores the value of this combination of theoretical approaches to the study of domestic violence, in particular the multifarious subject.

As mentioned above, this thesis is unashamedly political in nature. I have made political decisions about which interviews and articles best portray the themes that I identified, which methodologies to use and how the thesis is structured. While this research has emancipatory ideals, I do not presume to seek nor to have discovered the solution or to the problem of domestic violence. Nor does this thesis end with a set of tabulated recommendations and ideas for how we should define, intervene or respond to domestic violence. Nevertheless, I do hope that seeking insights into how perpetrators construct themselves provides a greater understanding of the complexity of this social problem and alternative interventions and practices.

SECTION 2: Thesis Structure and Chapter Overview

To undertake this analysis I have identified several discursive domains or ‘spaces’ within which the male perpetrator is active in negotiating the self as violent. These spaces were identified following interviews with male perpetrators of domestic violence. The metaphor of differing discursive spaces will provide a structure for my analysis of the men’s engagement with each discourse. Whilst this idea of space provides a structure for the thesis, it is important to acknowledge that these discursive domains are not finite spaces with boundaries, hence there are likely to be many intersections and cross overs

within and between these constructed spaces or domains. There are, therefore, a number of differing discourses and debates that this thesis brings together.

In chapter one I provide an overview of the theoretical and methodological tools used throughout the thesis. I employ an approach which adopts aspects of feminist theory and pro-feminist thought combined with a Foucauldian analysis of power, discourse and subjectivity. This results in the adoption of a precariously balanced form of poststructural feminism. The second section of this chapter focuses on the methodological tools. As this thesis is an examination of how men make sense of their violence, my methodology combines feminist approaches with some aspects of grounded theory within an interpretive framework. A feminist multi-methods approach is used which combines three qualitative research methods, including content analysis of media articles, interviewing men and women, and a close reading of professional documents which utilises Foucault's notion of *hypomnemata*.

Chapter two begins by classifying domestic violence interventions in terms of their underlying theories of what causes domestic violence. This first section provides the groundwork for the discursive analysis of domestic violence and the perpetrator throughout the thesis. The second section of chapter two provides a history of the constructions of domestic violence using results from a content analysis of the coverage of domestic violence across two decades in the South Australian newspaper *The Advertiser*. This chapter provides an insight into the changes in feminist actions and political positioning of domestic violence as a social issue within South Australia and Australia since the mid 1970s.

In chapter three I address the second discursive space, that of professional discourses. I use Foucault's concepts of knowledge/power and bio-power to explore the interplay between several professions' definitions of domestic violence. An examination of definitions of domestic violence used within select professional discourses – medical, legal, feminist and human services – allows me to distinguish how each profession understands domestic violence. Foucault's concept of bio-power is utilised to expose the effects of these definitions. Chapter four continues the investigation into professional engagement with domestic violence and moves to examine the interventions that professional groups undertake to stop domestic violence. Specific medical interventions, including preventative screening strategies and the use of psychotropic medication, are analysed, as are interventions used by human service practitioners such as 'the cycle of violence' and 'time out'. This process of critical reflection on professional interventions and conventions of practice utilises the method of *hypomnemata* in conjunction with the interview data.

In chapter five, which I have titled 'Relationship Spaces', the environment, both physical and emotional, of the domestic relationship is examined. Foucault's concepts of surveillance, discipline and normalisation are used to develop an analysis of the male perpetrator of violence. Gendered power provides another lens through which the complexity of the domestic relationship is understood. Women's experiences of violence and living with their violent male partner are used within this analysis.

Chapter six examines representations of the male perpetrator of domestic violence within popular culture and public discourses. I extend my content analysis of representations of domestic violence in *The Advertiser* to analyse representations of the male perpetrator specifically. This public discourse is used in conjunction with interview material to

provide insights into the way in which a man comes to understand his violence. Masculinity theories and theories of the body and subjectivity are used to explore the dominant constructions of the male perpetrator.

In chapter seven I draw on the interviews with men to provide an insight into men's constructions of themselves. Issues of self-control and the control of others are central to these men's self-understandings and their understanding of their relations with other family members (both partner and children). Foucault's notion of 'care of the self' and feminists' analyses of an ethics of care for others and emotional labour are used to explore the concepts of control within the home. The rather complex and contradictory picture of the male perpetrator that is produced supports Foucault's notions of multiple and contradictory subjectivities.

The conclusion summarises the outcomes of my research and I reflect on the way this thesis extends feminist knowledge about domestic violence, which in turn has the capacity to extend practice in this field.

CHAPTER 1

Theoretical and Methodological Tools

In the following quotation Foucault gives permission for others to use his work in an attempt to challenge and transform power relations:

all my books ... are, if you like, little tool boxes. If people want to open them, to use this sentence or that idea as a screwdriver or spanner to short-circuit, discredit or smash systems of power, including eventually those from which my books have emerged ... so much the better!

Foucault 1975, p. 16 cited in Patton 1979, p. 115

As many other authors have done and as Foucault suggests, I intend to use his life works as a tool box, to push, pull, stretch and bend his work to further the study of subjectivity and power relations. I will use Foucault's ideas in conjunction with feminist thought and masculinity theory to explore and challenge power relations within the domestic relationship.

SECTION 1: Theoretical Tools

Attendance at men's groups provides a site where perpetrators of domestic violence engage in the active creation of themselves as subjects. During interviews with men who participated in these groups, many claimed rationality during their violence, while others claimed that their violence resulted from irrationality. An understanding of the self is central to this thesis because it provides a backdrop for the exploration of the subjective experience of perpetrators of domestic violence. The men's groups provide but one location for the formation of subjectivity of the male perpetrator; there are many other discourses which impact on the formation of subjectivity of male perpetrators. To provide a wider contextual examination of subjectivity, several of these competing discourses are

pursued within this thesis. These discourses include: rational medico-legal discourses deriving from the Enlightenment; feminist theories which have informed how domestic violence is understood and responded to; masculinities theories which explain male resistance to feminist discourses; and ideas from poststructural theory which provide a framework for a complex picture of the male perpetrators' negotiations of these competing discourses.

The Subject

Contemporary understandings of the self rely on ideas laid down during the Enlightenment and refined through the period of classic liberal humanism. In this period, political philosopher John Stuart Mill defines the individual by the dictum 'over himself [sic], over his [sic] own body and mind, the individual is sovereign' (Mill (1859) 1989, p. 13). This statement suggests that the individual has complete control over his own mind and body and that they are discrete and controllable entities. Mill's ideas also encompass belief in a stable, coherent rational self, guided by conscious thought which is relatively stable and known by ourselves (Johnson 2000). Notions of the modern self are supported by ideas of self-control, independence, self-reliance and self-regulation. Feminist philosopher Chris Weedon (1997, p. 76) suggests that as rational individuals we learn that we should be 'non-contradictory and in control of the meaning of our lives'. She argues that classic liberal humanism suggests that each person has a unique essence and that the dominant version of selfhood is rational consciousness.

Psychologist Kenneth Gergen (1991) identifies two models of the modern self which operate simultaneously within the western world. The first model has its origins in the Romantic period where the self is taken to have psychical depths. The second model is based upon scientific investigation, where an essential truth about the mind and body is

assumed. The science-based model has involved measuring, observing and examining the limits of the human mind and body (Gergen 1991). This has resulted in an acceptance that the body can be known and the individual understood. Medical and psychiatric examinations have found the body and mind to be transparent, readable and open to improvement.

In contrast, poststructural constructions of the self have recognised that not all of the individual's features derive from essential biological or psychological characteristics, nor is the individual an autonomous and rational subject. Rather, as Suzanne Hatty (2000, p. 27) suggests, a poststructural analysis of the self recognises the self as constantly evolving, in a 'continuous state of construction and reconstruction'. This notion of the subject will be developed further later in this chapter. First, feminists' understandings and critiques of the subject will be explored briefly.

Feminisms and the Subject

There are many differing feminisms, possibly their only shared characteristic is the recognition of the oppression of women. Margaret McLaren (1997, p. 119) recognises the impossibility of capturing all the various feminist notions of the subject. Early feminist critiques of the Enlightenment subject did not argue for a reconstitution of the notion of subject, but argued against the assumption of the *male* subject (Hekman 1991, p. 46). Most feminisms reject the Enlightenment notion of the subject as disembodied consciousness; McLaren (1997, p.119) notes the importance to feminist theory of the 'embodied subject embedded within a social context'. Critiques of the Enlightenment subject apply to subjects considered to be rational and independent. However, the notion of being free from dependence ignores the social context, neglecting the dependence of men on women and it refuses to allow women to be seen as rational independent subjects

(Gowens 1991, pp. 90-91 cited in Fraser & Gordon 1994, p. 333). In their genealogical study of dependency in the US welfare state, feminist philosophers Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon acknowledge the historical socio-legal, political and economic dependence of the housewife in the industrial era. Fraser and Gordon (1994, p. 331) identify a fourth analytically distinct register of dependence which they term the moral/psychological register, where 'properties once ascribed to social relations came to be posited instead as inherent character traits of individuals or groups'. For example, Fraser and Gordon suggest that men as breadwinners, or economic providers, absorb independence as a fundamental character trait and subsequently women (as nurturers, family caretakers and non-earners) become saturated with dependence. Whilst Fraser and Gordon contest essentialist notions of men and women, second-wave radical feminist writers such as Susan Brownmiller, appeared to endorse it. Brownmiller (1975, pp. 14-15), writing on rape, stated that 'the male ideology of rape [is a] conscious process of intimidation by which *all* men keep *all* women in a state of fear'. Brownmiller identified women's constant fear as a feature of patriarchy. Her essentialist stream of thought suggests that men and women have fundamental natures (Elshtain 1981, pp. 204-228): men are violent rapists and oppressors; and hence women are subjugated victims. Other essentialist radical feminist claims in the field of domestic violence have also unintentionally resulted in a dominant version of women victims being presented as powerless victims with no agency. This view of the subject relies on an Enlightenment understanding whereby the subject is constant, fixed and male.

Various attempts have been made to acknowledge the contextual reality of dependence whilst also acknowledging gender. In *The Sexual Contract*, Carole Pateman (1988, pp. 222-223) critiques the classic contract theorists' assumptions about 'the individual' as independent, possessing political, civil and economic rights. Pateman critiques the Enlightenment 'male' subject using radical feminist ideas. The individual is taken to be

free, where an individual is considered to be everyone – man or woman, black or white. Pateman (1988, p. 223) argues that critics suggest that this notion of an individual is disembodied. She (Pateman 1988, p.223) states: ‘The individual as owner is separated from a body that is of one sex or the other. ... The “individual” is constructed from a male body so that his identity is always masculine’. Hence Pateman suggests that an assumption of an individual’s rights is an assumption of men’s rights. She argues that women are not recognised as subjects with political, social and economic rights. For example, for men to participate fully in civil society, they rely upon women’s participation in the sexual contract and provision of domestic service. To enter a contract one must be considered a free and equal subject; however, women, without this status, are unable to enter legitimately into social contracts such as marriage.

Poststructural feminists have provided different critiques of the Enlightenment subject from those of radical feminists. Contributions from poststructural feminists Chris Weedon and Joan Scott will be developed after my discussion of Foucault’s contributions to the study of the subject, but first I provide a brief outline of masculinity theories.

Masculinities and Male Subjectivities

In response to feminist and gay liberation movements of the 1970s and 1980s, some men, mainly in academia and gay politics, became politicised on gender issues and proceeded to further our understanding of masculinities. Australian sociologist and pro-feminist Robert Connell is renowned for his contributions to the study of masculinities. In *Gender and Power* Connell (1987, p. 184) develops the notion of hegemonic masculinity, based on Gramsci’s analyses of class relations in Italy. In Connell’s use of the term, ‘hegemony’ refers to an ordering of versions of femininity and masculinity at the level of society. ‘Hegemonic masculinity’ is a version of what it is to be a man that is framed in relation to

various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to femininity. Connell (1987, p. 183) observes that ‘the interplay between different sorts of masculinity is an important part of how a patriarchal social order works’. He (Connell 1987, p. 186) identifies heterosexuality as an important feature of hegemonic masculinities. Developing this concept further in *Masculinities*, Connell (1995, p. 81) provides, as he declares, a very ‘sparse framework’ with which to examine masculinities. This involves recognising the complexity of social life and examining the interplay of hegemony, domination/subordination, complicity and marginalisation/authorisation.

Masculinity theorists have entered debates about the contributions of postmodern theories of subjectivity and identity to understanding men. Political scientist David Gutterman (1994) suggests that these theories are useful in both rethinking the cultural values that prevail, and providing a framework for seeking social change through identity politics and coalition politics. In examining male subjectivity Gutterman provides an exploration into what he identifies as two points of resistance to the ‘governing scripts of masculinity’. Like Connell (1995, pp. 120-163), he sees gay male gender identity and profeminist men occupying these points of resistance. Gutterman (1994, p. 231) suggests that profeminist men can utilise the privilege they possess in traversing the ‘normalcy’ of their masculinity (presumably through their heterosexuality, race and class) to ‘gain access’ to other men and then reveal the “rewrites” they have made in the cultural scripts of masculinity’, thereby encouraging men to argue for change in their own lives.

Connell, along with other masculinity theorists such as Jeff Hearn (1998) and Bob Pease (1991, 2000a), looks at relations between masculinities and forms of violence. Connell (2000, p. 213) suggests that links between gender and violence are easy to establish, revealing worldwide patterns: men are more likely to dominate the armed forces in public life, and in private life men are more likely to be charged with homicide (Australian

Institute of Criminology 1995 cited in Connell 2000, p. 214). Whilst recognising the predominance of men in public forms of violence, the focus of this thesis is on private forms of violence, specifically violence against women in the home. Hence violences⁵ form a large part of dominant or hegemonic masculinity, almost providing a governing script for masculinity. Even though men dominate across the whole spectrum of violences, Connell (2000, p. 215) warns against essentialist thought which would suggest that violence is then ‘natural’ for or inherent in all men. He argues that ‘in any cultural setting, violent and aggressive masculinity will rarely be the only form of masculinity present’ (Connell 2000, p. 216), suggesting that there are always alternative forms/scripts available. This notion of multiple subjectivities will be explored further in the next section through an examination of the work of Michel Foucault. It is such links between gender, subjectivity, violence, power and the body that have inspired my interest in profeminist men’s writing.

Foucault and the Subject

Foucault identifies the goal of his twenty years of work as creating a ‘history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects’ (Foucault 1983, p. 208). By virtue of the nature of this examination of the subject, Foucault has studied the workings of power, although he asserts that it has not been his major focus. Foucault identifies two meanings of the word subject – ‘subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge’ (Foucault 1983, p. 212). Both of these notions of the subject are relevant to this study. Foucault refers to the processes in which human beings are made subjects as the objectification of the subject. He identifies three modes of objectification – dividing practices, scientific

⁵ I use the term ‘violences’, the plural of violence, throughout the thesis in an attempt to encapsulate the

classification and subjectification. Dividing practices are identified by Foucault (1983, p. 208) as the means of objectifying the productive subject through a process of division, either within himself or from others. Foucault examines these practices in his studies of the sick, insane and criminals. Scientific classification focuses on the ways in which fields of inquiry (such as the sciences) objectify the subject. For example, Biology and Natural History objectify life (Foucault 1983, p. 208). Foucault's third mode of objectification, 'subjectification', refers to the 'way the human turns him- or herself into a subject' (Foucault 1983, p. 208). This third mode of objectification stands apart from the other two modes, as Foucault examines the processes of self-formation in which the person is an active agent (Rabinow 1991, p. 11). Foucault views the subject as constantly creating him/herself through discourse. Foucault defines discourses as 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault 1995, p. 49). Discourses are not concrete objects that can be analysed in their own right; instead, a discourse is productive in that it constantly produces the objects of its knowledge (Mills 1997, p. 17). Foucault's understanding of discourse suggests that there are a multitude of alternative versions of events made available through language. This means that, surrounding any one object, event or person, there may be a variety of different discourses, each producing a different version of reality, different truth claims and a different way of representing the world (Burr 1995, p. 48).

For Foucault, truth, power and knowledge interplay in the formation of discourses. There are many discourses competing at any one time; the dominant discourse is the one that is considered to be true. The capacity to make claims of truth is in itself demonstrative of sufficient authority to support the effective knowledge claim. Foucault's central investigations were not to discover which discourses functioned as true at any point in history, but to examine the supports through which the discourse became dominant, and

thus believed to be true within that society/era (Mills 1997, p. 19). Discourse, then, is not simply the means by which a human subject, existing prior to the discourse, expresses himself/herself or accomplishes something. Rather, the discursive conditions (rules and criteria) set up specific places or positions which form the subject and in which the subject participates in their own formation. Foucault's concept of discourse is useful to this thesis as it provides a means by which dominant and alternative understandings of domestic violence and the male perpetrator are made possible. For example, dominant discourses include medical or scientific and criminological or legal discourses, while alternative discourses include gender-based studies such as feminist knowledge and masculinity theory.

Foucault understands the subject as fluid and complex, which contrasts with the Enlightenment view of the self as constant and fixed. Like Foucault's recognition that people are active in constructing themselves, my approach within this thesis is constructionist. I actively utilise the information and resources available to me to construct a theory or understanding about perpetrators of domestic violence, including analysis of the discourses available to subjects in self-construction as perpetrators (or not) and to others, such as counsellors and feminists in their construction of the subjects of 'victim' and 'perpetrator' of domestic violence. In doing this, I borrow from a variety of different sources, including Foucault's life works, critiques and summaries of his work, theories on masculinity and feminist literature on domestic violence

The process of self-formation that Foucault writes about in his *History of Sexuality* is shown to occur through a variety of 'operations on [people's] own bodies, on their own souls, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct' (Foucault 1980 'Howison Lectures' cited in Rabinow 1991, p. 11). These operations of self understanding, Paul Rabinow points out, are facilitated by an external authority figure such as a minister or

psychoanalyst (Rabinow 1991). Within the men's group, the group leaders could be said to function as mediators in this process of self-understanding and self-formation. Furthermore, the interviews which I conducted with these men and their female partners provide a further site through which the men actively construct themselves. The research interviews themselves are likely to have had an impact on the men and how they understood their violence. In the interviews, I asked the men to reflect upon not only their actions and behaviour within their relationship, but the effects and impacts that they see the group to have upon their selves and their relationship. This act of reflection in my presence may have encouraged a particular construction of the self or the relationship.

In this thesis I most closely align myself to Foucault's understanding of the self and the creation of the subject rather than a classic liberal humanist perspective. I will now move on to an examination of both poststructural feminist and masculinities understandings of the subject and their relevance to my exploration of the perpetrator of domestic violence.

Poststructural Discourses and the Subject

Feminist historian, Joan Scott (1999, p. 25) recognises the claims of radical feminists that notions of the subject have in the past referred to a particular embodied subject – the male subject – and, as indicated earlier, feminists have demonstrated the inadequacy of this universal representation. Within historical analyses this has resulted in the production of an alternative - 'herstory' - historical accounts that examine the contributions of women to society. Scott (1999, p. 25) insists upon the location of women as historical actors and recognises 'the particularity and specificity of all human subjects'. 'Particularity', she suggests, raises questions about collective identities and about whether it is possible for all actors within groups to be the same and share the same experience. Scott elaborates:

If the group or category 'women' is to be investigated, then gender – the multiple and contradictory meanings attributed to sexual difference – is an important analytic tool. The term 'gender' suggests that relations between the sexes are a primary aspect of social organization (rather than following from, say, economic or demographic pressures); that the terms of male and female identities are in large part culturally determined (not produced by individuals or collectivities entirely on their own); and that differences between the sexes constitute and are constituted by hierarchical social structures.

Scott 1999, p. 25

Here Scott argues for a broader interpretation of the subject to include gender as a key analytical tool.

Chris Weedon, argues for a feminist practice based on poststructural ideas which include the work of Michel Foucault. She suggests that poststructuralism offers feminism a framework for investigating 'why women tolerate social relations which subordinate their interests to those of men and the mechanisms whereby women and men adopt particular discursive positions as representative of their interests' (Weedon 1997, p. 12). Weedon (1997, p. 33) argues that a feminist poststructural understanding of subjectivity views it as 'the product of the society and culture within which we live, feminist poststructuralism insists that forms of subjectivity are produced historically and change with shifts in the wide range of discursive fields which constitute them.' Hence subjectivity is contradictory and shifting.

Feminist philosopher Jana Sawicki (1991, pp. 103-104) supports Foucault's notions of the subject, even though other feminist critics have found Foucault's work to be anti-humanist, rejecting subjectivity and agency. Sawicki (1991, p.103) accepts Foucault's account of the existence of a critical subject in that 'The subject does not control the overall direction of history, but is able to choose among the discourses and practices

available to it and to use them creatively'. Sawicki argues that Foucault's account of the subject does not introduce any complications to feminism that were not already there – feminism is continually caught between appeals to a free subject and an awareness of victimisation. Susan Hekman (1991, p. 60) argues that Foucault's recognition of the indispensable connection between resistance and power is significant to the feminist reconstitution of the subject. The scope for resistance within power relations enables agency for the subject. Adopting this version of subjectivity in the field of domestic violence enables a view of the woman as not just a victim of her partner's violence; she may be victimised (on occasion) within the relationship, but is simultaneously a capable and strong woman, mother, employee/r, sister, daughter and/or wife.

Australian academic and pro-feminist masculinity theorist Bob Pease (2000b) also relies on a poststructural understanding of the subject to suggest that pro-feminist men selectively take various discourses and subject positions, whilst at the same time resisting or rejecting other dominant discourses of masculinity. Pease utilises a Foucauldian analysis of the subject to describe the men he suggests are 'pro-feminist'; adding that they are men who can 'reconstitute themselves through a self conscious and critically self reflective practice' (Pease 2000b, p. 35). Pease argues that the postmodern concept of the decentred subject has the potential to allow inner change for men. He suggests that through a process of "mobile subjectivities" heterosexual men can come to feel empathy for different positions and loosen their connection to heterosexual dominance and patriarchy' (Pease 2000b, p. 142). Both Weedon's and Pease's adoption of Foucault's poststructural notion of the complex and contradictory subject will be useful in the analysis of change and self-discovery anticipated within the men's group program. I will now turn my focus from notions of subjectivity to its interaction with the concept of power, to establish how power is understood throughout this thesis.

Power

In conjunction with an understanding of the subject, an understanding of power is crucial to this thesis, as any human interaction involves power relations. Domestic relationships are no different and for this reason I explain my use of the term power in this thesis, particularly in relation to violence. To facilitate this analysis I have used the following three terms to distinguish understandings of power: individualist, structuralist and poststructuralist. In his analysis of discourses of power, Australian-based British social scientist, Barry Hindess (1996), argues that two conceptions of power have dominated western political thought in the modern period; these conceptions are aligned with my notions of individualist and structuralist power. To explore poststructural analyses of power, I will again rely on the work of French philosopher Michel Foucault.

The first of the concepts described by Hindess is Thomas Hobbes's notion of sovereign power, which invokes both capacity and the right to call on power. This understanding of power sees it as a quantitative capacity; it is a measurable form of power. This concept of power is individualist in that it is expressed when the individual with most power attempts to get another individual to do something they would not otherwise do. Hence the individual and his/her choices and circumstances are at the centre of the analysis (rather than social systems). Early liberal feminist constructions of domestic violence called upon this notion of power in order to explain the power relations within the domestic relationship. For example, the dominant explanation of power within a violent domestic relationship is one of a power imbalance, where the male holds more power than his female partner. Figure 1.1 was used in the domestic violence sector to delineate the difference between a 'domestic violence' relationship and a 'heated domestic argument' (Domestic Violence Action Group (SA), 1988). This somewhat simplistic 'stick figure' representation demonstrates potential power imbalances within the

Figure 1.1: Power Difference Between a Domestic Argument and Domestic Abuse
Source: Domestic Violence Action Group 1988, p.17

Note: Illustration included on page 26 in the print copy of the thesis in the Barr Smith Library.

relationship. To illustrate the 'heated domestic argument', the man and woman are the same size and hence are seen as being equal in power within the relationship. However, within the 'domestic violence' relationship, the man is twice the height of the woman (who is consequently reduced in size). Hence he is seen as having twice the power within the relationship. As explained by Hindess (1996, p. 33), 'with regard to power, the "zero-sum" approach suggests that, since there is only so much of it to go around, any gain in power of one individual or group must involve a corresponding loss of power on the part of others.'

The second concept of power identified by Hindess (1996, p. 81) as dominant within western political thought is Lukes's conception of 'an insidious power acting on the thoughts and desires of individuals through the medium of social arrangements and patterns of behaviour'. This negative and somewhat sinister form of power is present within radical and socialist feminist interpretations of male power. Hindess (1996, p. 69) acknowledges this element of feminist thought: 'patriarchy manifests itself not only in legal and institutional arrangements working to the advantage of men, but also in the formation of the consciousness of gendered subjects'. Patriarchal power as a negative and dominating concept is evident within radical feminists' writings. For example, feminist lawyer Catharine MacKinnon argues that feminism has a theory of power with sexuality at its centre: 'Sexuality then is a form of power. Gender, as socially constructed, embodies it, not the reverse. Women and men are divided by gender, made into sexes as we know them, by the social requirements of heterosexuality, which institutionalises male sexual dominance and female sexual submission' (MacKinnon 1982, p. 533). MacKinnon (1982, p. 537) posits that the position of men in society is such that they are able to create what is 'true': 'Power to create the world from one's own point of view is power in its male form'. She argues that power as legitimation, when combined with force, results in 'male power [which] extends beneath the representation of reality to its construction: it makes women

(as it were) and so verifies (makes true) who women “are” in its view, simultaneously confirming its ways of being and its vision of truth’ (MacKinnon 1982, p. 539). MacKinnon (1982, p. 535) suggests that the ‘personal is political’ slogan indicates that ‘to know the politics of woman’s situation is to know women’s personal lives’. Congruently, radical feminist understandings of domestic violence locate women’s oppression at the site of male abuses of power within the home, an extension of male dominance within the public sphere.

Radical feminist Andrea Dworkin’s (1981) *Pornography* identifies seven tenets of what she titles ‘male supremacist ideology’:

The first tenet of male-supremacist ideology is that men have this self and women, must by definition, lack it. ... Second, power is physical strength used over and against others less strong or without the sanction to use strength as power. ... Third, power is the capacity to terrorize, to use self and strength to inculcate fear, fear *in* a whole class of persons *of* a whole class of persons. ... Fourth, men have the power of naming, a great and sublime power. ... Fifth, men have the power of owning. ... Sixth, the power of money is distinctly a male power. ... Seventh, men have the power of sex.

Dworkin 1981, pp. 13-22

Dworkin (1981, p. 24) suggests that these tenets or strains of power, expressed through pornography, are the ways that men convey their power over women and as such are the means of ‘male power’. These forms of power also have repressive and negative overtones. In explicating these forms of male supremacist ideology, Dworkin argues that pornography is a demonstration of male power and dominance, suggesting that women’s bodies are not their own. She states: ‘Male domination of the female body is the basic material reality of women’s lives; and all struggle for dignity and self-determination is rooted in the struggle for actual control of one’s own body, especially control over physical access to one’s own body’ (Dworkin 1981, p. 203). Both MacKinnon’s and

Dworkin's understandings of power rely on the belief in a meta-theory of patriarchy as an overriding explanation for women's oppression. This notion of power is structuralist in that it is assumed that there is a belief in the existence of unobservable underlying structures, such as power and patriarchy, that have the capacity to influence and shape social life. An unintended outcome or limitation of both MacKinnon's and Dworkin's understandings of power is that women are continually positioned as subordinate to men and, as a result, women are constructed as powerless victims within a patriarchal world. Such structural theories can not explain exceptions to the 'rule', such as powerful women, nor can they account for a change in women's status.

Theorists in the domestic violence sector have been critical of these radical feminists' conceptualisations of power in understanding violence in the domestic relationship. British pro-feminist and masculinity theorist Jeff Hearn acknowledges that his book, *The Violences of Men*, is framed by an understanding that 'men's violence to women is clearly a form of power: it arises from and is underwritten by men's domination of women as a social group and it persists as a form of power in individual situations' (Hearn 1998, p. 213). However Hearn also points to further factors complicating this equation. For example, women's agency and capacity for resistance and men's responsibility are not accounted for adequately in this theoretical orientation. Hearn calls for a theory of power that adequately and fully deals with the complexity of men's violence to women, a theory which recognises the 'societal realities of men's structural power over women; the power relations embedded in family ideology and family forms, heterosexuality and marriage; the specification of interpersonal relations; and intrapersonal/intrapsychic relations of those involved' (Hearn 1998, p. 214). Dobash and Dobash (1998) argue in a similar vein, suggesting that past theories have failed to fully explain how women and men experience domestic violence. For example, they argue that the current frameworks fail to explain a

woman's continued love for her partner and desire for the continuation of the relationship amidst the myriad of violences she experiences. These insights suggest that, to advance thinking in the field, a revision of the dominant understandings of power (as held by the individual or structures) is required within explanations of domestic violence. It is for these reasons that I turn to Foucault. Whilst Foucault is revered, it is also thought by some that there has been an over-reliance on his ideas. However, I believe that his concepts of power, used in conjunction with feminist thought, can open up the debate about power and offer a more complex understanding of power relations in cases of domestic violence.

Foucault on Power

Foucault's analysis of power is extensive and was a theme taken up in different ways throughout his life. Commentators mention a shifting ground over the years in the way he defines power (Hindess 1996, p. 98). In one of his final interviews Foucault contrasts his understanding of power with the view of orthodox structuralist power as a sinister or evil force. He asserts:

we must distinguish the relationships of power as strategic games between liberties – strategic games that result in the fact that some people try to determine the conduct of others – and the states of domination, which are what we ordinarily call power. And between the two, between the games of power and the states of domination, you have governmental technologies – giving this term a very wide meaning for it is also the way in which you govern your wife, your children, as well as the way you govern an institution.

Foucault 1991a, p. 19

In this quotation Foucault makes several points. He suggests that he observes three relations of power operating: strategic games between liberties; the techniques of government; and states of domination. Foucault suggests particular technologies of government, that of wives by husbands, invoking a notion of governance related to

interpersonal relationships which include the structure (and conventions) of marriage vows, inheritance and name transference. This suggests that Foucault believes marriage and the family to be a site for the exercise of this form of governance.

In brief, the four main tenets of Foucault's notion of power relations between liberties as proposed within the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* are as follows. First power is exercised from innumerable points, not acquired or possessed only by dominant actors. Second, relations of power have a productive role; they are not only repressive. Third, power is not just exercised from the top down; it also comes from below. Hence there is no binary or all encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled; rather, power is capillary in nature. Fourth, power relations are both intentional and non-subjective and that where there is power, there is resistance (Foucault 1990a, pp. 94-95). Foucault explores many dimensions of the exercising of power and rejects the revolutionary (both individualist and structuralist) theory of power. He states: 'we shall try to rid ourselves of a juridical and negative representation of power, and cease to conceive it in terms of law, prohibition, liberty and sovereignty' (Foucault 1990a, p. 90). Foucault states that the success of power: 'is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms ... for its secrecy is not in the nature of an abuse; it is indispensable to its operation' (Foucault 1990a, p. 86). For Foucault then, the success of power in the social world is in its ability to remain hidden and unchallenged.

The intermediary form of power described by Foucault is his notion of government, which he applies at both micro and macro levels. For Foucault, government refers to both the governing of the family by State and non-State institutions, as well as the governing of individual members within the family by other family members. In *The Subject and Power* Foucault states that his use of the term: "Government" did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states; rather it designated the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed: the government of children, of

souls, of communities, of families, of the sick' (Foucault 1983, p. 221). In his study of governmentality in modern society, Australian sociologist Mitchell Dean explores Foucault's use of the term government. He affirms that government has been used by Foucault to describe the region between freedom and domination (Dean 1999, p. 46). Dean (1999, p. 47) states: 'it involves a form of power over others that is made operable through the liberties of those over whom it is exercised'. Hindess provides a useful summary of what Foucault considers the aims of governmental power to be when he states:

[governmental power] aims to regulate the conduct of others or of oneself. In addition to acting directly on individual behaviour, it thus aims to affect behaviour indirectly by acting on the manner in which individuals regulate their own behaviour. In this respect, too, government involves an element of calculation – and a knowledge of its intended object – that is not necessarily present in every exercise of power.

Hindess 1996, p. 106

As mentioned above, Hindess' reading of Foucault incorporates an analysis of the more subtle and complex distinctions Foucault makes between power, government and domination. Foucault sees dominative power as a narrow and limited dimension of power. To clarify the nuances between power and domination, Hindess suggests that Foucault refers to power relationships as 'unstable and reversible', acting on free agents. In this context the term 'free agents' refers to a person who has choices available to them, unencumbered by dominating forces. This understanding is to distinguish the use of the term 'free agent' from an Enlightenment view of the rational self. Hence 'power is exercised only over those who are in a position to choose, and it aims to influence what their choices will be' (Hindess 1996, p. 100). In comparison, domination refers to relations that are 'stable and hierarchical', where the agent is no longer a free subject and

has ‘relatively little room for maneuver’ (Hindess 1996, p. 97). That is, the subject of domination has limited agency and is no longer able to resist. To clarify, Foucault asserts:

The relations of power are fixed in such a way that they are perpetually asymmetrical and the margin of liberty is extremely limited. To take an example, very paradigmatic to be sure: in the traditional conjugal relation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, we cannot say that there was only male power: the woman herself could do a lot of things: be unfaithful to him, extract money from him, refuse him sexually. She was, however, subject to a state of domination, in the measure where all that was finally no more than a certain number of tricks which never brought about a reversal of the situation.

Foucault 1991a, p. 12

The inability to bring about the reversal of the situation establishes the difference between power and domination according to some constructions and definitions. In spite of domination, Foucault recognises that in hierarchical relationships the subject still has scope for resistance, ‘even though the relation of power may be completely unbalanced or when one can truly say that he has “all power” over the other, a power can only be exercised over another to the extent that the latter still has the possibility of committing suicide, of jumping out the window or of killing the other’ (Foucault 1991a, p. 12). In relation to domestic violence, this would suggest that no matter how violent or nasty a husband is, in Foucault’s eyes, a wife can resist, fight back, report to the police, murder him or commit suicide. In effect, she still has agency and so is not prevented from acting because the law constrains her to accept her husband’s violence. Foucault does, however, acknowledge that ‘death is power’s limit’ (1990a, p. 138).

Foucault makes scattered references to violence, but generally in response to clarifying or expanding his understanding of power. Foucault states that power acts upon the actions of others, whereas: ‘a relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things’ (Foucault

1983, p. 220). Domination then requires violence, but violence does not necessarily result in domination. Foucault states: 'one should try to locate power at the extreme points of its exercise, where it is always less legal in character' (Foucault 1980b, p. 97). For Foucault (1980b, p. 96) violence occurs on the social margins, whilst the exercise of power is an everyday occurrence. Violence does not necessarily result in powerfulness, nor is it (in Foucault's terms) available only to the powerful. Foucault does not expand on his separation of power and violence at length. Suffice to say, the exploration of power and its subtle and covert effects seem to fascinate Foucault more than overt violence and its more obvious impacts and effects. In Foucault's terms this extreme point of the exercise of power is where it is least evident or visible, that is, where it has most successfully hidden its own mechanisms. This would suggest that romantic love, heterosexual interaction and family/domestic violence relationships might be one of the most fruitful places in which to seek the micro-dynamics of power which enable domestic violence. This thesis focuses on the power effects at work in those normative aspects of domestic and romantic relationships (egalitarianism, generational responsibility for one's own biological children, the mother role, the father role, love and so on). Violent domestic relationships are an important site for the examination of power effects as they highlight the internal contradictions of these normative operations of power and the technologies that sustain them.

Feminisms on Foucault and Power

As mentioned previously, I am not the first feminist to attempt to utilise Foucault's thought and apply it to an area of feminist social inquiry. I will briefly provide some insights into previous analyses of Foucault's work and its usefulness to the feminist project. There have been many feminist critiques of Foucault's reconceptualisation of

power (Bartky 1988; Martin 1988; Harstock 1990; Benhabib 1991; McNay 1992; Ramazanoglu and Holland 1993; Bell 1993; Sawicki 1991; Allen 1996). For the purposes of this chapter⁶ I will limit my exploration to three of these critiques, those of Nancy Harstock, Amy Allen and Jana Sawicki.

Feminist political scientist Nancy Harstock (1990) undertakes a radical feminist critique of Foucault's notion of power. She argues that Foucault takes steps toward making power disappear: 'Power is everywhere, and so ultimately nowhere' (Harstock 1990, p. 170). Harstock suggests that Foucault leaves domination out of the picture of power and so he is unable to offer a theory of power that adequately accounts for gender.

United States feminist scholar Amy Allen (1996) is also critical of the utility of Foucault's notion of power for feminist inquiry. She (Allen 1996, p. 279) argues that Foucault is insufficiently structural in his analysis of power to be useful for a feminist analysis. Allen suggests that Foucault can be helpful to feminists on certain levels of analysis – micro-levels of power relations, cultural meanings and social practices (1996, p. 279). In her commentary upon Foucault, Allen relies on Foucault's understandings of power – power relations between liberties and domination – but fails to critique Foucault's notion of governmentality.

Feminist philosopher Jana Sawicki (1991) provides a poststructural analysis of Foucault's notion of power relations between liberties, discipline and resistance. She argues for the possibility of a Foucauldian feminism. Sawicki (1991, p. 95) argues that 'Foucault's attention to the productive nature of power, and his emphasis on the body as a target and vehicle of modern disciplinary practices, were compatible with already developing feminist insights about the politics of personal life'. In her appreciation of Foucault, Sawicki is also mindful of the criticisms of his work. In response to these criticisms she

⁶ Later chapters explore other feminist critiques of Foucault.

has reconstructed a version of Foucault that she finds useful for addressing issues relevant to American feminist theory and practice (Sawicki 1991, p. 98).

Each of the feminist analyses above does not provide a comprehensive picture of the three types of power relationships mentioned within Foucault's works – relations between liberties, governmentality and domination. I would argue that all these dimensions of relations of power need to be considered in concert to provide feminism with a more comprehensive platform for analysis.

Whilst there has been criticism of Foucault's contributions to feminism, on some level there is an acknowledgement of the advance that his contributions have made to how subjectivity and power are understood. As mentioned previously, Foucault has provided me with some tools, tools which I have chosen selectively from his tool box, to suit my analysis of violences against women within domestic relationships. To explain how I go about this, I will now provide a detailed examination of the methodological tools used within the thesis.

SECTION 2: Methodological Tools

I have adopted a multi-paradigmatic approach throughout this thesis, combining feminist, poststructuralist and other interpretive approaches, some of which derive from the humanities and others from social inquiry. The combination of these approaches enables a greater depth of understanding about men's experience of themselves as more or less violent. I argue that whilst these approaches are different in their origins, this particular combination of approaches are compatible in that they share a commitment to: the influence of language on the construction of people's experience; the use of interpretation to produce meaning; the significance of context to experience; and they value qualitative methods. The approaches are also non-positivist and hence not engaged in a search for an

overarching truth or answer. Shulamit Reinharz reflects on feminists' use of methodological multiplicity (1992, p. 244). She argues that feminist research 'reaches into all the disciplines and uses all the methods, sometimes singly and sometimes in combinations' (Reinharz 1992, p. 243). I have used multiple methods in this thesis including interviewing, content analysis and *hypomnemata*. Some empirical feminist approaches would disapprove of this suggestion. However, I have not relied upon an empirical feminist approach, but am more aligned with a poststructuralist feminist approach which recognises multiple understandings of reality. Before I present a rationale for my selection of methods in more detail, I will discuss my research methods.

The Research Methods

The men's groups were selected as the primary site for examination and my initial focus was on interviewing the men and their women partners to examine how they understand men's violence within the relationship. As discussed earlier, the interviews with men and women generated several other possible sites for the examination of the 'violent male subject', namely professional discourses and popular culture (such as print media), so it was essential that an examination of these sites also be integrated into the thesis. Hence a mixed methods approach has been used in an attempt to maximise access to the various factors that influence the formation of the male subject. The following methods have been used to examine these sites for the extent and the ways in which perpetrators accommodate their domestic violence into their sense of self and women accommodate their partner's violence into their understanding of 'the relationship'. The various methods are woven throughout the thesis such that two methods may be used within one chapter. For example, chapter six contains data from the content analysis of the media coupled with interview material. Further, the outcomes may be spread across a series of chapters. By

this I mean, for example, that results from the content analysis are reported in both chapters two and six. I will now outline my use of each of these methods in more detail, as well as identifying the challenges associated with these methods.

Men's Groups

The primary data for this thesis was collected through my role in the 'What difference do men's groups make?' evaluation project. A concerned group of health workers working in the area of domestic violence were aware of the constant tensions within the sector about providing funding for men's groups, the effectiveness of which had not been 'proven' to make women safer. In response to the paucity of Australian evaluation material available about the efficacy of men's groups, these welfare workers initiated an evaluation of men's groups. The group members represented a variety of organisations including Relationships Australia (previously Marriage Guidance), the Inner Southern Community Health Centre, Adelaide Central Mission and the Attorney General's Department. This group approached Dr Margie Ripper at the University of Adelaide to undertake the evaluation of men's groups and acquire funding for the project. Funding was gained in 1996 through a public health grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council. The research grant funded a PhD research position and the steering group provided strong industry partners. I was selected as the PhD candidate, and was therefore the interviewer on this project.

As interviewer for the men's groups project, I gained access to the men's direct accounts of their experience of being perpetrators of violence and the experience of their women partners (the targets of that violence). The interviews with men and women were conducted separately, tape recorded and transcribed, allowing me ready access to the way men and women spoke about and constructed themselves, their relationships and the violence. These personal constructions are essential to this thesis which examines the way

men produce the inner self of the male perpetrator, and seeks to gain insights into how the men view and explain themselves, their actions and their behaviours. The women's personal constructions are equally valuable as they provide an alternative reading of the men.

All eleven men's groups that were run throughout metropolitan Adelaide in 1996 were approached and agreed to be involved in the evaluation project. Nine of these men's groups were being run through the community health sector at no cost to the participant and two were run through Relationships Australia where a fee for attendance at the group was charged. During this period, approximately four men's groups based on an anger management approach were also offered through the criminal justice system. However, these groups were not included because they did not meet the inclusion criteria of being structured on a 'responsibility model' rather than a pure behaviour management or 'anger' approach (see Appendix A for copy of criteria for inclusion into the research project). The responsibility model means that responsibility for the violence is held by the male perpetrator. All group leaders supported and participated in the research. The group leaders strongly encouraged men to be involved in the evaluation; ultimately however, the men self-selected from the groups to participate in the evaluation. If the men declined involvement in the evaluation it in no way affected their ability to receive a service or attend the group. The men were also advised that they could drop out of the evaluation at any stage.

The men's wives or partners were also approached to be involved in the evaluation. At the start of the first meeting of the men's groups, men were asked to provide their partner's contact details and I approached each partner separately to invite her involvement in the evaluation project. I explained to the women that their involvement was voluntary, confidential and independent from their partners' involvement. Hence interviews were conducted on separate occasions at different times. Partners were reassured that whether

or not they participated would not reflect on the services their partner received. Some women chose not to be involved in the evaluation, even though their husband did so, and one woman chose to be involved in the evaluation, even though her husband did not.

The evaluation project contained both quantitative and qualitative measures. Hence the men and women were required on three separate occasions to complete both a questionnaire and a face-to-face interview. The data for this thesis draws only on the qualitative materials because it is these which illuminate the meanings of domestic violence for the participants. Brief demographic information collected with the questionnaires has been used to aid in the description of the men and women attending the groups, including information about age, employment status, marital status, length of relationship and number of children.

Interviews with Women and Men

The participants in the research were sixty-six men and forty-two women. All of the men were in attendance at the first night of one of the eleven men's groups being run throughout Adelaide in 1996. All of the participants were residents of South Australia at the time of the interviews. Some of the couples were from rural regions, but the majority resided in metropolitan Adelaide. All participants signed consent forms and received a copy of an information sheet detailing the project, what it involved and information about and contact details of researchers (see Appendix B: Information Sheet for Project Domestic Violence: What difference do men's groups make?).

The interviews were carried out between April 1996 and May 1998. As the evaluation project was longitudinal in nature, the men were interviewed in the first two weeks of the men's groups; the two weeks following their completion of the twelve-week men's group

and eighteen months after the end of the men's group. The interviews were semi-structured in nature and lasted anywhere between fifteen minutes and two hours (see Appendix C: Interview Schedules). The men were interviewed in a public place – their local community health centre, hospital or public library. The women were interviewed either in their home or at their local community health centre. The men were asked to provide the phone number of their partner and I approached the women partners to establish their involvement in the evaluation. Many of the women partners were pleased to be approached and to participate⁷. Some women declined to participate, as they did not want to maintain any connection with their 'ex-partner'. One woman heard about the evaluation and, while she was aware that her partner was not involved, she was happy to share her knowledge and experiences. In total, two hundred and fifty-nine interviews were conducted across the two-year period. As is often the case in longitudinal studies of sensitive topics, there was a substantial drop-out rate from one interview point to the next. Table 1.1 provides a summary of the number of interviews undertaken.

TABLE 1.1

Total Number of Interviews Undertaken with Male and Female Participants

	Men	Women
First Interview	66	42
Second Interview	54	31
Third Interview	39	27
Total Interviews	159	100

⁷ The group leader may or may not have ongoing contact with the female partners of the men attending the group. There was no consistent policy in this regard. Hence some women were receiving ongoing

Through the men's groups I had access to the group leaders. Although I did not formally interview them, I was often able to chat informally with the group leaders about their hopes for the impending group, the progress of the group and their reflections on how they felt the group had progressed throughout the twelve-week period. I was also able to access various materials used within the groups, often developed or made available by the group leaders.

All of the interviews were tape recorded. A professional transcriber transcribed the tapes for the evaluation. Participants were offered the opportunity to receive a copy of their transcripts. Only one woman took advantage of this offer. In order to protect the privacy of the interviewees, throughout the thesis any potentially identifying information about individuals has been changed or omitted. A small proportion of the interview data collected for the evaluation project has been used within this thesis. Most of the interview material used in the thesis was 'complete' in that the men had attended all three interviews and had attended the majority of sessions of the men's group. One man had been asked to leave the men's group. However, he attended his interviews with me and so his material has been included in the thesis. Representative quotations have been selected from the interview material to best represent general trends identified within the greater proportion of the interview material. In the quotations, the interviewees' exact words have been used wherever possible. In some places additional words have been added in square brackets to assist comprehension or clarification.

Content Analysis of Print Media Coverage of Domestic Violence

Print media coverage of domestic violence was collected and analysed as one means of identifying available discourses and explanations for violence. These data, used together with the interview material, helps to examine which explanations the men were active in taking up. The press clippings were also used to investigate what (if any) changes had occurred in the representations of perpetrators, masculinity and domestic violence across a twenty-year time period. A cross section of three periods was selected for this purpose - 1975-1976, 1985-1986 and 1995-1996. The interviews were conducted in 1996-1998 and so studying these three time-periods provide the context of public discussion about domestic violence.

The Advertiser was selected as the source of the clippings for the longitudinal representations of domestic violence. The main reason for this was that the men were residing in Adelaide and *The Advertiser* is the statewide daily newspaper for South Australia. Ease of access to this data was also a central consideration: the men would be likely to have access to the paper. The analysis in chapter two utilises a collation of newspaper articles reporting domestic violence within *The Advertiser* to provide a general picture of constructions of domestic violence leading up to the interview dates. More detail about the data analysis is presented in chapter two.

As discussed above, content analysis is the method used to examine the discursive space of the print media. The final discursive space for examination within this thesis is that of professional discourse and practices in relation to domestic violence. To gain insights into the discourses available to men through the professionals who deal with them I have utilised the method of *hypomnemata*.

Hypomnemata

Hypomnemata, originating in ancient Greco-Roman culture is a method of self-examination, results in creating change in one's life, in turn leading to self-improvement (Foucault, 2000b). Foucault (2000b, p. 207) identifies it as a form of 'art of the self' which allows one to enact government of the self. *Hypomnemata* is the process of keeping written notes of life or guides for conduct, followed by reflection on the notes of one's day. Foucault states: 'they [*hypomnemata*] constituted a material record of things read, heard, or thought, thus offering them up as a kind of accumulated treasure for subsequent rereading and meditation' (Foucault 2000b, p. 209). These documents then formed the raw material for the detection of personal maladies and revelations about the self; this attempts to overcome either personal weaknesses or difficult circumstances. Hence, engagement in the process of *hypomnemata* allows a person to equip him/herself with helpful discourses to alleviate or remedy the particular circumstance. *Hypomnemata* had a further role as identified by Foucault and that was to 'enable the formation of the self out of the collected discourses of others; they can be found, on the other hand, in the correspondence with others and the exchange of soul service' (Foucault 2000b, p. 217). This constant self-development was the key to the ethic of self care. More detailed description of my use of the method of *hypomnemata* to examine professional discourses is provided in chapter four. I will now provide a rationale for my selection and use of these methods.

Rationale for Methods: The Research Methodology

Feminism is not a singular category and so it is important to identify how my work might 'fit' more closely with a particular type of feminism. Feminist psychologists Katherine Allen and Kristine Baber (1992, pp. 3-4) identify three feminist epistemologies used

within feminist research – feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism. In this thesis I most closely align myself with feminist postmodernism, as they describe it. There are several assumptions that form part of this approach which I will briefly overview. Feminist postmodernists are skeptical about singular truth claims, believing that there is no one truth or reality. A process of deconstruction, where basic concepts are challenged and dominant discourses identified, is engaged in to expose existing knowledges that elsewhere are taken as normal or natural. Feminist postmodernism is constructive. This means that individuals are engaged in creating their own social reality (Allen & Baber 1992, p. 5). Feminist psychologist Nicola Gavey describes the contributions that feminist poststructuralism and discourse analysis have made to psychology. She argues that feminist poststructuralism offers researchers a theoretical basis for analysing the ‘subjectivities of women and men in relation to language, other cultural practices and the material conditions of our lives’ (Gavey 1989, p. 472).

While many characteristics of feminist research have been identified and discussed (Reinharz 1992; Webb 1993, p. 417; Olesen 1994; Neuman 1997, p. 80), I will provide a brief overview of my adoption of selected characteristics of feminist research. Women’s input was sought and valued throughout the research process (Webb 1993, p. 417). Feminist health workers were involved in the steering group; feminist researchers undertook the research; and women participated in the research interviews. Care and concern for current and ongoing safety of women participants was considered integral to the design of the research project (Neuman 1997, p. 80). For example, the interviews were confidential and those with each partner were undertaken separately (not together as a couple). An interviewer with social work skills was selected to ensure the emotional safety of the women, making sure that after the interview women were emotionally

supported and able to access resources to ensure their personal safety. The safety of the female interviewer was also considered a high priority. For example, interviews with men were only to be conducted in public places, not in their homes, and a mobile phone was provided for home visits with women. Finally, this thesis shares the feminist goal (Reinharz 1992, p. 249) to understand, emancipate and challenge the position of women in society. In doing this, the existence of and interplay between gender and power is central. Hence the thesis is unapologetically political in nature. The evaluation project upon which this thesis is based is emancipatory or action-oriented in nature, seeking to help women involved in the evaluation as well as women in broader society, live lives free from violence (Neuman 1997, p. 80). The outcomes of the evaluation project ‘What difference do men’s groups make?’ will be used to direct and inform policy priorities and possibly funding for the ongoing provision of men’s groups. Emancipatory ideals suggest a truth perspective supporting an Enlightenment project. As established earlier, I more closely align myself with a poststructural belief in multiple and contextual realities. To this end I wanted to clarify that, whilst poststructuralism argues against the meta-narrative of patriarchy, it simultaneously allows for the recognition of a collection of women’s diverse experiences of power and oppression. Both women’s and men’s voices have been collected and used within this thesis⁸. The interpretation of the women’s and men’s experiences of domestic violence has been considered within a historical context which identifies the social problem of domestic violence where the predominant perpetrators of violence are men.

An emancipatory project also argues for liberation or social change. Liberal and radical feminist projects have a long history of arguing for women’s equality, such as women’s right to safe, legal abortion and equal pay. In my examination of the interplay between

⁸ This is an attempt to reduce the suggested bias or distortion when only one respondent is used (Szinovacz, 1983, p. 633).

discursive constructions of the male perpetrator of domestic violence and power, I unashamedly open up possible opportunities for social change and so claim an emancipatory politics.

An inductive approach has been used within this thesis. This means that I have begun with detailed observations and moved from the specifics and minutiae to a more abstract level of generalisation. This approach to reasoning or development of theory is derived from 'grounded theory'. Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss are responsible for introducing the ideas of grounded theory in 1967 (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Later, Corbin and Strauss (1990) identify two principles of grounded theory, the first being that change should be built into the method. This occurred within my study at two levels. At a more specific level, over the series of three interviews with the participants, the interview schedule changed to engage more fully with the patterns that were arising within the interview data. In this process the interviewees became informants in the development of the research project, which enabled the data and theory to interact. The links that I had with the research project meant that I began interviewing and then built theory from the detail and specifics of the interviews. Some of the men, when interviewed, identified further influences on their understanding of their sense of self as a perpetrator of violence. This outcome resulted in a wider exploration of discursive spaces, including media and professional discourses. So, at a broader level, I was able to be flexible and change the focus of the research project to include an analysis of media and professional discourses about domestic violence.

The second principle is that 'actors are seen as having, though not always utilising, the means of controlling their destinies by their responses to conditions' (Corbin & Strauss 1990, p. 5). This principle was also built into the study as participants were able to

maintain control or as Foucault would term, exercise resistance over their contributions by limiting what they revealed about their relationship or not attending the interview.

As detailed above, in the development of the research project I have adopted some of the principles and core ideas from grounded theory as identified by Corbin and Straus (1990, p. 5). Corbin and Straus (1990, p. 5) locate the theoretical origins of their approach within Symbolic Interactionism and Pragmatism. However, they declare that, in order to use their method, the researcher does not have to subscribe to these particular orientations (Corbin & Straus 1990, p. 5). Academic and nurse Judith Wuest (1995) argues for a feminist grounded theory. Wuest contends that grounded theory is a methodology that can be conducted from a feminist point of view because both approaches share common ground. For example, grounded theory and postmodern feminist epistemology share the recognition of multiple explanations of reality, the evolving nature of theory and that the researcher is active in interpreting the research findings (Wuest 1995, pp. 128-129). I share her belief.

Corbin and Straus (1990) claim that data for analysis using a grounded theory approach can arise from multiple sources including interviews, documents and newspapers. I will now briefly detail the ways in which I worked with the data collected. Analysis occurred throughout the data collection process. This was particularly appropriate as the interviews occurred across an extended period of time. Throughout the interview period I kept research journals in which I was able to identify and construct relevant categories and test these categories through a process of reflection on the interviews. In these journals I also documented the categories identified within the content analysis of media representations. The maintenance of these journals enabled the process of linking the categories with relevant theory.

This research is also constructivist or interpretive in seeking to understand the lives of women and men and their experiences of the social problem called 'domestic violence'. The interpretive approach stems from German sociologist Max Weber's studies of social science (Neuman 1997, p. 68). Weber's hermeneutic approach argues for the meaningful study of social life such that one learns about and attempts to understand the personal reasons or motives that shape human behaviour and actions. In this thesis I attempt to learn about how women and men make sense of their own experiences of a man's violence. In doing this I rely on assumptions adopted from an interpretive approach: 'The interpretive approach holds that social life is based on social interactions and socially constructed meaning systems ... assumes that multiple interpretations of human experience, or realities, are possible ... [and that] ... social reality ... [consists] of people who construct meaning and create interpretations through their daily social interaction' (Neuman 1997, pp. 69-70). The interpretive approach attempts to provide an insight into another person's social reality by describing it and attempting to explain what the actions may mean to other people. This thesis indirectly studies some specific aspects of 'daily social interaction' by exploring both women's and men's lived experiences through the use of interviews, a qualitative method. The interpersonal individual interviews provided a forum for the women and men to construct their experiences of the relationship and of the man's violence within it. During the interviews, the women and men spoke freely about their relationships. This has been especially significant for this thesis because the gendered dimensions of the experiences of domestic violence are highlighted. In line with a feminist approach, an interpretive approach also holds that researchers should reflect on, analyse and be aware of the impact of personal feelings and points of view when engaged in research with other people. Both feminist and interpretive methodologies commonly rely on the use of qualitative methods. In Michael Patton's description of qualitative

methods he demonstrates how, in practice, these methods reflect the goals of feminist and interpretive methodologies:

A qualitative approach to measurement seeks to capture what people have to say in their own words. Qualitative measures describe the experiences of people in depth. The data are open-ended in order to find out what people's lives, experiences and interactions mean to them in their own terms and in their natural settings. Qualitative measures permit the researcher to record and understand people in their own terms.

Patton 1980, p. 22

Quantitative methods such as survey methods have been found to be useful for feminist research (Westmarland 2001; Hanmer, Griffiths & Jerwood 1999; Kelly, Regan & Burton 1994; Kelly, Burton & Regan 1992). Feminist researchers Kelly, Burton and Regan (1994, p 35) argue that their choice of methods 'depends on the topic and scale of the study in question'. Westmarland (2001) distinguishes the different values of quantitative and qualitative methods. She states that quantitative methods are valuable in naming women's oppression whilst qualitative methods are valuable in 'delving further and using feminist research for change within the women's liberation movement' (Westmarland 2001, p 8). Certain quantitative methods have been shown to provide a distorted picture of domestic violence. For example, quantitative methods have been used to measure quantities of domestic violence in the population. Researchers have relied on measures such as the 'Conflict Tactics Scale' (CTS) to gain an understanding of the extent, frequency and intensity of domestic violence (Szinovacz 1983, p. 634). Some researchers use of the CTS has identified equal amounts of violence within relationships from women to men and men to women (Straus 1979). This finding contradicts much anecdotal evidence which suggests that women experience more violence from a male partner than men received from women. This quantitative measure was found to count forms of violence equally (Dobash et al. 1992). For example, a 'slap' by a man which broke his

wife's jaw was counted as the same as a 'slap' that a woman used on her husband's hand at dinner to stop him 'stealing' a potato chip from her plate. These instances of violence, without the surrounding context and an examination of the effects of the actions, appear equal and were counted as equal⁹. Qualitative measures used in the field of domestic violence allow a greater exploration of the context and the effects of the violence within the relationship.

Although this critique of the value of quantitative methods when researching domestic violence is persuasive, feminist researchers do not completely reject the value of such methods to feminist research (Kelly, Burton & Regan 1994, Reinharz 1992). To explore the wider context within which women and men have experienced domestic violence I have used particular methods with quantitative origins to examine print media representations of domestic violence and perpetrators of domestic violence. A content analysis of print media coverage of domestic violence was undertaken to identify possible trends in these representations across a twenty-year time period. Content analysis is a technique for gathering and analysing the content of text (Neuman 1997, p. 272). Although originally developed as a quantitative tool, it has evolved to become a method of exploring latent content, including discursive constructions, evident in the texts. In Shulamit Reinharz's (1992, p. 148) discussion of content analysis she identifies additional methods which flow from feminists' use of content analysis for the examination of texts, including discourse analysis, rhetoric analysis and deconstruction. These methods are used to read 'between the lines' within the texts to identify dominant or privileged discourses and question the assumptions underlying the text and, in doing so, to illuminate the effects of gendered differences. I will demonstrate the ways in which the men and women utilise various discourses to understand and explain their behaviours and their

⁹ This also suggests limits to the conflict tactics scale as a quantitative measure.

subjectivity. The following section provides greater detail about the three methods used within the thesis namely, interviewing, content analysis and *hypomnemata*.

Challenges to Methods

Interviewer Role

The interviews did not pass without several challenges. One of the main challenges that I faced as a trained social worker¹⁰ was the recognition of the differences in conducting a social work interview compared to a research interview. In a social work interview the aim is to listen to the person's presenting problem and respond in such a manner as to enable the person to bring about change in their life. Central to a social work intervention with domestic violence is the need to ensure the continuing safety of the woman. For ethical reasons this was also central to the role as research interviewer. However, for me this therapeutic role contrasted starkly with the interviewer role which focuses on the interviewee's reflections. One of the main differences between the research interview and the therapeutic interview is that the research interview does not work toward 'solution' or resolution of the 'problem'. A further difference is that the research interviewer does not challenge or pass judgement on what participants say or the way in which they say it, whereas within a therapeutic interview the worker may draw the interviewee's attention to destructive elements of their talk. As a researcher, in not challenging certain behaviours described by the men, I felt complicit in the men's abusive talk. On some occasions the interviews with the female participants became emotional and it was necessary to spend time with the woman to ensure that she was safe in both an emotional and physical sense. Sometimes I also spoke to women about and referred them to domestic violence and/or police services for emergency situations. In South Australia, as a social worker I am also

a mandatory reporter, which means that I am legally responsible for reporting to government bodies my suspicion or evidence of child abuse or neglect. Hence I informed the participants of my legal duty to report any suspected or actual child abuse discussed within the interview setting. The contradiction for me was that my legal responsibility did not extend to reporting violent crime between adults.

Rapport and Confidentiality within the Interviews

A further challenge was the development and maintenance of rapport and confidentiality with the male interviewees. As the interviews were to be conducted over an extended period of time, it was essential to develop trust and rapport with both the men and women interviewed. In her work studying women within organised racism, Kathleen Blee (2002, p. 12) describes the difficulties she faced as an interviewer working to develop rapport with people from an ‘unloved’ group. I too found it difficult working to develop rapport with men who had engaged in violence with their female partner. In finding common ground, I would rely on superficial measures such as conversations about cars, weather, their jobs and food, attempting to keep my own relationship private. Blee (2002, p. 13) suggests that rapport is problematic when scholars do not share a world view with those they study. The work to establish rapport with the women interviewees was often less emotionally demanding. I would discuss with the women their jobs, their children and, if asked, I would more openly disclose information about my personal relationship. Whilst I am unable to determine the accuracy of the following assertion, I had a strong sense that central to establishing rapport with both the women and men was their ability to identify me as heterosexual. That a level of rapport was established with the men was evidenced on two separate occasions when I was recognised while working in my casual job outside

¹⁰ My undergraduate degree is a Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) from the University of South Australia.

of my research role. On these occasions the men felt able to approach me and speak with me about their relationship outside of the interview context. Evidence of the level of rapport established with the women was such that one woman, upon leaving her relationship and entering a shelter (a year after the interview series had been completed), asked the shelter worker if she knew of me and the study. The shelter worker sought my contact details as the woman wanted to tell me that she had left the relationship and was doing well.

Some radical feminist analyses of the research interview describe the power relation between interviewer and interviewee as hierarchical in nature, where the interviewer has the power (Finch 1984; Ribbens 1989). My experience of the power relation when interviewing both the men and women was more fluid in nature. For example, whilst as interviewer I have authority and knowledge about the interview and research process, the interviewees always had the power to withhold an answer to a question, to fabricate a response or simply not show up to the interview. As a woman researcher interviewing the male perpetrators of domestic violence I was acutely aware of the interviewee's potential for violence – often raising caution and fear within me. To achieve trust I found it important not to make judgemental comments about the men's and women's behaviour. This often meant that I was not true to myself. On one occasion I terminated an interview with a male interviewee earlier than I normally would have as I felt violated and unable to continue while he discussed how he would 'help himself to his wife while she was asleep' as a regular and normal occurrence in the relationship (one that she had complained about), not as 'rape', which is the term that I would use to describe his behaviour.

When both members of a couple were participants in the research I would interview the male participant first. In one of the interviews the male interviewee described his wife in such a manner that, following the interview, I was wary of her behaviour. This process of

engagement with me had the effect of influencing my initial perceptions of her, inciting fear. Nevertheless, in this instance I am sure I based my initial assessment of her on how she presented herself to me, not through his eyes.

Blee (2002, p. 18) also discusses her experiences of fear when interviewing racist activists. She acknowledges that, while she was initially cautious when setting up her interviews, she took fewer precautions as time continued. On occasions I was reminded of the sexist assumptions of the male interviewees. In setting up the interviews with men I would make a tentative time with the man and then need to ring the Community Health Centre or hospital to check the availability of interview rooms. In one particular instance a male interviewee sexualised the 'room booking' procedure by suggesting that I book a hospital room with a bed. Constant vigilance was required on my part to immediately address this inappropriate sexual innuendo. Further, whilst I did not interview men in their homes, I would often interview women within their homes. On some occasions my interviews with women in their homes would coincide with their partner also being at home. This situation was not ideal; however, in all cases I continued the interview with the woman, rather than reschedule and risk losing the opportunity to meet with her.

In developing trust and rapport with both male and female participants, it was essential to establish the importance of the inviolability and confidentiality of their contributions within the limits of the law in relation to child abuse. On all but one occasion when interviewing the women, I had already spoken to the male partner. Some women seemed initially apprehensive about their interaction with me. This was overcome early in the interview after a discussion about the research project and my ethical obligations.

All were aware that as interviewer of both the men and the women I was in the privileged position of hearing two sides of the one story. Only once did an interviewee seek to hear what their partner had said. A woman rang shortly after her partner's interview with me to

ask what he had said. It was necessary for me to re-affirm the expectation of confidentiality.

Vicarious Traumatization

Vicarious trauma is recognised as a negative emotional effect on the worker who has been working closely with people who have experienced trauma. It is defined as the ‘transformation of the therapist’s or helper’s inner experience as a result of empathic engagement with survivor clients and their trauma material’ (Saakvitne & Pearlman 1996, p. 25). As the term ‘vicarious’ suggests, the person emotionally affected has not actually experienced the trauma or violence themselves but, through the action of listening and emotionally connecting with the survivor, takes on an emotional load. This phenomenon was first acknowledged as being experienced by researchers working with survivors of the holocaust and coming into contact with explicit, graphic descriptions of horror and trauma (McCann & Pearlman 1990). As interviewer for the ‘What difference do men’s groups make?’ project I had first-hand, ongoing contact with female victims of their male partner’s violence. Often during interviews women would describe the suffering that they had experienced. Towards the end of the interview period, as a result of hearing women’s repeated stories of violence, I experienced an emotional drain akin to vicarious traumatization. In response to my concerns, formal debriefing was set up with an independent counsellor of my choice. In a confidential setting I was able to debrief the personal effects on my own sense of self, safety and relationships of repeatedly hearing first-hand stories of violence against women.

Whilst not naming her experience as vicarious traumatization, Blee (2002, p. 19) described her need for regaining ‘emotional distance from this research before writing about it – a process that took years’. I too experienced the need to distance myself from the men’s

narratives of violence and the women's experiences of men's violence. In reading some of the interview material, I am still able to recall and recognise the men and women and provide descriptions of their homes, years after conducting the research interviews. On occasion I find it difficult to re-read the interview material.

In investigating the experiences of men who perpetrate violence against women, this thesis will examine how these men achieve a view of themselves that accommodates their violence. To achieve this, the research techniques used needed to extend beyond the men's accounts of their violence and change. As described earlier, a multi-method approach was chosen in order to gain a more complex picture of the intricacy of power relationships and men's construction of themselves as perpetrators of domestic violence. The richness of the interview data, combined with the content analysis of the print media and the *hypomnemata* of professional documents, provides for a more comprehensive interpretation of the male perpetrator's view of himself. The value of this approach will become evident in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 2

A History of ‘the Problem’

Domestic violence, as a recognised social problem, has a relatively brief history. Public consciousness of domestic violence as a social problem has only become evident in Australia since the 1970s, as will be demonstrated in section two of this chapter. This chapter begins by providing a framework to examine domestic violence interventions based on their underlying theories of what causes domestic violence.

SECTION 1: Explanations for Men’s Violence Against Women

Various disciplines have provided explanations for men’s violence against women, including psychology, criminology, victimology and feminism. To provide a succinct overview of these explanations for men’s violence, I have categorised them under the following theoretical constructs - individualist, structuralist or poststructuralist. In using this classification I have borrowed from social work academic Jim Ife’s ‘accounts of social issues’¹¹. Ife (2002) identifies four perspectives which underlie the differences in the way social problems are understood. These he designates as: individualist, institutional reformist, structuralist and poststructuralist. Australian feminist and social researcher Lesley Laing (2002) uses a similar typology in her examination of men’s group programs which she identifies as being based on either individual/psychology or socio-political perspectives. As suggested above, I will use three of the four perspectives presented by Ife to guide my analysis of the ways in which men’s violence against women is commonly

understood or explained¹². This categorisation process, whilst crude, provides a starting point for understanding the inter-relationships between approaches and identifies potential areas for conflict and contradiction. As an aid to explain the different categories, examples of interventions will be described.

The process of categorisation is widespread within the social sciences. Typically the disciplines of psychology, psychiatry and criminology tend toward using individualist approaches, whereas sociology and social work take a more structuralist perspective, and different feminist theories use a combination of individualist, structuralist and poststructuralist approaches. Whilst all three approaches include attempts to change individuals, they are informed by different explanations of behaviour. My focus is on interventions used in the domestic violence sector and how they are positioned in relation to the underlying understandings of domestic violence.

Individualist Theories of Domestic Violence

Individualist theories are those which position the individual at the centre of the intervention. The problem is located within the person and the person is the site for change. It is based on the understanding that social systems are comprised primarily of individuals and can be understood in terms of their choices, characteristics and interests (Johnson 2000, p. 153). South Australian family therapist Alan Jenkins (1990), in his writings on therapeutic interventions with men who are violent, used a classification

¹¹ Ife attributes his 'accounts of social issues' to a three-fold classification system of individualist, institutional reformist and structuralist developed by Taylor-Gooby and Dale (1981 cited in Ife 2002, p. 49) to which he has subsequently added poststructuralism.

¹² I have conflated Ife's categories of institutional reformist and structuralist into the structuralist category. Ife uses institutional reformist to refer to the institutions established to manage social problems such as courts, welfare system, etc. I have taken the liberty of conflating these two categories in recognition that

system for causal explanations of men's violence and abuse in which he described individualist theories as locating fault within the individual's character/personality or looking to psychological processes or motives for explanations for the violence (Jenkins 1990, p. 18). Often biological explanations or psychiatric illness are seen as the source of men's violence.

Psychological explanations for men's violence include notions of anger (or temper) which is seen to be in need of 'control'. If men lack sufficient self-control, they are at risk of violence 'exploding' from within. These theories suggest that if men are able to gain better control over these aspects of their personality, the violence will dissipate. This explanation does not, however, explain those situations where men are violent and abusive exclusively toward those closest to them, and usually only in the home environment, but are non-violent in other spheres of their lives. A variant of these explanations is that of disinhibition (Jenkins 1990, p. 23), where the effects of alcohol or drugs are said to remove normal inhibitions and to provide the explanation for violence. This theory is based on a biological explanation for the violence, where the violence is considered natural for men and the use of alcohol and drugs 'unleashes' the violent male.

Psychology literature also has a long history of attempting to explain domestic violence as a result of particular interactions within the family and between family members (Jenkins 1990, p. 24). For example, 'Systems' theories explain domestic violence as one of many problems characterising a 'troubled marital system', and considered is a sign of a 'more primary dysfunction' and a means of 'maintaining the equilibrium of the system' (Bograd 1984, p. 560). Hence the violence is seen to have a purposeful role within the family – 'to correct her behaviour' so the family can function again. The alternative explanation is that

the abuse is a result of dysfunctional interactions amongst family members or within a 'dysfunctional family' (Jenkins 1990, p. 27). I have identified the systems approach as an individualist approach because, while it does acknowledge that individuals operate within social systems, the focus for change is on the individual rather than the social system.

I would also regard psychology-based theories of development, such as social learning theory or sex role explanations, as individualist approaches. Whilst there is recognition of the social source of behaviours, the focus is maintained on the behaviour of the individual. Social learning theory suggests that violence is learned as a child and passed through generations within violent and abusive families (Jenkins 1990, p. 28). For example, men see themselves as having learned to be violent through observing their father beat their mother or because they were victims of abuse as children, and thus they accommodate (or even expect) male violence to be part of the husband/father role.

The sex role approach also attempts to connect social structures with personality formation, but its emphasis is on how individuals fit into social relations (Connell 1987, p. 49), drawing on stereotypical conceptions of both masculinity and femininity. Hence I have categorised this approach as individualist. Sex role theories rely on the assumption that there is a set of actions or behaviours which are considered appropriate to a particular gender (Connell 1987, p. 47). This provides the sex role theorist with the opportunity to make general assumptions about particular communities. For example, men and women are considered to take on particular roles associated with their sex. Dominant sex role constructions see the female as homemaker and the male as breadwinner; the male as rational, the female as emotional; the male as violent and aggressive, the female as passive and receptive. Sex role theories embody a number of contradictions. The most obvious is their inability to account for non-conforming men and women in egalitarian relationships; or relationships in which men fail to be abusive and women fail to be passive and

compliant. They are also unable to account for changes in sex roles over time, although there appears to be no concomitant reduction in violence with such changes.

On the whole, interventions which are based on psychological explanations for violence attempt to change the behaviour or thinking of the particular individual. Alternatively, systemic theories, which locate the source of violence as a result of functional or dysfunctional interaction between family members, would engage the couple in joint therapy or engage the family as a group. However, in both instances the focus of intervention is on changing individuals to address the dysfunction.

Intervention strategies with men based on an individualist perspective involve the use of group programs such as anger management or self-help groups. These groups focus on changing/reforming the man's individual psycho-pathology and use strategies which target change within his personality or character. These groups aim to teach men new communication skills, conflict management skills and strategies to manage their responses to their partner and family members (Keys Young 1999, p. 64). Criticism of these programs centres on the possibility for blaming the victim for the violence rather than the man taking responsibility for his behaviours (Keys Young 1999, p. 64; Laing 2002, pp. 7-8); from the perspective of structuralist theories, the individual's location in structures fashions behaviour.

Structuralist Theories of Domestic Violence

Structuralist theories locate the social problem in the real or concrete social world or in social structures, that is, beyond the individual, establishing that these external factors have an effect or impact on social life and social relations (Johnson 2000, p. 315). Another body of domestic violence literature includes theories which suggest that violence

is an intrinsic part of the structure of western society (Gelles 1980; Gelles & Cornell 1985). In these theories domestic violence is understood as a 'stress reaction' to problems which plague the family and relationships in contemporary times. It is seen to be a result of modern families being affected by the social stresses of unemployment, poverty, homelessness and isolation (Jenkins 1990, p. 30). Quite clearly, a limitation of this explanation is its failure to account for domestic violence by privileged individuals 'even in the best of homes'¹³.

Radical feminist theory suggests domestic violence is a result of patriarchal social structures. This approach is positioned as structuralist because the interventions advocate a change in the gender order within society. Feminist and family therapist Michele Bograd (1988) identifies four dimensions common to feminist perspectives on wife abuse. These include: '(1) the explanatory utility of the constructs of gender and power; (2) the analysis of the family as a historically situated social institution; (3) the crucial importance of understanding and validating women's experiences; (4) employing scholarship for women' (Bograd 1988, pp. 13-14). Anne Edwards (1987, p. 16) explains that early second-wave feminist theorists such as Shulamith Firestone, Kate Millett, Juliet Mitchell and Sheila Rowbotham first looked 'for the sources of male power, not in men's greater physical strength or their alleged aggressive instinct, but rather in the major institutions of contemporary capitalism'. Edwards (1987, p. 22) establishes that feminist theorising at that time 'turned its attention to social and cultural mechanisms of defining, shaping and constraining female (and male) sexuality as fundamental elements in male power over women and as of critical importance to patriarchy', such that 'violence has come to be seen as a socially-produced and often socially-legitimated cultural phenomenon, rather

¹³ This catch phrase was used as a title by Jocelyne Scutt (1990) to describe the ways in which violence in the family crosses social and class barriers.

than the natural expression of biological drives or an innate male characteristic' (Edwards 1987, p. 26).

Some feminist commentators have found the exclusive concentration by radical feminists on gendered explanations for men's violence against women to be limiting, in particular when seeking explanations for domestic violence between lesbians and in explaining domestic violence in different cultures. Some explanations for cultural differences include the acting out of dominant heterosexual scripts. Connell (1995, p. 80) talks of marginalised or subordinated masculinities where there are 'ethnic-charged' ways of enacting masculinity. Feminist Gail Mason (1997, p. 55) argues that 'current theorisations [of domestic violence], grounded in heterosexual experience, are struggling to produce a discourse adequate to the task of understanding violence against non-heterosexual women'. In a subsequent article Bograd (1999, p. 275) broadens her feminist analysis to recognise the importance of race, class, sexual orientation and gendered asymmetry as structural factors impacting on the occurrence of domestic violence. Feminist Aboriginal academics Marcia Langton (1989) and Margaret Smallwood (1996) utilise feminist constructs in combination with recognition of colonisation to explain family violence in Australian Aboriginal communities. Smallwood (1996, p. 135) argues for land rights as a crucial component in addressing the health and spiritual well-being of Aboriginal Australians. On the whole these feminist commentators have broadened the feminist focus from simply a gendered inclusion to the analysis of other forms of oppression in combination with a gendered explanation.

Structuralist or socio-cultural theories of men's violence against women locate the need for change within social structures, cultural norms and ideologies as a means of making change possible (or likely) within the individual (Jenkins 1990, p. 30). Feminist approaches which emphasise legal changes, such as the full criminalisation of domestic violence, illustrate this focus. Other approaches which fit with a structural analysis

include education and prevention campaigns targeted toward the broader community to make domestic violence unacceptable. The shelter movement, which arose from the recognised need within the women's movement for safe and secure accommodation for women fleeing violent relationships, also provided a site for consciousness-raising about women's rights. Interventions provided by the shelter movement offer both practical and emotional support and care for women in need. Whilst the immediate focus of these interventions is the individual woman, the movement is based on a social action model and maintains a political presence advocating on behalf of women fleeing violent men.

Interventions with men stemming from a socio-political analysis entail group work with a 'gender-based cognitive behavioural' framework or a 'psycho-educational with a pro-feminist' framework (Keys Young 1999, p. 63; Laing 2002, pp. 3-4). This approach to group work with violent men is documented to be the most common form of group program in use in Australia (Keys Young 1999, p. 63). In groups based on this model an educational focus is adopted whereby the men learn about gender inequality in society and in relationships and the tactics of power and control that they use within relationships. Women's safety is given a high priority and the group's aim is for men to accept responsibility for their violence (Laing 2002; Jenkins 1990). An inclusion criteria for the groups which were evaluated in the domestic violence project 'What difference do men's groups make?' was that they be based on a 'psycho-educational' responsibility model of practice¹⁴. This model of practice has been proposed in Western Australia as 'best practice' (Domestic Violence Prevention Unit, 2000). These groups use a variety of strategies and cover a range of gender issues including: sex roles expectations; explanations of patriarchy; legal issues; relationship issues; communication skills;

¹⁴ A number of self-help groups and anger management groups were operating in Adelaide at the time the evaluation was undertaken but these were not included in the evaluation project.

physiological and cognitive aspects of anger and aggression; and information about myths about domestic violence (Keys Young 1999, p. 63). Some of these issues are also dealt with in the individualist behaviour change programs. A criticism of the ‘responsibility’ model of men’s group programs from the individualist perspective is that the men participate in the same program which leaves little room for tailoring the intervention to the individual circumstances and differences of the men attending the group (Laing 2002, p. 8). Laing (2002, p. 8) found that supporters of these two differing perspectives – socio-political and individual – are and remain polarised in what they see as appropriate means of intervening with men who are violent toward their partners.

In a sense, most interventions end up with a focus on individuals, as institutions are ultimately made up of individuals. However, by changing the framework within which individuals act and make choices (laws, escape routes for partners, income for women, etc), and by attempting to change how individuals understand their social options (education, etc), the focus of structuralist approaches is ultimately on changing institutions or structures.

Poststructuralist Theories of Domestic Violence

In chapter one I provided a brief overview of the core tenets that distinguish poststructuralism from structuralism. A key feature of the poststructuralist approach is the centrality of narrative or text – the text about the individual and the text about society. Hence words and language are seen to construct a particular reality rather than simply ‘reflect’ reality, opening up the possibility for multiple truths. Ife (2002, p. 50) suggests that for any phenomenon to be perceived as a social problem requires the use of language and the formation and accumulation of certain truths and knowledge. It is through the

language of discourses, coupled with the ways in which particular discourses are socially sanctioned or privileged as true, that oppression is maintained within society.

Social work academic Karen Healy (2000) develops and applies a poststructural approach to social work practice. She uses Foucault's four 'rules' of discourse to outline her approach (1981 cited in Healy 2000). First, discourses produce certain rules and procedures which make it possible for some things to be said and others not. She uses the example that, prior to the Second World War, there were different possibilities for understanding family violence compared to those available now (Healy 2000, p. 40). Second, discourses and power are interconnected. Hence some discourses come to be privileged as true, and some individuals rather than others are privileged to make effective truth claims. Third, discourses are both discontinuous and contradictory. Consequently, there can be various discourses competing at any one time. Fourth, Foucault reveals the effects of discourse, what they produce and a critical examination of their effects and limits. In the formation of the subject, discourses are taken up and make available certain ways of understanding oneself. An example of this would be the shift in language used by professionals in relation to naming 'victims' of domestic violence as 'survivors'. This is an attempt to replace an oppressive subject position, in which the 'victim' is seen as trapped, with one that is more productive and positive (Healy 2000, p. 46).

Ife (2002, p. 51) claims that social change through a poststructuralist perspective must come about via analysis and understanding of those discourses being taken up and challenging the dominant understandings. My thesis is attempting just such a challenge. Australian family therapist Michael White (1991) has developed a form of practice with men and women which he terms 'narrative therapy', which draws on Foucault's poststructuralist interpretation of power/knowledge and discourse. White proposes a form of deconstruction of the narrative as a way of working with his clients to challenge dominant discourses and constructions of the self. Strategies include 'externalising

conversations'¹⁵, identification of 'unique outcomes' and 'alternative stories'¹⁶, 'landscape of action' questions¹⁷ and 'landscape of consciousness'¹⁸ questions. In effect the therapist uses these strategies with men and women so that they might produce different stories of themselves and in doing so see that other courses of action are possible. In some of the men's groups in South Australia in 1996 ideas from the narrative therapy approach were being used as part of the psycho-educational responsibility model group program (Northern Metropolitan Community Health Service 1997). Some of the men's groups involved in the evaluation 'What difference do men's groups make?' used strategies from a poststructuralist perspective to bring about a change in the 'violent man' script.

As mentioned previously, men's 'narratives' to explain their violence drew from a number of sources, including the groups as well as dominant representations as found in the media. In the next section the general results of the media analysis is offered, providing an overview of the ways domestic violence has been represented in the public arena over a twenty-year time period.

¹⁵ Clients are asked to provide their account of the effects of a problem on their life and how it has affected their view of themselves and relationships. Some exploration is undertaken about how the client has come to understand themselves in this way. As part of this process the practitioner invites the person to explore alternative and preferred ways of understanding themselves – who they are and who they might be (White 1991, p. 29).

¹⁶ Unique outcomes are occasions the client can recall that they have responded to a situation in a significant and preferred way (White 1991, p. 30). For example, there may be situations when a man would usually respond with violence and yet he chooses to act differently – in working with the therapist this would be identified as a unique outcome. The therapist can then work with the client to develop alternative stories about the unique outcome.

¹⁷ White (1991, p. 30) defines landscape of action questions as "questions [to] encourage persons to situate unique outcomes in sequences of events that unfold across time according to particular plots".

¹⁸ Landscape of consciousness questions "encourage persons to reflect on and to determine the meaning of those developments that occur in the [alternative] landscape of action" (White 1991, p. 30). They encourage the articulation and performance of the alternative ways of acting or believing.

SECTION 2: Genealogy of Domestic Violence in *The Advertiser* 1975-1996

As mentioned in chapter one, the media analysis involved sampling at three points across a twenty-year period. All editions of *The Advertiser* were examined during three two-year periods (1975-1976, 1985-1986 and 1995-1996). For the years prior to 1986, articles on domestic violence were located manually using microfilm copies of *The Advertiser*. Relevant articles were then photocopied from the microfilm and a systematic content analysis undertaken. For those years after and including 1986, articles about violence in relationships, woman battering or domestic violence were located within newspapers by using the Presscom electronic search program. The word 'violence' was used initially as the search key word but, due to the large volume of data located, the search was narrowed by using the term 'domestic violence'. Both a quantitative content analysis¹⁹ of the articles and a qualitative reading were undertaken. In 1975-1976 the term 'domestic violence' was not in common usage and so I have included articles from 1975-1976 which discuss behaviours now considered to be domestic violence²⁰. This included articles which reported any instance of violence within a marriage or domestic relationship. The total number of articles within the data set was two hundred and sixty. A summary of the distribution of the articles collected from each time block is provided in Table 2.1. The overall number of *The Advertiser* articles reporting violence in the domestic relationship nearly doubled from sixty-one articles in the 1975/1976 period to one hundred and eleven articles in the 1995/1996 period. This increase in reporting itself suggests a change in the level of recognition of domestic violence as a social problem within the community.

¹⁹ This information, once collected, was entered into an Excel spreadsheet.

²⁰ As a manual search was conducted in 1975, 1976 and 1985 the term domestic violence was not necessarily present in descriptions of violence in relationships. As an electronic 'key word' search was conducted for 1986, 1995 and 1996 only articles which contained the key words 'domestic violence' and 'woman batter*' were collected. Therefore it is possible that in 1986, 1995 and 1996 there may have been more articles in

Rather than examine the articles in isolation, it is important to consider the socio-political context within which these articles were reported.

A number of significant events influenced the reporting of violence against women and domestic violence within these time periods. In relation to the first period, 1975 was International Women's Year, during which no-fault divorce was introduced across Australia and the Family Court was established. Then in 1976 *The Advertiser* reported the parliamentary controversy surrounding the introduction and adoption of Rape in Marriage legislation within South Australia. The newspaper became a forum in which the proposed legislative changes were 'publicly' debated. Some of the articles included in my analysis arise from this debate, although I included only those which discussed 'private' physical, sexual and emotional abuses within relationships as opposed to discussions about the legal and political ramifications of the legislation.

TABLE 2.1

Number of Articles Reported in *The Advertiser* in 2-Year Blocks across 20 years

Year	Number of Articles about Violence in Domestic Relationship
1975-1976	61 (23%)
1985-1986	88 (34%)
1995-1996	111 (43%)
Total	260 (100%)

Notes: In 1976 an extra 34 articles were found that reported the Rape in Marriage Legislation but these were not included as specifically about domestic violence.

The *Advertiser* which describe behaviours now considered to be domestic violence that were not named as 'domestic violence' or 'woman battering' and so not included in this analysis.

The period 1985/1986 could be characterised as a period of excesses in economic and social arenas, where the State Labor Government headed by Premier John Bannon was held to account for the collapse of the State Bank. It was also the early stages of the AIDS epidemic, which resulted in increased use of the media to provide health promotion messages to the population at large. This trend is also demonstrated by the increase in health promotion messages about domestic violence in *The Advertiser* endorsed by allied health professionals and government officials (see Table 2.3 Distribution of Subject Areas in News Genre - political category).

A very significant event for gun law regulation and violence within the community occurred in 1996 following the Port Arthur Massacre. Port Arthur is a tourist location in Tasmania, where a lone gunman killed thirty-four people and injured others in a single rampage. This event provided the impetus for tighter gun law regulation throughout Australia. The discussion of gun restrictions extended to domestic violence and the phenomena of murder-suicides by men who shoot their women partners and/or children before turning the gun on themselves and committing suicide. This event also provided opportunity for discussion within the media of Australian masculinities, learning theories and the generational transference of violence.

The 'Birth' of Domestic Violence

There were four basic 'genres' or textual forms in which domestic violence was discussed: letters, art, opinion and news reporting. First, in the 'art' genre I have included book and theatre reviews related to domestic violence. 'Letters' to the Editor are the second genre and represent unsolicited public opinion items (however selected by editorial staff for

publication). ‘Opinion’ covers opinion columns, as well as professional commentary within advice columns such as ‘Family Forum’ and ‘Doctor’s Diary’.

Within the news genre, four sub-categories are distinguished by the subject areas of legal, international, research and political concerns. The legal category covers both police and court reports as well as articles about the provision of police, legal and court services. The international category includes overseas reports of cases of domestic violence or interventions in domestic violence. The research category includes reports of any research on domestic violence, and the political category refers to articles on government policies or ministerial announcements regarding legislative changes, service provision or funding allocations for domestic violence. This section also includes non-government organisation and community services articles about coverage of service provision, funding allocation or legislative changes. The number of articles from these categories across the twenty-year period is detailed in Tables 2.2 and 2.3.

The reporting of domestic violence articles from overseas halved from 1975/1976 to 1985/1986 and has since remained relatively consistent (21%/10%/12%). International articles about violence against women tended to serve a pejorative or joke role. These articles positioned the Australian male as tougher and more masculine when compared with men from other countries. For example, one article reported the plight of British males beaten by their wives (Morgan 1975, p. 26). This article implied that British males were weaker and less masculine than Australian males because they had suffered violence at the hand of their female partners, the ‘weaker’ (feminine) sex. Implicitly the message is carried that Australian men ‘wouldn’t stand for it’ the way the British men appear to.

TABLE 2.2
Article Distribution by Genre of Article

Type of Article\Year	1975/1976	1985/1986	1995/1996
Art	-	7 8%	1 1%
Letters	1 (18) 2%	9 10%	17 15%
Opinion	8 (6) 13%	4 5%	1 1%
News	52 (10) 85%	68 77%	92 83%
Total	61	88	111

TABLE 2.3
Distribution of Subject Areas in News Genre

Type of News\Year	1975/1976	1985/1986	1995/1996
Legal	35 67%	14 21%	14 15%
International	11 21%	7 10%	11 12%
Research	- (1)	5 7%	15 16%
Political	6 (9) 12%	42 62%	52 57%
Totals	52 (10)	68	92

Note: Numbers in brackets represent articles specifically concerning Rape in Marriage Legislation.

The types of articles reported changed in nature across this period. In 1975/1976, the main types of articles about violence in domestic relationships were crime or court reports. These articles recounted the details of crimes that had been committed by men against their women partners (or by women against men). At this point the crimes were not known as ‘domestic violence’. In later years the court reports focus on violence against wives – taking the predominant forms of murder, assault or rape within a marriage, de facto or separated relationship. Other representations of domestic violence, that is, as a social problem, were rare within this time period. The reason for the dramatic drop in legal reports from 35 in 1975/1976 to 14 a decade later is unknown (See Table 2.3). This decline could be explained in a number of ways, such as the adoption of differing ways of reporting court issues in the paper, or fewer court cases in subsequent years (this is unlikely), or that there had been such an increase in reports that they were all no longer reported, or that the nature of the reports changed. It is difficult to check these hypotheses statistically, as crime statistics on domestic violence assaults can only be collected through breaches of restraining orders which were introduced in South Australia in 1994 as part of the *Domestic Violence Act 1994 SA*. Ironically, with increased recognition of the existence and prevalence of domestic violence, it may also have become less newsworthy. Whilst the total number of articles on domestic violence increases over time, there is growth in new areas, particularly the ‘political’ category reflecting more activity in this area.

When compared with the years to follow, there were a relatively high number of articles in 1975/1976 which discussed women’s personal experience of violence and abuse through the regular advice columns such as ‘Doctor’s Diary’ and ‘Family Forum’ (13%). These articles provide an insight into possible medical and therapeutic responses when women disclosed domestic violence during this period. My interpretation of the opinion-based

responses shows that the dominant reaction by mainstream professionals was that of minimising the women's experiences of fear and placing responsibility on the woman for her husband's violent behaviours. For example, a woman writes to Family Forum: 'My husband has a quick temper and flares up before he thinks ... my husband "explode[s]" or storm[s] out of the room ... After he has let off steam he carries on as if nothing had happened' (*The Advertiser* 11 June 1975, p. 25). The response comes from a panel and refers to several possible causal factors including:

It may be that your husband's behaviour is a reaction to tension he is experiencing ... The panel wondered how much attention you gave your husband when he was not angry. Is he throwing temper tantrums because he knows this is a sure way to provoke a reaction from you and get your attention, which maybe is lacking at times? ... Does he have any history of head injury or damage which may be responsible for such outbursts?

The Advertiser 11 June 1975, p. 25

The response in this case suggests a focus on individualist solutions, while in later decades individualist solutions are supplemented by or in competition with structural responses, such as that offered through the shelter movement. This is a possible indicator of the rising power of feminist discourse in relation to domestic violence.

In 1975/1976 the Labor Party was in government at both Federal and State (South Australia) levels. The Whitlam Labor Government was the first Federal Government to fund shelters to provide housing and support for women in violent relationships. In many instances these women were engaging in an often interrupted process of leaving relationships. Six articles published in 1975/1976 discussed the opening of new women's services or the financial plight of existing women's services. For example, the opening of Naomi's Women's Shelter in Prospect (*The Advertiser* 12 February 1976, p. 15), the YWCA women's shelter in Whyalla (*The Advertiser* 4 March 1976, p. 9) and the Rape

Crisis Centre in Hindmarsh (Hirst 1976, p. 24) were reported. 'Infighting' amongst women members of management within the women's shelters was reported and a close reading of articles from the time implies that women could not be trusted to administer funding (*The Advertiser* 23 January 1975, p. 12; Hirst 1975, p. 26). The second-wave of feminism (from the 1960s-1970s) is responsible for some of the first public responses to domestic violence, including the provision of services to women experiencing domestic violence. The women's movement in Australia fought publicly and politically, subsequently gaining Federal funding for the establishment of a range of women's shelters throughout Australia (Summers 1994, pp. 516-519).

In line with radical feminist thought which supported separatism 'from men and from institutions, relationships, roles and activities which are male-defined, male dominated and operating for the benefit of males and maintenance of male privilege – this separation being initiated or maintained at will *by women*' (Frye 1983, p. 96 cited in Tong 1995, p. 125), the women's shelters were women-only spaces, run by women for women. Politically, while the issue was beginning to be recognised and funding provided, violence against women was considered a women's issue and remained on the margins.

Violence against women was one arena where the various approaches to feminism were relatively unified. Within parts of the women's movement there is an implicit belief that every woman's experience of domestic violence has some similarity or common ground, united by a common experience of 'womanhood'. This commitment and belief allowed campaigns to be established which argued for women's voices to be heard speaking out about the violence they had experienced. Community campaigns such as 'Breaking the Silence' and 'Zero Tolerance' were established to promote women's right to speak publicly about their experience.

The most significant change in reporting signified in the content analysis is the increasing frequency and emphasis of the political category (refer to Table 2.3). This is owing to a combination of the following: a more diverse range of services; the inscription of domestic violence in political parties' policies (particularly in those designated women's policies); and the ongoing debate concerning appropriate/successful services.

In 1985/1986, sixty-two per cent of news articles were political articles focusing on the provision of new domestic violence services, funding arrangements for domestic violence services, changes to policy or law and the promotion of public campaigns for the prevention of domestic violence. In 1985/1986 there were once again both Labor Federal and State Governments: Bob Hawke was Prime Minister of Australia and John Bannon was Premier of South Australia. The articles about domestic violence from the political category covered a broad range of policy areas, including women's affairs, police, housing, Attorney General's Department, migrant issues and health. Once again the shelter movement fought public battles to maintain their funding. A continuing undercurrent of these is that the women's shelter services were unaccountable, not trustworthy and did not provide effective services to all women, specifically to migrant women. Non-government services promoted anti-domestic violence campaigns with both a prevention and education focus. Training of police and judiciary was also considered a priority. Party political domestic violence articles began to appear during the 1980s. By 'party political' I mean that domestic violence had gained currency as an issue on which both the Liberal and Labor parties focused debate and scored political points (votes) from. Articles include one headlined: 'Libs release child-abuse, home violence policies' (*The Advertiser* 5 August 1985, p. 3), while another front-page article opened with: 'The SA government will set up a domestic violence council to oversee proposed major changes to the ways in which SA authorities handle cases of domestic violence' (Tilbrook 1985, p. 1). These articles suggested that the community supports the government's increased

spending to reduce domestic violence. In 1986 the party political focus of domestic violence was maintained. For example, the article titled 'Libs launch publication for women' details the publication of a Liberal Party newsletter for women reporting the need for more effective responses to domestic violence (Tilbrook 1986, p. 29). Political debates around the best approaches and interventions in domestic violence cases, such as the provision of counselling services for men and greater crime control of domestic violence, were reported. These party political articles published in the 1980s suggest that domestic violence had gained community support and currency as a political issue.

Unique to the 1980s period was the appearance of review articles of performances and/or art exhibitions on the topic of domestic violence. These articles discussed domestic violence as a theme of a performance or book. For example, Australian playwright David Williamson's play *The Removalists* was reviewed (Harris 1986, p. 37). The article reported that information pamphlets about domestic violence were made available on theatre seats for the audience members in recognition that the play may have raised 'personal issues'. Whilst only a small proportion of the overall number of articles during this period (8%), these arts review articles signify a cultural shift in the acknowledgement of domestic violence as a social problem requiring intervention, supporting the suggestion above that the issue of domestic violence has become increasingly mainstream over the decades.

In 1995/1996 articles with a political focus remained dominant: fifty-seven per cent of the news articles collected during this period were categorised as political. The political context had changed from previous years because a Liberal State Government was now in power. This period began with a Federal Labor Keating Government and ended with a Coalition Howard Government. There was also a change in the number of policy areas involved in domestic violence, with a centralised focus on the Attorney General's Office

or Office of Families and Children at a State level, and Family and Community Services at the Federal level. This change signifies a rather large shift in government responsibility for dealing with domestic violence and a change in political orientation from considering domestic violence as a women's issue to a family issue. United States academic Kathleen Ferraro (1996) undertook an analysis of the discourse of domestic violence within the United States. She identifies the change in ideology of the movement against domestic violence – from a feminist focus with emancipatory political ideals to an ‘apolitical “women’s issue” promoted by some of the most reactionary and exploitative politicians and institutions’ (Ferraro 1996, p. 78). She highlights the role the Reagan Government had in shifting the discourse from one of liberation to one of crime and social control. Ferraro states: ‘violent men have become the focus of criminal justice intervention; battered women, the object of mental health reform’ (Ferraro 1996, p. 86). The political climate within Australia has meant that under a Labor Federal Government, domestic violence was regarded as a health and women's issue. The Coalition Federal Government domestic violence policy more closely follows the pattern in the United States of a crime control and mental health discourse with a sub-theme that specifically characterises earlier feminist initiatives (shelters and women's services) as having ‘failed’.

Responses to and interventions in domestic violence cases have also changed over time. In 1975/1976 the predominant intervention was for the victim to be placed in a women's shelter service and the perpetrator could continue his life in the community (unless rape or murder was committed). In 1985/1986 domestic violence was considered a therapeutic and health issue and both the victim and perpetrator were encouraged to seek counselling. In 1995/1996 the victim was expected to seek counselling, whilst the perpetrator uses court mandated (socially and through the legal system) to attend a men's therapy group for ‘men who are troubled by their violence’. The direction of interventions also shifted from

a strong preventative and community education focus to individually tailored family-based interventions. Counselling interventions with men have been provided in South Australia since 1983. The men's groups were initially considered a radical intervention but in the 1990s became more widely accepted, being supported through the legal/court systems. They are typically described as 'preventing' violence and therefore are said to be preferred over 'reactive' interventions for women in crises. In the late 1990s men's counselling was considered one part of a 'coordinated' response with interventions for each 'family' member. Implied within this approach is that domestic violence is a family issue. Coordinated responses are encouraged and domestic violence has entered the evolving political discourse of 'partnerships' between various areas of government.

Within the political articles, the term 'partnerships' predominated in the 1995/1996 period, but was not used in similar articles from earlier periods. The use of the term 'partnerships' in relation to domestic violence is an interesting choice, as the language of the egalitarian couple or relationship is often described as that of 'partners', indicating equality in the sense of 'equal partners'. In a political sense the term 'partnerships' is seductive, as it represents a relationship where the power is shared in an equal manner. In 1995 the term partnership was used by the then South Australian Minister for Family and Community Services, Mr Wotton, to describe the proposed relationship between the government and community:

Mr Wotton said last night that domestic violence 'clearly' affected the lives of women but was 'not just a women's issue'. 'What is needed is a broader approach in which government can work *in partnership* with the community to stop violence in the family', he said. [emphasis added]

Further endorsing the idea of government and community partnerships, journalist for *The Advertiser* Nadine Williams uses the words of a shelter worker: ‘It took us 20 years to get domestic violence on to the agenda. I reckon we can stop domestic violence in another 20 years if we work together *in genuine partnership* with the government’ [emphasis added] (Williams 1996, p. 17).

The increase in popularity of ‘coordinated responses’ within a crime control discourse provided an opportunity for the Federal Howard Government in 1997 to bring together all the heads of government to work cooperatively across all levels of government and policy areas. One outcome was the establishment of the funding program ‘Partnerships Against Domestic Violence’. In the late 1990s this notion of ‘partnerships’ had, however, become linked to neo-liberalism and policies of privatisation (Dean 1999). Dean states:

Here the ‘social’ and its agencies (social workers, nurses, counselors, community bodies, government departments, educational authorities, even social movements and support groups) become our *partners*. ... the social is reconfigured as a series of ‘quasi-markets’ in the provision of services and expertise by a range of publicly funded, non-profit and private for-profit, organizations and bodies. [emphasis added]

Dean 1999, p. 173

To put it bluntly, partnerships is the language which facilitates the use of private monies/resources to support public infrastructure. On behalf of the Vancouver Women’s Fund, Canadian feminist Catherine Dat (1998) has examined the implications of ‘partnerships’ within the field of prevention of violence against women. Dat (1998) highlights the pitfalls experienced by women’s services in Canada associated with working in partnership with government or business. She warns against women’s services blindly entering partnerships with government or business interests in a desperate attempt to support the provision of services to women (Dat 1998).

Mirroring the increase in the number of newspaper articles in the political category in 1995/1996, the research category also increased across the twenty-year time span. There were no reports of research into domestic violence in 1975/1976. This increased to seven per cent in 1985/1986, and in 1995/1996 the number of reports about domestic violence research peaked at sixteen per cent. This trend suggests that governments and non-government organisations have an increasing financial investment in research into domestic violence, as well as a public interest in the reporting of the research findings.

The increase in frequency of reporting political and research articles suggests an increasing professionalisation and politicisation of domestic violence as a public issue. The increased role of government bodies in both decision-making about and the provision of services and funding for domestic violence are demonstrated. This supports Lumby's (1999, p. 244) assertion that the categories we consider political or of public interest have expanded to result in the politicising of behaviours once seen as personal, thus posing a challenge to the public/private dichotomy.

An 'industry' of domestic violence has been created, and has become a political battleground which is reflected within the print media. This is played out to such an extent that some political careers are beyond repair because of accusations of domestic violence, as evidenced in chapter six. Within the political category, ideological shifts are evident across the twenty-year time span. In 1975/1976 domestic violence was considered a 'women's issue'. This was evident as feminist spokespersons or shelter workers were used as the primary sources of information about woman battering. In 1985/1986 there was a diverse range of voices claiming knowledge about domestic violence. The most dominant was from the health departments. In 1995/1996 domestic violence was

positioned as a problem of crime control. In support of this assertion, in 1995/1996 both the Attorney General and the Minister for Police were key government spokespersons about domestic violence. Attorney General's representative Sue Millbank from the Crime Prevention Unit endorsed this shift in policy portfolio and identified a possible outcome of the change in portfolio as raising the political profile of the issue of domestic violence. She is reported as saying:

'Previously it was seen as a women's or a health issue' ... 'With more of a focus on it as a crime, there is more understanding of the importance of the issue'.

The Advertiser 13 August 1996, p. 9

Millbank suggests that with the weight of crime control discourse, domestic violence is now taken seriously as a criminal act. Whilst recognised within a discourse of crime control, the issue of men's violence to known women is now seen to be best resolved through therapeutic means, where the perpetrator attends men's groups and engages in a process of re-learning and taking responsibility for his actions. Hence the interventions with men can not be considered entirely within a criminal framework.

Under the Howard Coalition Federal Government (1993-) and its support for Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV), domestic violence has come to be considered a family and criminal issue rather than a women's and health issue. A document delivered to all Australian households in June/July 2004 reinforced this focus and declared that: 'Violence against women: Australia says no' (Abetz 2004). This document was funded by PADV and provided information about domestic violence. In this document, responsibility for violence against women was invoked within the family (specifically women, parents and friends) and at the local community level, rather than with men and at a government level. In regarding domestic violence as a family issue rather than a health issue, the gendered nature of domestic violence is silenced.

Language of Domestic Violence

A significant shift within the reporting of domestic violence in the periods under review is the adoption of the term 'domestic violence' into popular usage. In 1975-1976 no newspaper reports used the term 'domestic violence' to describe the act of criminal assault or abuse within a relationship. For example, reports about women's refuges, which were being established during this period, referred to 'destitute' women rather than victims of domestic violence. This reference to 'destitute' women using the women's shelter fails to recognise that the impetus to seek refuge was abuse and violence from the male partner. Their lack of accommodation or means of subsistence was secondary to their abuse.

In 1975 and 1976 terms such as 'wife beating' and 'wife battering' were used when reporting international instances of violence against women. Whilst there were legal reports indicating that Australian men abused their wives, the reporting of 'battering' (using this term to suggest a trend or pattern rather than an individual's behaviour) occurred only in reports of overseas news stories. This manner of reporting had the effect of distancing the suggestion that 'wife beating or battering' could be patterns of behaviour perpetrated by Australian men.

The 1975 court reports of the murder of Garry Pettit by his wife Margaret Pettit revealed a history of his assaults which would now be described as 'domestic violence'. The paper reported: 'A woman alleged to have murdered her de facto husband had said he usually had assaulted her about twice a month, the Adelaide Magistrate's Court was told yesterday' (*The Advertiser* 13 February 1975, p. 9). This situation would also now be related to 'battered woman syndrome' (BWS), a psychological construction used to describe a woman's reduced capacity for self defense following years of domestic violence, who then plots to 'escape' the cruelty by killing her husband. In the 1990s BWS was first used in Victoria in the case *R v Raby* (1994) as part of the defence of provocation (McCarthy 1994, p. 141). Margaret Raby was charged with and sentenced for the murder

of her husband Keith. During the hearing she described her experience of torture at the hands of her husband. Evidence of BWS has been adduced within other Australian State courts²¹ and the High Court²². The use of BWS is problematic as it both medicalises and pathologises the women's experience of abuse (Alexander 2002, p. 30). Each State and Territory has its own civil legislation designed to protect against domestic violence, offering victims the option of taking out a protection order. Specific domestic violence acts were introduced in some Australian States and Territories in the mid to late 1980s and early 1990s²³. In most jurisdictions a criminal prosecution may arise out of the breach of a protection order. In South Australia domestic violence restraining orders can be obtained under the *Domestic Violence Act 1994 SA*, and for boyfriend/girlfriend or same sex relationships under the *Summary Procedure Act 1921 (SA)*. Hence in some jurisdictions notions of 'domestic violence' came into common legal usage as early as 1986 (such as the Australian Capital Territory), but in other jurisdictions there is still no specific 'domestic violence' or 'family violence' Act (such as Tasmania).

From 1985 the term 'domestic violence' is used with regularity to describe male violence against women in intimate relationships. In 1985 it appears in titles of newspaper articles, for example, 'Move to help overcome domestic violence' (Gregory 1985, p. 22) and 'Domestic violence widespread' (*The Advertiser* 17 August 1985, p. 15). This is significant in two regards. Firstly, once domestic violence is recognised and named as a phenomenon, descriptions of the types of behaviour encompassed by the term are no

²¹ As cited in Alexander (2002, p. 29): SA: *R v Runjanjic*; *R v Kontinnen* (1991) 56 SASR 114; 53 A Crim R 362; *R v Taylor* (unreported, SASC, 12 December 1995); Tasmania: *R v Gunnarsson-Weiner* (unreported, TASSSC, 13 August 1992); New South Wales: *R v Hickey* (unreported, NSWSC, 14 April 1992 noted in (1992) 16 Crim LJ 271); *R v Chhay* (1994) 72 A Crim R 1; Northern Territory: *R v Secretary* (1996) 107 NTR 1; Victoria: *R v Raby* (unreported, VSC, 22 November 1994); and Queensland: *R v Kuna* (unreported, QCA, 29 November 1993).

²² As cited in Alexander (2002, p. 29): *Osland v The Queen* (1998) 73 ALJR 173; 159 ALR 170.

²³ Sourced from Alexander (2002) - ACT: *Domestic Violence Act 1986 (ACT)*; NSW: *Crimes (Personal and Family Violence) Amendment Act 1987 (NSW)* which incorporated a new Part 15A into the *Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)*; NT: *Domestic Violence Act 1992 (NT)*; Qld: *Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Act 1989 (Qld)*; SA: *Domestic Violence Act 1994 (SA)*; Tas: *Justices Act 1959 (Tas)*; Vic: *Crimes (Family Violence) Act 1987 (Vic)*; WA: *Restraining Orders Act 1997 (WA)*.

longer spelt out. The ‘short hand’ term domestic violence (or more recently DV) requires no description of the behaviours or their impact. Secondly, it also has the effect of sanitising the reports by eliminating the detail of who was doing what to whom. This adoption of a ‘catch-all’ term affects the way the victim and perpetrator are understood, in ways that will be elaborated in the next chapter. ‘Domestic violence’ remains a contested term – it is used by all but its meaning remains in dispute. Among the criticisms of the term is that it disguises the dynamic of who is the perpetrator and who is the victim. It also tends to equate with physical attack and thereby does not bring to mind cruelty, rape, threats, social isolation, coercion, stalking, belittlement and other forms of abuse.

This shift in agenda is, once again, demonstrated by John Howard’s 1996 election pledge:

Violence against women and children should be regarded as the completely unacceptable face of male behaviour ... All States and Territories would be involved in the violence summit and would be urged to introduce complementary legislation on domestic violence ... Reflecting previous Coalition criticism of specialised women’s services, the policy does not commit itself to maintain current funding levels for the Office of the Status of Women [the Ministerial office previously managing domestic violence].

Sweetman 1996, p. 7

A result of this ‘more inclusive’ agenda is that domestic violence is taken to include many forms of violence (not just gendered violence): men’s violence to women and men; women’s violence to men; and women and even children’s violence toward their parents.

Causal Attribution of Domestic Violence

There have been several shifts in the reporting of domestic violence within the twenty-year time period that signify changes to how domestic violence is understood. The large number of individual legal or criminal reports about cases of violence against women in the 1975/1976 period provides some support for the suggestion that domestic violence was viewed as an individual's problem rather than as a social problem with structural causes. To demonstrate this shift, a closer qualitative and quantitative reading of articles about the perpetrator of domestic violence was undertaken to reveal the causal factors attributed to explaining his violence. Table 2.4 provides a summary of the attributes of the male perpetrator of domestic violence.

TABLE 2.4
Summary of Attributes of the Male Perpetrator of Domestic Violence

	1975/1976	1985/1986	1995/1996
Individual causes (mentally ill, lonely, stressed, alcohol or drug use, victim of violence, passion, jealous, temper, biological)	30 (91%)	29 (85%)	27 (51%)
Societal/structural causes (class, race, power and control)	3 (9%)	5 (15%)	26 (49%)
Total	33	34	53

It is evident that domestic violence was once almost entirely attributed to individualistic factors. These explanations included both psychological and often biological explanations for the male perpetrator's behaviour. While in the 1995/1996 period individual explanations still dominate, a more even distribution to both individual and societal causes for the violence is evident. Where previously gender, class-based and cultural explanations for domestic violence were rare or non-existent, they are now part of a growing language about power and control. Categories of class and race can be considered as structural causes for the violence, although they were often read as individual characteristics. The focus on the ethnic or cultural dimensions of the perpetrator allow the male reader to view the perpetrator as other or 'not like' him. Hence race may have been used as an individual explanation and as a point of difference, rather than as a recognition of the structural antecedents of the problem. Whilst simplistic, this analysis does serve to provide evidence of a change in how domestic violence is portrayed within the media from individual to structural causes.

As mentioned in section one, a poststructuralist approach identifies the privileged discourses which are taken up as 'true'. This section has provided an overview of the discourses about domestic violence that have been made available through the media. Professional groups such as those working in the law, medicine, human services and feminist policy makers have been shown to be active in the field of domestic violence. Like the media, these professional groups are also active in making certain discourses about domestic violence available, albeit for a smaller audience.

In short, I began this chapter by providing a review of differing perspectives used to explain and respond to domestic violence to ground the content and political positioning of the men's group program. In the second section of this chapter I outlined the results of the content analysis of media representations of domestic violence establishing that, as a

social problem, domestic violence has gained political currency such that a government 'industry' of domestic violence has been established in Australia. The next chapter explores the discourses of domestic violence made available through the practices and ideas of professions working within this 'industry'.

CHAPTER 3

Professional Spaces (1)

In this chapter I turn from the history of the media's constructions of domestic violence in South Australia to different professional groups' definitions of domestic violence. Foucault's notions of examination and bio-power provide the theoretical background for this exploration, allowing for professional writing about and practices in relation to domestic violence to be viewed as a text. Four different professions' definitions of domestic violence are under scrutiny as I establish the distinguishing features in terms of their explanations for and understandings of domestic violence. These professions are feminist, medical, legal and human services. This analysis offers insights into the mechanisms of bio-power and its effects in controlling the population. It also explores the way in which dominant discourses pervade the social environment, producing both intended and unintended consequences. In this chapter definitions of domestic violence are used as a way of distinguishing the assumptions and approaches of these four major professional groups. Continuing the focus on professions, in chapter four I examine interventions used by the medical and human service professions when working with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

As suggested in the previous chapter and indicated by the content analysis of *The Advertiser*, an industry of domestic violence has been established. Hence there is seen to be an increasingly legitimate role for state intervention into domestic violence. For example, all Australian States and Territories now have a form of domestic violence legislation. The police and legal roles, when intervening in domestic violence, are a

relatively new development in Australia, occurring in some States since the late 1980s and early 1990s. Even so, many interventions in domestic violence occur through more informal processes, such as therapeutic interventions with victims and/or perpetrators through the welfare system. The professions as part of the legal and welfare systems increasingly work in partnership to provide integrated legal and therapeutic interventions. Before examining the definitions, I will provide some background to Foucault's use of the term 'bio-power'.

Michel Foucault's study of penology in *Discipline and Punish* and power in *The History of Sexuality Volume 1* has provided insights into the means of social control conducted by the state. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault identifies a shift from overt uses of public violence to more subtle strategies of confinement and surveillance. He identifies a change from a top-down form of social control in the form of physical punishment on behalf of the sovereign to a 'more diffuse and insidious form of social surveillance and process of normalisation' imposed by the professions (Pinkus 1996, p. 1). The concept of 'bio-power' is used by Foucault to describe the techniques and methods that subjugate bodies and control populations (Foucault 1990a, p. 140). The central idea of bio-power is the creation of self-regulating subjects, where individuals internalise the norms of their particular social groups and become their own overseers (Danaher, Schirato & Webb 2000, p. 74). People come to understand themselves through the guidance and direction of external institutions/groups/professions. Foucault identifies forms of control that act on and can be enacted by *each member* of the population. Foucault's interpretation of power recognises that power is inherent in all relationships, hence bio-power acts on all members of the population, not just the disenfranchised. Even the most dominant of groups or individuals are acted upon in some way (Danaher, Schirato & Webb 2000, p. 74). Foucault states: '*techniques* of power [are] present at every level of the social body and

utilised by very diverse institutions (the family and the army, schools and the police, individual medicine and the administration of collective bodies)' (Foucault 1990a, p. 141). Within this chapter and the next I will apply notions of bio-power to professionals' interventions into domestic violence in more depth.

Michel Foucault offers an alternative reading to the structuralist streams of thought about social control, whereby the state intervenes merely in the form of restrictive power, rather than offering enabling power. Foucault (1990a, p. 92) views social control as residing in a variety of sources, not just one central source such as the state or sovereign, as a structural perspective would have it. Instead, bio-power is conceived as a much more subtle, widespread and insidious power over life. Foucault identifies two forms of bio-power – 'bio-politics of the population' and 'anatomo-politics of the human body'. Bio-politics is the arm of bio-power which enables control and regulation of the population. Canadian academic Denise Gastaldo, in her study of health education as bio-power, provides an example of bio-politics. She acknowledges social policy as a visible means of seeking control over a population (Gastaldo 1997, p. 116). She also reveals invisible techniques of bio-politics, such as the manner in which the domain of the health system has expanded into private life to establish what is considered to be normal or abnormal (Gastaldo 1997). A dominant critique of the therapeutic intervention by social workers is that clients are relatively powerless; intervention involves the exercise of professional power over the client, to which the client is forced to succumb. Sociologist Linda Gordon (1988) discusses the consequences of state intervention in the 'violent family'. She states that: 'once social-control agents, whether public or private, entered families, all family members lost their privacy' (Gordon 1988, p. 294). In this quotation Gordon acknowledges the power dimension involved within the welfare intervention. It is not only the perpetrators of the violence who lose their privacy and become visible to the

public gaze, but also the victims of the violence. However, Gordon recognises the complicated interactions that power relations between family members in cases of domestic violence or child protection have for the action of social control. For example, domestic violence interventions are often based on requests from family members to intervene, these invitations usually coming from those family members with less power. Gordon challenges the dominant view of the therapeutic intervention as professionals with power and the clients with none, suggesting that the clients ‘were not usually passive but, rather, active in arguing for what they wanted’ (Gordon 1988, p. 295). This echoes Foucault’s notion of power as capillary and productive as outlined in chapter one. In her comparison of critical²⁴ social work approaches with critical poststructuralist social work approaches, Australian social work academic Karen Healy recognises that: ‘Foucault’s analyses suggest that social control is present in all human services work, including ostensibly radical practice approaches. For even though social control may take different forms across practice contexts, the lesson of poststructuralism is that there is no escape from it [social control]’ (White 1997 cited in Healy 2000, p. 73). Whilst there is no escape from it, social control is negotiated and produces subjectivity.

The other arm of bio-power is anatomo-politics. Anatomo-politics focuses on the body as a mechanised object. It is the discipline of the body in order to create a docile subject that forms the focus of Foucault’s analysis of bio-power. Surveillance, normalisation and examination are technologies of power which discipline the body. Before applying the concept of bio-power to domestic violence, I will firstly explore the act of examination, used by professions with the effect of disciplining the body and creating docile subjects.

²⁴ Healy (2000, p. 3) uses the term ‘critical’ to denote practice approaches with an emancipatory social change orientation which includes standing alongside the oppressed, valuing dialogical relationships, a

In an interview with Foucault about *Discipline and Punish*, JJ Brochier asks Foucault about his study on the history of the examination. Foucault responds that those people who have held power have been studied in abundance, but that the mechanisms of power such as examining have been paid little attention (Foucault 1980a, pp. 38-39). During this interview Foucault reiterates his claims made in *Discipline and Punish* about the inextricable relationship between power and knowledge evident within the examination. He states: ‘the examination is at the centre of the procedures that constitute the individual as effect and object of power, as effect and object of knowledge’ (Foucault 1991b, p. 192). In his work *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault argues that the disciplinary techniques of hierarchical observation and normalisation combine to create the examination (Foucault 1991b). In the following quotation Foucault explores the dynamics and workings of the examination:

It [the examination] is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them. That is why in all the mechanisms of discipline the examination is highly ritualized. In it are combined the ceremony of power and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force and the establishment of truth. At the heart of the procedures of discipline, it manifests the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected.

Foucault 1991b, p. 184

The examination that Foucault primarily refers to is that undertaken by professionals, particularly medical (including psychiatric) experts. This is an examination whereby the subject is scrutinised according to and compared with the norm. Foucault describes three effects of examination: the transformation of the economy of visibility into the exercise of power; the introduction of individuality into the field of documentation; and, surrounded

recognition of the role of social, economic and political systems in individual experiences and a commitment

by all its documentary techniques, the examination makes each individual a ‘case’ (Foucault 1991b, pp. 187-191). The first effect of disciplinary power is the increased visibility of the subject at the centre of the discipline: ‘In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his [sic] subjection’ (Foucault 1991b, p. 187). Hence, through the examination, the individual is at the centre of the gaze; s/he is also placed within a field of documentation. Where once it was only the powerful or the wealthy who were written about, now the madman, the patient or the prisoner are also written about: ‘This turning of real lives into writing is no longer a procedure of heroisation; it functions as a procedure of objectification and subjection’ (Foucault 1991b, p. 192). The information collected and made available about an individual through the professions is ever-increasing. Foucault argues that it allows the state greater control over the individual. These effects of the examination produce an increasingly detailed specification of individuality; the more knowledge that is collected and made accessible, the more detailed and more encompassing the normative criteria become.

Foucault speaks of examination existing within the social sciences and gives historical examples of the development of the examining processes within hospitals and schools. He presents the hospital as developing systems of perpetual observation of the patients’ health which involve, for example, the doctors’ visits becoming more regular and regimented. The schooling system, with regular examinations and tests of students’ knowledge, provides another example of examination – the combination of uninterrupted hierarchical surveillance and normalisation. School examinations compare students with each other to measure and judge the progression of their knowledge. The examination is a means of

to changing structures which exploit or dominate.

mapping the exchange of knowledges, guaranteeing the movement of knowledge from the teacher to the student, whilst allowing the teacher to be aware of what the student has learnt. Schools also achieve the docility that Foucault refers to by the 'informal curriculum' which judges students on the basis of punctuality, neatness, obedience, effort, politeness, social ability and their capacity to self-monitor and develop all of these moral practices. The examination has the potential to recognise anomalies and then normalise them through corrective or therapeutic means. As Foucault states: 'The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the 'social worker'-judge; it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based' (Foucault 1991b, p. 304).

The examination is a process that creates a story about the individual, a text about individual differences, but it inscribes that individual story within the structures that support and regulate the individual history. The examination and other records measure the individual in relation to the norms of acceptable behaviour. I will now proceed to focus on the role of professional discourses in producing the examination.

SECTION 1: Professional Definitions of Domestic Violence

Section one distinguishes the approach of each profession based on their definitions of domestic violence, and in section two an understanding of bio-power is used to expose the effects of these definitions.

Definitions are important as they reveal and affect how the issue of domestic violence is perceived by both victims and perpetrators of violence and the overall view of an issue, which in turn informs the directions for research and the way responses and interventions

are developed and implemented (Dobash & Dobash 1990). There are many competing definitions of domestic violence. My argument is not to determine the 'best' or 'most accurate' definition of domestic violence, but to locate the differences and power dependencies inherent within the definitions as they are used by various disciplines.

The establishment of disciplines is based on their claim to specific knowledges and the use of their own specialised language (Weedon 1997). The strength of a discipline or field of knowledge is in creating knowledges and in sustaining power as a result of the created knowledges. Foucault commentators McHoul and Grace (1993) recognise the specific nature of a discourse as it is associated with certain disciplines, professions or fields of knowledge:

These specific discourses or disciplines must not be looked at as a global entity (discourses in general) because their histories are quite distinct. Some disciplines have long histories (medicine and mathematics), while others do not (economics and psychiatry). Furthermore, within each of these fields of knowledge, the statements which compose them are not only distinct in each case but also are subject to quite different kinds of transformation.

McHoul & Grace 1993, p. 43

There are many professions claiming knowledge in the field of domestic violence. One example is the law, as domestic violence is now recognised throughout each State and Territory of Australia as a criminal act. Medicine is another, because of the health effects and the increasing role of the medical profession in identifying and treating cases of domestic violence. The doctor has unique access to the bodies of patients and is positioned to observe marks of violence. The role of welfare and human service practitioners, including social workers, psychologists, family therapists and community development workers, is to intervene to prevent domestic violence through macro

interventions such as social policy or community education campaigns, or at a micro level when counselling ‘victims’ and ‘perpetrators’ of domestic violence or intervening with ‘dysfunctional’ families or relationships. Feminist interests are also represented in making knowledge claims about domestic violence, in so far as domestic violence is an example of ‘patriarchy’ or ‘gender power’. Australian feminist Jan Breckenridge (1999, p. 14) identifies the inherent power of professional discourses. She states: ‘within professional discourses, the strategies of subjugation and silences have selectively constructed what is to be counted as “real” and “true”, as well as what is and isn’t spoken about in relation to domestic and sexual violence.’ She claims that the ‘feminist’ voice is one that has provided challenges to the existing professional definitions of sexual and domestic violence through a critique of their responses to victims. Breckenridge fails to acknowledge that the feminist discourse also operates within these power relations. These different categories of professions, whilst presented here as separate and independent, are not mutually exclusive; for example, there are many feminist lawyers and human service providers. These professions are presented within this thesis as representative of the key stakeholders within the field of domestic violence. They are distinguished from one another first by their underlying assumptions concerning explanations for domestic violence and hence solutions and, second, by the fact that they are key players in the domestic violence ‘industry’. Hence these professions have established themselves as possessors of specific knowledges about domestic violence. This delineation of professions and the accompanying responsibilities for particular areas of knowledge and intervention is important to this debate as they each have different explanations for regulation and control.

The cross-disciplinary nature of domestic violence requires many professionals, each with their own knowledge base, to work closely together. It is evident in the following

quotation that the United States Panel on the Understanding and Control of Violent Behaviour experienced difficulties when working on the issue of violence across disciplines. They stated:

The panel believes that the difficulty of communication across disciplines and violence-control agencies is a major barrier to developing effective interventions. Interdisciplinary communication requires each researcher to invest substantial time and effort in learning one another's vocabularies, in learning how phenomena at different levels of description are measured and classified, and in learning about the related disciplines.

National Research Council 1993, pp. 321-322 cited in Dobash & Dobash 1998, p. 7

Feminist political theorist Carol Lee Bacchi (1999) presents a 'What's the problem?' approach to policy analysis. In this approach she distinguishes 'problem representation' as her central concern (Bacchi 1999, p. 37). She borrows from Stone (1988, p. 83 cited in Bacchi 1999, p. 36) in setting up her approach: 'in confronting any definition of a policy problem, the astute analyst needs to ask how that definition also defines interested parties and stakes, how it allocates the roles of bully and underdog, and how a different definition would change power relations'. Hence, differing constructions of social problems are central to Bacchi's analysis. Further to this she argues for social commentators or those working to bring about social change, to 'examine their language, their concepts, their assumptions and the way they construct their case discursively' (Bacchi 1999, p. 45). In the field of domestic violence, as in other policy arenas, the way the social problem is defined has consequences, both intended and unintended. Bacchi's 'What's the problem?' approach is useful to this thesis as it not only examines the power relations inherent in differing constructions of policy problems, but it also highlights the ways in which groups are constituted in policy discourse (Bacchi 1999, p. 46). Bacchi makes use of Foucault's understanding of the way in which individuals engage in the practice of self-monitoring

whilst believing themselves to be free from surveillance. To provide examples of her approach Bacchi (1999) investigates various policy problems. One of these is the language used to describe domestic violence. She suggests that the use of terms such as ‘wife battering’, ‘domestic violence’, ‘spousal abuse’, ‘family violence’, ‘violence against women’ and ‘men’s violence’ have political consequences (Bacchi 1999, p. 165). She argues that the language used to describe the object of policy concern has an effect upon the experience of, in this instance, the victim and the proposed site for intervention (Bacchi, 1999: 169). Debates about the best names to describe ‘domestic violence’ also occur within the domestic violence sector (MacDonald 1998, pp. 35-36). My analysis of the definitions of domestic violence, whilst different in focus from Bacchi’s work, uses aspects of her ‘what’s the problem?’ approach.

Across the political spectrum, definitions of domestic violence have been contested throughout its brief history. Hence, examining definitions provides a means of examining the visible action of bio-politics, a form of bio-power. To illustrate the dependencies amongst the discourses I will draw on definitions or understandings of domestic violence from the following profession (fields of knowledge): feminist, medical, legal and human services. Each profession’s priorities and underlying knowledge base influences the definition and what is understood as ‘domestic violence’. I have taken the liberty to suggest that the definitions selected for examination are representative of the discipline. In doing this, I acknowledge the differences within each of the disciplines and accept that I may be presenting the generic or dominant voice of the disciplines’ discourses, downplaying the possibility of contesting and counter discourses. The definitions will be examined to provide an example of the ways in which the ability to define a social problem acts to control and regulate the population, but that this is played out in different ways by different professions.

Feminist Definitions of Domestic Violence

The political document selected as representing feminist interests was produced by the National Committee on Violence Against Women (NCVAW). The *National Strategy on Violence Against Women*²⁵ (NCVAW 1993) utilises an analysis of gender power and works within Foucault's power/knowledge paradigm. The NCVAW *Position Paper* (1992 in NCVAW 1993) clearly and consistently refers not to domestic violence but to violence against women²⁶. It defines violence against women as:

Male violence against women is behaviour by the man, adopted to control his victim, which results in physical, sexual and/or psychological damage, forced social isolation, or economic deprivation, or behaviour which leaves a woman living in fear.

NCVAW 1993, p. 45

This definition of violence against women, which includes understandings of 'domestic violence', clearly articulates a gendered understanding of violence. It focuses both on the action (the forms of violence committed by the man and the presumed intent of those actions) and the response (the woman's experience of fear). This definition of violence against women is compatible with a radical feminist standpoint as the definition names men as the perpetrator and women as the target of violence, thus putting gender power at the centre of the definition.

Gail Mason argues that this definition does not fully explain domestic violence for *all* women. She suggests that lesbian women are excluded from this definition of domestic

²⁵ Gail Mason (1997, p. 47) suggests that political dialogue in this field has been strongly influenced by feminist formulations of the problem. At the beginning of the 1990s this was arguably seen as a 'seminal' document (in that it was one of the first influenced by feminist premises) for the development and guidance of Federal policy initiatives.

²⁶ The use of the term 'violence against women' is also political. It signals the feminist critiques of the term 'domestic violence' which feminists consider does not encapsulate the gendered nature of the male violence against women.

violence due to the dominance of heterosexual assumptions (Mason 1997, p. 51). It would seem that this definition may have been influential in the development of the subsequent medical definition and the legal definition offered here (considering the time lines and progression of thought). The radical feminist definition is broad in its interpretation of violence, recognising that violence is more than physical violence, however it is narrow in its identification the victim and perpetrator of that violence. The frequency or severity of behaviours is not considered central to this particular definition of domestic violence.

Medical Definitions of Domestic Violence

The medical definitions I will discuss have been sourced from research reports on the detection and treatment of domestic violence within two emergency departments of Australian hospitals. Researchers have used these definitions of domestic violence in their attempt to measure the incidence of domestic violence discernable in the medical environment.

The Monash University Accident Research Centre undertook an examination of the patterns and indicators of domestic violence. In the introductory chapter, the authors outline their operational definition of domestic violence as ‘partner violence resulting in injury in those aged 15 years and over, occurring both within and outside the home’ (Sherrard et al. 1994, p. 11). This definition focuses on physical violences which result in bodily injury. There is no mention of the subjective state of the victim, nor are the behaviours of the perpetrator detailed in this definition. Unlike the previously described feminist definition which did not specify the relationship between victim and perpetrator, this medical definition focuses on the ‘partner’. The researchers acknowledge that ‘this definition is narrow compared with most used in the literature’ (Sherrard et al. 1994, p.

11). This first medical definition is, quite clearly, designed solely to determine the bodily injuries sustained by the victim (who can be male or female, hetero- or homosexual). Hence, in this instance, the physical injuries to the body of the victim or the results of physical violence are what constitute domestic violence. This definition makes 'sense' when a narrow or traditional view of health as the 'absence of disease' is adopted rather than a more holistic socio-cultural view of health. In contrast with the feminist definition, this definition avoids a gender dimension through the adoption of the neutral term 'partner violence'. Interestingly, the term 'within or outside the home' extends the focus to attacks occurring outside the 'domestic' location by non-domicile partners, including by an estranged partner (and it would presumably include sexual violations). In this definition 'domestic' is a relationship not a location. The object of interest appears to be the injured party rather than the perpetrator. The medical gaze seems not to be towards identifying and controlling abusive partners but in responding to their victims.

Australian medical academic and researcher Gwenneth Roberts and her colleagues undertook a similar study to that by Sherrard et al., to determine the prevalence and predictors of domestic violence victims at the emergency department at the Royal Brisbane Hospital in 1991. The operational definition of domestic violence used within their project was:

persistent abuse of an adult 16 years of age or over, during or after a family or close relationship, where one partner was afraid of and/or being physically hurt by the other.

Roberts et al. 1993, p. 307

This second medical definition is more inclusive of violence in the form of coercive control. In this definition the researchers have included the subjective experience of the victim, established as 'fear'. Even so, the emphasis is clearly focused on the manifestations of physical violence in injury. Roberts et al. measured the experiences of

domestic violence through the use of questionnaires, which included questions from the controversial Conflict Tactics Scale²⁷, augmented with questions designed to measure sexual, emotional, verbal and economic abuses. Hence, forms of physical violence are not privileged to the same extent as within the first medical definition.

The definition by Roberts et al. suggests that ‘persistent’ or repeated abuses are required for the violence to be considered domestic violence. Consequently, if this medical definition were adopted, the first instance or any one-off episodes of violence in the relationship would presumably not be recognised as domestic violence. Borkowski, Murch and Walker (1983) found the frequency of violence to be a defining characteristic of domestic violence. This was also found to be the case in the medical definition. Both medical definitions specify the age of the victim of domestic violence as an ‘adult’ (15 or 16 years), not recognising that domestic violence may occur in adolescent or dating relationships.

Whilst both of these medical definitions focus on physical injuries sustained by the victim (and so it could be argued they are victim focused), there is minimal acknowledgment of the emotional injury that may also be sustained from domestic violence. The medical emphasis on physical well-being rather than emotional well-being is evident. The second medical definition (Roberts et al. 1993) illustrates an attempt by the researchers to integrate ideas from feminist definitions within medical clinical practice. Hence the symptom (or subjective experience) is being introduced into medical understandings of domestic violence along with the ‘sign’ of physical injury. As the definitions stand currently, there is no acknowledgment of gender or power relations within either medical definition.

²⁷ Critiques of the Conflict Tactics Scale suggest that it de-contextualises the violence, removing the gendered nature of Domestic Violence (Dobash and Dobash, 1992).

Legal Definitions of Domestic Violence

In Australia, there are two levels of jurisdiction: the Federal legislation²⁸, which covers all States and Territories in a limited range of areas; and the more extensive State and Territory legislation. As criminal matters are generally the responsibility of the States, domestic violence legislation is predominantly included within State-based criminal and civil law. Domestic violence legislation varies substantially between States, hence calls for a more consistent approach throughout Australia (Domestic Violence Legislation Working Group 1997, p. 1). In response, the Domestic Violence Legislation Working Group released a report titled *Model Domestic Violence Laws* in 1999. These calls for a Federal approach have not, as yet, come to fruition (Charlesworth, Turner and Foreman 2000, p. 223). At the time of submitting this thesis, despite the above recommendations, a Federal approach has still not been implemented.

Since my research is based in South Australia, I will examine the *South Australian Domestic Violence Act* (1994), which states that:

A defendant commits domestic violence

(a) if the defendant causes personal injury to a member of the defendant's family; or

(b) if the defendant causes damage to property of a member of the defendant's family; or

(c) if on two or more separate occasions -

(i) the defendant follows a family member; or

(ii) the defendant loiters outside the place of residence of a family member or some other place frequented by a family member; or

(iii) the defendant enters or interferes with property occupied by, or in the possession of, a family member; or

²⁸ A Family Violence Strategy has been introduced to the Family Court of Australia by retiring Chief Justice Alastair Nicholson at the Federal level (Family Court of Australia, 2004). This strategy adopts a more comprehensive description of elements of violence. It is too early to establish the effects of the changes that have been introduced.

(iv) the defendant gives offensive material where it will be found by, given to or brought to the attention of a family member; or

(v) the defendant keeps a family member under surveillance; or

(vi) the defendant engages in other conduct,

so as to reasonably arouse a family member's apprehension or fear.

This definition describes the behaviour that constitutes acts of domestic violence under the law in South Australia. Notably, it includes both physical violence (causing injury to the body or damage to property) and forms of psychological violence such as stalking. Superficially, the victim's experience of violence is mentioned: '*reasonably* arousing a family member's fear or apprehension'. However, upon closer examination, the law provides a particular meaning for 'reasonable': the notion of *reasonable* means the effect that the actions would have on a 'reasonable person' and not on this particular victim. Hence the subjective experience of the victim of domestic violence is not central to the legal interpretation of violence. In comparison, sexual harassment rulings have tested the notion of the 'reasonable and ordinary person' such that Judge Keith asserted:

In my view, the reasonable person perspective fails to account for the wide divergence between most women's views of appropriate sexual conduct and those of men ... unless the outlook of the reasonable woman is adopted, the defendants as well as the courts are permitted to sustain ingrained notions of reasonable behaviour fashioned by the offenders, in this case, men.

Rabidue v Osceola Refining Co. Supp. 419 (1984) at 626

Australian legal academic Jenny Morgan discusses a sexual harassment case presided over by the then Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commissions President Marcus Einfeld in *Hall, Oliver and Reid v Sheiban* (1988). She asserts that the difficulty with the anti-discrimination legislation is that it is ultimately enforced at the tribunal or court level by

men, whom she argues have ‘no understanding of the oppression experienced by women and other subordinated groups’ (Morgan 1988, p. 160). In this particular case, Justice Einfeld found the male respondent guilty of sexual harassment; however, the complainants were refused compensation. The injuries experienced by the women were of a psychological nature and, in refusing compensation for the damages experienced, Morgan suggests that Einfeld failed to recognise as harms the non-physical violence such as psychological violence. Morgan (1988, p. 159) states: ‘if it is not worthy of compensation, it appears as if it is not a real injury’. From this ruling it is evident that an acknowledgment of the subjective experience of the female victim of crime is at best precarious. This finding was reversed on appeal, bringing into play the actual experience of the victim. A shift in the definition of sexual harassment occurred such that Justice Einfeld determined that a woman must only establish that sexual harassment occurred and that she suffered as a result:

The task in these cases is therefore not to determine what other women faced with the same behaviour would or might have felt or how they would or might have reacted ... there is, in my view, no room in the assessment of damages in sex discrimination cases for a criterion of some type of hypothetical ‘reasonable woman’, whatever or whoever that might conceivably be.

Bennett v Everitt (1988) EOC 92-244 at 77, 283

Because the main purpose of the legal definition of domestic violence is to establish fault, this adversarial process establishes and reinforces the victim/perpetrator dichotomy. Evidence of breach of the domestic violence restraining order is required to establish proof of domestic violence, privileging physical forms of violence such as assault, slapping, pushing and punching because these leave marks on the body or can be observed by a third party, whereas coercive and controlling behaviours can not. The subjective experience of fear is considered by the magistrate in making the domestic violence

restraining order, a civil remedy requiring evidence on the balance of probabilities. Breach of the restraining order, a criminal act, requires a heavier burden of proof and evidence that the finding is 'beyond' reasonable doubt. Therefore, the inclusion of the victim's subjective experience of 'fear' is currently without legal redress as it is probably unlikely that a magistrate, especially a male one, and judiciary (still male dominated) will find an apprehension of fear beyond reasonable doubt unless there is also evidence of actual physical violence or at least repeated threatening behaviours, such as verbal threats. Australian legal critic Nicolas Seddon, in his review of legal responses to domestic violence across Australia, considers the difficulties in seeking legal redress for non-physical violences. He comments that:

some types of violence, such as economic deprivation, excessive possessiveness and jealousy or enforced social isolation, are not directly remediable through the legal measures. ... Similarly, denigration or humiliation is a common form of domestic violence but not generally amenable to legal redress. Even if a court could be persuaded to make an order forbidding such conduct, enforcement of the order would be difficult. This merely shows that the law is limited in what it can do; it cannot effectively deal with some forms of violence.

Seddon 1993, p. 3

In this quotation, Seddon is suggesting that the legal definition can not and does not encapsulate the full experience of domestic violence and provides the victim with only limited protection. Thus the focus of the legal definition remains on physical forms of violence. Law, in its search for truth, relies on empirical/observable evidence or 'signs' of violence before giving the victim the authority to prosecute the offender. The law also does not describe the relationship in male-female terms; rather, it uses gender neutral language.

Seddon (1993, p. 2) utilises the case of *Plows v Plows* (1979) to illustrate the room for discretion within the Federally based Family Law's definition of domestic violence to cover experiences of violence other than physical violence. In this case the judge used a court order to forbid a particular parental behaviour, in order to protect the child. The judge ordered that each party to the marriage not denigrate the other in front of the children (Alexander 2002, p. 68). Hence verbal abuse was not legally tolerated. This was, of course, for the obvious reason of protecting the child and not the victim of verbal abuse. This case indicates that the law has some flexibility to countermand behaviours other than physical violence through the use of specific orders. Again, the ability to enforce the law remains an issue.

In an attempt to be universalistic and gender neutral, terms such as 'family member' used within the *Domestic Violence Act 1994* (SA) serve to obscure the gendered dimension of domestic violence. The *Domestic Violence Act 1994* (SA) covers only domestic violence restraining orders for former and currently married couples, heterosexual de facto couples and children (Alexander 2002, p. 140). Restraining orders can also be sought by non-cohabiting parents of children, boyfriend/girlfriend relationships or same sex relationships under the *Summary Procedure Act 1921* (SA) (Alexander 2002, p. 140).

The reality of enforcement of the restraining order is that there needs to be evidence to support the existence of domestic violence, which in turn relies on physical damage or injuries. Further, the notion of a 'reasonable person' also requires obvious harms to be considered seriously in the courts. Finally, gender neutrality in the language used within the legislation disguises the gendered nature of the crime. It is evident that legal and medical discourses are at the very early stages of acknowledging psychological forms of

violence as harm. It is unlikely (and possibly undesirable) that the law attempts to legislate for appropriate psychological and interactive behaviours between intimates.

Human Services Policy Definition of Domestic Violence

The final definition is from what I have termed ‘welfare and human services’. This field includes professions such as social workers, community workers and policy makers. I have chosen an example of a social policy document prepared by the South Australian Office for Families and Children (1997). This definition is broader in scope than the previous definitions I have discussed. I argue that it has been influenced by feminist theories, which explain violence as a result of a gendered power imbalance:

Domestic violence is any form of abuse, violence and/or coercion by a partner or previous partner that serves to establish and maintain power and control over another person, is enacted in a context of unequal power or privilege, and has the potential to cause harm to the physical or emotional well being of that person.

The behaviours which constitute domestic violence include actual or threatened physical assault, sexual assault, verbal, social, spiritual and economic abuse.

The Office for Families and Children, SA 1997, p. 7

The recognition of the ability for the behaviour to ‘cause harm to the physical or emotional wellbeing of that person’ sets this definition apart from the South Australian legislation which requires that a ‘reasonable person’ be harmed by the behaviour. This definition includes a much wider understanding of the types of behaviours that constitute domestic violence, which in turn broadens the subjective experiences of domestic violence. This definition once again describes the behaviours that constitute domestic violence. There is a clear emphasis on understanding violence as a result of a power imbalance resulting from structural inequalities such as gender. This definition relies on an understanding of power as a resource which one person in the relationship has and the other does not.

To summarise, it is striking that the gendered nature of domestic violence adopted by the radical feminists is not found in the medical and legal definitions. These definitions instead focus on the observable behaviours between partners and their effects, rather than the subjective feelings of the victim; and they take little account of the context in which the violence occurs, such as the power balances and social scripts of sexualities. The human service definition, whilst recognising the context within which the violence occurs, specifically acknowledges the gendered nature of the crime but not the many power relationships that may influence such as social class, race, and sexual preference. This may indicate support for the feminist agenda.

These examples have illustrated the ways in which most definitions of domestic violence focus on the behaviour of the perpetrator rather than the experience of the victim and vary depending on the discipline of the definer. They also show the privileging of physical forms of violence amongst medical and legal definitions and most often the avoidance of mentioning either power relations or gender. Foucault (1990a, p. 144) was critical of the law, whilst suggesting that it, too, acts in a regulatory manner, as imposing a notion of what constitutes the norm. He suggests that, by contrast, bio-power has the capacity to act more subtly to influence the social body. Danaher, Schirato and Webb (2000, p. 125) suggest that 'Governments produced the body, in their discourses, as an object of social concern, and used tools like social policy to produce particular types of populations'. The above definitions and their interpretations have the capacity to shape the social body and the ways in which its members internalise notions of domestic violence. Some professions hold this power to a greater extent than others, depending upon their sanctioning ability. The next section outlines some of the intended and unintended effects of the definitions of domestic violence.

SECTION 2: Signs and Symptoms

As mentioned previously, the subtle actions of bio-power work to control the body of the populace. I have established that the way social problems are defined has a social impact as well as an impact on the subject. The following discussion highlights some unintended consequences on society and the subject following the adoption of the aforementioned definitions. I use Foucault's analogy of the medical sign and symptom to demonstrate the reliance of the medical and legal professions on the sign (often a physical behaviour read by the professional) and the feminist and human service professions' propensity to seek the symptom or psychological states as offered by the victim. The sign/symptom distinction is useful, as the sign is valued as objective, visible and verifiable, being available to the gaze of others. In comparison, the symptom is subjective, interpretable, open to change, deceit or misunderstanding.

Privileging of the Physical, Privileging of the Visible

The above analysis of definitions of domestic violence reveals that the medical (and legal) professions privilege physical violences and visible manifestations of domestic violence. This has the consequence of positioning women who present to the emergency section of the hospital or police station with physical bruises or injuries as 'legitimate' victims of domestic violence. That is, within medical and legal services, physical injuries must be present if a woman is to be considered a 'real' victim of domestic violence. As a result, this 'truth' combined with the dominant power/knowledge position of the medical and legal professions, physical forms of violence have come to be privileged over non-physical forms within western discourses of domestic violence. Privileging the physical could be argued to be a manifestation of a deeper tendency to value the sign over the symptom (what is observable to the eye over what is experienced and reported) or the objective fact

over the subjective experience. I will provide a brief overview of Foucault's work in relation to the medical model and apply this to the current medical definitions.

Foucault discussed the emphasis of the medical profession on the sign in *The Birth of the Clinic*. Foucault undertakes an archaeological exploration of the genesis of clinical practice within medicine over what he determines as an essential period of change from the mid-eighteenth century to the early twentieth century. One of the central arguments is the evolving role of the sign and symptom in medical examination. Foucault recognises the influence of Bichat's seminal work which witnesses a shift from a focus on both signs and symptoms, to an examination and tracing of disease within the body and the use of visual, sound and tactile signs to identify disease and disorder. Reading the signs meant that the body was understood as a physical object without psychological depths. This shift in the genesis of clinical practice came about, Foucault suggests, because of the increased manipulation of the corpse and tracing of disease. It was at this point that medicine ceased to be a work of reason and became a science of observation (Scott 1987). Foucault thus describes the privileged position that observable 'facts' have been given within the medical profession over time: 'The observing gaze refrains from intervening: it is silent and gestureless. Observation leaves things as they are; there is nothing hidden to it in what is given' (Foucault 1993, p. 107). Foucault claims that a major shift in medical perception, or what he terms the 'medical gaze', occurred at the end of the eighteenth century. In the new perception, the sign and symptom were separated: the symptom of the disease may remain silent, the truth of the disease was contained only in what the doctor found, in the form of the sign (Armstrong 1984). The sign was read by the physician upon the surface of the body, whereas symptoms were hidden below the surface of the body and represented the experience of the disease/illness.

Symptoms are inherently subjective in that they are directly perceptible and experienced by the patient and must be described to the doctor. They may or may not manifest in a sign. In response to the report of, for example, a sore throat, the doctor seeks to clarify the disease diagnosis by examining the throat for signs. The doctor begins visually ('open your mouth'), follows this with an auditory reading ('and say ahh'), whilst also examining the throat externally with his/her hands to identify possible swollen glands or any other palpable external sign. These signs confirm the symptom and, in their power to confirm, hold great authority. Foucault suggests that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the sign has become the privileged means of clinical examination. The sign provides truth to the patient's claim. Hence, without a corresponding sign, a symptom may remain untreated, until the time upon which a sign becomes evident.

The emphasis on the sign as opposed to the symptom would, in the case of domestic violence, support the focus of the medical profession on the physical manifestation of violence in the form of injury and bruising. Armstrong (1984) has undertaken a content analysis of medical texts (1910 to 1980), examining how the interaction with the patient is described. His particular interest is in the way doctors are advised to take the patient's 'history' and to engage with them about their problem. He suggests that the early texts confirm Foucault's theory in that they reflect the dominance of signs in medical diagnosis. However, Armstrong argues that around the 1950s the dominance of the sign was challenged. He argues that there was a new interlinking between the sign and the symptom, with the recognition that not all symptoms have signs and that not all signs have symptoms. For example, high cholesterol, low bone density and hypertension are symptom-less but to the doctor's 'eye' are signs. Domestic violence could also be described through what Armstrong identifies as a 'sign-less' symptom. However, my examination of medical and legal definitions of domestic violence indicates that the emphasis on the 'sign', or that which is observable, predominates within the medical and

legal definitions of domestic violence. The emphasis on the sign as compared with the symptom is possibly a point of difference between medicine and the psych-sciences, because the psych-sciences focus upon the experience of the symptom rather than the sign.

The power of the medical profession is expressed through their specific knowledge and social authority, which in turn provides the basis for the creation of medical truths. Foucault states: 'truth is centred on the scientific discourse and the institutions which produce it' (Foucault 1979, p. 46). I am suggesting that the scientific model of clinical practice which privileges the sign as truth has helped create the privileged position of physical forms of domestic violence. Foucault suggests that there are specific effects of power which are attached to truth or successful truth claims (Foucault 1979). The inter-linking of medical with legal professions continues to uphold the sign as truth within discourses of domestic violence.

Sexual Harassment Legislation: Subjective Experience

A limitation of the legal definition of a criminal offence is that it usually includes both prohibited conduct (which in relation to domestic violence refers to the breach of the restraining order) and a 'guilty mind' or intent (Legal Service Commission of South Australia, 1995). The effects of behaviours which unintentionally cause harm or incite fear are disregarded in this definition. An example that clearly demonstrates this semantic difference is the domestic violence perpetrator who leaves a rose lying on the doorstep of the house of an ex-partner. This incident is not unlawful, although its outcome incites fear in the receiver. The fear is of the presence and possible surveillance by the ex-partner. The legal understanding of domestic violence does not incorporate this experience as domestic violence.

Two main components of each of the definitions of domestic violence will be identified – the behavioural (sign) component and the experiential (symptom) component. The behavioural component refers to the aspects by which the ‘offender’ or ‘perpetrator’ undertakes the act of domestic violence. The definitions then offer, to varying degrees, comprehensive accounts of the types or manifestations of that violence. The outcome or experiential component refers to the ‘victim’s’ experience of the violence. This is couched in the terms ‘fear’, ‘apprehension’, ‘disempowered’ and the ‘questioning of self worth’. This experiential component refers to the ‘victim’s’ subjective experience of the violence. To get a better understanding of the two components (behaviour and experience) I will contrast them with current understandings of sexual harassment legislation which are experiential in nature. Whilst in the case of domestic violence the legal definition requires the presence of signs, other areas of the law rely less upon the sign, acknowledging the significance of symptoms. An example of this is in the area of sexual harassment which is based on the symptom or subjective experience of the victim. The legal definition of sexual harassment in SA is:

A person shall for the purposes of this section, be taken to harass sexually another person if the first mentioned person makes an unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, to the other person, or engages in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the other person, and

(a) the other person has reasonable grounds for believing that a rejection of the advance, a refusal of the request or the taking of objection to the conduct would disadvantage the other person in any way in connection with the other person’s employment or work or possible employment or possible work; or

(b) as a result of the other person’s rejection of the advance, refusal of the request or taking of objection of the conduct, the other person is disadvantaged in any way in

connection with the other person's employment or work or possible employment or possible work.

Section 28 (3) of the *Sexual Discrimination Act 1984*

This legislation is experience or victim based. It includes both intentional and unintentional behaviours by the perpetrator and hence, unlike domestic violence legislation, the intention of the alleged harasser is disregarded. Therefore, sexual harassment is identified by the experience of the person being harassed: 'Sexual harassment is in the mind of the receiver, not the beholder' (Wallace 1985, p. 27). It is based on the understanding of the term 'unwelcome' and what this means for each individual person. The title of an article about sexual harassment, 'Where the victim defines the crime' (Rydges 1984), provides support for the fluid interpretation of offensive behaviour. Thus sexual harassment is recognised as a subjective experience. When pressed to describe what sexual harassment is, Carmel Niland responded:

It is difficult to make an exhaustive list. A lot depended on the nature of the organisation: dirty calendars might be considered sexual harassment in an office, but not in a factory where most employees are men. It covers a range of verbal and physical experiences that will vary from one company to another.

Rydges 1984, p. 62

The sexual harassment legislation includes a range of experiences of harassment. That is, the laws are not prescriptive of what constitutes sexual harassment, but the experience of the receiver is the paramount concern. Hence particular types of harassment will not be privileged as 'real' harassment to the exclusion of others. Defining law on the basis of the experience of the victim results in the expansion of the definition to include 'all' experiences as compared to an external 'body' passing judgement and making decisions about what constitutes sexual harassment for all women and men. However, the reasonable person test still applies in terms of reasonable grounds for believing one will be

disadvantaged. The experience within domestic violence definitions is that it is prescriptive in terms of the acts or behaviours which constitute types of domestic violence. As a consequence, if a person's experience falls outside these parameters, she or he is not considered a 'real' victim of domestic violence, 'deserving' of legal redress and social services.

Broadening the Definition of Domestic Violence

As indicated earlier, feminist definitions of domestic violence have provided challenges to definitions which privilege physical violence (Breckenridge 1999). They have made inroads into the dismantling of these dominant discourses. I will now consider the effects of these challenges to the dominant conception of domestic violence as physical violence.

Definitions of domestic violence are constantly evolving. Feminist interest in the area of domestic violence, as with sexual assault (Kelly et al. 1996, p. 85), has made the unspeakable, 'speakable'. This was demonstrated in the newspaper analysis which found that the term domestic violence did not exist in 1975/1976, whilst in 1995/1996 it was in common usage. Feminism has provided a 'safe' space for the discussion of a myriad of forms of violence against women and girls. The ability for women to speak about the violences has informed understandings and definitions of domestic violence.

Kelly locates two strategies used by feminists and researchers to overcome the limited definitions in use (Kelly et al. 1996, pp. 85-86). One is to broaden the word's meaning to include more experiences, whilst the second is to create new concepts or words to explain different experiences, for example, creating the term 'sexual harassment'. In the field of domestic violence the predominant strategy in use is the former, the broadening of meanings, predominantly to create a more inclusive definition of domestic violence. So, when women reveal a new form of violence, the abuse is then added to the definition. For

example, early understandings of domestic violence were limited to physical and sexual abuses. This has expanded to include psychological, emotional and verbal abuses. This has since increased further to include economic, cultural and spiritual abuses. The mapping of this evolution is evident within the media analysis of representations of domestic violence presented earlier. The identification of these abuses has been informed by women's experiences and is meant to be inclusive of all women's experiences of violence. The above examination of definitions indicates that, within feminist and human service areas, there has been more willingness to accept a broader range of violences based on women's experiences. This same acceptance is not reflected to the same extent in legal or medical definitions, which remain focused upon signs or evidence.

The process of broadening has worked in various ways. First, there is a more inclusive understanding of the different types of violence, and second, a broader understanding of who can be a victim of violence. For example, the use of the term 'partner' rather than 'wife' includes both heterosexual and homosexual couples. The use of the term 'family' member includes both partner-to-partner violence, as well as generational abuse such as child-to-parent or parent-to-child. As documented by Bacchi (1999, p. 177), a consequence of this broadening can be the removal of the gendered nature of the crime. The next section provides some examples of the intended and unintended effects of these various definitions, using the men's interview material to show the way these definitions are negotiated by men in their construction of the self.

SECTION 3: Negotiating the Subjectivity of the Perpetrator of Domestic Violence – Men's Experiences

An unintended consequence of the various definitions of domestic violence is that contradictory messages are sent to victims and perpetrators from various professional

groups. At their first evaluation interview, the men attending men's groups were asked what had surprised them about the first night of the group. Many of the men disclosed their surprise at the diversity of the men attending the group and yet how 'normal' they seemed. They were also surprised at their high level of comfort in talking. For some of the men their surprise was in learning the diverse range of behaviours which constitute violence. On the first night of the group, leaders routinely identify and discuss definitions of domestic violence which include the many types of behaviours which women recognise as domestic violence (most closely reflecting the human services definition). Thus one participant, Justin, recollected his surprise at the wide range of violent behaviours which included: 'actually lashing out to maim or put somebody else in hospital with rage, or taking it out on children. [But also] You know, things being forced [on another person], like sex or anything. There's a whole range [of violences]' A416M. Similarly, Sean recalls in more detail the discussion about the different types of violence:

One of the first things that the lady, one of the leaders actually shared about, was really good – it was an eye-opener – when she explained the first four things that we can relate our problems to which were physical, social and verbal, and the other one I don't remember²⁹. But I thought it was very good because it made everyone think and everyone began to be open and honest about the situation. Because there was sexual abuse in there and everything and it was good that people were challenged, and you could see that they were really being open about it. A417M

Ironically, the emotional form of violence is the category that Sean fails to remember, possibly an indication of the societal lack of interest in this dimension of violence. Contradictory messages are sent to the men, as these definitions reach beyond the scope of the current legislation. Hence, adopting the human service definition in the men's group is

²⁹ Emotional violence is the fourth form of violence.

a form of bio-power, attempting to mobilise the men's control of their own behaviours at a level beyond the legal prescription of what is considered violent.

One unintended consequence of privileging of physical violence by the medical (and legal) discourse is the men's claims about their own violence at the men's groups. Throughout their interviews with me, the men made comments which minimised their violence when it was not physical violence. Comments such as 'I'm not a hitter' and 'I'm not as bad as some [of the men] in the group, one guy broke his missus' jaw' were frequently provided to distinguish their non-physical violence from 'real' violence. These comments suggest the persuasiveness and pervasiveness of the dominant medical and legal understandings of domestic violence which privilege physical violence. This, of course, works both ways in that the men actively engage in the formation of these discourses as well.

An additional unintended outcome of the privileging of physical violence is the establishment of a hierarchy within the group, whereby the men who use physical force are seen as 'worse' than men who use other non-physical forms of violence. For example, Jeremy stated: 'Some of the guys are a lot more violent than me yet they've still got a woman, a lady in their life. Whether they really care for these people I couldn't be sure' A1078M. In this statement, Jeremy, whose wife Jenny had left him, reframes the problem as her inability to tolerate his violence which, in his interpretation, was not as bad as that of other men in the group. In this way, Jeremy also judges his wife in terms of her ability to tolerate certain behaviours: she is deemed abnormally critical.

As the medical and legal professions do not actively reinforce these expanded notions of violence, the men are able to rationalise their 'narrow' definition and disqualify the expanded definition presented within the men's groups. The medical and legal definitions

in practice support men's view of themselves as non-violent, unless physical violence has been used. Hence the men and women in my study are sent contradictory messages by the various professions about the behaviours that constitute domestic violence, and so can actively take up the messages that they desire. We are, therefore, in a climate of confusing and contradictory definitions and meanings of domestic violence. The inter-linking of the medical and legal professions continues to uphold the sign (and physical behaviour) as truth. The medical and legal professions maintain privileged status when determining 'legitimate' victims of domestic violence and hence legitimate the naming of perpetrators.

In the next chapter I remain focused on the professions, specifically the medical and human service professions, examining the interventions that are used when working with male perpetrators and female victims of domestic violence.

CHAPTER 4

Professional Spaces (2)

The previous chapter has established that the differing ways those professions define domestic violence impacts on how the men understand their violences. Foucault's notions of bio-power and a bio-politics of the population, a technique of controlling the population, was applied to explore the various definitions of domestic violence and their unintended consequences. This chapter continues to use Foucault's notion of a bio-politics of the human body, a form of disciplining the body and controlling the population. In this chapter I establish its use by the medical and human services professions as a means of disciplining the subject of domestic violence. I will examine how both the medical and human services professions act to control violence within the domestic relationship by adopting disciplinary techniques including confession, surveillance and examination. The differences between these professions' intervention is their respective emphasis on change and their proposed solutions. The medical profession has focused its attention on the woman victim of domestic violence, whilst human services workers focus their intervention on both the woman victim and the male perpetrator of the violence, as will be shown by using examples provided by the men and women interviewed.

I will analyse selected interventions used by the medical profession and human services workers to consider the implications of these approaches in terms of their focus for social control. The medical interventions include treatment of injuries, prevention strategies and the administration of psychotropic medication. The human services interventions examined occur within the men's group. I argue that the medical and human services interventions unintentionally serve as strategies of social control, acting on the woman partner rather than the man, despite the intention of the intervention.

Violence within relationships is increasingly being considered throughout the relevant professions as aberrant behaviour. Examples will be used to show the ways in which both members within the 'violent' heterosexual couple are enmeshed, to different degrees, in complex systems of surveillance and normalisation carried out by the professions. A distinct shift in the focus of the examination can be witnessed within professional interventions in domestic violence in the 1990s. Throughout the preceding twenty years, as is evident within the media analysis, the woman victim of violence has been the predominant subject of the gaze. It has only been in the 1990s that the male as perpetrator increasingly became the object of the gaze of the therapeutic community. His behaviour was increasingly recognised as deviant or abnormal, but amenable to 'reform'. Thus I propose that the examination has shifted emphasis and it is now the male's violent behaviour which is increasingly objectified. Once deviant behaviours are recognised, the professions act in an attempt to change the man. Hence the perpetrator becomes the object of the examination and the 'experiment' is played out upon his body. I present evidence that suggests the perpetrator resists these attempts at transformation and change, manipulating the intervention such that the responsibility for change falls back on the woman victim of domestic violence. I will further explore the way in which the medical and social welfare systems use a combination of disciplining strategies to examine the male perpetrator and female victim of domestic violence. While the professional gazes shift to the male, they remain inscribed within patriarchal discourses that tend to leave many feminist understandings of gendered power and sexual scripts unexamined.

SECTION 1: Medical Gaze on Woman's Body and Psyche

British social scientists Barrett and Roberts studied the relationship between doctors and their patients within general practice. They found that the relationship between the doctor and patient contained aspects of control and power, and that this was particularly evident with middle-aged women who were found to be the least powerful in relation to their general practice doctors (Barrett and Roberts 1978 cited Lupton 1997). The study by Barrett and Roberts is part of the critique of orthodox medicine which took place in the 1960s and 1970s.

Australian cultural theorist Deborah Lupton (1997, p. 95) suggests the critique of medicalisation was shaped by Marxist critiques of the structures of society, including questioning the social role of members of powerful and high status professions such as medicine and law. Medical sociologists adopting the findings of the critique sought to challenge and subvert the perceived power of the medical profession (Lupton 1997, p. 95). A tenet of the medicalisation critique is that social life and social problems had become more and more 'medicalised', and were thereby viewed through the prism of scientific medicine as diseases. The notion that an individual's autonomy should not be constrained by more powerful others is also central to the medicalisation critique.

Radical feminists have also been critical of the social control role of the medical profession. Feminist critiques have identified the medical profession as a predominantly patriarchal institution whose definitions of illness maintain gender inequality (Lupton 1997, p. 97). There are three aspects of the feminist critique: first, that the male is privileged over the female; second, professional knowledge is privileged over the patient's experience (sign over symptom); and third, the body as an organism is privileged over social systemic understandings of health and well-being. Feminist commentators' critiques of medicalisation usually focus on the ways in which ordinary life events specific to women, such as pregnancy, birth and menopause, become medical 'problems'. In the

case of domestic violence, however, the critique is more about the social problem becoming a 'medical' problem.

Lupton (1997, p. 97) identifies a major difficulty with the orthodox medicalisation critique in that it portrays western medicine as only unhelpful, detracting from people's health rather than improving their health status in any way. As Lupton (1997, p. 98) argues, the critiques mentioned above also fail to acknowledge the ambivalent nature of the feelings and opinions that many people have in relation to medicine, or the way that patients willingly participate in medical dominance and may indeed seek medicalisation. Australian feminist academic Rosemary Pringle, in her study of gender, power and authority within the medical profession, examined women doctors within the women's health movement. She suggests that 'medicalisation is double-edged' (Pringle 1998, p. 218) in that it permits the problem to be diagnosed and treated, whilst simultaneously supporting the power of the medical profession. Pringle (1998, p. 219) acknowledges that medical technologies may be used to the advantage of women, in gaining more control over their lives, while simultaneously the same or other technologies may be used to treat women as passive objects of medical inquiry.

Foucault has challenged the assumptions of the medicalisation critique. In *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault (1993) argues that medical paradigms have provided important systems of knowledge and related practices by which we not only understand but also experience our bodies. Hence medical power may be viewed as an underlying resource by which diseases and illnesses are identified and dealt with. The body and its various parts are understood as constructed through discourses and practices, through the 'clinical gaze' exerted by medical practitioners. Foucault's understanding of power/knowledge is central to his critique of medicalisation. Foucault argues that power is held in a network of relations, not in the domination of one social actor over another. The power relation within the

doctor-patient relationship is one of disciplinary power, where the doctor provides guidelines about how patients should understand, regulate and experience their bodies. In providing the guidelines about what is 'normal' or 'abnormal', the doctor encourages patients to become familiar with their own bodies and watch for any variances, thus engaging in self-surveillance. Foucault suggests that where there are power relations, there is also resistance and in the doctor-patient relation, patients can exercise resistance to the doctor's prescriptions of regular health checks and self-surveillance, but at the cost of their own health and well-being. I argue that the radical feminist critique of the medical model as purely controlling needs to be reconsidered in a Foucauldian light as also enabling, as a means in which the self is defined and provided with health remedies.

The following examples demonstrate several levels of medical interventions into domestic violence which are found to focus their gaze on the woman's body and psyche.

Early Prevention and Detection Strategies

At a whole population level, early prevention and detection strategies are being enacted by the medical profession as a means of surveying the population for domestic violence. Foucault has recognised the medical profession's role as a judge of normalisation, acting to return the sick subject to a state of health (Foucault 1991b, p. 304). Domestic violence victims may suffer injuries which require medical treatment. The general practitioner and the emergency departments of hospitals are well recognised as the first possible contact points for victims of domestic violence. However, research indicates that doctors often miss the 'symptoms' or fail to ask questions which elicit information about the source of the patient's injuries (Roberts et al. 1993; Stuart 1996).

Medical sociologist David Armstrong (1995, p. 395) argues that the twentieth century has witnessed the rise of a new form of medicine – surveillance medicine. This form of medicine involves the surveillance of normal populations by the use of strategies such as screening, public health campaigns, surveys and health profile questionnaires, with the primary outcome being the internalisation of good health messages by all members of the population. Armstrong argues that the emergence of surveillance medicine has resulted in both a shift within medicine to a closer alliance with the social sciences, and a shift in the examination of disease itself to spaces outside of the body. Armstrong describes this as a shift from the three-dimensional body to a four-dimensional one that includes a time-community locus (Armstrong 1995, p. 403).

Medical authorities have accepted the importance of the role of prevention and early detection programs which encourage the population to take responsibility for noticing the signs of disease. In response to screening programs, women have become surveyors of their own bodies, enacting preventative health care. Breast cancer (self breast examinations) and cervical cancer (regular pap smears) screening programs are prime examples of the collusion of medical and women's surveillance of females' health status.

Increasingly doctors are being asked to practice more stringent detection strategies in relation to victims of domestic violence (Power 1999). For example, screening programs to detect victims of domestic violence are recommended to improve the medical response to cases of domestic violence within the emergency department of hospitals (Stuart 1996, p. 66). These screening programs have also been piloted in obstetric, antenatal, drug and alcohol and mental health services (Irwin and Waugh 2001). An evaluation of the pilot project for routine screening for domestic violence in New South Wales health services recommended that routine screening be introduced in all of the aforementioned areas across New South Wales health and broadened to include early childhood services,

women's health and community health services (Irwin and Waugh 2001, p. 53). It is evident that the woman or 'victim' of domestic violence rather than the male perpetrator is the predominant target of these medical intervention strategies.

While the intention of this intervention is to document and extend 'proper' and more appropriate care to victims of domestic violence, I argue that there are differences between the use of screening programs for 'disease'-oriented disorders, such as cancer, when compared with socially-based problems such as domestic violence, which may or may not be manifest through injury or psychosocial disorders. Some of these differences are that the doctors are asking women to reveal information about criminal events; the notion of prevention is flawed in that the intervention occurs after the event of violence and not prior to it; there are limits to the resources available to secure women's ongoing safety; and the intervention may prevent her from re-attending the particular medical service as she becomes a known victim of domestic violence.

Woman's Body Surface as a Site of Surveillance

Physical markings such as bruises can inscribe the subject position of 'victim' of violence on women's bodies. Bruises present on the surface of the body result in both medical and self-surveillance.

Following severe physical abuse, women may attend the emergency department or their general practitioner to seek medical assistance. In these cases, the doctor has access to the woman's body which s/he can survey for bruises or injury. Doctors rely on the woman to reveal details about how the injuries occurred. A woman may or may not disclose the

origins of her injuries. This ability of women to refuse disclosure can be understood as a form of resistance to the doctor who may invoke victim status or an intervention that she does not want. I am proposing that bruises and injuries, these markings on the body, define the woman as a victim for the medical profession. For Foucault the body is the field on which the play of powers, knowledges and resistances is worked out. In this instance, the woman's body is the site for the interplay of women's knowledge about themselves and medical knowledge of the woman's body.

Bruises can be read in different ways and invoke different forms of self-surveillance. Some are kept silent under the cover of clothes, which provide protection from a stranger's eye. The deliberate wearing of particular clothes to cover bodily marks is a means of self-surveillance. Some bruises, for example those that indicate the arms have been held firmly by finger print markings, may invoke social silence when made public, as they indicate the direct use of force against the body. Women with obvious bruises such as a black eye are less likely to go out in public. For example, one of the women I interviewed, Jan, recalled that she refused to drop her children off at school when she had a black eye, preferring to stay at home out of the public gaze. Foucault states: 'disciplinary procedures, [are] not [only] in the form of enclosed institutions, but as centres of observation disseminated throughout society' (Foucault 1991b, p. 212). In her case, Jan felt that the 'centres of observation' had extended to the school teachers and other parents³⁰.

'Love bruises' or 'hickeys', which are usually located on the neck or breasts, can be interpreted as signifying ownership or possession. These bruises or bites can be signs of possession, particularly when they are in public view. One woman, Sally, indicated her

³⁰ In South Australia school teachers are required to report, through mandatory reporting legislation, incidences of suspected child abuse or neglect; this role does not, however, extend to the reporting of suspected domestic violence against adult women.

partner's use of 'love bites' on her neck as a method of control. He had given her 'hickeys' on her neck the night before she started a new course at college. In this instance, the presence of recent hickeys on Sally's neck would provide a symbol, indicating to other men and women that Sally was not available sexually, that she was already in a relationship. Bruises are signs that have social meanings and create the need for self-surveillance.

Feminist philosopher Elizabeth Grosz argues that: 'bodily markings can be read as symptoms, signs, clues to unraveling a psychical set of meanings' (Grosz 1994, p. 139). That is, markings on the body carry 'depth' or social meaning. Grosz explains 'cicatrizations and scarifications mark the body as a public, collective, social category, in modes of inclusion or membership; they form maps of social needs, requirements, and excesses' (Grosz 1994, p. 140). The bruises that women carry following physical violence are signs of the violent relationship. The bruises and scars of domestic violence located on the woman's body inscribe the subject position of 'victim' of domestic violence (this contrasts with male bruises which are often read as the heroic, victorious marks of battle or sporting injury.) Grosz argues that these types of inscriptions are capable of re-inscription, of transformation, are capable of being lived and represented in quite different terms that may grant the woman the capacity for independence and autonomy. An example of this is the use of the concept of 'survivor' (as opposed to victim) within feminist literature and amongst human services practitioners. Charmaine Power (1998), Australian nurse and academic, deconstructs the victim/survivor binary, identifying the notion of 'strong woman' as an alternative identity for women who experience men's violences.

At an individual level the medical profession seeks signs such as bruises on the woman's body, which come to symbolise and mark her as a victim of domestic violence.

Depending on the degree of injury, the woman can choose to make these signs public and seek medical intervention, risking the label of victim, or she can redefine herself as a ‘survivor’ or ‘strong woman’.

Medication as a Means of Control

Over the series of three interviews (across an eighteen-month period) Nell (reinforced by her partner Damien) mentions her experience of the following illnesses: depression, attempted suicide, chronic fatigue syndrome, arthritis, panic attacks, anxiety, abnormal liver function and migraines. She was seriously compromised by these, having difficulty walking and often being bedridden. The majority of Nell’s illnesses are currently understood to be psychologically based. Nell and Damien rely on the medical discourse to explain her illnesses. The children have also been ‘diagnosed’: the son as having Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and pyromania, the daughter as having a ‘borderline personality disorder’ and being suicidal (having made a number of attempts on her life).

Damien acknowledges the potential for change in his behaviour toward Nell when she is sick:

I get angry with her when she is sick because she gets unreasonable, but then that’s also the time that *I know I shouldn’t be angry with her*. ... I get angry with Nell and she gets mad with me when she is sick, and *I shouldn’t get angry with her when she’s sick*. A lot of people do get upset easily when they get sick. A106M

In his statement, Damien acknowledges the anger he feels toward Nell when she is sick. He establishes the inappropriateness of his anger when Nell is sick. The ‘sick role’ provides Nell with some relief from his abuse (or at least a sense that he feels guilty for anger toward her when she is sick). In the course of the research Damien and Nell split up and Nell’s health improved dramatically. In her final interview with me, Nell reinterprets

her series of medical illnesses since the first interview as the result of her abusive relationship:

When I stopped getting the migraines, sort of down the track, and I thought, 'I haven't had a migraine for two months. Fancy that. It just happens to be the same amount of time I haven't been with Damien. I can walk now. Fancy that.' C106F

Nell's experience would suggest that domestic violence had manifested itself as other medically recognised 'disorders' and that she takes some time to redefine these as the product of domestic violence and not some other cause.

As Lupton notes, Foucault suggests that there is no human body which exists outside of medical discourse and practice. Rather, the body and its various parts are understood through discourses and practices, through the clinical gaze exerted by medical practitioners and internalised by individuals (Lupton 1997, p. 99). Power, as it operates in the medical encounter, is disciplinary power that provides guidelines about how patients should understand, regulate and experience their bodies.

In the following interview excerpt Damien resists the idea that family dynamics could be at the base of his step-daughter Louise's health problems, seeking instead that the medical practitioners honour their previous diagnoses of 'real' illness in Louise. Damien says:

Basically they've [the hospital] said that really basically the problem is it's our family - that all four of us are just a dysfunctional type family and that Louise really hasn't got any problems, apart from when she is at home. It's just amazing. I mean she's been diagnosed as this, that and whatever, but they just don't seem to want to recognise anything. B106M

In this quotation Damien is challenged by the hospital's reinterpretation of his step-daughter's problem. Damien does not know how to respond to this dismissal of her previous diagnoses. The recognition of her problem as not requiring medical intervention has two effects: first, the responsibility for the problem is back with the family members;

and second, the hospital no longer has the responsibility to provide a service to the family as their problem falls outside the ‘medical’ ambit. The medicalisation of domestic violence extended to other couples and families included prescribing psychotropic medication to alleviate the problems. For example, in her final interview, I asked Barbara whether her husband Cameron had been violent toward her since the first interview. Her response was as follows:

Barbara: No. Whether it’s I’m more agreeable. How long ago was the men’s course? You say it’s been eighteen months.

Michelle: Over eighteen months since the last interview.

Barbara: Because since I’ve been - - -. I’ve been taking Zoloft, that’s an anti-depressant. I’ve been taking that - August, September, October, November, December, January - So I’ve been taking that for about eighteen months and that’s really helped calm me down, I’m not so aggressive, so that’s helped as well. So that could be a part of it as well.

Michelle: Is Cameron on any anti-depressants or anything?

Barbara: No. He should be. I don’t look at it as an anti-depressant. It’s just like if I was diabetic and then I would have to take insulin, so I have to take Zoloft because there is mental illness in my family and its chemical imbalance. It’s not that I suffer from depression, because I don’t. It was just to make me less aggressive, and I have been more calmer. Well, I think I am. So I probably react different. I respond to him rather than react. But when I do react - I mean if I’m tired or something – that’s probably when --- [inaudible]. But that’s normal. I don’t think there’s been any um ... behaviour, like I feel threatened or frightened or anything. C209F

Barbara infers her responsibility for Cameron’s violence and talks about her reduced antagonism to Cameron since she has been taking Zoloft. Barbara’s action of taking the anti-depressant medication, combined with Cameron’s taking up smoking again, has resulted in a reduction in Cameron’s violence. There seems to be some ongoing tension, possibly violence, when Barbara states: ‘If I’m tired or something - that’s probably when.’

It is evident that Barbara has taken responsibility for Cameron's violence. Similarly, Jasmine deduces that her use of medication has helped to reduce Basil's violence. Basil has also been prescribed anti-depressants:

Jasmine: So I filled in the form and I had mild anxiety, which I blamed on Basil because I said, 'Well what do you expect? I'm now married'. I was really horrible, my language, because, 'Now I'm married to that cunt', and the look, you know. I'm thinking, 'I feel such an idiot'. You know, looking back and behaviours. He [the psychiatrist] said, 'No Basil loves you' and he went through things and that's all right, and he gave me an anti-depressant, Zoloft ... He told me that I had a mild anxiety and also I had a chemically-related depression to drinking because I drank to relax, and he says, 'Anyone who drinks, apart from enjoyment, to relax, has an alcohol problem.' C971F

These examples provide case studies where women in violent relationships have been prescribed anti-depressant medication to control their partner's violence and hence have at some level been forced to take responsibility for their partner's violence. Zoloft, also known generically as sertraline, is prescribed to treat depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, and panic disorder (*MIMS Annual* 2003, p. 3-351). Some of these disorders have been linked to domestic violence. The use of Zoloft with the women in this project is worthy of note in terms of the known side-effects of this product – most notably, agitation in thirteen per cent of cases (*MIMS Annual* 2003, p. 3-352). In fact, in the Australian case *Regina v. Hawkins* [2001] NSWSC 420, the Supreme Court ruled that a man's ingestion of Zoloft was part of the explanation of the murder of his wife. Medical expert at the trial, Dr David Healy of University of Wales College of Medicine, claimed that: 'Zoloft can cause agitation and a certain amount of disinhibition so that some individuals engage in aggressive or dangerous behaviours without due regard for the consequences and in a manner that is out of character for them' (*Regina v. Hawkins* [2001] NSWSC 420).

As Lupton suggests, a paradox in the experience of the medical intervention occurs whereby their surveillance could be experienced by both the doctor and the woman as 'care' or by society as 'prevention', and yet at the same time as a means of 'social control'. So, while the medical profession plays a critical role in responding to and treating women's physical injuries that result from men's violence, at the same time they are also engaged in surveillance of women's bodies for signs of domestic violence, encouraging women to participate in a process of self-surveillance. Further, the use of psychotropic medications such as Zoloft to treat women in violent relationships suggests the medical profession's role as a disciplinary agent, reinforcing women's responsibility and culpability in men's violence.

These examples, combined with that of Nell and her daughter Louise, show the effects of a medication-oriented medical intervention in domestic violence (where it is possible that the medical practitioner does not know that the relationship is violent). The intervention has the effect of locating the treatment of the violence on the woman's body.

When the medical profession diagnoses women who are victims of domestic violence as mentally ill (having anxiety, depression, etc) and medicating them, the woman is provided with an alternative identity. One could argue that this identity is no more liberating than the identity 'victim of domestic violence'. However, it is less stigmatised because there are fewer presumptions that she contributes to her mental illness than there are that she contributes to the violence in her relationship. By taking on the diagnosis of 'mental illness', the woman is accorded greater agency and is reassured that her 'relationship problems' can be 'cured' by taking medication, rather than expecting change within her partner.

SECTION 2: Therapeutic Gaze on Men and Women: The Cycle of Violence or Violences ReCycled?

This section focuses on a specific metaphor used by human service professionals in describing violent relationships the ‘cycle of violence’. The notion of violent behaviour as having a cycle has reached taken-for-granted ‘truth’ status in the field of domestic violence services. The use of cycles, as a means of representing the life of social problems, has become commonplace in the social sciences (Peyrot 1984; Best 1989). Cycles have been used to explain addictions such as drug and alcohol abuse (Peyrot, 1984). The domestic violence literature is scattered with references to cycles. The two most common cycles referred to within this literature are the ‘generational cycle of abuse’ – which describes the alleged transference of violence from parents to children through role modelling – and the ‘cycle of violence’ – used to describe the ebb and flow of violent episodes. British feminist academic Liz Kelly, whilst discussing the generational cycle of abuse, comments that: ‘Every cycle model – and there have been many over the last 100 years – attempts to reduce complex social realities, to simplistic behavioural and individualistic explanations’ (Kelly 1999, p. 32). I am in support of Kelly’s assertion.

The Generational Cycle of Abuse

The generational cycle of abuse refers to the theory that violent behaviour is passed from one generation to the next. That is, if the father within a family is violent, then the son within the same family is at risk of adopting the same violent traits, having had them modelled by his father. Similarly, women abused as children are said to ‘choose’ abusive partners and/or ‘accept’ abuse of their children by their partner, or inflict abuse on their children, having accepted this as a normal part of intimate relationships. This theory is contentious and arguments are made both for and against it within the literature (Kelly

1999; Peled, Jaffe and Edleson 1995). Arguments against the theory of ‘generational transfer’ focus on the unknown number of people, men and women, who were abused as children and who in later life do not abuse their children or experience abusive relationships. *Mutatis mutandi*, not everyone who is violent as an adult was abused as a child. Even though the concept of the generational cycle of abuse is contentious, references within popular culture continue to refer to its existence and belief in it is widespread. For example, it provides the grounds for governmental initiatives such as conducting non-violence interventions in schools and providing children in violent households with ‘children’s workers’ to support them to avoid repeating violence.

Generational transference of violence relies on two explanations for violence: biologic – that violence is genetically inherited; and social learning theories – that violence is a learned behaviour. A possible outcome of the generational theory is that it allows men and women to become resigned to their violence and victimisation. Hence, violence is seen as an inevitable part of growing up within their family and therefore change is out of their control. This suggests that the transference of violence from generation to generation may never end: like a circle there is no definite start or finish. The use of the cycle in this instance would suggest that one can never break from the cycle, merely interrupt it briefly, and it will resume again. The cycle of violence gives the impression of continuity and therefore, ironically, of control (to recognise and disrupt the cycle). The other usage of cycle within domestic violence literature refers to the allegedly cyclic nature of ‘violent incidents’ within the relationship: the so-called ‘cycle of violence’.

The Cycle of Violence

I have found the ‘cycle of violence’ depicted within many of the community education pamphlets (and wall posters as well) and information booklets given to people

experiencing domestic violence. Australian social worker Carol Hughes recognises that the cycle of violence is a metaphor that has become 'part of general language and part of the professional language of the domestic violence field' (Hughes 2000a, p. 5).

In Australia, there is a developing body of critical literature on the use of the cycle of violence as an explanatory metaphor by human services professionals. The Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre has published a series of critical comments by workers in their newsletter (Loughnan 1999; Schweiter 1999; Hughes 2000a; Hughes 2000b). The *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy* has also provided a forum for debate and criticism about the use (or misuse) of the cycle of violence (Wileman and Wileman 1995a, 1995b; Shaw and Pye 1995). Hence there is a groundswell of discussion and debate amongst professionals.

Watson and Wilcox (2000) examine means by which professionals engage in reflection on their practice. They propose the use of *hypomnemata* as a method of reading to undertake reflection and hence improve and make changes in one's professional practice. They suggest:

in the spirit of *hypomnemata*, professionals may select and collect in one place, artefacts from their work (handouts, abstracts, letters, proposals, workshop outlines, overhead transparencies, video clips, etc) which represent daily conventions of practice, and then, in the hermeneutic tradition, do a close reading (or annotation) of them.

Watson and Wilcox 2000, p. 64

This method provides an opportunity for deep and critical reflection on practice (Watson and Wilcox 2000). The practice of reading and reflecting on the conventions of our professional practice is explored as a means of achieving self-reflection and self-improvement, seeking a 'revised understanding of our practices' (Watson and Wilcox

2000, p. 64) and leaving room for challenge to current knowledges and practices. Watson and Wilcox argue for a closer (and multiple) reading of conventions of practice to ‘read between the lines’ and identify the underlying messages within a text. It is in the professional context outlined by Watson and Wilcox that I have applied the method of *hypomnemata*.

To undertake this analysis I am using a variation of the method of *hypomnemata* as I have selected artifacts produced by human services workers (rather than material I have produced myself) to gain insights into the profession’s use of metaphors, as well as the use and value of the specific intervention. As a trained social worker with experience in the area of domestic violence and sexual assault, I feel I am able to position myself and reflect as I would had I produced the documents myself. The texts or conventions of practice that I have collected include documents used within the domestic violence sector to describe the ‘cycle of violence’. The ‘cycle of violence’ is used as an educational tool within the men’s groups to explain the nature of men’s repeated violence. It is also used by human services professionals when working with women. The documents reflected upon have been sampled across a twenty-four year time period and take several forms, including published writings, unpublished articles, pamphlets and posters. This time period reflects the images and understandings of the ‘cycle of violence’ that may have influenced the group leaders working with the men. I undertake a discourse analysis of each of these documents to examine how men and women are constructed within the ‘cycle of violence’. This material is then linked with the interview data to establish how men and women position themselves within the ‘cycle of violence’.

Before exploring some of the effects of the cycle of violence, it is instructive to trace the history of this powerful concept to reveal the transformation it has undergone over a

twenty-year period. The 'cycle of violence' is a therapeutic construct developed to explain the nature of domestic violence. Control is pivotal within this representation of violence as a cycle. The cycle represents violence as always imminent but traversing through phases of quiescence followed by outbursts. It has been and still is commonly used in therapy to help individuals interpret danger signs of 'build-up' and to take action aimed to predict or prevent outbursts (see Figure 4.1). In a therapeutic setting, the cycle of violence is used as a means of offering control for both the victim and the perpetrator by predicting the occurrence of the violence. Australian family therapist Robin Wileman and researcher Bud Wileman (1995a) based a group intervention for women on the cycle of violence. In the group program, women were advised of the certain stages of the cycle considered 'safer' and hence more opportune moments to interrupt the men's cycle of violence and attempt to rebalance power (Wileman and Wileman 1995a). Women were asked to interrupt the men's cycle by changing their own behaviour or actions, which would then supposedly disrupt the man's 'pattern' of response. Their paper and subsequent book resulted in critical discussion within therapeutic circles about the value of the cycle of violence as a therapeutic intervention, with some claiming that they were placing responsibility for the violence with women and subsequently putting women's lives at risk (Shaw and Pye 1995; Hughes 1997).

FIGURE 4.1: The Cycle of Violence

Source: Northern Domestic Violence Action Group (1997) *Domestic Violence: Draw the Line*. Salisbury and Playford Crime Prevention Program, p.7

Note: Article included on page 142 in the print copy of the thesis in the Barr Smith Library.

The four examples of cycles selected span nearly twenty years. The first use of the concept that I was able to access was developed by Lenore Walker (1978) in the United States. Walker's cycle is recognised as the 'genesis' of the cyclical concept as it is applied to domestic violence. Ian MacDonald (1987) from the Queensland Marriage Guidance Council developed the second version in an unpublished paper. The third version of the cycle is in the form of a pamphlet, produced in South Australia jointly by the Violence Intervention Project and the Elizabeth/Munno Para Crime Prevention Committee (1997). The final adaptation of the cycle I will discuss is identified as a reproduction of Lenore Walker's cycle of violence. It is a poster featuring a dot painting by Marjorie Limbiari from the Ali Curung³¹ Women's Safe House Committee (2001). The poster was developed by Robyn Thompson, an anthropologist, who was contracted by the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services – Women's Health Strategy Unit, working with the women at Ali Curung. I will explore the similarities, inconsistencies and contradictions following a brief description and illustration (where possible) of the four versions of the cycle of violence.

Walker's Cycle

Walker's version of the cyclic representation of battering incidents was located in her book chapter, titled 'Treatment Alternatives for Battered Women'. In introducing the concept of violence as a cycle, Walker states that rather than: 'constant or random occurrences of battering there is a definite cycle that is repeated over time' (Walker 1978, p. 146). She identifies three distinct phases of the cycle. Phase one is the tension building phase. Phase two is the explosion or acute battering incident and the final phase is characterised as 'calm, loving respite' (Walker 1978, p. 146). No diagrams are used to illustrate her 'cycle theory of battering incidents'. Walker identifies her source of data for

³¹ Ali Curung is an Aboriginal Community located 150km south east of Tennant Creek, Northern Territory.

this paper as 'Denver women'³² (Walker 1978, p. 144). The cycle is clearly descriptive of the man's actions and feelings and presumably was gleaned from women's descriptions of what he did and felt, rather than how the men felt and acted. In this sense it is a 'male' perspective of the cycle.

Phase one is noted for minor battering incidents in which the woman is reported by Walker as engaging in attempts to calm the batterer. 'She may become nurturing, compliant, and anticipate his every whim, or she may stay out of his way. ... She believes that what she does will prevent his anger from escalating. If she does her job well, then the incident will be over; if he explodes, she assumes the guilt' (Walker 1978, p. 147). Further, Walker comments that 'during the initial stages of this first phase, they [the women] indeed do have some limited control. As the tension builds, they [the women] rapidly lose this control.' Walker also reveals insights into the batterer's behaviour and consciousness. 'The batterer spurred on by the apparently passive acceptance of his abusive behaviour, he does not bother to control himself. ... He is aware that his behavior is inappropriate, even if he does not acknowledge it' (Walker 1978, p. 147).

Phase two is the 'acute battering incident' in which the batterer fully admits that his rage is out of his control. Walker affirms the woman's recognition that she is able to exert control over when and why the battering incident occurs and comments that some women 'provoke the batterer into an explosion ... rather than being totally at his mercy' (Walker 1978, p. 149). This second phase is said to be shorter than the first and third stages, lasting from two to twenty four hours. Walker reports that the women are able to describe the battering incident in minute detail and with considerable objectivity whilst also reporting that they do not feel their bodily injuries while they are being inflicted.

³² It is often the case in this field that practice models and educational materials are not published but are spread informally with other practitioners.

Phase three or the final phase is described as a time when the batterer is: 'extremely loving, kind and contrite' (Walker 1978, p. 151). It is characterised as a period of calm. The batterer is said to be sorry for his actions and begs for her forgiveness, making promises that he will never do it again. 'The batterer believes he never again will hurt the woman he loves' (Walker 1978, p. 152). Walker continues 'The battered woman wants to believe that she will no longer have to suffer abuse ... Her self-image withers as she copes with the self-awareness that she is selling herself for the few moments of phase three loving. She becomes an accomplice to her own battering' (1978, pp. 152-153). Walker recognises that the ideologies of romance are reinforced during phase three of the cycle. She states that, since most battered women seem to hold traditional values about love and marriage, they are: 'easy prey for such guilt trips about breaking up a happy home - even if it's not such a happy one' (Walker 1978, p. 153). It is at this point that the cycle comes full circle and the batterers engage in the first phase again; the tension building phase.

MacDonald's Cycle

Counsellor for the Queensland Marriage Guidance Council, Ian MacDonald, in an unpublished paper titled 'The Cyclic Pattern of Abusive Relationships', confirms that violent relationships fall into a 'classic' cyclic pattern (1987). Using his experiences of counselling couples to inform his work, MacDonald has reworked Walker's 'classic' cyclic pattern, identifying five clear phases. MacDonald stresses the importance of ensuring 'that it [the cycle] fits the experience of the women who are victims of constant assault within the home' (1987, p. 3). In brief, the five stages include the build up, stand-over (explosion), remorse, buy back (pursuit) and honeymoon phases (see Figure 4.2).

The build up phase is described within this cycle by developing a contrast between 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' (violent) relationships. The tension is said to build up as the 'dysfunctional' couples have not yet developed the ability to de-escalate the tension:

‘Instead they persist with ineffective attempts at negative control’ (MacDonald 1987, p. 4). The implication is clearly made that the violence is a result of the couple unable to work out their problems, implying the violence is reciprocal. That is, the violence is a result of an inability to communicate effectively. This contrasts with Walker’s model where the problem was assumed to be in the man’s behaviours.

In explaining the ‘stand-over’ phase, MacDonald draws on an understanding of traditional sex roles. For example, the ‘male’s superior physical strength becomes evident, along with his belief... that, as the male, he has the right to take a dominant position’ and that as a result ‘she will often become compliant and submissive, in the hope that she will be able to maintain peace and harmony in the home - since she accepts this as her role as a wife and mother’ (MacDonald 1987, p. 4). MacDonald, as with Walker, engages in blaming the victim for the timing of the onset of some ‘explosions’. For example, MacDonald states: ‘In some cases, however, I believe that the stand-over phase becomes so intolerable for the woman that she will provoke an incident, simply to get the punishment over and done with’ (1987, p. 4). Naming the violence ‘punishment’ as is done in this quotation, infers that she has done something wrong to deserve the abuse. This stand over phase includes what is characteristically known as the ‘explosion’. In this second version of the cycle, the assault is described as being: ‘carried out with a sense of self-righteous rage. The perpetrator believes that his anger must be given a physical expression and that he is 100% in the right’ (MacDonald 1987, p. 4).

MacDonald describes the remorse phase as a time in which the perpetrator feels a sense of disgust and dismay within himself, a feeling that he does not admit to. In fact, MacDonald reports that the man will attempt to justify his actions and minimise the nature of the assault. MacDonald states: that it is at this time that the woman is likely to assume or at least share blame and responsibility for his violent actions.

FIGURE 4.2: Five-Phase Cycle of Violence

Source: MacDonald, Ian (1987) 'The Cyclic Pattern of Abusive Relationships' Unpublished paper. Relationships Australia, Qld. p. 3.

Note: Illustration included on page 147 in the print copy of the thesis in the Barr Smith Library.

The buy-back phase which follows the remorse phase is described as a result of the woman's action of withdrawing from the relationship. Her partner's response is to pursue, make promises and apply pressure on her to re-value and maintain the relationship. MacDonald identifies two further ways that the perpetrator may ensure that the buy-back phase works. Firstly, through proclaiming his helplessness which, 'for the woman who believes that this is her responsibility as a wife, this is a powerful draw' (MacDonald 1987, p. 5), and secondly, the use of threats as a last resort.

The honeymoon phase in this cycle is described as a period in the relationship when there is a high degree of closeness, tenderness, sexual contact and touching. MacDonald suggests that his clients have told him that it is a period of a 'honeymoon on eggshells' where both partners know that nothing has been resolved and that the build up of tension inevitably follows. MacDonald theorises the violent relationship as one typified by a high degree of emotional dependency. He notes that the violent relationship does have times of 'extraordinary intimacy when all the romantic myths of marriage are recreated' (MacDonald 1987, p. 6). It is at this point that the cycle is said to repeat itself, when the perpetrator moves into the 'build up' phase again. MacDonald warns that: 'every time the cycle is repeated, the assaults increase in both severity and frequency' (1987, p. 6).

MacDonald relates his five-stage cycle to his work within men's groups. He identifies strategies used by leaders of men's groups to deal with each stage of the cycle. Hence MacDonald reconstructs Walker's cycle, adding two stages to it and accepting the concepts presented by Walker. MacDonald's five-stage cycle is in general circulation. For example, it was reproduced within a Fact Sheet produced by the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs (1995), Queensland.

South Australian Domestic Violence Cycle

In South Australia, a version of the cycle of violence is described in virtually all domestic violence information booklets or fact sheets which are made available to women (and men) experiencing domestic violence.³³ The version I have chosen to discuss was produced in pamphlet format jointly by the Violence Intervention Project and the Elizabeth/Munno Para Crime Prevention Committee (VIP & E/MPCPC), South Australia and is dated 1997. It is written to target the female victim of domestic violence and was distributed by community and health care service providers.

This SA version specifies four phases. These phases are identified as build up, explosion, remorse and false honeymoon. The cycle is portrayed as an inevitable part of domestic violence. For example, 'you may be able to ignore them and maybe things will stay the same. It may seem at times that things are getting better. But over the long haul, they usually get worse if nothing is done' (VIP & E/MPCPC 1997, p. 5).

The build up phase is described in similar terms to the other examples, as a time in which 'the man begins to feel irritated and annoyed' (VIP & E/MPCPC 1997, p. 5). As these feelings become more intense, he begins to feel pressured or stressed and he can become abusive, threatening and physical. Build up is said to lead to an explosion 'sooner or later if he does not do something about it'. This comment indicates that the responsibility for the violence has been placed squarely with the perpetrator.

The explosion is described as the 'dangerous' time: '[This] is the time when women get hurt. He may use verbal abuse, threaten her, use physical force against her or destroy things' (VIP & E/MPCPC 1997, p. 5). He is said to experience his anger as growing more intense and that there is nothing she can do to quell this. This implies that the abuses

³³ Such information booklets, fact sheets and pamphlets have been produced by the Domestic Violence Resource Unit (currently the Domestic Violence Unit), SA; Elizabeth/Munno Para Crime Prevention Committee and the Violence Intervention Project, SA 1997; Southern Domestic Violence Action Group, SA 1993; Department of Community Welfare, SA 1990; Domestic Violence Service Training Document, SA

which occur prior to this phase are preliminary to and of less significance than the physical attack or explosion. Further, this quotation from the pamphlet infers that the ‘explosion’ is the only time that women get hurt and that being injured physically is the only, or worst possible, ‘hurt’.

The remorse phase is supplemented by a section which challenges the claims to the universal existence of ‘remorse’ phase as described within previous examples of cycles. The pamphlet suggests that some men may show ‘no’ remorse; nor do they see themselves as responsible for what they have done. Further, the pamphlet suggests that other men may blame their partner, others will deny that anything happened at all, whilst others will brush it off as ‘no big deal’.

The ‘false honeymoon’ phase is peculiar to this cycle. The ‘false honeymoon’ is described as a period of time in which ‘he may do a whole range of things to try and make up. He may buy gifts, fix things he has damaged or try very hard to please his partner. There are times when things seem even better than they have for a long time’ (VIP & E/MPCPC 1997, p. 6). This phase, whilst called the ‘false’ honeymoon, details the behaviours in very similar terms to the phase known as the ‘honeymoon’ described in the second cycle above.

In brief, this third version of the cycle, whilst being similar in content to the previous two cycles, is clearer in its representation of the batterer’s experience of violence. It is written as a description of his experiences.

Ali Curung Women’s Safe House Committee, Northern Territory

Traditional dot-paint symbols have been used to illustrate this cycle of violence. A poster has been developed incorporating a photo of the original oil on canvas artwork produced by artist Marjorie Limbiari (see Figure 4.3). The poster includes information about two

models. On the left is the cycle of violence (based on Walker's Cycle of Violence) and on the right is a pictorial representation of the Wegscheider model³⁴ of the roles that children in a dysfunctional family can assume. Both of these pictures are explained in dialogue on the edges of the poster. The cycle of violence in this illustration is depicted as having five stages – 'honey moon stage', 'build-up', 'bring to boil', 'explode' and 'make-up'. Stages 'bring to boil' and 'explode' both depict an object next to the man and woman – suggesting physical violence. The dialogue about the cycle of violence explains that the violence will not stop and that it will keep on going around in a circle until 'you do something to make it stop'. Violence inside and outside the home are both discussed.

Sometimes the violence occurs inside the home where only the kids see it and there is no one to protect the woman. The woman needs to know when her husband might get violent so she can leave the house with the children before the explosion. She needs to learn what the signs of [the] bring to boil stage are, then she can go to other family or to the safe house. If her husband is going drinking she could also go somewhere until he has slept it off.

Limbiari 2001

The text above suggests the responsibility of the woman is to know her man, indeed to stand in his shoes in order to predict his mood and actions. At the same time it recognises the community responsibility for her safety. Unlike women's shelters, where the address is kept confidential, in Indigenous communities the location of the safe houses is known to all community members. Safe houses are respected as areas of 'women's business'.

This Indigenous Australian adaptation of Walker's cycle of violence is important as an indication of the pervasiveness of the cycle metaphor within the domestic violence sector

undated and sources of information within are un-referenced.

³⁴ Psychologist, Sharon Wegscheider (1989) suggests that children adopt roles which help them to cope with their parent's behaviour such as hero, scapegoat, lost child and clown. The Wegscheider Model arose from this study of roles that children adopt within the alcoholic family.

FIGURE 4.3: Ali Curung Women's Cycle of Violence

Source: Limbiari, Marjorie (2001) 'The Cycle of Violence Poster' Women's Health Strategy Unit, Northern Territory Government.

Note: Illustration included on page 152 in the print copy of the thesis in the Barr Smith Library.

in Australia. The interpretation of the cycle using dot-art, a traditional and well recognised style of Indigenous art work, raises questions as to whether the cycle of violence acts as a further tool of colonisation by the welfare sector with a white western metaphor being overlaid on a specific cultural context. Aboriginal human service workers have challenged the use of the term 'domestic violence' to instead use the term 'family violence' (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 2000). This suggests the need to recognise differences between communities regarding how domestic violence is experienced and understood. The use of the cycle metaphor might suggest that the experiences of domestic violence by white western women in Denver, United States are the same as those of Aboriginal women from Ali Curung, Northern Territory Australia.

Critiques of the Cycle of Violence

Each example of the cycle of violence, to a greater or lesser extent, has the following problems. First, the cycle does not reflect reality if there is no cycle or each woman's experience is different. Second, the cycle focuses on the sign (visible physical violence) and not the symptom (how women and men are feeling). Third, the cycle captures the woman's experience of his violence, such that she is used as an informant about his actions. Finally, the cycle tends to implicate the woman in the man's behaviour in various ways, which requires her to share responsibility for the violence and to act to break the cycle. Each of these critiques will be briefly explored. Following this, interview data from the men will provide insights into the men's readings of the cycle when it was used within the men's group program.

Although acts of violence may be cyclic, the threat of violence has been found to be ever-present rather than cyclical (Shaw and Pye 1995, p. 177). Shaw and Pye (1995, p. 177) argue that the cyclical representation fails to acknowledge the more constant threat of violence that women live with in the home. Further critics found that the cycle of violence generalises women's experiences, suggesting that all women experience domestic violence in a similar pattern (Shaw and Pye 1995, p. 177; Loughman 1999, p. 16).

Signs of physical violence are privileged within the cycle of violence. Loughman (1999, pp. 16-17) identifies the predominantly 'physical' picture of violence that is represented in the cycles of violence. She argues that these representations hide the more subtle and insidious forms of coercion and control. My analysis of the cycles supports Loughman's (1999) assertion of the privileging of physical violence. The language used within the cycle of violence invokes imagery of the physical body, specifically the build up and explosion phases. This is evidenced by the use of the term 'explosion' and 'acute battering incidents' within the first version of the cycle. Later versions of the cycle adopt the same name for the phases, but suggest that the explosion is not just physical violence as it includes verbal forms of violence as well. The violence within the Ali Curung cycle is more obviously physical violence due to the added object, presumably a weapon, next to one of the half moon symbols which represent people in the relationship (see Figure 4.3). The cycle then is a cycle of physical assault. Hence social and emotional forms of violence are not represented within the 'explosion' model. The 'explosion' model only accounts for episodic abusers not representing persistent and ongoing forms of violence. Although not explicitly discussed within these cycles, sexual violence is also used against women. The cycle of violence fails to fully recognise this. The 'explosion' phase does not really acknowledge the potential for the 'explosion' to be sexual in nature, such as through

forced sex. Arguably the so-called 'honeymoon' phase offers men an opportunity to legitimately pressure their partner for sex as part of 'making-up' which occurs following the explosion phase. There is no recognition of the potential for this 'honeymoon' or 'making-up' period to be coerced or agreed to for relief. It may also be violent in nature.

While the cycle claims to be representative of men's violence, it is evident that the source of data informing the development of the cycle was initially from women. In the development of her typology, Walker states that: 'preliminary data obtained on battered women indicate the existence of a cycle of battering behavior' (Walker 1978, p. 146). Hence the source of the information for the development of Walker's cycle of violence is battered women. Walker refers to her sample as being 'Denver women' but gives no detailed account of the methodology, number of women involved or sampling processes used to obtain this preliminary data. Her research was conducted in 1976. There is no evidence that men have been consulted by Walker in the production of this version of the cycle. It is apparent then, that Walker relies solely on women's experiences in developing the descriptions of the cyclic phases of men's violent behaviour. Hence the 'Denver women' are asked to become the 'expert' voice concerning their partner's behaviours and emotions. The women are used as a means of articulating what the men are experiencing, hence the women are asked to be informants on the men's emotions and behaviours, buying into notions that women should 'know their man'. In contrast to Walker's position, which has relied on women as the source of men's innermost thoughts and feelings, New Zealand social worker Ken McMaster (1998, p. 59) has constructed yet another version of the cycle of violence. He indicates that his version has been informed by his colleagues who have worked with men in groups (McMaster 1998, p. 58). It is once again based on Lenore Walker's (1978) original cycle. McMaster's cycle has five

stages titled - Escalating Abuse, Self-righteous Anger, False Calm, Cold Anger and Tension Rising (see Figure 4.4). In adapting this cycle, McMaster has identified five

FIGURE 4.4: The Cycle of Abuse

Source: McMaster, Ken (1998) *Feeling Angry Playing Fair: Breaking the Cycle of Abuse* Auckland: Reed Books, p. 59.

Note: Diagram included on page 156 in the print copy of the thesis in the Barr Smith Library.

decisions that the men make as they move through the cycle. The use of these decision stages is an attempt to shift the responsibility for the violence from women to the men.

The audience of the cycles (the writer's intended target group) varies with each use of the cycle. Lenore Walker (1978) first provided the evidence of the existence of the cycle for professionals working with women. MacDonald (1987) used the cycle in couple therapy and his work with violent men in men's groups. The South Australian cycle's (1997) target audience was the men and women in domestic violence relationships in the Northern suburbs of Adelaide and the Ali Curung cycle's (2001) audience was the Australian central desert Indigenous community, specifically the women (and possibly broader groups of Indigenous Australians). Professionals' continued use of the cycle of violence as an explanatory tool for the violence has the potential to reinscribe patriarchal notions of the relationship. When the cycle appears on pamphlets and women are their predominant audience, the use of the cycle increasingly enters the genre of 'understand your man'; so when professionals use the cycle of violence with women they inadvertently locate the blame for the violence with women. Gradually it seems that the fact that the cycle is based on a female centred view - what she does and feels and her beliefs about what he does and feels - is diluted or lost as the authors try to make it relevant to their audience.

Contrary to the impression that the cycle positions women as passive, reacting to the inevitable cycle that he (the active subject) directs, Wileman and Wileman (1995a, p. 168) suggest that the woman can be an active agent. They advocate that she use the knowledge of his cycle for her own benefit. In learning to live within his cycle, she can manipulate the times at which he is vulnerable (honeymoon) and protect herself in times when she is

in danger (explosion phase) (Wileman & Wileman 1995b). Shaw and Pye (1995, p. 178) observe that, in making this suggestion, Wileman and Wileman encourage women to engage in constant surveillance of their partner and themselves, to protect themselves. Hence the responsibility is placed on the woman to use the predictability of the cycle to manage his violence and to protect themselves. In the Ali Curung model the comment that women should 'learn what the signs of the "bring to the boil" stage are' reflects the expectations on women by professionals (Limibiari 2001). The cycle implicates the woman in some phases of the cycle and, in doing so, it sneaks in the possibility that it is 'the couple' or 'the relationship' that is in a cycle of violence, rather than the man perpetrating violence. The cycle of violence asks 'her to constantly monitor him' (Shaw and Pye 1995, p. 178). Therefore, the responsibility for the violence rests with her, rather than him. Australian counsellor, Pam Loughman (1999) supports Shaw and Pye's suggestion. She recognises her discomfort in using the cycle of violence in her practice, as she believes that the cycle encourages women to see themselves as equally involved within the cycle and fully responsible for disrupting the cycle (Loughman 1999, p. 16).

Persistence of the 'cycle' metaphor is evident within the Federal Government's 2004 community education campaign targeting all Australians with the catch-phrase, 'Violence against women: Australia says no'. The description of the cycle of violence within this document uses the term 'build-up' (Abetz 2004, p. 8) and reflects the content of the cycles already discussed. Although the title suggests the campaign targets gender specific violences (with the title 'violence against women'), the description of the cyclic nature of the violence is in gender-neutral terms. This document provides, yet another, variation of the cycle of violence.

The consistently unquestioned application of the cycle of violence with both women, violent men and the broader community is troubling. The origins of the cycle and knowledge of whose cycle it is, need to inform its use, with the goal of ensuring men's responsibility for their violences. A simplistic cycle narrative trivialises the complexity of the lives of women and violent men. If workers choose to continue to employ the 'cycles' in their practice, they need to think critically about its value for securing both women's safety and asserting men's responsibility.

Cycle of Violence within the Men's Groups

When responding to social problems in the 'therapeutic' environment, group leaders are adopting a psychological approach, often identifying the use of patterns to explain and look more closely at behaviours. The establishment of patterns of behaviour enables one to predict the behaviours of another (or oneself), which, in the case of domestic violence, allows a sense of control over situations (and the other person), even when they are violent. One appeal of the cycle of violence for those who utilise it, is that it allows a degree of prediction over their (or their partner's) otherwise unpredictable behaviour. Most of the men's groups within the programs in Adelaide, in 1996 to 1998, to some extent relied on the cycle to describe the men's behaviour. In the final interview, men were asked whether they used the cycle to explain their own behaviour or possible change in behaviour (as a prompt I showed the men a picture of the cycle). In the following quotation, Patrick described his experience of the cycle:

Patrick: Yes, I have to say that I went through the whole cycle before I started doing the men's group. ...

Michelle: Do you think now that you're not in the cycle or that maybe the gaps between things are longer?

Patrick: I could almost say that I'm not in the cycle. I guess probably there's a little bit of build up but it never comes out and explodes or anything anymore. I can control my feelings that way. As far as nothing being resolved, I communicate more now with either Sarah [ex-wife] or Ann [recent ex-girlfriend] to work things out. ... I know there is probably still a little bit of build up, but I can control that. Yes the gaps, if there are any, are huge now compared with before which is [when] I exploded, went off my nut or something like that. 211M

Shane too was able to comment on the cycle of violence as he saw it acting within his relationship with Catherine.

In my house I can go out at midday, come back at 1.30 and we go straight to the explosion because I see that while I've been gone, my wife has been doing something that is not in her best interests [drug taking]. She's been abusing something [illicit substance] and so build up, hey, we don't have a build up, it [the violence] happens. ... And remorse, there is very little remorse because I don't feel particularly bad about the violence, because I believe that we both choose the violence. 536M

Shane indicates that the cycle of violence presented in the group does not entirely match his use of violence. He identifies the absence of two of the stages— build up and remorse. Shane is somewhat unusual, however, in that he sees his violence as legitimate punishment of his wife's drug taking (this will be discussed further in chapter seven). Kevin also remembered the cycle being discussed within the men's group. Kevin was more critical of its use, suggesting that it was a rather simplistic picture of domestic violence.

I don't know. I just [look at] it now and consider it corny. There is no way that you can look at the subject of domestic violence and draw the circle and say, 'this is the way it is',

because there are so many variables. There is just so much that influences the violence in the home, you can't fix it, and you're not ever going to fix it dealing with the men. 858M

Kevin, whilst providing a critical picture of the value of the cycle of violence, also suggests that dealing with men only limits the effectiveness of the intervention. In Kevin's view, the cycle implicates both men and women in the violence. Whilst Patrick identifies with the cycle, both Shane and Kevin question its applicability to their experience and behaviours.

Feminisation of the cycle metaphor

American anthropologist Emily Martin (1991) examines the use of metaphors in scientific literature about human reproduction. She uses many examples from biological texts to illustrate the way in which the 'story of' the action of the egg and sperm has been constructed, using stereotypical male-female roles. The cycle of violence could be said to parallel the archetypal story of male sexual drive and gratification, where the honeymoon phase is foreplay, the build up phase is sexual tension symbolised with the erect, turgid penis and the explosion phase is orgasm or ejaculation. This metaphor normalises the masculine nature of the cycle of violence. Like the sex drive, the cycle suggests that violence (referred to by the men as 'it') is ever present, lurking and able to be triggered.

In general, it is unusual for the metaphor of cycles to be applied to male behaviour or characteristics. The concept of 'cycle' as a regulatory mechanism is usually feminised, mainly due to its association with menstruation. Women's bodies are perceived as leaky and unpredictable. The medical application of the concept of cycle to menstruation has overlaid predictability and control to a process that often may not be experienced with such predictability and control. There are several examples from the interviews with men

and women, where they have feminised the cycle of violence by relating it to the woman's menstrual cycle. As mentioned above, during the final interview, I asked both men and women to reflect upon the cycle of violence. In response, Nicole related the cycle of violence to her menstrual cycle.

I have regular massages or go for walks on the beach and that. I'm trying to remain calmer and get through every month with having the most minimal symptoms of mood swings and everything – headaches, bloatingness, the whole lot – but somewhere along the line there it's almost like he's tuned into it and he'll just start getting really aggressive and he'll go, 'I know you're due for your period soon', and all of this sort of thing and it's like, 'How do you know?' and that's where we jump on it. The conflict comes along ... And it might last for a couple of days and then when I get my period it's like things have simmered down again. So it's not up and down and in and out of this as this much. It's just it might get slightly bad in my premenstrual times, when ... my period [comes], and then after that it's usually simmered again. I think that's all it is, just the monthly thing more now. C531F

Nicole overlays her menstrual cycle onto the cycle of violence to provide a biological explanation for his violence. Her experience of premenstrual tension is combined with his anger to provide a frame of reference for explaining her experience of the violence. Here Nicole collapses the bodily experiences of the couple into one entity, wherein he 'tunes in' to her pre-menstrual tension and reacts as if it were occurring in his body.

During Nick's final interview he also refers to the times when Kate has her menstrual period as the time in which she provokes him into violence. Nick sees the only answer to the violence stopping being when she reaches menopause.

Nick: Now I'm supposed to know when she's got her periods ... what a joke! ... You know she'll wake up and bang, she's in that mood, and then I'll get in it. But then because I'm the violent one – you know, push her or throw her or whatever ...

Michelle: What would it take for the violence to stop do you reckon?

Nick: Well I suppose menopause could be a part of it. That's when they stop getting their periods ... Yes, I reckon that'd be a big part of it... C639M

Women's menstrual cycle is now Nick's explanation for his violence. These appropriations of the intended understandings of the 'cycle of violence' provide examples of professional language and concepts being adapted to transfer men's responsibility for their violence.

Both of the domestic violence cycle metaphors, the generational cycle of abuse and the cycle of violence, originate from systemic ways of conceptualising social problems and aspects of social life. The reliance of social sciences and family therapy on systems theory is under challenge (Hoffman 1988; Lowe 1990). Hoffman argues that we are shifting away from the 'timeless circle metaphors' such as homeostasis, circularity, autopoiesis to 'rivers-in-time' metaphors concerned with narrative, history and flow (Hoffman 1988, p. 56). These circular/cyclical metaphors, however, have been very resilient within the domestic violence sector. Ron Schweitzer (1999, p. 20) suggests that the cycle of violence should be archived or relegated to the 'myth' arena as soon as possible. He suggests that the cycle can be used as an 'excuse' for why the man was violent, as indeed was evident within a number of the interviews quoted. Feminist social worker Carol Hughes (2000a) suggests that metaphors have a limited life span. She argues that cycle metaphors are currently being replaced by 'spirals and cascades' (Hughes 2000a, p. 7). Hughes (2000) then changes pace, suggesting that the cycle metaphor may be harder to disrupt and that it may be more useful to harness its value, rather than rejecting it outright. Perhaps the increasing groundswell within the profession will dislodge its dominance.

Foucault's theory of bio-power helps to explain the dominance and persistence of the cycle of violence. This investigation into cycles has identified that the continued use, remaking and adaptations to the cycle, serve to reinforce its existence. The messages within the cycle act as knowledge of and power over both male and female bodies. The cycle acts as a disciplinary practice on the body of the man and woman. In the following quotation, feminist philosopher Jana Sawicki interprets Foucault's concept of disciplinary practices: 'Disciplinary practices represent the body as a machine. They aim to render the individual both more powerful, productive, useful and docile' (Sawicki 1991, p. 67). The cycle of violence establishes norms, the norms of a violent relationship, through which men and women judge their relationship and against which they police themselves.

SECTION 3: Therapeutic Gaze on Men

A central thesis within *Discipline and Punish* is the recognition of the shift in societal ideas of punishment (Foucault 1980a). The shift identified by Foucault is from a focus on physical and public forms of punishment to a prison system utilising private and more subtle means of control. I would argue that this shift in societal notions of punishment is reflected further by the use of men's groups to control men's violences towards women through therapeutic means rather than legal means.

Men's groups have been running in South Australia since 1983. They are located within the Community Health and Correctional Services systems. The men's group intervention focuses directly on the male perpetrator through his attendance at the structured program. The men's group is a twelve week course which runs for an hour and a half per week. For most of the men, their attendance at the group is voluntary³⁵. A small group of men have

³⁵ The meaning of 'voluntary' is open to dispute. In some feminist circles the exact 'voluntary' nature of men's attendance is considered nebulous. Some of the men, it may be argued, have been socially sanctioned to attend the men's group, through suggestions from community members such as parents, lawyers or partners. However the men must still attend and participate in the program willingly.

been court-ordered³⁶ to attend. This educational/therapeutic response is offered as a reply to behaviour that in a non domestic context would constitute the crime of assault.

At the men's group a combination of facilitated discussion and psycho-educational activities are offered from week to week. There are several different theoretical orientations which guide the delivery of the men's groups and the interventions that are used by the group leaders. The group leaders are usually a male/female pair; however two of the eleven groups involved in the research had a male/male dyad. The man's violence is brought into discussion by the group leaders through descriptions of the relationship elicited from one or both partners and is judged within the confines of what is a 'normal' relationship. The men deviating from this norm are accepted into the group for therapy or, to use Foucault's terminology, the 'experiment'.

The Men's Group as Confessional

The confessional, as described by Foucault:

[is a] ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement; it is also a ritual that unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console, and reconcile.

Foucault 1990a, pp. 61-62

Hence the response of the group leaders and other members of the group to the men confessing is all important. There is a suggestion that the group leader has the function and ability to absolve the man of his guilt, as in the Catholic church confessional. In the church confessional, once a sinner confesses his/her sins, the priest asks the sinner to

³⁶ As part of a bail application, the judge may have recommended that the man attend the men's group

repent and then they are absolved of their sins. On the first night and each week at the beginning of the class the men are asked to talk about their past week - their feelings toward their violence and what the result was. This 'confession' in front of the other men and the group leaders encourages men's self-surveillance of their behaviours and feelings during the week, as well as permitting the surveillance of the men's violence toward their partner by the group leaders.

The following comments from two men indicate the value of the group as an opportunity to confess their violence:

Patrick: This is the first time [of] talking about it. ... It's good to talk about it in front of these guys. 211M

Kevin: Like they're not really wanting to say too much and sort of blurt it out like me - 'Here it is, wear it, and that's what I'm here for'. So I think that generally the stuff you hear first, or the stuff that you don't hear, just little bits of maybe, is all, it's all accurate, and it's just everybody's testing the water their own way. I think even somebody like myself who may just sort of just lay it all out there for everybody to hear, there's probably a lot of other stuff and deeper stuff which will come out later on. It's sort of a way of testing your surroundings, you know, to feel secure so you can put it there and see what the reactions are, and I think everybody's the same whether they put it straight out or whether they're just quiet about it. But I think you'll find that in the group situation there'll be a lot of honesty. 858M

While Patrick suggests that it is good to talk about violence in front of the other men Kevin is a little more hesitant suggesting that the confessional process was not easy.

The next quotation indicates the role of the group as an aid to self-surveillance. Damian discusses his ability to practise things learnt between the groups and report back to other group members.

So it's that group situation again is forcing me to practise what I'm talking about, and also learning from the other guys by seeing what their actions are. 106M

The period in the men's group, where men admit their violences, is also a time where the men in the group test the ground about the violences that are acceptable to discuss in the group and those that are not. They are engaging in a process of weighing up their 'sins' against the sins of the other group members. During the first evaluation interviews, I asked the men why they had attended the men's group. Jeremy told me that he was at the group because he 'helped himself to his wife whilst she was asleep' [had sex with his wife without her consent while she was sleeping]. Jeremy only attended the first week of the men's group during which he decided it was not for him because he was not 'as bad as' the other men in the group. This would suggest that Jeremy had engaged in a process of self evaluation, where he weighs up his violences against those revealed by the other men in the group. This discussion about Jeremy's use of the information gained from the confessions brings me to highlight the benefits accruing to the person who confesses.

Foucault continues:

a ritual in which the expression alone, independently of its external consequences, produces intrinsic modifications in the person who articulates it: it exonerates, redeems, and purifies him; it unburdens him of his wrongs, liberates him, and promises him salvation.

Foucault 1990a, p. 62

The sense of absolution gained from the confession on the first night, coupled with his comparison to other men's violences, led Jeremy to believe that he did not need to continue his attendance at the group. The men's group leaders have a social control

mandate to ensure the safety of women, and yet, without more comprehensive follow-up, reasons for high drop out rates³⁷ at the men's groups remain speculative.

Surveillance

Foucault recognises the disciplinary action of surveillance as being the internalisation of the gaze of the warden such that the prisoner surveys and regulates his own behaviour. Hence external surveillance leads to a level of internal surveillance, where the prisoner begins to change his own behaviours for fear of being watched because he knows he is watched – he sees himself through the gaze of the warder. The group leaders, through the process of confession and 'checking-in' each week at the commencement of each group, engage in a form of surveillance of the domestic relationship.

In their interviews with me, women spoke about the increased sense of safety they experienced during the time that their partner was attending the group and reporting to the group leaders what had happened in the past week. The man was seen to be no longer responsible only to himself but to the 'ceremony of power' (Foucault 1991b, p. 184) provided by the group and group leaders. In the following excerpt from Kerri's second interview, I asked her how she feels about the group ending and Alex her partner 'going it alone', without the support (surveillance) of the group and group leaders. She is concerned about the sudden withdrawal of the support of the group and recommends a more gradual process.

Kerri: ... [meeting] once a month or, you know, for three months say [a] once a month interview with the leader of the group, and then once every two months - . You know,

³⁷ A twenty per cent drop out rate was reported by Poynter, 1991 and a forty per cent drop out rate was reported by Pirog-Good and Stets, 1986. The men's drop out rate for the "What difference do men's groups make?" research project from first to third interview was forty per cent.

weaning off [the weekly attendance at the group] like that - just a supervisory sort of thing.

It [would] keep him a bit on his toes.

Michelle: Would it make you feel safer do you think?

Kerri: Yes, I think so, especially for someone like Alex who relies so much on external opinion. He takes a long time to change his habits, so having that external input - - -.

Michelle: And that public - - - [recognition].

Kerri: Yes, would just help to cement those habits a bit more, the habit of not being violent

I think. I can't say that for others but I feel it would help [Alex]. B1190F

This concern about the group ending expressed by Kerri would suggest that Alex had not fully internalised the gaze of the group leaders.

The majority (seven out of eleven) of the men's groups were run in the Northern metropolitan area of Adelaide, which is a lower socio-economic area. Although official discourses of domestic violence reiterate that violence crosses all classes, the majority of the groups are located within this geographical region. With this focus, it could then be claimed that the men's groups allow increased surveillance of the working class populations by welfare workers, a claim made by Finch (1993) and Gordon (1988).

Resistance

Forms of resistance toward the ideas presented by the group leaders and group process were evident within the men's groups. Despite the surveillance offered by the group leaders within the men's groups, many of the women (and some men) spoke about the tea breaks in the men's group as a time in which the men would smoke and speak frankly to each other. The men use the tea break as times in which they could rebel against the content of the group, out of earshot of the group leaders, enacting resistance.

Struggle for Power/Knowledge

The men were introduced to a variety of tools and strategies within the men's groups to help them stop their violence. Some of these were also used by the men in a power/knowledge struggle between the man and his partner. The women receive little or no contact from the group leaders about the group and its content, so the women are uninformed about what is going on and what the men are learning, except through the men's interpretations of their activities and responses. So, whilst the emphasis of the intervention is on the men changing their behaviours and taking responsibility for their violence, the women can only understand the group through the men's interpretation and passing on the information learned at the group.

The unintended power effects of this situation were evident in relation to the strategy of 'time-out' which men were introduced to. 'Time-out' is a strategy in which men are to identify when they are in danger of 'exploding' and briefly leave the situation to defuse their feelings. New Zealand social worker Ken McMaster (1998) describes some guidelines for time-out that he uses with men. In summary, the guidelines suggest:

- Talk about time-out with people around you before you need to take it.
- Leave when you feel unsafe and are about to become abusive.
- Do something physical
- Phone a friend or one of the telephone counselling services to talk about what is happening.
- Phone the person you were unsafe with and find out whether the other person feels safe having you back.
- Return at the time agreed to.
- Negotiate a time within the next 24 hours to talk about what happened.

Time-out is a strategy for the men to use to leave a situation in the home before it gets violent and return when they are able to discuss the issue ‘rationally’. The strategy requires the men to identify their embodied sense of violence ‘building up’ and to use these signals to make a decision to leave the situation before any violence occurs. One man had explained this strategy to his partner, sharing with her something he had learnt at the group. However, in doing so, he had changed the rules of time-out such that he made it clear to her that she needed to leave the house when she noticed that he was becoming abusive or violent, rather than him. She did so, not knowing that the rules of the strategy had been changed to suit him. In the following example Jeremy describes his use of time-out.

Let’s say it’s [the fight has] been in the bedroom or whatever, I’ve barred the way basically, which is threatening and I know that ... That’s about the extent of it. And like if she’s wanting to force her way past maybe I’ve held her and that’s about it though. But as far as, you know, like punching or anything like that, no I’ve never done that. No I haven’t. ... It’s a[bout] control but all I would like is for her to stay where she is or go to another room or whatever – ‘Don’t run away. Provided you stay, I’ll go. I’ll go out the back yard, I’ll do whatever. I just don’t want you to run away’. Actually I still think that’s a problem. I know I’m trying to control the situation incorrectly, but that’s all I would like from her, is, ‘Don’t run away. Don’t run away from the problem. OK, if you don’t want to talk about it, call ‘time-out’ ... I’ve got to respect [her decision] ... so does she, you know. Actually there was something early in the men’s group when we went through that time out, you know. It works fine but time-out doesn’t mean running out the door. All I was ever trying to do is, ‘Don’t leave, don’t leave the house, don’t run away’ 969M

Jeremy uses the symbolism of leaving the house as leaving the relationship and not dealing with the problem at hand. He uses his body as a fourth wall which actively prevents Danielle from escaping, almost from fear that she won’t return. He justifies his physical restraint of her as non-violent. However his action has the effect of controlling

her actions and restricting her movements. He also places the responsibility of calling 'time-out' on her. Part of the aims of the men's group was to get the men to recognise within themselves when their emotions lead to violence and to remove themselves from the situation. Instead Jeremy abdicates this role of measuring his emotions and delegates it to his wife Danielle. She is responsible for the emotional work within the relationship; this corresponds with sex role expectations where emotional work is considered a feminine trait. The house is symbolically the container of the violence - to leave the house is to escape the problem. Jeremy explicitly designates his behaviours as control rather than violence. He acknowledges the way in which he is once again attempting to control the situation that she is attempting to escape.

Another example of the way in which the men at the groups manipulate information received from the group leaders reveals how they utilise knowledge for its power effects in their relationship. Peter claimed that he was the victim of his partner's sexual violence, as she had refused to have sex with him. In his mind, Peter had interpreted her refusal in response to his sexual advances as an example of sexual violence, as his sexual urges were not being met, causing him harm. Hence his interpretation of sexual violence was changed to meet his own needs.

Jasmine recognised that she was relying on Basil's interpretation of what happened at the Men's Group and at his appointments with his doctor. In the following interview Jasmine identifies the frustration of not knowing and her need to follow it up for herself:

I started experiencing the same arguments with him which made me really uptight. ...

Anyway so this time I rang up. I thought, 'That's it. I don't know'. It's a bit like the men's group. I didn't know what [Dr] Smith was saying to him – I take his word for it. How do I know if he went back and told Smith that he was drinking? Anyway so I got a referral. I told Basil that I was getting a referral to see Smith from my GP and I had to go. C971F

The sense of not knowing what had transpired was disempowering for Jasmine. It meant that Jasmine was making decisions about her life and child's life in an uninformed manner which may have put their safety in jeopardy.

While the men's groups provide an opportunity for the human service workers to work with the men to change their violent behaviours, the evidence presented here suggests that the interventions (or teaching devices) used by the group leaders can also be used by the men to shift or avoid acknowledging responsibility for their actions. It is evident that the human service interventions, whilst targeting the men, can have the unintentional effect of acting upon the woman. The men's group creates the situation whereby the men either deliberately use their knowledge/power as a further strategy to control their partner or the men's group enables the men to take on therapeutic terms, but within a paradigm that maintains male power.

At one and the same time professionals are both urging men not to control women but also to control themselves, their own behaviour. So, in effect, professionals' aim is to teach the men 'good' control and yet, at the same time, expect them not to use their 'bad' controlling strategies any more. In effect, the strategies used by professions legitimise the strategies that we are asking the men not to use.

The medical profession adopts disciplining techniques that act on the female victim of domestic violence, which serve to reinscribe her responsibility for men's violence. The therapeutic community, through the delivery of men's groups, focuses its intervention on the violent man, attempting to get him to recognise his responsibility for his violence. In a roundtable discussion on *Social Work, Social Control and Normalization*, Michel Foucault (1999, p. 92) commented on the role of social work: 'what is important is that social work is inscribed within a larger social function that has been taking on new dimensions for centuries, the function of surveillance-and-correction: to surveil individuals and to redress

them, in the two meanings of the word, alternatively as punishment and as pedagogy'. In their work with male perpetrators of domestic violence, the surveillance and correction role of human service workers is evident. Through either purposeful manipulation or misinterpretation by the men, many of the therapeutic strategies used in the men's groups have the effect of disciplining the female body, rather than the male body. Once again she, the victim, is held responsible for his violence. In some ways, strategies of control used by the professions, resemble the same techniques that men use to control and manipulate their families. Therefore, a shift is required, such that professional interventions be focused on attributing responsibility to the male for his use of violence.

The preceding chapters have provided insights into the discourses made available to men and women by professional groups such as medical, legal and human services. In chapter five the discursive domain of the relationship provides the site for further investigation into domestic violence discourses.

CHAPTER 5

Relationship Spaces

While the previous two chapters have focused on the ways that professional discourses may act to selectively shape the male perpetrator, the following chapter shifts focus to examine power relations within the heterosexual relationship. In the first section of this chapter, Foucault's concept of discipline is used to provide insight into the more intimate workings of the couple³⁸ and family within the domicile. The institution of the domestic relationship is the site for examination of the workings of two techniques of Foucault's notion of discipline – surveillance and normalisation – which are explored in sections two and three of this chapter. In section one, interview data from men and women is used to explore notions of the 'home', revealing an inter-linking between the emotional spaces of the relationship within the physical space of the home. Section three examines the normalising effect of discourses of romantic love.

In his central exploration of disciplinary practices, Foucault's focus was the prison, examining space, both physical and relational, within it. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault (1991b) undertakes a genealogical examination of the development of the western prison system. He examines how, through the organisation of the prison, it is possible to control the inmates' time and space. I intend to develop a similar analysis in a different site. The focus of my investigation of disciplinary practices occurs within the space or confines of the 'couple'. The particular subsets of couples in focus are those who

³⁸ Within this chapter I use the term 'couple' to signify the adult-adult heterosexual physical and emotional relationship that exists within the family (if there are children). There is an assumption that the adults within the 'couple' are engaged within a sexual relationship. They may or may not be married and may or may not live together. There are varying legal, financial and social expectations depending upon the status of these aspects of the 'couple'. Within this chapter I also use the term relationship. My use of this term is to signify the emotional connection between members within the couple.

have been in a sexual relationship and are, or have been, co-habiting. All inhabit a relationship which is defined to be 'domestic'. It is this domestic realm, and the relationships within it, which I intend to scrutinise. Some of these couples are married, others occupy some variation of a de facto arrangement, some have children either of their relationship or separately and so fit the commonsense definition of 'family'. The 'family' has been the focus of much socialist, liberal and radical feminist analysis (the nuclear family in particular). It is described as the domestic or private sphere, a major site of social and cultural transference and often the location of horrific acts of violence and abuse (Scutt 1990, pp. 2-3; Summers 1994, p. 1; Bittman & Pixley 1997, pp. 46-47).

Radical feminists have theorised violence and abuse within the family to be the result of an imbalance of power between the male and female within the couple. Violence against women in the home has long been attributed to male power over women or patriarchal power. Accordingly, radical feminist, Kate Millett states that: 'patriarchy's chief institution is the family' (Millett 1985, p. 33). In the context of patriarchal power, power is viewed as a negative and dominating force. According to Vikki Bell (1993, p. 37), a feminist sociologist, feminist scholarship has recognised the operation of power within the private areas of life. She argues that Foucault's work is similar to the feminist critique of structural power, in that he also recognises and locates power in the private sphere. Foucault acknowledges the power plays upon: 'our bodies [and] our day to day existences' (Foucault 1980c, p. 187).

In her analysis of incest within the home, Bell (1993, p. 32) interprets Foucault to suggest that discipline operates, not to stop its targets acting, but to direct their actions – in effect shaping the possibilities open to them. Foucault proposes that discipline produces subjected and practised bodies, 'docile' bodies. That is, the machinery of discipline acts

on the body defining: ‘how one may have a hold over others’ bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines’ (Foucault 1991b, p. 138). This interplay between discipline, control and the body is central to my examination as I explore gendered dimensions of resistance and struggle within the ‘couple’.

In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault (1991b) identifies the architectural design of Bentham’s panopticon as the ultimate means of discipline, through observation, over bodies. Foucault also proposes three technologies of power that contribute to the success of discipline. These instruments are hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and their combination which constitute the examination (Foucault 1991b, p. 184). I will apply the first two of Foucault’s instruments of discipline and Bentham’s panopticon to an exploration of the couple located in the domestic space, but before discussing these technologies, we need a discussion of the family as an institution in which discipline, in its two fold meaning, is expressed.

In the following quotation Foucault clarifies his use of discipline:

Discipline may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a ‘physics’ or an ‘anatomy’ of power, a technology.

Foucault 1991b, pp. 215-216

Here Foucault identifies discipline as a type of power, a set of techniques operating within institutions. By this Foucault distinguishes discipline from belonging to an institution. In the following quotation Foucault alludes to the ‘family’ as an institution and possible site of the operation of these disciplinary practices:

And it [discipline] may be taken over by ‘specialized’ institutions ... or by institutions that use it as an essential instrument for a particular end ... or by pre-existing authorities that find in it a means of reinforcing or reorganizing their internal mechanisms of power (one day we should show how intra-familial relations, essentially in the parents-children cell, have become ‘disciplined’, absorbing since the classical age external schemata, first educational and military, then medical, psychiatric, psychological, which have made the family the privileged locus of emergence for the disciplinary question of the normal and the abnormal); or by apparatuses that have made discipline their principle of internal functioning ..., or finally by state apparatuses whose major, if not exclusive, function is to assure that discipline reigns over society as a whole (the police).

Foucault 1991b, pp. 215-216

By this, Foucault identifies intra-familial relations as a site of discipline, particularly inter-generational relationships. For example, the family, and the couple within it, is a productive site for the construction of gender and sexuality as well as of generation. However, the focus of my examination is the adult-adult couple in the space of their domestic environment.

In this quotation Foucault refers to ‘external schemata’ acting on the family. This may refer to a plan or scheme which enables the reproduction of ideas within the egalitarian family. These ideas are absorbed and impact on the familial expectations. I will briefly provide a series of examples of such schemata acting on the contemporary Australian family. The discourse of ‘obedience’ (of women to men and children to adults) is at odds with a discourse of equality and voluntariness. The apparently voluntary nature of the ‘relationship’ and marriage is a dominant discourse within debates about the violent relationship. A strongly held assumption within the community is that relationships involve choice. If an individual is not happy, is incompatible with his/her partner, is subjected to cruel or violent treatment, or violence is present, then it is that individual’s responsibility to end the relationship. In sum, both partners are seen to be in the couple

voluntarily. It is presumed to be their conscious decision to be involved with each other and get married; if they did not want to be, they would get out. The discourse of volition also operates, where both members are in the couple of their own free will. Once the couple includes children, however, it becomes a 'family', thereby invoking discourses of parental rights and relationships. One of the major differences between a couple and the family is the voluntary nature of the couple. This is predominantly based on understanding a generational difference, in that the children are legally bound to one or both of their parents. In support of the proposition, about the voluntary nature of couples, is the introduction into Australian Family Law of no fault divorce, enabling men and women to move in and out of marriages more freely. An outcome of the apparently voluntary nature of the couple is that women in violent relationships are asked why they 'stay' in that couple.

One explanation as to why women might not 'leave' is framed in terms of power relations between men and women. This has also been expressed as a discussion about the notion of dominant masculinities, which depends upon a reciprocally subservient femininity. One form of these gender roles is expressed through the male breadwinner and the subservient female homemaker dyad. This gender divide has, however, been supplemented by an emphasis on mutuality and equality in the couple. In their study of Australian couples, Bittman and Pixley (1997) found a strong commitment to the values of equality and mutuality. In their study of attitudes and actions toward the gendered division of labour, Bittman and Pixley (1997) found that, rather than adopting visions of traditional roles within the family, both men and women value the sharing of labour within the home. When studying the men and women's actual allocation of time to domestic chores, Bittman and Pixley (1997, pp. 114-115) found that, while the couples believe in equality, in actuality women carry a double-load of both paid and un-paid work. Bittman

and Pixley (1997, pp. 170-171) use the term 'pseudomutuality' as a way of explaining the inability for either member of the couple to acknowledge or communicate these inequalities within the relationship. So, while these couples are engaged in the rhetoric of equality and mutuality, they are replicating traditional gender divided power relations within the economic and domestic sphere. In his study of *Inequalities in Marriage*, Ken Dempsey (1997, p. 109) found that notions of decision-making within the family were complex and they often involved relations of power. Decision-making is not as egalitarian as couples believe (See also Edgell 1980; Pahl 1990; Burgoyne 1990; Zvonkovic et al. 1996 cited in Dempsey 1997, p. 110). Once again the rhetoric of equal and egalitarian decision-making exists in married couples, but may compete with the actuality of unequal and/or oppressive decision-making.

Couples whose relationship is based on romantic love, who have ideals of a family and are heterosexual constitute the archetypical couple. Jo VanEvery (1996, p. 40) asserts that 'while heterosexuality has no essential character, it does have a hegemonic form in late twentieth-century Western societies'. VanEvery argues that 'influential' theories of marriage and the family continue to preserve normative heterosexuality. All the couples in my 'What difference do men's groups make?' study identified as heterosexual. This is not to imply that domestic violence does not occur within homosexual relationships, nor is it to assume that 'couplehood' and families are the exclusive domain of heterosexuality. VanEvery (1996, p. 44) contends that dominant explanations of sex inequality within the family have relied on biological difference and women's capacity for motherhood as explanations for gender power imbalance. The next section applies Foucault's idea of discipline within the couple that is bounded by the shared 'home', the domicile.

SECTION 1: Domestic Space as a Site of Discipline

Rabinow (1991, p. 17), commentator of Foucault, states that: ‘discipline proceeds from an organisation of individuals in space, and it requires a specific enclosure of space. Once established, this grid permits the sure distribution of the individuals who are to be disciplined and supervised.’ Organisation of space is essential to discipline. Throughout this section, I will refer to two concepts of space relevant to the ‘domestic’ couple: the domicile or architectural space of the home, and the emotional space of the relationship.

Surveillance operates within both of these conceptualisations of space as a technology of power. I will show the gendered nature of the technologies of power, particularly of surveillance within the home and of the emotional relationship. I propose that surveillance occurs within these couples from both the man surveying the woman and the woman surveying herself, her children (if any) and the man. The intentions of these surveillances are very different: the man is largely seeking compliance from those he scrutinises and the woman is seeking to prevent or subvert violence by modifying her behaviour and influencing that of others. It will be evident that children too, can be drawn into the surveillance on behalf of one or other parent.

Domestic violence is very much constrained by the domestic space. ‘Domestic’, within the phrase ‘domestic violence’, represents the domicile, the private sphere, the home. In the legal and medical definitions of domestic violence, ‘domestic’ signifies the relationship. Feminist analyses of the domestic realm recognise that the home is not always as it seems (Bell 1993; Johnston and Valentine 1995). Some women do not experience the home as the warm, loving and supportive environment that is often conjured. In fact, evidence indicates that for some women and children, the home is the opposite - a site of violence, fear and intimidation (Scutt 1990; Mooney 1997). The

gendered nature of violence in public and private spaces was confirmed in an English study wherein Mooney validated the radical feminist assertion that most violence against women occurs in private (Mooney 1997). She also confirmed the assertion that most violence against men occurs in public and that the perpetrator of crimes in both public and private are most likely to be male (Mooney 1997). Hence violence, gender and space are inextricably linked.

Sociologist Bryan Turner (1996) briefly explores the spatial division of society between passions (private sphere) and reason (public sphere). He suggests that it would be more accurate to refer to private spaces in the plural: 'The modern home is opened to the world by an architectural emphasis on light and space. At the same time the home remains a castle cut off from other private spaces' (Turner 1996, p. 66). Turner suggests that a sociology of the body is an analysis of the spatial organisation of bodies and desire in relation to society and reason. The home, whilst representing the private sphere, also acts as a signifier of the couple (family) that has been built within it. Touted as one of the great Australian dreams shared ownership of a home is a significant milestone in becoming a 'couple'. It indicates both financial and emotional commitment within the relationship and forms the foundations of a 'family life'.

The concept 'home' varies across culture, social groups, individuals and time (Rapoport 1995). Architect, Peter Somerville in speaking of 'home' within western industrialised societies states that the home consists of seven essentials: shelter, hearth, heart, privacy, roots, abode and paradise (Somerville 1992). A core element of the home as 'paradise' is the idea that it is where the 'real' unconstrained, authentic person can be expressed. The home is valorised as the province of both security and love. Architect Rapoport (1995) confirms that a sense of security and a sense of control over one's environment are central

to notions of 'home'. Feminist Iris Marion Young (1997, pp. 161-163) concurs with these assumptions and identifies four normative values of home that she argues should be accessible to all people – safety, individuation, privacy and preservation. Young (1997, p.163) suggests that the: 'home is the site of the construction and reconstruction of oneself'. She acknowledges, that while women are at risk within the confines of home, home is the location within which much undervalued and unnoticed work of women occurs providing a site for the development of both an individual and collective identity.

The term domestic violence is contested within literatures about violence against women, particularly the notion of 'domestic'. For example, Indigenous Australians choose not to use the term 'domestic' violence but prefer the term family violence (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 2000, pp. 4-6). This may be a reflection on the cultural use of the term 'home' within the Indigenous community as identified by Rapoport: 'it is not the residence but the landscape and kin group that are invested with such meaning' (Rapoport 1995, p. 37). This is supported further by the usage of 'home' in popular culture. For example, Australian Indigenous singer and songwriter Christine Anu, released a song that was titled *My Island Home*, where 'home' refers to the land and kin, rather than a building or house. Within Indigenous communities there is less of a clear-cut distinction between the privacy of the family inside the house and the extensive community kin relations beyond. The nuclear family is less privileged and less common. Other forms of Australian popular culture have capitalised on the unique and contextual meaning of home. For example, the Australian cinematic production *The Castle* directed by comedian Rob Sitch is a tongue in cheek examination of an idiosyncratic Australian working class family's emotional connection with their home. It is a story about the legal struggle to save the Kerrigans' family home from compulsory acquisition by the real estate developers. In the following quotation from the movie, the father/head of the household Darryl Kerrigan encapsulates

the meaning of 'home' in an Australian context: 'It's not a house, it's a home - it's got everything. People who love each other, care for each other. It's got memories - great memories. I mean it's a place for the family to turn to, come back to' (Cilauro et al. 1997).

Similar sentiments are evident in an academic study of the English home by surveyor Peter Saunders who explores expectations of what it is to be at home: 'The home is where people are offstage, free from surveillance, in control of their immediate environment. It is their castle. It is where they feel they belong' (Saunders 1989, p. 184). Both Saunders' reference to freedom from surveillance and his use of the term 'they' are important to my analysis of normative couple. The term 'they' presumes mutuality, that the inhabitants of the home experience the home similarly and can all/both be 'in control', share interests and have common goals. This ideal of mutuality is impossible within a couple with domestic violence (and possibly within all heterosexual relationships).

Building a 'Home' and Building the Relationship and Family

In legal discourses, as well as in the couples' own understandings, property relations are central to the construction of the couple. As noted briefly above, ownership of the house plays a significant role in the formation of the relationship as 'family'. Edwina discusses the importance of the ownership of the house to her husband Frank's sense of belonging within the family:

Well I moved in [to the new house] before Frank and I got back together. It was about a month before, but we did a lot of talking before. To start with of course it was my house because I built it, but we have changed that into both names – it's *our* house. ... But to start with Frank kept calling it '*Your* house. What do you want to do in *your* house?' And I never called it *my* house, I would actually feel really guilty because we were together. So there was a lot of problems like that to start with, even whose house it was. So I mean I

made a great effort of calling it *our* house all the time and when Frank called it ‘your house’ I’d say, ‘No, *our* house’. It’s amazing how much yours, mine and ours can make a difference to a conversation. C423F

Edwina articulates the clear impact of ownership of the house on their relationship. Joint ownership of the house (or changing the house into both names) signifies mutuality within the relationship and that both partners are recognised as contributing ‘equally’ to the relationship. It signifies a commitment to the relationship. When Frank called it ‘your house’ he was challenging Edwina’s claim to a (true/egalitarian) relationship. The status of the relationship was questioned as long as she had ‘my’ house, rather than ‘our’ house. Joint ownership of the house makes their relationship ‘real’ again; it legitimates their ‘coupledom’. There is romantic symbolism in the house being in both names – it creates the ‘couple’.

Kerry also talks about the significance of whose name the house is in. In contrast to Edwina’s desire to have the house in joint names, Kerry spoke with me, about the importance of having the house in her own name.

Kerry: And I say to him, ‘Well I don’t really need you’. Like financially. He sees everything as financial and he’s pissed off because the house isn’t in his name. He always refers to it as, ‘Oh *your* mortgage and *your* house’ and I used to comment on it. ... I’m able to be independent because I can say, ‘Well the house is in *my* name’, and I’ve still got that niche. I mean, I use that too. I don’t turn around and go, ‘[laughs] The house is in *my* name’, but I just say, ‘Oh I don’t have to live with you, I choose to live with you, but if you don’t want to live in the relationship then bugger off’.

Michelle: So it ultimately gives you some control over the situation really.

Kerry: Yes, because I don’t have to worry like before. It had to get to the point where he’d hit me before he was gone, and now *I’m* not going to let it go that far. I can turn around and go, ‘Well no I don’t need you’, and he’s realised that it’s not good on the kids being apart but it’s better than being together and being violent. B537F

In other words, Kerry is shifting the power relationship by keeping the house in her name. It is as if she is using the powerful symbol of independence (non-mutuality) to demonstrate that while other aspects of the relationship are non-egalitarian (that is he is abusive), she will hold onto the non-egalitarian property ownership. In the months prior to our interview, Kerry had initiated legal action to have ownership of the house transferred in her name only³⁹. Since the house has been in her name, Kerry has experienced a sense of greater security and felt that she has had more control over her relationship. Kerry draws on her ownership of the house and the discourse of volition to exercise power within the couple. Domestic violence research has indicated that fear of homelessness and financial dependence are reasons why women stay within a violent relationship (Chung et al. 2000). In Australia the largest joint asset that couples own is their house and the largest joint debt their mortgage. This means that to voluntarily leave a violent man, the woman may experience substantial financial losses and, in most cases, lose her home. For Kerry, ownership of the house (having it in her name only) is about having financial security such that she can make decisions about the relationship not based on financial reasons.

The comments from Kerry and Edwina indicate that sole ownership of the house gives one party a point of leverage. In the quotation from Kerry, she suggests that she ‘uses’ this knowledge as a means to have more control within the relationship, reaffirming her belief in the voluntary nature of the relationship. It gives her choices about the relationship, enabling her to make decisions rather than being forced into certain outcomes. It lets her exert control within the relationship. In Kerry’s case, having the house in her name allows her the leverage required to ask him to leave when he gets violent in *her* home. Kerry inadvertently assumes responsibility for Tom’s violence when she states: ‘I’m not going to let it go that far’. However having the house in her name gives Kerry both legitimate

³⁹ Kerry’s husband Tom was reluctant but willing to give Kerry sole ownership of the house.

agency to act and it allows Kerry to voice her commitment to Tom as voluntary, she no longer feels forced to be together.

Ownership of the house has a significant symbolic and financial meaning for the couple. Some men use this to claim that the relationship is not 'real' unless home ownership is shared, and some women agree. But other women claim that a 'real' relationship can exist despite separate ownership because then the relationship is voluntary. Thus showing how actors shift meanings in discourse, in this case of the 'couple'. The connection between the financial commitment to the home and the emotional commitment to the relationship becomes even more blurred when the relationship breaks down.

Property 'Rights', Relationship 'Rights'

Sarah and Patrick had been living separately for a few months. Sarah and their two children lived in the jointly owned home, Patrick having moved out. In the following interview extract Sarah described arriving home one evening:

So up until then everything seemed to be going fairly smoothly and Patrick seemed to be accepting that it [the relationship] was finally coming to an end, and then the Thursday we [Sarah and their two children] arrived home, got home at eight o'clock, and there he was in the house. The fire was going, the washing machine was going and he said, 'I've moved back in' and I said, 'You can't do this' and he said, 'Yes I can. I've spoken to a lawyer. I have every right to. I own half this house and I'm here to stay. You can't stop me'. 211M

In this situation the ownership of space has multiple dimensions. Patrick draws on a rights discourse, coupled with an equality discourse, to justify moving back into the house (to pick up where the relationship left off). He jointly owns the house and because 'she can't stop him' from moving back in (as there is no restraining order) he believes that it is appropriate and reasonable to do so. He has been advised that legally he had the right to move back in because he was paying part of the mortgage. He presumed that this property

right reinstated him in the relationship, he'd come 'home'. He lit the fire and made himself 'at home'. The hearth has strong symbolism as the centre of the home. Presumably he thought he would also move back into his half of their jointly owned bed.

Sarah continues:

So I walked around the house saying, 'You can't do this'. Because I was running late that morning I thought, 'Oh, I've got to ring the police. I can't have them coming in with my bed not made'. So there I am, running to make my bed, because he wouldn't let me get to the phone, and I'm thinking, 'Oh, I've got to make the bed because the police will come in and they'll probably try and take him away'. But he wouldn't let me get to the phone so there was going to be no police and I kept walking round the house saying, 'You can't do this', and he kept saying, 'You'd better consider it really seriously before you pick up that phone. You pick up that phone and dial the police. You've brought this all on yourself and you can suffer the consequences', and that's the way he was talking. I thought, 'Oh, what am I going to do?' ... I was saying to Patrick, 'You can't stop me from picking up my own phone'. 'It's not your phone, it's my phone just as much as it's yours and you can't use it at the moment.' I said, 'Well this is crazy. You can't do this to me - you can't move in', and he kept saying that he'd spoken to a lawyer and he had every right to. B211F

Sarah considered the need, in this crisis situation, to make the bed before contacting the police. In this statement, Sarah suggests that the domicile is a reflection of her identity. If she makes the bed she will be seen as responsible within the domicile. For Sarah, Patrick's moving back into the home symbolises more than providing shelter for him, it is a moving back into the couple, which she believes he also expected as part of his return. Subsequently, she (with the assistance of the police⁴⁰ who were able to verbally clarify her rights) was able to reinstate the difference between Patrick's property 'right', to his house, and the right to move back into her life, that is, back into the relationship. The following

⁴⁰ Sarah was reluctant to take out a restraining order against Patrick, as she believed, it had the potential to increase his anger and antagonism during the upcoming property settlement.

interview with Danielle also illustrates the close connection between the architectural space of the home and the emotional space of the relationship. Danielle and Jeremy are married and, prior to his attendance at the men's group, they were living together with their children in their family home. The difference was that the family home was the same home that Jeremy had shared with his previous wife.

At the time of the final interview Danielle and Jeremy had recently separated and as a result Danielle had moved out into a rented home unit, which was large enough to accommodate visits from the children, who had stayed with Jeremy. Danielle spoke with me about the impact on her psyche of living in the same house that Jeremy's ex-wife lived in. She stated:

I'm stronger now than I was when I was living with him. I've got my security here. This [unit] is my safe place and I know that if I want him to leave this is my home, whereas back where we lived it was always his home because he lived there with his previous wife. It was always *his* home, and that's another thing. I say to him I'm not going to go back there and live. If we do get back together again, I want it to be somewhere else and he keeps saying, 'Oh, it's better if we go back here financially and that', but I just can't. I just can't go back there and live. 969F

Another issue raised by Danielle during the interview was Jeremy's ownership of the house. Jeremy presents the argument about financial stability of the family as a reason for his links to the house. It is his rationale for staying. Danielle's emphasis suggests that the inequality represented by his ownership of the house may have influenced the outcome of fights and her feeling comparatively weak. She has taken strength from being released from the confines of *his* house and the history it holds, asserting that any future relationship with him would need to be located elsewhere, in another house, one that can be their home to share. Danielle has gained a sense of control by leaving and not re-

entering his domicile. In this, her final interview, Danielle indicates the value to her sense of self in having her own emotional and physical space. Her new unit represents the separation in the relationship, but more than this, it signifies a 'safe place'. Her unit is a place free of violence and intimidation. She is free from being the 'wife' in *his* house and *his* life the unit is a place where she can summon her strengths. Throughout the interview Danielle alluded to the presence of her husband's 'history' with his ex-wife within the walls of his house. Others too spoke as if the physical structure of the house represented or reflected the relationship dynamics.

The rooms within the house provide barriers between family members - allowing solitude, (if lucky enough to have a room of one's own) or being the basis of sibling fights (whose side of the room belongs to whom). For the children, their bedroom could be considered the haven dividing the home between safe and unsafe zones. In my interview with Sarah she talked about her concerns about her children's safety and the actions she undertook to maintain the safety of her two young daughters Margie and Susie. Sarah described the difficulty she had keeping the children in their room and safe from their father's rage:

And I was trying to put the girls in the other room, saying to Susie, 'Look just stay in your room. I don't care what you do. Play with Margie. Just shut the door and ignore what's happening because Margie doesn't need to hear this, you don't need to hear this. Just Daddy and I are having a bit of an argument but it'll all be all right in a minute'. And Susie said, 'But what's going on?' and I'm saying, 'It's all right, just don't worry about it. Just go in your room'. 'Oh, well we want an iceblock.' I was saying, 'Well go in your room and get an iceblock and just stay there'. 'But we'll mess up the room.' I said, 'I don't care what you do. Just stay in the room'. So Susie went in the room and she could hear a lot of yelling going on and she kept coming out and checking that everything was okay.

This experience of making a safe place for children to be shielded from violence is common in women's negotiation of men's violence. In the following interview Jenny also describes how she insisted the children remain in their bedrooms during Gary's rage. At these times, their bedrooms are the only safe places for the children:

He threw it [the knife] from the top room and my poor son, he's hearing Elise [my daughter] screaming, Gary's [husband] going ape with this knife. He must have heard me say, 'Put the knife away'. My son comes out of the room. While he's walking out the room to see what's going on, this knife [flies straight past his face]... And I've never ever seen my husband do that and my husband, 'I'll f'ing fix this', because you can't do anything with him when he's in that rage. I just said to Shaun, 'Get in your room', because I knew he'd have ended up with the knife in him. I said, 'Get in your room', and my son says, 'No, I've got to protect you and Elise'. I said, 'Get in your room, just please', so fortunately he did. 428F

Both of these interview transcripts highlight the feelings of mutual responsibility the children assume to ensure the safety of their mothers and vice versa. It would be misleading to suggest that the children's bedrooms are always a 'safe zone'. Increasingly reports of abuse of children (including sexual abuse) by men are found to co-exist with domestic violence (James 1994; Edleson 1999).

The main bedroom is a joint space, shared between the two members of the couple, 'sleeping together' being the literal and metaphorical hallmark of a satisfactory relationship. Along with the understanding that the ownership of a home signifies a dual commitment to the relationship is the idea that the couple will share the main bedroom. The sexual health of the couple is measured by their capacity to share a bedroom within the house. At the time of this interview Sarah had just recently separated from her husband. She recalls, when they were living together, the nights that she would go to great lengths to avoid situations of intimacy with her then estranged husband Patrick:

When Patrick and I were together I found I watched TV a lot at night so I didn't have to go to bed. He would go to bed and I'd put the kids to bed and read them stories, and sometimes I'd fall asleep in their beds while I was reading stories, and then wake up and think, 'Oh, I wonder if Patrick's still awake', and then I would go in the lounge and sit and watch TV for about three more hours, just so that I wouldn't have to go to bed. That kind of life was getting me tired, more and more tired, and it was terrible. A211F

Sharing the main bedroom with Patrick meant that Sarah went without sleep to avoid going to bed when he was awake. The implication of going to bed when he was awake was having to refuse sexual intimacy, by waiting till he fell asleep she could avoid this possible confrontation. Hence Sarah has actively changed her sleeping patterns so that she could avoid conflict.

In the following quotation, Nicole indicates that Matthew's violence resulted in separate sleeping arrangements:

[When] something like that happened [violence] and of course we went in separate rooms then for a couple of nights and it went quiet again... C531F

Consequently the shared space of the main bedroom became a contested space. Not only was the bedroom a contested space for Nicole and Matthew, but eventually the house became a contested space:

I just think the day that I said, 'Get out' and that was very hard and I had to watch him pack his bag and walk down the street with no car and I felt sick because I feel like, 'Oh my god, this isn't just my house. This is his house too' and I would never think that is a reasonable thing, but he'd pushed me too far and I was in pain and I had to call a doctor and I was really quite badly hit around and beaten. C531F

Nicole indicates the guilt she experienced after being attacked by Matthew where she felt she had no option but to ask him to leave. In this instance, as in many cases of domestic violence, the architectural space of the home is the site where the men's violence occurs.

The architectural space of the home is intrinsically connected to the emotional space of the relationship. As has been shown above architectural spaces within the home can be ascribed gender dimensions. His use of violence can be read as a way in which the perpetrator asserts control over the 'home' space, even though the 'home spaces' are seen as predominantly feminine spaces.

SECTION 2: Surveillance within the Domestic Space

Researchers Johnston and Valentine (1995), examined lesbian identities within the domestic environment, suggesting that the ideology of 'the family' which emphasises togetherness, intimacy and an interest in others' business may also work in opposition to the ideals of privacy and control over one's surroundings. Johnston and Valentine also recognise the home as a location of surveillance of family members' sexuality: 'Lesbians living in (or returning to) the 'family' house, who haven't 'come out' to their parents can find that a lack of privacy from the parental gaze constrains their freedom to perform a "lesbian" identity "at home"' (Johnston and Valentine 1995, p. 101). Hence, whilst the home may be a location of privacy for 'the family' per se, individual members may not be secured the same level of privacy or freedom from surveillance by other family members (Johnston and Valentine 1995, p. 100). Within my interviews, a number of stories indicate a lack of personal privacy due to scrutiny by family members. As the following quotation indicates, Damien resents his wife's children sharing and using his belongings. He calls on a discourse of his 'right to privacy' to justify his action of hiding things from the children:

It's got to the stage now with rights that we've got a sliding cupboard in our bedroom and I've got these compartments in it. I actually put a lock on the door on one of them so that

we could have some things that are private. And the other night I come home and James' gone and got mum's keys he's gone in there and got something he wanted. You know what I mean. I mean ... I share, but I feel that there has to be something that's sacrosanct in my life, *something that I can call my own*, but I haven't even got that. (emphasis added)

106M

Damien initially softens the 'selfish' tone to his complaint by invoking mutuality between he and his wife who become the 'we' of the couple in contrast with 'them' of her children. In doing this, Damien also invokes a generational tone. However the references to the couple subsides as soon as his narrative shifts to identify the children as his wife's when he says 'James' gone and got mum's keys'. In Damien's narrative, it is apparent that the problem for him is the loss of his private space and his control over his personal belongings. Although initially he positions himself as part of a couple, he points to the limits of 'coupledom', with his plea for: 'something he can call his own'. Overall Damien indicates a feeling of helplessness about his lack of inviolable space within the home. Similar to Foucault's discussion of the prison the prisoners have limited control over their space – there are no 'private spaces'. The prison officers hold the keys; they have access to every part of the prison cell. In Damien's situation, the private space of the locked cupboard becomes public as the children gain access to this space. The privacy afforded to the 'couple' is considered further in my analysis of the domestic space as another couple describe their new living arrangements.

Damien's reference to his need for independence/individuality within the couple is reminiscent of the same tension that Edwina and Kerry spoke of when reflecting on the way that owning their house provided independence within the mutuality of the relationship. Members of another family whom I interviewed had, in the time between the second and third interviews, built a new house. Comments from both Edwina and Frank

describe the significance of the family's new living arrangements to the family functioning. Of importance was the ability for family members to have privacy and spaces of their own, rather than shared spaces. In the following quotes we hear first from the woman, Edwina, and then from Frank her husband, the couple is seen as a unit whilst the children within the family are a separate 'group':

Edwina: But I mean as far as the house goes, we have more privacy because it's six bedrooms and the main bedroom is at the front of the house and the other children's bedrooms are at the back of the house, so they've got their own lounge room, their own TV, their own eating area. I mean that's made a big difference too, having more room in the house. We're not under each other's feet. And Frank tends to sit in the study. He's actually going to play the guitar. C423F

Frank: We're in a probably better environment at the moment because [it's] a bigger house, that sort of thing, so we're not living in each other's pockets. ... Myself and Edwina have got our own sort of lounge now and the kids have got their own area sort of thing, so it's a lot better. C423M

In the rhetoric of the family being a private place it is assumed this means freedom from external surveillance, exclusion from the public gaze, as well as privacy from other members of the household. The expectation of privacy from other family members compromises the concept of mutuality of the couple and communal living and sharing. This notion of privacy is threatened as we explore Foucault's concept of surveillance – both the external gaze or public surveillance and also the 'private' gaze or self-surveillance. The effects of power by observation equate to a lack of privacy. As will be explored further, it is through surveillance that the inmates of Foucault's panopticon are stripped of privacy, they are constantly observed by an invisible gaze.

Foucault suggests that Bentham's panopticon should be understood as a generalisable model, for defining power relations in terms of the 'everyday life of men [sic]' (Foucault 1991b, p. 205). He describes the panopticon as the *piece de resistance* of hierarchical observation. Hierarchical observation creates the subject through constant observation or the sense of being observed. The panopticon is an architectural design that allows the subject to be constantly watched or to believe that s/he is being constantly watched. For within the panopticon, power is both visible and unverifiable. The circular architectural design of the panopticon, with the central 'eye' or watch tower, allows for the discipline of large numbers of people in institutions such as prisons and hospitals. Rabinow states that: 'through spatial ordering the panopticon brings together power, control of the body, control of groups and knowledge' (Rabinow 1991, p. 19). Rabinow refers to a telling comment by Bentham that the panopticon gaze could as easily be observing a criminal, a schoolboy, or a wife (Rabinow 1991, p. 19). Bentham then suggests that the panopticon would be an extremely effective and useful arrangement for a harem, since it would cut down the number of eunuchs necessary to watch the women in the cells (Bentham cited in Rabinow 1991, p. 19).

In an interview with Paul Rabinow, Foucault explores the intersections between space, knowledge and power. Foucault comments 'Space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power' (Foucault 1982 cited Faubion 2000, p. 361). This quotation is relevant to this study of space within the domicile as it makes explicit the links between space and the exercise of power. Foucault recognises in this interview that architecture itself does not act, but that techniques of power may be invested in architecture. Hence architecture has the potential to both enable and resist relationships of power.

In general, the architectural design of the typical Adelaide family home has very few of the architectural features⁴¹ of the panopticon. However, with imagination, the house can be conceptualised as a small scale panopticon – there is no space within the house which is unable to be viewed⁴². Hence the family has mechanisms of observation in places which are able to be used as mechanisms of control. There are hierarchies within the home that support ‘acceptable’ surveillance. For example, it is expected that small children are watched and observed by parents, and babies, are increasingly monitored by intercom. This intergenerational surveillance is a social expectation, endorsed as ‘good’ parenting. This assumption is however, not reciprocated and children are not allowed the same access to all parts of adult life (especially children from another relationship). It could be argued that one of the disciplinary technologies of power between generations is the access that adults/parents have to observe the most intimate aspects of children’s bodies and lives. In comparison children are excluded from reciprocal access to the intimate aspects of adult bodies. In this section I have briefly discussed some examples of acceptable forms of surveillance within the home.

Usage of various rooms within the home is typically gendered. For example, the kitchen and laundry are, in general, considered ‘feminine’ spaces; the ‘shed’ (often in the backyard) is typically a ‘masculine’ space; and the shared areas of the house such as living and family rooms allow observation of family members. Sociologist, Vikki Bell (1993) has extensively examined the disciplinary practices which surround incest within the family and, in the following quotation, reveals the importance of the politics of space within the home to surveillance of daughters’ bodies:

⁴¹ It could be argued that in the surveillance of children, contemporary designs of the open plan family room shares a key feature of the panopticon. The watchful eye of the kitchen/mother overlooks the family room/children.

There are examples of fathers and brothers watching through holes in the walls, of girls being watched dressing and undressing. The spaces within the home that were once thought of by the daughters as private (such as bathrooms and bedrooms) become spaces in which they can be watched so that they have to be constantly alert, just as the inmates of the panopticon.

Bell 1993, p. 64

Gaze of Her Emotional Space

My practice of conducting interviews with women within the home would, on rare occasions, occur when their male partner was at home. One such occasion demonstrated the possibility for the equivalent of the panopticon gaze to be exercised within the domestic space. I interviewed Nell and Damien three times, each on separate occasions. They are married. They have both been married previously and both have two children from their previous relationships. Damien's two children live with their mother, whilst Nell's two children live with her and Damien. The second of the series of three interviews with Nell was scheduled on a day which, unbeknown to us, coincided with Damien's rostered day off. We decided to conduct the interview outside in the backyard (as was often the case in fine weather), because this would ensure that Damien would be out of earshot. During the interview Damien, who was cleaning the house, found it necessary to visit his shed in the backyard, and therefore walk past us, no less than six times. Although he did not overtly interrupt or eavesdrop on our conversation his repeated appearances had the effect of asserting his presence into our consciousness, such that he was 'present', even when not in our immediate vicinity.

⁴² The children's bedrooms offer at least partial privacy and in some houses lockable toilets and bathrooms can be found (but with the 'safety' feature of being opened from the outside with a simple coin or screwdriver).

Similarly, my interview with Veronica was scheduled on a day that Simon chose to 'work from home'. Simon and Veronica are married and have a two year old daughter. Simon is self employed and Veronica is employed on a part-time basis. My second interview with Veronica was conducted in the kitchen whilst her partner Simon was working in the study. Simon left all the doors open as he retreated to the study to 'get out of our way'. Veronica closed the series of doors before commencing the interview, an act that prompted Simon's return unannounced, within ten minutes.

These examples show ways in which these two men presumed that overseeing their wives was their prerogative. Their surveillance probably had the intention (and possibly the effect) of altering the content of the interview. Particularly influential was the men's invisible and unpredictable presence, which meant that we were unable to determine where they were, and whether or not, they were listening. Nell commented towards the end of her interview when I asked:

Michelle: 'Has this evaluation created any problems for you?'

Nell: 'Apart from Damien jumping in and out of the shed all the time. (laughs) ... He's probably very curious as to what I am saying, but there's nothing I've said to you that I probably haven't already said to him anyway' B106F.

In these examples Damien and Simon both used their bodily presence in an attempt to control what was being said. The women self regulate their physical and emotional space because of the presence of their partner.

Once couples are separated and one partner has moved out, other means of surveillance become available to be used. The eyes of the children replace the perpetrator's direct gaze on the wife. On access visits the children are commonly asked to recall the activities of the other parent. Sarah comments about the ways she has schooled her daughter Susie, to deflect Patrick's interrogation:

He still wants to know what I'm up to and the only way he can do it is through the girls. [In answer to her father's questions about Sarah] ... Susie says, 'I don't know', because I've told her, 'That could be your standard comment to Dad if he wants to know anything – 'I don't know' or 'ask Mum' because it's none of Dad's business'. I said 'I'll tell you [her daughters] everything if you want, [about] what I'm doing in my life, but I don't think you need to know absolutely everything, but I'll tell you if you want as long as it doesn't go back to Daddy'. Because a couple of things did get back to him and I even got comments back on it. But I still feel he's out there. C211F

The above quotation indicates how Sarah must work to maintain her privacy from Patrick. Patrick relies on conversations with the children during access visits to gain information about Sarah. He no longer has direct access to this information from Sarah and so Susie, their daughter, has become his eyes and ears. Patrick's gaze of Sarah's emotional space continues, even though they now live apart tellingly she 'still feels he is out there'.

The experience of being under constant surveillance, as envisaged by Foucault, is at its most marked in the event of stalking. Being stalked is common for women experiencing domestic violence both when a couple is living together, as well as following separation. Sarah and Patrick are married but at the time of the interviews were living separately. They have two children who both live with Sarah. During her third and final interview with me, Sarah comments:

He's admitted to following me around a bit to see what I've been up to and who I've been with. It makes me wonder on weekends when I'm alone, like wondering if he's peering in my bedroom window. ... I wish I could get someone in my bed to give him a good show. (laughs) ... I have a feeling that he could be peering in windows. C211F

Sarah indicates the unverifiable nature of Patrick's observation. Foucault (1991b, p. 201) states: 'the inmate must never know whether he [sic] is being looked at at any one moment' that is, the subject never knows whether they are the object of view or not,

creating homogenous effects of power. For Sarah, despite the possible surveillance by her ex-husband, Patrick, she imagines a strategy of resistance. The statement: 'I wish I could get someone in my bed to give him a good show', illustrates Sarah's awareness that it is her sexual self and behaviour that is the object of his scrutiny, as he clearly still sees this aspect of her life as reflecting in some way on him. Sarah perceives the potential of 'giving him a good show', as an act of resistance which would demonstrate to him the breakdown and failure of his disciplinary practices.

The examples given so far, illustrate both men and women surveying each other's physical and emotional spaces within the couple. Sarah felt the effects of possibly being watched and she considered ways that she could change her behaviour in response to knowing that Patrick might be watching her. Observation by the surveillant is not the only form of surveillance identified by Foucault within the panopticon. The unverifiable nature of the surveillant's gaze results in the inmates adopting the gaze, that is, attending to their own behaviour and modifying it to avoid (or disguise) actions which they know may be punished. This creates in the inmate the point of view of the observer, that is, it ensures self-surveillance. It was evident that women engage in forms of self-surveillance in an effort to protect themselves from attacks from their partner.

Self-Surveillance as Self Protection

Foucault states:

he [sic] who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.

Hence the subject adopts practices that result in the ‘automatic functioning of power’ (Foucault 1991b, p. 201). Medical sociologist Liz Eckermann (1997) in her application of Foucault’s notion of self-surveillance to women practising anorexia, suggests that when people are objectified self-surveillance emerges as a practice of control. She states that: ‘when people are treated as objects they see themselves as objects and tend to torture their bodies and desires to fit instructions and specifications’ (Eckermann 1997, p. 157). The action of self-surveillance or self discipline involves the victim ‘simultaneously playing both roles’, that is, the victim becomes her own surveyor. In relation to domestic violence this means she must imagine the worst possible scenarios of violence that may evolve based on previous acts or threats. She creates it in her mind, mapping the imagined preconditions in order to avoid their possibility. She becomes her own guardian as she plays out her perception of her partner’s responses to her actions or inactions and those of the children. As she internalises her perception of his demands, they increasingly shape her own behaviour and she becomes the external observer and monitor of her self. All of the women I interviewed strategised to avoid their partner’s violence. Some went to great lengths to plan and modify their behaviours and in doing so rendered themselves docile.

Fear (for herself or her children) is a major motivating force in women’s self regulation. The threat of violence or the knowledge of the perpetrator’s ability to be violent is central to a woman’s self discipline. Specifically, she must imagine (or predict) what his response will be before it happens, allowing her to change her behaviours in an attempt to pre-empt or avoid his violence. Ironically, her action of self-surveillance requires her to invoke his control of her as the means whereby she seeks to gain control over her own situation.

Jenny and Gary have been married for nearly five years. They share a house with Shaun, her son from her previous relationship and Elise who is Jenny and Gary’s daughter. In my final interview with Jenny, she explained the behaviours she undertakes prior to and when

her husband returns weekly from his work trips. Jenny is able to detect when he is upset or more likely to ‘explode’. She refers to these periods as ‘the mood’ and reports its effect on her:

I become defensive, I’m on my guard. I always tend to be trying to assure myself that he’s not in the mood. I find that he interrogates me and I’ve got to make sure that if anybody’s phoned me, I’ve got to be sure of the time, the day they phoned, because in case he’s rung me and the phone’s engaged and I’ve said, ‘Nobody’s rung’, and he says, ‘Yes, but I phoned you and it was engaged’. He questions that. Wants to know what I’ve been doing, who rung me, so I’ve got to keep that in my mind. Then I’ve got to make sure I’ve got the meals organised for what I’m going to do. I worry about the outside being cleaned up because [otherwise] he starts blaming the boy for not doing any gardening and that. I just make sure a few certain jobs are done so he can’t have an excuse to go off. C428F

Sarah too provides a clear illustration of the extent to which her thought patterns are focused on predicting and pre-empting her ex-husband’s (Patrick’s) behaviour, even now that they are separated. The excerpt is taken from Sarah’s second interview where she described her thought processes as she planned babysitting in order to attend her graduation ceremony. Sarah wanted to ensure that Patrick did not know who was taking care of the children so that he could not take advantage of her absence to take them away. Her concern for her children’s safety results in her modifying her behaviour. To do this Sarah found herself thinking as if she were Patrick, she tried to imagine locations for childcare that he would not think of. Sarah decided to drive to the other side of the city to place her children with a friend:

Then I thought, ‘Well if Mum and Dad don’t have the girls, where [will they go?]’ - like Patrick was meant to have them that weekend – ‘where am I going to put them? I won’t feel safe unless they’re a long way away’ [from Patrick]. So I put them out the other side of town at a girlfriend’s house, knowing that Patrick wouldn’t think [that] I would go all

that way [the other side of the city] to come back [to the graduation ceremony]... So I put the girls out there and then went on to the dinner and then went back and slept the night at her place. B211F

Similarly Pamela and Ralph are currently separated. Pamela describes the way she pays particular attention to the words she chooses in conversations so as not to 'trigger a violent reaction' from Ralph. She described her watchfulness of what she says to Ralph:

Manipulate is probably the wrong word, but I tend to try and create a situation where if we've got things to discuss where it's not going to trigger a violent reaction. If I have something to say I'll watch how I say it so as not to trigger something. I couldn't have my own thoughts, my own anything. C867F

Pamela, along with Sarah and Jenny, make a number of concessions and changes to their behaviour in their perpetual effort to avoid violence. Pamela's attention to her speech, so as not to 'trigger a violent reaction', violates an assumption of the notion of romantic love as a mutual, equal relationship that is, she is unable to speak from her heart or speak her mind.

The women I interviewed had a great deal at stake in their capacity to perform the normative hetero-feminine skill of 'knowing your man'. The capacity for women to 'read' men's behaviour is deeply embedded in femininity and is a core element of the discourse of romantic love of which the ideal of couple is part. I now turn to considering the role that normative femininities and masculinities play in facilitating domestic violence.

SECTION 3: Normalisation - The Ideal of Romantic Love

Foucault describes normalisation as a disciplinary technique along with hierarchical observation and the examination. In his explanation of the concept of normalisation he states:

Like surveillance and with it, normalization becomes one of the great instruments of power at the end of the classical age. For the marks that once indicated status, privilege and affiliation were increasingly replaced - or at least supplemented - by a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogenous social body but also playing a part in classification, hierarchization and the distribution of rank. In a sense, the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialties and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another.

Foucault 1991b, p. 184

For Foucault, normalisation acts to compare individuals and differentiates between them according to a desired norm. Therefore, it is the comparison of one with the presumed typical 'other', so that when one varies from the 'norm', the subjects act to alter their behaviour to become more like the 'favoured' or 'normal'. Hence a norm is established by which all are judged and deemed to conform or not. Normalisation produces homogeneity by minimising idiosyncratic behaviour and judging all individuals against each other, but it also individualises by measuring each against the norm (Bell 1993, p. 67). Rabinow reads Foucault's concept of normalisation as a means of detecting anomalies within the social body. Rabinow states:

an essential component of technologies of normalization is the key role they play in the systematic creation, classification, and control of anomalies of the social body. Their *raison d'être* comes from two claims of their promoters: first, that certain technologies serve to isolate anomalies; and second, that one can then normalize anomalies through corrective or therapeutic procedures, determined by other related technologies. In both

cases, the technologies of normalization are purportedly impartial techniques for dealing with dangerous social deviations.

Rabinow 1991, p. 21

As proposed by Rabinow, those who deviate from the norm can be detected and attempts made to correct their 'deviant' behaviours. Jean Carabine, writing on heterosexuality and social policy, argues that normalisation is a process whereby 'appropriate and acceptable' sexuality is enforced and regulated (Carabine 1996). Carabine argues that heterosexuality is a monolithic category which has remained invisible due to its apparent 'normality'.

I apply Foucault's notion of normalisation, proposing that the 'culture of romance' acts as this normalising judgement on couples and, in doing so it provides the boundaries of supposed 'normality' through which men and women establish, adjust and judge their relationships. The discourse of romantic love permeates cultural images within western societies. Sociologist Anthony Giddens (1989, p. 8) identifies notions of romantic love as developing from the extra-marital sexual affairs of the aristocracy some two centuries ago. During this period, marriages were based on inheritance rights and familial connections, not emotional connections, sexual pleasure or compatibility, which in western societies are increasingly seen as central to 'coupledom'. 'Platonic' love can be contrasted with romantic love, where platonic love is based on the idea that 'sexual desire be controlled for the greater good of the whole' (Oliver 2000, p. 19). Some core ideas of romantic love include: the inevitability of meeting 'one true love', a shared vision of a future, and the desire to grow old together. Romantic love involves the ability to speak from the heart, to be exclusively focused on each other emotionally and sexually. Further, emotional and sexual exclusivity are both expectations of heterosexual romantic love which ideally culminates in commitment through the formal (or increasingly informal) practice of marriage. Within the confines of romantic love, a couple who loves one another will do

everything in their power to care for their partner, rather than hurt or harm them. Although violence and coercion within couples is evidently common⁴³, it is not considered to be the ‘norm’ within relationships based on romantic love. Violence is beyond the boundaries of ‘acceptable behaviour’. The assumption that love and violence are mutually exclusive is at the heart of the romantic ideal and yet, paradoxically, jealousy, possessiveness and obsession are not incompatible with romantic love.

A core principle of romance is the concept of love. Love is complex and contradictory. In the following quotation, philosopher Mortimer Adler encapsulates the complex interplay of emotions surrounding love: ‘Love frequently turns into its opposite, hate. Sometimes there is love and hate of the same object; sometimes love inspires hate, as it occasions jealousy, of the things which threaten it. Anger and fear, too, follow in the wake of love’ (Adler and Gorman 1961, p. 1054). Adler continues to describe the way in which love blurs the action of the law: ‘in acting as if love exempted them from ordinary laws; as if their love could be a law unto itself. “Who shall give a lover any law?” Arcite asks in Chaucer’s *Knight’s Tale*. “Love is a greater law”’ (Adler and Gorman 1961, p. 1056). This claim is used by the incestuous father-rapist of his daughter and then his granddaughter in Clara Law’s film *The Goddess* of 1967. Here, as in popular belief, predatory desire is deemed to be ‘love’. Another principle of romantic couple is the ability of ‘love to conquer all’, that there are tough times in relationships, but the strongest love will always overcome the adversities. This hope is invoked by women in most abusive relationships with someone they love. The notion of love as a higher order emotion was a strong theme throughout the interviews where men, in particular, praised those

⁴³ Australian Bureau of Statistics found ‘23% of women who have ever been married or in a de facto relationship experienced violence by a partner at some stage during the relationship’ (ABS 1996, p. 50).

relationships where the couple stayed together even though the woman had experienced intolerable levels of male violence.

The discourse of romantic love in couples connects strongly with the discourses of normality that surround the nuclear family as an ideal type. Both the nuclear family and heterosexuality depend upon the performance of gender roles. The archetypical husband and/or father is the main breadwinner and wife the home-keeper. Within the nuclear family the role of parent is to nurture and love but also to control and discipline the children. Generational respect is intact and assumed. The family lives communally within the same household. There is an expectation that family members will stick by and support each other. The addition of children to the couple alters the dynamics. The couple no longer exists in isolation but as part of a family. Expectations on the couple change as members adopt the additional roles of parent – mother or father. In the nuclear model, the father becomes the symbolic head of the family along with its assumed roles of disciplinarian and breadwinner. The reconstituted or split family adds further complexity to these models. The man is no longer able to adopt the roles associated with the traditional nuclear model. The men's roles, as disciplinarian and head of the family, are often challenged as the children are not 'his' or are 'less his' than hers.

The equality model of the couple, which underpins romantic love (and the 'childfree' couple), challenges the normative gender roles held within the nuclear family model. The tension between equality and hierarchy is also evident in dual income (and dual unemployment) families, where the male may take a greater role in caring for the children or domestic activities. The woman within the equality model may keep her own name when married (as increasingly occurs within the nuclear model). The couple may have joint bank accounts and joint ownership of the family home.

Two parallel characteristics of a 'healthy' couple are emotional intimacy and mutual commitment. An expectation (and an apparent sign of a 'good' relationship) is that both partners are aware of where the other person is 'at' emotionally and that they are mutually committed to the relationship. Women especially monitor the health of their relationship by constantly assessing the level of commitment of their partner. The following interviews with women indicate ways in which they engage in practices of vigilance to gauge their partner's emotional commitment to the relationship. Directly after I had interviewed her partner Rick, I received a phone call from Jess. She asked what Rick had told me during the interview. I reiterated that the interviews were confidential and that I would not talk about what Rick had said. In the ensuing conversation it became evident that Jess was attempting to glean information from me, in order to help her determine Rick's emotional commitment to their relationship. She explained that she was deciding whether she should stay in the relationship or leave, a decision that rested on Rick's level of 'commitment'. In her attempt to 'read' Rick's emotional commitment to the relationship Jess was attempting to recruit me as her 'eyes' and 'ears'.

Commitment to the relationship was commonly measured by sexual fidelity. Nicole and Lincoln are married and living together with their two children. After Lincoln attended the twelve week men's group, Nicole received a phone call from a stranger alleging that Lincoln was having an affair. In her final interview Nicole explained her strategies of spying on her husband, Lincoln:

So I started going through his pay packets. Like I got them out of the folder which is just sitting there, so it wasn't like I was snooping through his things, but I couldn't work out the hours. And I did sit [in my car outside] ... his work one day for quite a while and I watched. He could come and go a little bit more freely than I've ever been led to believe without sort of having to clock on and off. He worked every Tuesday night late and this

was a Tuesday night when this person [made an anonymous phone call]. Well it was Wednesday and this person said they'd seen him on the Tuesday night with a woman, so I don't know whether this Tuesday night he was not working and going off with this person every week, or whether he was working and that was just someone making it up. C531F

Nicole is watching and checking on Lincoln, checking his pay slips and watching him at work to determine his commitment to their relationship. In reporting her strategies, Nicole denies that her actions could be considered 'snooping' or invading Lincoln's privacy or stalking as it has been described previously when done by men. The main reason for this was because her surveillance was not successful in resolving her doubts and when she approached Lincoln about the alleged affair he denied it. Her surveillance did not act to reduce her anxieties. This example of surveillance differs dramatically from Foucault's concept of surveillance, where the surveillant internalises the gaze, as Lincoln had no knowledge of Nicole's attempts to resolve her concerns about his fidelity. Hence he was not placed in a position to monitor his own behaviour in response to the knowledge of Nicole's suspicions.

Normalisation operates in the judgements women make in their relationship and the degree of commitment that their partner shows them. Earlier comments from Jess demonstrated this concern. Men too, scrutinise their relationship for the extent to which it enables them to perform one or more of many masculine roles: head of the household, decision maker, provider, lover, 'man of action', father and most importantly the 'sexual proprietor'. Not all of these are compatible with the mutuality and sensuality demanded of romantic love within the couple. Potentially, there are positive consequences of having the culture of romance as a norm in that women in violent relationships use the norms as a measuring stick to determine whether they are or are not part of a 'normal' couple. A contradiction exists in that the expression of men's violence is not necessarily incongruent

with the norms of romantic love and so 'violent love' has the potential to survive within this paradigm. This application of normalisation shows the way in which the 'culture of romance' can be seen to provide a normative framework on a couple's relationship and in doing so, challenge men's violence.

Within this chapter several conflicting discourses have been identified. The home provides a sense of security and a private refuge (her rental flat, his shed, the children's bedroom) which individuals find empowering yet this is destabilised by forms of surveillance within and outside the home. More often than not, these forms of surveillance are generally expressions of the male presumption of power to observe and judge other members of the family. There is a contradiction between the presumptions of mutuality and sharing that accompanies notions of family and the couple and the desire for privacy and for sole ownership of the house. Finally, discourses of equality within the relationships serve to undercut notions of gendered power relations. This chapter has also examined the space of the relationship and spaces of the home showing the home to be marked by both gender and generation difference, such that children, but rarely women, have a safe haven within the purportedly safe - but actually unsafe - home. To him the home is both safe and private; if either of these notions are challenged he will attempt to protect both his safety and privacy. Women were found to engage in forms of self-surveillance to protect both themselves and their children from acts of men's violence.

This chapter has examined the domestic violence perpetrator within the private spaces of the home and relationship. The next chapter investigates popular representations of the perpetrator of domestic violence within public spaces, specifically the print media.

CHAPTER 6

Masculinities (1) – Popular Representations

Many studies examining representations of domestic violence within the media have found that the blame for men's violence has been located with women or that men's responsibility for their violence has been minimised (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994; Howe 1997; Kitzinger 1998; Carter 1998; Berns 2001; Evans 2002;). Popular conceptions of violent acts and those who commit them often reflect the notion that violence against women is a mindless, incomprehensible, unpredictable, and unpatterned behaviour enacted by the alcoholic, the mentally unstable, or the socially desperate (Dobash and Dobash 1998, p. 141). Male perpetrators of violence are predominantly portrayed as 'monsters existing outside of normal society' (Kozol 1995, p. 657) or as aberrations – 'quite different from "normal men"' (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994, p. 126). The media's creation of the monster perpetrator is a 'representational strategy that distanced him from "normal" men' (Kozol 1995, p. 655). This assumes that the 'normal', everyday man can sit comfortably and detach himself from the identity of 'perpetrator' as he reads the paper or watches a movie. The media has been considered influential in shaping public attitudes (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994); therefore, I examine the way men in my study related to media representations of the male perpetrator. I acknowledge that, while the media has a powerful influence, it is no more influential than the experience of living in a particular kind of family (Mackay 2002, p. 13) and that individuals are not passive recipients of media 'influence'. Media representations do however, provide and legitimise, certain discourses about domestic violence and masculinity which can be actively taken up or resisted by the audience.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides a theoretical background for the analysis of differing forms of masculinities represented within the media analysis. I utilise Arthur Frank's theory of the body, in particular the male dominating body, coupled with David Morgan's analysis of classical and grotesque male bodies, to provide a basis for the discussion of differing forms of masculinity expressed within the media analysis. In the second section, dominant constructions of the male perpetrator in *The Advertiser* are examined across a twenty-year time period, relying on evidence from the content analysis which is interwoven with data from the interviews with men and women. This analysis includes the examination of pictorial representations of the male perpetrator, identifying a dominant form of hyper-masculinity that is equated with the perpetrator. This section also establishes the interplay of different types of masculinities in media representations of the perpetrator. Connell's (1995, p. 80) notion of the interaction between hegemonic with marginalised (on ethnic or class grounds) masculinities provides a starting point in this discussion. Two forms of hegemonic masculinity also intersect: that of hyper-masculinity (the all-powerful, sporting physical body) and the rational, self-controlled male. The final section examines the relationship between popular representations of the male perpetrator and men and women's understandings and constructions. This chapter establishes that, the women interviewed see men as having complex subjectivities in which violence is one part of their selves. Men's perceptions of themselves are explored further in chapter seven.

SECTION 1: Masculinities and Men's Bodies

Philosopher Alphonso Lingis examined the social and cultural practices of the Maasai in Africa as they paint, mark, tattoo, scarify, circumcise and subincise the male and female bodies (Lingis 1984, p. 22). He compares these practices with the social and cultural

practices on the body of the Germans in the capitalist western world: 'the German nakedness celebrates naturalness, what a German is by virtue of being born healthy and Aryan and vigorous, the beauty that is not decorative, rococo, but functional' (Lingis 1984, p. 42). Lingis' study shows that forms of body writing and various techniques of social inscription are practiced in our own culture as much as in others: 'bind[ing] all subjects, often in quite different ways according to sex, class, race, cultural and age codifications, to social positions and relations' (Grosz 1994, p. 141). Lingis suggests that our gender, class, race, culture and age impact on how we experience our bodies. It is the representation of a particular body, the male perpetrator of domestic violence, that forms the focus of this chapter.

The equation of the violent male as dominant and powerful is acknowledged within the work of certain social theorists examining the embodiment of masculinity, including sociologist Arthur Frank's theorising of the 'dominating' body. He describes the body as a concept incorporating a triangular intersection of institutions, discourses and corporeality. In search for a sociology of the body, Frank uses a grid to characterise body uses (Frank 1991). Whilst Frank identifies four body types it is his notion of the dominating body which is pertinent to my discussion.

Frank identifies two main characteristics of the dominating body. The first is that dominating bodies are exclusively male bodies and the second, is what he refers to as their sense of lack, which Frank suggests is characterised by fear and anxiety. Frank illustrates his concept of the dominating body by drawing on Theweleit's work on the German Freikorps⁴⁴ soldiers and Gregor's work on the Mehinaku men of the Amazon. The macho-masculine nature of these dominating bodies becomes evident in the descriptions of their

domination. Both the warrior's and the soldier's bodies are socially and culturally marked bodies, representing masculinity, domination and violence. Although unsaid, Frank's dominating bodies envision physical strength, musculature or hyper-masculinity. Frank quotations Theweleit:

domination thus becomes [the] medium and outcome of the warrior body: 'What seems to hold the masculine-soldierly body together is his compulsion to oppress the body of another (or bodies, or the body in his own body). His relation to the bodies he subordinates is one of violence and, in extreme cases, of murder'.

Theweleit 1989, p. 87 cited in Frank 1991, p. 73

Frank criticises other literatures for representing dominating bodies entirely as male bodies and yet he too reinforces the male body as the epitome of dominating bodies in his choice of examples of the male soldier and warrior. In his description of 'dominating' bodies, Frank reaffirms the 'hyper-masculine' male body as the 'dominant' body. Sociologist, David Morgan suggests that Frank's descriptions of the dominating body verge on essentialism. He is critical of Frank's description of the dominating body as he argues that such a position reinforces, rather than theorises, the association between masculinity and violence. Hence Frank's examples portray the only dominant body as the 'traditional' masculine and stereotypical dominating body: the body which is muscular, taut and fit, the body which is inherently 'physical'.

Morgan suggests that dominance can be expressed in a variety of ways such as 'bodily posture and sitting as well as through more overtly physical deployments of the body' (Morgan 1993, p. 74). To adopt this 'expanded' view of domination allows greater scope when considering who may dominate and the forms that domination may take. Morgan criticises Frank's seemingly bio-determinist connection between masculinity and violence,

⁴⁴ An official army unit formed at the end of the first World War to fight along the borders of Germany.

preferring constructivist theories. He states: 'it is not the possession of a penis which provides the basis for male dominance over women. Rather it is systems of patriarchy which enable the penis to be represented or understood in ways that express domination' (Morgan 1993, p. 74).

Frank's description of the embodiment of domination, in his recollections of tribal warriors and military soldiers, focuses on the active interpretation of the body. He establishes an essential connection between domination, the male body, action and traditional masculinity. In contrast, Morgan argues that domination is not just achieved through specific actions, allowing domination to be enacted by those other than the hyper-masculine male and in ways which are not purely physical actions. Frank utilises a model of violence which relies on men's bodies as a conduit of a sovereign view of power. The violences presented are 'extreme' displays of power, they do not represent subtle manifestations of everyday power and control. Frank's work is useful as he begins to explore the interplay between the male body and violence, yet his analysis is restricted in that he focuses solely on extreme displays of physical violence and masculinity. As compared with Foucault, who avoids such analyses of extreme forms of violence, Frank and Morgan are illustrative of the different ways power is understood to be linked to masculinity in contemporary social theorising, representing both modernist and postmodern approaches respectively. These differing understandings of masculinity, power and violence are important to this chapter as they provide a basis for exploring and understanding the representations of male perpetrators within the media.

Morgan (1993) offers a class analysis of masculinity which links male body types, rather than character types, with pre-industrial class distinctions. The 'classical' body type is typically associated with the civilised and aristocratic classes; and the 'grotesque' body

type with peasant or lower classes. In his critique of typologies of male bodies Morgan focuses on the distinctions between the classical and grotesque bodies⁴⁵ to explore the intrinsic connection between masculinities, control and violence. The classical body is described as controlled, civilised and conforming to dominant aesthetic standards whilst the grotesque body is described as uncontrolled, unappealing and much closer to nature. Morgan states:

The grotesque body represents symbolic power of the natural, a capacity for violence and sheer physical domination, highlighting the potential fragility of respectable society. ... Respectable, cultured societies in this context become feminine or effeminate. The classical or rational body represents the power that resides in control, control over self and control over others.

Morgan 1993, p. 83

These distinctions, he suggests, cannot be drawn clearly in modern times (Morgan 1993). In modern times the ‘classical body becomes the rational body but the grotesque body still, at least symbolically, tends to be associated with the working or lower classes’ (Morgan 1993, p. 82). Yet Morgan suggests the grotesque body is no longer stigmatised. Both these body types, whilst established as opposites, are described as being able to exert control over others but in different ways. The grotesque body represents the ‘symbolic power of the natural’:

It may be suggested further that there are relationships, often covert, between the two manifestations of bodily power. The power of the controlled classical body, through the very emphasis upon control and discipline, suggests a capacity for violence which the classical body shares, although less obviously with the grotesque body.

Morgan 1993, p. 83

⁴⁵ Morgan (1993) acknowledges that the classical and grotesque body analogy has been used previously by Bakhtin, 1984; Featherstone, 1991 and Stallybrass and White, 1986.

The implication is that there are different types of masculinity which use control in different ways. Morgan's re-working of the distinction between classical and grotesque bodies allows links to be drawn between men of different classes and acts of domination and violence. Morgan suggests that a result of patriarchal domination is that men have not been required to: 'reflect upon their positions as men in society or to consider themselves as gendered or embodied subjects' (Morgan 1993, p. 73) and that to examine power more thoroughly requires a refocusing on men's bodies. This section has outlined theories which describe multiple forms of masculinity, in particular violent masculinity. The dominating body is seen as both male and expressive of physical power and violence. Morgan reveals a more complex understanding of domination as he identifies a dominating masculinity which refuses embodiment, based on a rational masculinity. In the next section I identify the dominant forms of masculinity present within media descriptions of the male perpetrator of domestic violence which draw on these forms of masculinity.

SECTION 2: Man and/or Monster? Mind and/or Body? Print Media

Representations of the Male Perpetrator over a 20-Year Period

My analysis of representations of the domestic violence perpetrator within the media starts with a quantitative analysis of the sex and age of the domestic violence perpetrator. I then undertake a qualitative reading for attributes of the perpetrator and establish trends. In doing this, I select for closer inspection the reporting of celebrity perpetrators of domestic violence. This section concludes by examining trends in representations of the perpetrator's personal experience (voice) and corporeal manifestations.

The majority of stories about domestic violence (across all categories and throughout the three time periods) describe the perpetrator as male (92%)⁴⁶. In the earlier two time periods only two reports, both international reports (one published in 1975, the other in 1986), report female perpetrators. In these articles the male victims of violence are portrayed as weak, unmanly or not really victims at all. For example, the descriptions of victimised Englishmen are implicitly contrasted with the Australian male (for which there were few equivalent victims reported) (Morgan 1975, p. 26).

In 1995-1996 there are more articles which challenge the theory that the identity of the perpetrator is always a heterosexual adult male. For example, in a court report from Perth, reporter Roy Gibson, details a case of murder involving domestic violence within a male homosexual couple (Gibson 1996). Other reports (both local and international) identify children as perpetrators of 'family violences', with attacks predominantly against their mothers (Williams 1995; Altmann 1996; *The Advertiser* 19 July 1996, p. 16; *The Advertiser* 26 March 1996, p. 10). The number of reports about women as perpetrators of domestic violence has remained relatively steady over the twenty-year time period at roughly five per cent of the total reports about perpetrators (See Table 6.1: Gender and Age of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence Represented in *The Advertiser*). It could be argued that the normalisation of domestic violence discussed earlier, and evidenced by the adoption of the term 'DV', has also made ordinary domestic violence common-place and un-newsworthy therefore the stories shift to exotic or exceptional cases of domestic violence where the perpetrator is not a heterosexual male.

A qualitative reading of the newspaper reports for impressions of the perpetrator was undertaken to assess the accuracy of Dobash and Dobash's (1998) observation that the perpetrator is regularly depicted as alcoholic, mentally unstable or socially desperate. Table 6.2 has been compiled summarising the attributes of the perpetrator as depicted in

⁴⁶ Even if not explicitly stated, the use of him/her often implied the sex of the perpetrator or victim.

The Advertiser. These categories describing the perpetrator also provide an explanation or reason or cause for the violence, hence a reading of some of the dominant explanations for domestic violence can also be gauged.

TABLE 6.1

Gender and Age of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence Represented in *The Advertiser*

	1975/1976	1985/1986	1995/1996
Adult Male	33 (94%)	34 (85%)	53 (87%)
Adult Female	2 (6%)	3 (7.5%)	2 (3%)
Child	0	3 (7.5%)	6 (10%)
Total	35	40	61

I will briefly outline some key trends identified from my content analysis (see Table 6.2: Attributes⁴⁷ of the Perpetrator of Domestic Violence in *The Advertiser*). In the 1975/1976 time period the perpetrator was most often described as having ‘lost his temper’⁴⁸ or that his violence was the result of jealousy. Hence the violence was an expression of their anger and their inability to control their expression of anger. In the 1985/1986 period the perpetrator was reported as having been under the influence or having used either alcohol or drugs. Second to this explanation in 1985/1986 is that the men had either been stressed or suffered a mental illness (this may have taken the form of depression or psychosis). This reduces in 1995/1996 suggesting that stress and mental illness was no longer a central explanation for men’s domestic violence.

⁴⁷ More than one attribute may be implied from an article.

⁴⁸ An extension of the explanation of a lost temper is the use of war metaphors in the titles of articles about domestic violence. The following words which conjure war-like imagery were predominantly used in the

In 1995/1996 the dominant explanation was that violence was a result of ‘sex role’ expectations or power differences. Robert Connell (1987, p. 47) argues that one step away from biological explanations are sex role theories which infer that: ‘being a man or a woman means enacting a general role definitive of one’s sex – the “sex role”’. This theory interlinks psychology and sociology as the feminine and masculine personality is developed through a process of socialisation (Connell 1987, p. 48). Sex role theories have the capacity to support men’s use of violence as men are constructed as ‘naturally’ dominant (Connell 2002, p. 31) and in-control in both the public and private spheres. It is evident that simplistic aspects of a feminist analysis of domestic violence have been adopted by public discourses to provide surface level explanations of men’s violence, as was also found in Adrian Howe’s analysis of print media representations of ‘The War Against Violence’ in *The Age* (1997, p. 202). Also stemming from second-wave feminist analysis, explanations of male power and control have become part of a common professional discourse about domestic violence which are also reinforced through popular culture in books such as *Men are from Mars Women are from Venus* (Gray, 1992) and parts of the ‘men’s movement’.

Women and children perpetrators were most often described as being previously victimised, suggesting that this led to their perpetration of violence. This explanation strengthens the discourse of the generational transference of domestic violence. It is significant to note that over the twenty-year time span male perpetrators were increasingly reported as having previously been victims of some form of abuse or violence. Female perpetrators were also described as rebelling against the sex role stereotypes for their gender. On one occasion the woman’s violence was attributed to her hormone levels for example pre-menstrual tension (Rowbotham 1986, p. 21).

It is notable that the first era pathologises the ‘deviant’ man (temper, jealousy or passion) whereas the second era pathologises social factors (drugs and alcohol, stress), whilst the third is overwhelmingly focused on sex roles or power as explanations for men’s domestic violence. This content analysis has shown the dominant explanations for men’s domestic violence made available to the men interviewed within twenty years of public discourses.

Implied cause of Perpetration	1975-1976			1985-1986			1995-1996			Totals		
	Male	Female	Child	Male	Female	Child	Male	Female	Child	Male	Female	Child
Mentally Ill	5			5		1	2			12		1
Lonely	3			2						5		
Stressed	2			5			2			9		
Alcohol or Drug Use	4			9			4			17		
Temper	7			1		1	5	1	1	13	1	2
Jealousy/Passion	8			2			3			13		
Hormones					1						1	
Ordinary	1			2			2			5		
Genetics				1			1			2		
Monster				1			2			3		
Victim of Violence		1		1	2	1	6		5	7	3	6
Culture	2			2			5			9		
Sex Role / Power		1		1			16	1		17	2	
Class	1			2			5			8		
Totals	33	2	0	34	3	3	53	2	6	120	7	9

TABLE 6.2: Attributes⁴⁹ of the Perpetrator of Domestic Violence in *The Advertiser*

⁴⁹ More than one attribute may be implied from an article.

Race, Ethnicity and Culture of the Perpetrator.

Cultural explanations for male violence were present within each time period. In 1995/1996 in particular culture was considered a defining feature of the male perpetrator in eight per cent of the articles (See Table 6.2). Judging from these print media representations, ethnicity of the male perpetrator is considered a contributing factor within domestic violence. Evidence suggests that domestic violence crosses all races and hence, racial divides cannot be maintained as a dominant causal explanation. *The Advertiser* style guide used in 1999 recommends that someone's race is not to be mentioned within an article unless it has a direct impact on the story. This was confirmed by the then Assistant Chief of Staff John Brittle (J. Brittle [*The Advertiser*] 1999, pers. comm., 13 August). There was one report for the murder of Roma Young by her husband Peter Young which occurred at Yalata Aboriginal mission in 1976 (O'Reilly 1976). The details provided about the murder suggest it and other crimes were the result of a drunken party. That Peter and Roma were both drunk at a party has two implications, one that Peter was drunk and therefore beyond self control (he was in a monster state). Two, that Roma has some guilt in her own murder as she too was drunk. The only other articles which make overt references to the race of the perpetrator or victim in police or court reports of cases of violence against women were reports of 'dowry' burning of brides in India in 1985. The focus on the primitive or barbaric violence of the 'other' culture/s functions as a point of difference in which 'mere' domestic violence pales by comparison.

In contrast to the absence of attention to race within police and court reports, reports of crime statistics and medical articles indicate that domestic violence is very high within Australian

Indigenous communities (Langton 1989; Bone 1995; Smallwood 1996)⁵⁰. The high level of domestic violence recorded within Australian Indigenous families is also indicated by certain reports within *The Advertiser* in the following ways. For example, 1996 legal report stated:

Chief Justice Alastair Nicholson said workers at Aboriginal communities rated family violence as their greatest concern. ‘The crisis of family violence is nowhere more apparent than in the Aboriginal community,’ he told the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration seminar on domestic violence in Adelaide. ‘All the warning signs are here for us to see and I am concerned that recent suggestions that the Government will cut Legal Aid funding and support to Aboriginal Legal Services will only serve to exacerbate the crisis.’

The Advertiser 30 August 1996, p. 5

Other media reports detailed the need for funding and provision of services to Australian Indigenous women experiencing domestic violence. There was no reference to support services for Australian Indigenous men who perpetrate domestic violence. The funding of men’s groups is mentioned in *The Advertiser*, but no specific allocation of funds for Australian Indigenous men. None of the men who participated in the research project identified themselves as Indigenous Australian⁵¹. A number of explanations are possible: Australian Indigenous perpetrators of violence may not be receiving therapeutic support services within the Adelaide metropolitan region, or the therapeutic support services do not meet their needs, or the high-levels of imprisonment of Aboriginal men means they are receiving services through the criminal system. Alternatively, the low reporting of family violence may be a result of Indigenous distrust of the ‘white man’s’ criminal justice system, following the many ‘black deaths in custody’. Due to the high levels of mistrust of police and social work agencies, Harry Blagg (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 2000) argues for

⁵⁰ Specific references are made to high levels of domestic violence reported by Aboriginal women in the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory has the greatest percentage of Aboriginal people in Australia.

different models when intervening in Aboriginal Family Violence, shifting away from a strict criminal justice approach. A more appropriate approach has been proposed as ‘healing’, which involves the community and family in an individual and collective problem-solving process (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 2000). Blagg notes that programs which specifically address Indigenous issues are being funded (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 2000). Atkinson (2002, p. 159) argues that the context of dispossession be taken into account in responding to Indigenous family violence. She states that: ‘treatment programs which address the person’s perpetrator behaviour without also helping move them out of the victimising experiences which may still be controlling much of their behaviour are a waste of time and money’ (Atkinson 2002, p. 159).

Debates about the effects of colonisation and its systemic effects arguably came into public consciousness with differences of opinion over Australia’s Bicentennial celebrations and whether the white founding moment should be called ‘settlement’ or ‘invasion’. Violence towards Indigenous people since colonisation is beginning to be documented in reports such as *Bringing them home*, a report to the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (1997). Attention has also been drawn to violence within Indigenous communities, including within families. There is widespread understanding among Indigenous Australians that this violence, which includes ‘family’ violence, is the result of dispossession and destruction of their communities (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 2000).

⁵¹ Ninety-six per cent of the male participants identified as Anglo Australian.

In Australian society a dominant reading of Indigenous masculinity as 'primitive' and/or 'savage' continues. The ethnocentric images of the Aboriginal 'savage' and the assertion that violence is accepted within Aboriginal culture are legacies of colonial views which create difficulties when discussing Aboriginal men as perpetrators of domestic violence. Not only is the image of savage Aboriginal masculinity and/or cultural norms offered as a mainstream explanation for the high levels of domestic violence but the arenas in which Australian Indigenous men are disproportionately successful appears to reinforce the idea of inherent or 'natural' aggression. Australian Indigenous social activist and academic Melissa Lucashenko recognises Aboriginal men's ability to succeed professionally in fields where uses of force are not negatively sanctioned: 'Two of the areas of Australian life in which Aboriginal men have "succeeded" have been in the contact sports of boxing and football, where violence can be given a price tag and not a prison term' (Lucashenko 1997, p. 157). Alternatively, it could be argued that such success in tough contact sports is the legacy of severe physical hardship and maltreatment at the hands of the dominant culture. Rather than being inherent in Aboriginality, aggressive potential may result from being the object of oppression and abuse or sport may provide one of the few paths of upward mobility available to Aboriginal men who are failed by the education system.

Recognition of cultural diversity in services for domestic violence is discussed in *The Advertiser* in 1986. Articles reported the funding of domestic violence services specifically targeting migrant women. In 1996 the release of Patricia Easteal's book *Shattered Dreams* was reported as highlighting the plight of migrant women who experience domestic violence (Critchley 1996, p. 5).

The majority of newspaper reports implicitly suggest that 'other' cultures are violent in nature and by comparison anglo-Australians are not. This concurs with Jeannie Martin's (1996, p. 154) finding that non-English speaking men are often portrayed as 'violent and brutal, corresponding to a natural 'bestial' side as opposed to the civilized [or anglo man].' In my content analysis there was a 1976 court report that detailed the beating of Anastasia Tsagaris by her husband Haralabos. In Haralabos' defence, his lawyer stated that 'his client had given his wife a scolding as was Greek custom' (*The Advertiser* 4 September 1976, p. 7). The above notion is also present within reports of Government decisions. For example, 'Health Minister, Dr Armitage, has decided multi-culturalism's respect for other cultures does not extend to condoning such domestic violence and has funded a program to combat it' (Crouch 1995).

For those men attending the men's group, ninety six per cent of whom were anglo-Australians, emphasis on ethnicity and violence within the print media may serve to create a point of difference for the men to distance themselves from their own actions. The men in the groups can assert that white men like them are not as violent and are therefore not like these 'other' men. The media provides other opportunities for the men to distance themselves from the dominant image of perpetrator, but this time it is in terms of being 'ordinary', in contrast to the lives of the rich and famous men who are violent to women. Following, is a more detailed qualitative reading of those specific instances where celebrities were reported to have committed domestic violence.

Celebrity Perpetrators

Most figures, who are in the public eye, are ‘everyday’ men in that they have multi-dimensional lives. They are generally not considered to be ‘working class’, mentally ill or otherwise unstable. Yet the type of careers in which these men succeed are often those where self interest, ambition and aggressive/adversarial characteristics are rewarded. Of the six articles reporting public profile perpetrators of domestic violence, only two professions were represented - that of the sportsman⁵² and politician⁵³.

Reporting instances of domestic violence in these occupations may have the effect of normalising the violence in the perpetrator’s family life by comparing it with the level of aggression expected of them within their chosen career. That is, the careers of both politicians and sportsmen are presented as requiring a ruthless and aggressive competitive ‘spirit’. Their careers sanction uses of control and force over others. These capacities are then said to spill over into other ‘domestic’ relationships resulting in violence and abuse. I suggest that the problem of these celebrities’ domestic violence then becomes one of them not knowing (or being able to) differentiate their ‘work’ practices from their ‘private’ practices. Lynne Segal, author of *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men*, suggests that men predominantly occupy jobs with the most socially approved uses of force and violence such as the police, army, prison officers, and other agencies of defence and correction (Segal 1997, p. 267). The politician, whilst seen as a thinking man, has ‘power over’ others and is rewarded for ruthless self interest and pragmatism. Arguably then, the politician and sportsman are jobs with socially approved uses of control and force. In contrast to these

⁵² Sporting heroes included Australian Football League Adelaide Crows player, Jason McCartney, 1996 and an English Soccer player, 1995.

⁵³ Politicians that have also been reported include: Rocky Gattellari, Liberal candidate for seat of Cabramatta (also reported as a former boxer); Noel Crichton-Brown, Liberal Senator 1995 and Russel Gorman, Labor Member of Parliament 1995 as well as, Ralph Clarke South Australian State Labor Member of Parliament, 1998.

media representations of perpetrators as occupying jobs with socially approved uses of force, a broad cross-section of jobs were represented among the men interviewed within the research project. These include some jobs with socially approved uses of force such as police officer, defence forces and labourers (physical strength) and those without such as lay preacher, accountant and school teacher. None of the men within the men's groups described their occupation as politician or professional sportsman. Sociologist David Morgan (1993) makes the point that some forms of bodily expression are licensed or legitimated but only in particular times or places. He cites the example of physical violence used in sport and war where particular kinds of bodily conduct are allowed or even required, whereas were these behaviours to occur in other arenas they would be negatively sanctioned.

Sportsmen⁵⁴ as Perpetrators of Domestic Violence

Media representations of both local and international sportsmen as perpetrators of domestic violence were published during the 1995/1996 period. Within Australian culture the sportsman is one of the all-time great heroic icons. Australian sociologist Robert Connell suggests that sport has come to be the leading definer of masculinity in Australian mass culture (Connell 1995, p. 54). Within male sports there are strong connections between the male body, self-control and the control of others. For example, the male athlete who plays Australian Rules Football at a league level is expected to have his body under supreme control. The football player is revered as being in control of himself, his opponent and the ball. His self control is exercised over his body through regular training and dietary regimens and over his mind by the team-building psychological work.

⁵⁴ The use of masculinist language is intentional because it is sportsmen who are iconised. Sportswomen, although increasingly visible, do not carry the same national prestige. In the press clippings collected no sportswomen are reported as being violent toward their partners.

In 1996 *The Advertiser* reported the application for a restraining order by a young woman, Danielle Kershaw, against her ex-boyfriend, an Adelaide Crows football player, Jason McCartney (*The Advertiser* 5 December 1996, p.3). The report indicated that her application for the order was due to alleged phone calls and an incident involving an alleged attack by McCartney on her new boyfriend. Although sexual jealousy is a common theme in reportage of male violence in dating relationships, its mention here can have an additional meaning. That is the presence of competition, the existence of Danielle's new boyfriend 'explains' the attack on his opponent. Jason McCartney gained media fame since this report as an Australian hero-survivor of the Bali bombing⁵⁵. In many respects this report does not differ greatly from other court reports especially when the length of the report is considered. However, it does differ in regard to its prominence within the paper and the content of the article. The report was placed on page three which is the major news page after the front page; usually court or legal reports are placed beyond page five. This particular report was deemed to be of greater value because it was about an Australian Rules football player, a sporting icon, rather than an 'everyday' man. Further, not only did this article receive prime positioning, a photo of the offender was also included. This is an unusual practice for police or court reports unless it is a court trial for murder or attempted murder.

Prior to the 1995/1996 period the predominant way in which men (and occasionally women) are identified as perpetrators of violence is through court or police reports. These include media reports of the cases which have reached the courts. As mentioned previously the majority of these reports involve attempted murder or murder of a spouse. Restraining orders

⁵⁵ McCartney, who was celebrating the end of season with football mates, was seriously injured in the terrorists' bombing of a nightclub frequented by western tourists on October 12th 2002 Kuta, Bali. His recovery has been closely documented in Australian media, up till and including, his return to play Australian Rules league football for North Melbourne in June 2003.

were introduced to South Australia in 1991, as legal protection for victims of domestic violence so it is to be expected that court or police reports regarding restraining orders would only occur in the time period 1995-1996⁵⁶. The celebrity case of Jason McCartney was the only media report about the application and granting of a domestic violence restraining order in South Australia in 1995/1996. The prominence of this article is not because it is an everyday occurrence (the other 3,322 restraint orders granted in 1996 were not reported). Being in need of restraint is not a negative thing for a football player, neither is sexual jealousy Jason is reported as displaying behaviours consistent with dominant masculinity. The position of the article, and implicit accolades for his 'red bloodedness', prevent his behaviour being seen as deviant or even unacceptable but simply as him 'having gone too far' in his masculinity. This does not mean that sportsmen are allowed to be violent, but that their violence is possibly considered more understandable as a 'hyper-masculine' activity. This case also highlights the complexity of a masculinity which expects men to traverse 'work', or the public sphere, where forms of violence are accepted and respected and the private sphere where violence is not tolerated.

International sportsmen's violence toward their female partners was also reported within *The Advertiser*. For example, English soccer player Paul Gascoigne's abuse of his wife was reported (Toy 1996, p. 3)⁵⁷. In 1996 an *Advertiser* article detailed the promotion of a community education program about domestic violence launched by Denise Brown, the sister of the United States afro-American football player OJ Simpson's murdered wife Nicole. Denise Brown had been promoting domestic violence prevention since the murder of Nicole

⁵⁶ Prior to this period the only equivalent was a 'keep the peace' order. There is one reference to such an order – a judge's recommendation that a woman victim should apply for a 'keep the peace' order.

⁵⁷ For more detailed discussion of this particular article see Appendix D.

Brown-Simpson allegedly by her ex-husband OJ Simpson. Feminist and media commentator Wendy Kozol (1995) analyses the representations of Simpson which highlight a racialised reading of him as ‘a monster’. However, she fails to identify his occupation as a further defining characteristic of his ‘monsterhood’. In being both black and a sporting personality OJ Simpson has two socially sanctioned expectations for his violence. The detailed descriptions of the attacks by both Simpson and heavy-weight boxer Mike Tyson⁵⁸ add a racialised dimension to the notion of animal-like violent sportsman. The primitiveness of afro-American males is readily invoked through three centuries of cultural stereotypes backed by populist versions of evolution. This adds to the ‘classing’ gaze, an additional sign of the hyper-masculine body.

The sportsmen reported to be perpetrators of domestic violence were not demonised for their violent behaviours off the field. Their violence against women was positioned as an extension of their masculinity, problematic only in that it was ‘out of place’, and therefore unacceptable. In comparison with the sportsman, the politician is considered to be a thinking man⁵⁹. His power is not overtly physical but gained through the sovereign. As an elected member of parliament, the politician is said to represent the voices of his constituents and political party through his capacity to enact legislation and shape public policy. The following articles reveal alleged instances of domestic violence within politician’s ‘private’ lives.

⁵⁸ Convicted of rape in Indiana (1992), two further allegations of rape made 2000 and 2001. Like Gascoigne, Tyson was able to continue boxing and life in the public domain once released from prison. Tyson’s career plummeted when he bit a fellow boxer’s ear; the rape of a woman was not as difficult for him, in terms of getting his professional career back on track. National Basketball Association’s Kobe Bryant was accused of rape in 2002/3. In Australia (2004) two National Rugby League teams were defending team members accused of rape. Canterbury Bulldogs team members were accused of the gang rape of a woman in Coffs Harbour and Melbourne Storm team members were being investigated for the alleged rape of a woman in South Yarra. A series of allegations of rape by Australian Football League (AFL) players have also been reported (*The Weekend Australian* March 20-21 2004, p. 6).

Male Politician as Perpetrator of Domestic Violence

The 1995 article titled 'Domestic Violence is Nauseating' provides political comment on the issue of domestic violence. The focus of the report is the public allegations of a restraining order being brought against Western Australian Senator Noel Crichton Brown by his wife. The concern within this article appears not to be with the violence per se, but with its possible impact on his political career and its potential exploitation for political point-scoring. This article demonstrates how public disapproval of domestic violence can be used as a political strategy to destabilise the position of a political leader or parliamentarian. It is reported that the wife of Senator Noel Crichton Brown had taken out a Restraining Order against him and that this information had been 'leaked as a part of faction wars'. The general tenet of this article suggests that a restraint order against a public figure is both a private and a political tool or weapon which can be used by women against their male perpetrator. Days later, a 'letter to the editor' was published in support of Senator Crichton Brown suggesting that restraining orders are too easily granted to women and they are therefore not true evidence of domestic violence (Woods Castle 1995).

This article could also be seen to provide pressure on the political parties to respond to domestic violence within their ranks. The article explores the position that political leaders have taken toward domestic violence in order to determine the possible implications of the crime on the career of Senator Crichton Brown. The opinion of John Howard, who was the then opposition leader but by the end of 1996 was Prime Minister of the Federal Liberal Party, is made very clear by his statement that domestic violence is: 'one of those things that makes my flesh creep' (*The Advertiser* 5 April 1995, p. 18). The reporter then suggests that the structure of the Australian Labor Party (in comparison with the Liberal Party) is such that if

⁵⁹ The use of masculinist language is intentional as even though there are an increased number of female

this situation arose for them, they would be able to remove that person from their position as a response to their behaviour. In this report domestic violence is not the newsworthy issue in itself, but newsworthy only in so far as it constitutes a politically damaging indiscretion.

A similar article, published only a week later, made public the private life of a New South Wales Labor politician Russel Gorman. The article titled 'Domestic Violence Shock Keating Dilemma over MP' reveals that Russel Gorman, a Labor backbencher, admitted to facing charges of assaulting his wife and daughter (Ferguson 1995). Gorman's position as a respectable politician is called into question by reports that his colleagues were stunned by his comments about the alleged violence toward his wife and daughter. In this report, Gorman is represented as a monster by the graphic descriptions of the violent incident and the seemingly unfeeling comments that he made about his wife and daughter. Gorman is reported as saying: 'women are able to secure restraint orders too easily', and that he had never hit a woman (Ferguson 1995). By stating this, Gorman is shown to rely on a narrow definition of domestic violence focusing only on physical assault. His definition clearly excludes the verbal abuse, threats and pushing and shoving which he admits to. The report suggests that the then Prime Minister Paul Keating had been placed in the same position as was the Opposition leader John Howard in relation to Senator Crichton-Browne. Keating is portrayed as not showing strong leadership on the issue of domestic violence compared with Howard's strong condemnation, which is reported to have forced Crichton Browne to leave Parliament at the next election. By contrast Keating had: 'not bought into the debate'.

As with the aforementioned newspaper article, the occurrence of domestic violence is not considered newsworthy in itself, it is the political ramifications for both the politician and the political parties that form the real focus of these reports. If a politician had committed any other crime, including assault or rape, there would be grounds for dismissal from their political position. This is a point that the journalists fail to make, which illustrates that domestic violence is not considered to be a 'real' crime. The suggestion, that domestic violence is not a crime, contradicts the general trend in the reporting of domestic violence highlighted earlier.

Finally, at the State level, South Australian politician Ralph Clarke was reported to have abused his partner Edith Pringle. This was reported in a series of articles in *The Advertiser* in 1998⁶⁰. Morgan's distinction between classical and grotesque bodies can be applied to *The Advertiser* reports of celebrity perpetrators, specifically Ralph Clarke. For example, South Australian politician Ralph Clarke, an alleged perpetrator of domestic violence embodies aspects of the 'grotesque' body type. As a large and reportedly undisciplined man he is seen to have little control over his own body (whether this is weight, temper or sexual urges) and yet he is able to have control and be powerful in parliament is the terrain of the classical 'rational' body. No matter what body type a man possesses, classical or grotesque, he can exert control in either personal or professional lives through different means. Representations of Ralph Clarke focus on the body, but also acknowledge his psychological depths.

⁶⁰ For example, the following articles refer to this case,- Coorey 1998a, p.3; Coorey 1998b, p.9; Steene 1998, p. 5.

Analysis of Celebrity Perpetrators

In 1996 Marian Meyers conducted a quantitative content analysis and qualitative textual analysis of local news' coverage of violence against women in Atlanta, Georgia. Meyers (1997) focused on the effects of news coverage of violence against women for the victims, arguing for more sensitive and informed reportage. Meyers (1997) consulted advocates for victims of sexual assault to make suggestions for the improvement of media reporting of violence against women. Included within the dozen recommendations is to 'cover everyday, run of the mill violence against women, not just celebrity or sensational violence' (Meyers 1997, p. 110). She states that: 'a number of advocates noted that the news emphasises celebrity cases while ignoring the fact that women are murdered, battered and raped by men every day' (Meyers 1997, p. 110). Hence Meyers (1997) argues that the way male celebrity crimes against women are reported suggests that rape or violence against women by 'everyday men' is an anomaly. In my analysis of newspaper coverage of domestic violence in *The Advertiser* there were no reports of male public figures or celebrities as perpetrators of domestic violence during the time periods 1975-1976 and 1985-1986. Due to the absence of articles reporting violence against wives in the lives of public figures during these two time periods, one can only assume that domestic violence by celebrities was either hidden or not deemed newsworthy. In the years 1995-1996 coverage of domestic violence perpetrated by public figures was more commonplace. These 1990s reports of celebrity perpetrators were placed more prominently within the paper (earlier pages) than coverage of other cases, even though they were less than three per cent of the total number of articles on domestic violence. Australian cultural theorist and media commentator Catherine Lumby suggests domestic violence is relevant when considering the fitness of someone to hold public office (Lumby 1999, p. 147). The media reports of the politicians presented above support this assertion in

that domestic violence has evidently gained political currency. However, the media reports of sportsmen continue to promote a level of acceptability and understanding of their violence. Even though this difference exists, the celebrity perpetrator's domestic violence is positioned as unexpected and unusual acts conducted by extraordinary men. As with the differing cultural groups, 'everyday' men are able to position these men as 'other' and not like themselves.

An outcome of the reporting of high profile or celebrity perpetrators of domestic violence is the challenges it poses to the public/private dichotomy entrenched within domestic violence. The private lives of those of celebrity status come under greater scrutiny than 'ordinary' people. Equivalent public reporting of bullying and violence is rarely undertaken of 'everyday' men. Their privacy remains intact. In fact, this is an instance in which the public/private dichotomy within domestic violence is called into question. Domestic violence is no longer private for public figures. The intense reporting by the media requires public men to become more accountable for their private lives. Media reporting of domestic violence is the public face of a renowned private issue. In contrast to Wendy Kozol's (1995) claim that the media representations of domestic violence reproduce popular assumptions about public and private spheres, protecting patriarchal privilege, in her book *Gotcha: Life in a Tabloid World* Australian media commentator Catharine Lumby (1999) argues that the tabloid media has helped blur the edges between public and private spheres. Lumby (1999, pp. 215-216) illustrates this argument in her discussions of the extramarital affairs of the ex-President of the United States of America, Bill Clinton. My analysis supports Lumby's idea that the media does not consistently reproduce popular assumptions about public and private spheres. I suggest that the media represents penetration into the private sphere of public

figures. By using both qualitative and quantitative content analysis of media representations of domestic violence I have shown ways in which the 'privacy' of domestic violence is challenged. Hence public and private spheres are increasingly marked by artificial boundaries. The newspaper is the site of the exchange, where the private spills out into the public and as I will demonstrate in section three, the public seeps into the private.

Perpetrator's Voice in *The Advertiser*

My review of 1995 and 1996 articles within *The Advertiser* show that the male perpetrator has a voice. Both celebrity perpetrators and 'everyday men' have been provided with an opportunity to speak about their abusive behaviours. This contrasts with coverage in previous periods where, unless responding to allegations of a criminal offence, the male perpetrator's voice was not present in an authoritative speaking position. Journalist Nadine Williams uses the voice of Wayne Turner an: 'Adelaide accountant [who] now readily admits he's a domestic violence perpetrator' (Williams 1995, p. 7) to speak about his knowledge of the changes to the legislation which recognises the plurality of violences considered domestic violence. Another article by journalist Paul Lloyd uses the voice and story of a perpetrator, David, to describe his domestic abuse and to advance community awareness about the men's groups run by the Correctional Services Department (*The Advertiser* 28 February 1995, p. 25). Paul Lloyd provides the perpetrator with the opportunity to describe his experiences of perpetration of domestic violence in his own words in a feature article of over eight-hundred words in length. The irony of this article is the use of the term survivors within the title 'Survivors of violence'. 'Survivor' is a term that has been predominantly attached to the woman victim of violence who has managed to escape the violent relationship. In this article

the term has been usurped and is used to describe ‘the couple’ as survivors, although the perpetrator’s voice is highlighted as the person who knows and has survived. None of these stories celebrate the perpetrator of the violence. However, their ‘ordinariness’, combined with the fact that none of the perpetrators have felt the full weight of the law in relation to their violence, could have the dual effect of raising awareness whilst reducing the perceived seriousness of domestic violence. This is exacerbated by the silence from the targets of the abuse – women.

Corporeal Domestic Violence - Illustrated Representations of Perpetrators

Across the three decades corporeal manifestations of domestic violence predominated. The victim’s battered body remained central to public representations of the victim. Across the twenty-year time span, all articles which mentioned a victim of violence, placed the body central to the discussion. This is also an example of privileging the sign (or physical violence) over the symptom (woman’s experience). As mentioned above, it was only in the 1980s and 1990s that the victim’s voice has slowly come to accompany the body to provide insight into other dimensions of the experience of the violence. Such articles were, by far, in the minority and were always accompanied by some account of damage to the victim’s body. In the print media the victim’s body changes form and shape, when living and often dead. Her body is battered, bruised, broken, stabbed, thrown, pushed, shoved, and/or penetrated. Her body changes colour (due to injury not race), it can be red, green, blue or black. Hers is a leaky body, a body bleeding as a result of injury, rather than menstruation. She weeps through fear. Her hair is pulled out and her clothes are torn. This is the dominant print media representation of the victim of domestic violence. It is both real to the experience and attacks

on women, yet focused on what has happened (the event) and the marks on the body rather than on the feelings and the non-physical aspects of the abuse.

A shift from reporting physical forms of violence only, to recognising other forms of violence is evident from the 1980s. However even into the 1990s period articles are illustrated with physical imagery such as a male fist (Williams 1996, p. 17; James 1996, p. 22). In these pictorial representations of domestic violence the male clenched fist (below the elbow) represents the entire male body of the perpetrator of violence. This mnemonic device partly undermines the text which speaks of a broader more complex (and less readily depicted) definition of violence. A photograph is used to illustrate an article titled 'Desperate Women' (Williams 1996, p. 17; see Figure 6.1). This photo depicts a woman although only her head and hands are visible. She is holding her hands up defending herself against a male fist.

The second feature article titled 'No way out' has three photos (James 1996, p. 22; see Figure 6.2). The first is a photo of Amanda Fergusson and her son Michael who were murdered by her de facto husband Salvatore (Sam) Amuso, who then committed suicide. This evocatively depicts the extent of the harm that domestic violence can cause to real people killed by it. The second photo is of an unidentified woman inside a room looking out through the blinds representing the entrapment and fear experienced by women in their homes. The third photo is of a clenched male fist. In these pictures the fist represents both masculinity and physical violence; through regular use, this mnemonic image has also come to symbolise domestic violence. The term 'domestic violence' no longer needs to be included in the title of the article as the male fist stands to represent all that is domestic violence. The use of images in print media articles about domestic violence relies heavily on physical manifestations of

violence such as fists, faces and other bodily parts. Typical of this is the following image which illustrated an article about domestic violence in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (9 October 1997, p. 15; See Figure 6.3). Although not part of my content analysis of *The Advertiser* I selected this image for its exaggeration of the stereotypical nature of the perpetrator as a monster or animal. The depiction is archetypal of the macho-masculine body physically dominating a female body. The man has one hand raised above his head the other hand is carrying an unidentifiable weapon. The male figure is in the background. However, the perspective is such that, he is equal in height, giving the illusion that he towers over her.

FIGURE 6.1: Desperate Women

Source: Williams, Nadine (1996) 'Desperate Women' *The Advertiser* 28 September, p. 17.

Note: Picture included on page 241 in the print copy of the thesis in the Barr Smith Library.

FIGURE 6.1: Desperate Women

Source: Williams, Nadine (1996) 'Desperate Women' *The Advertiser* 28 September, p. 17.

FIGURE 6.2: No Way Out

Source: James, Colin (1996) 'No Way Out' *The Advertiser* 26 October, p. 22.

Note: Article included on page 242 in the print copy of the thesis in the Barr Smith Library.

His threatening (lurking) appearance is depicted within the shadows and we are unable to see his eyes and detailed facial expressions. We can however see that his mouth is open and his teeth are showing. This shadowy figure evokes the image of a growling animal stalking its prey. The figure portrays 'hyper' masculinity - his larger than life size, his exaggerated bodily proportions - broad shoulders, big biceps and long legs and his clearly protruding Adam's apple. This image is also arguably a classed body - signified by a particular 'working class' or 'mullet' haircut⁶¹ and a labourer's build. The build of this male body could be that of a soldier or 'tribal warrior'. Hence the body within the illustration is not an 'everyday' body but an exaggeration of the macho 'masculine' body. This illustration creates a 'half-man half-monster' image, which, when viewed by certain men, allows them to respond 'I'm not like that; I'm not a monster.' This particular image reinforces socially inscribed assumptions about the body of the male perpetrator of domestic violence. These images, once again, provide men an opportunity to 'other' particular types of masculinity as violent, rather than their own.

⁶¹ The 'mullet' is a 1990s colloquial term for a style of haircut associated with Australian working class male. Often ridiculed as 'un-cool' by popular comedians and radio announcer the duo Merrick and Rosso, ABC Radio - Triple J, 2000.

FIGURE 6.3: A Pittance for a National Threat

Source: Summers, Anne (1997) 'A pittance for a national threat' *The Sydney Morning Herald* 9th October, p. 15.

Illustration by Amanda Upton.

Note: Illustration included on page 244 in the print copy of the thesis in the Barr Smith Library.

FIGURE 6.3: A Pittance for a National Threat

Source: Summers, Anne (1997) 'A pittance for a national threat' *The Sydney Morning Herald* 9th October, p. 15.
Illustration by Amanda Upton.

SECTION 3: Men's and Women's Representations of the Perpetrator

The everyday activities of relationships are taken for granted or conducted automatically. Their everyday reality becomes the mundane, our own normality. Michel Foucault acknowledged the 'everyday' as a site for the exercise of power. He recognised the power relations at work in our everyday personal and private lives, as they concerned: 'our bodies, our day to day existences' (Foucault 1980c, p. 187). Foucault states:

As against the privileging of sovereign power, I wanted to show the value of analysis which followed a different course. Between every point of a social body, between man and woman, between members of a family, between a master and a pupil, between every one who knows and everyone who does not, there exists relations of power which are not purely and simply a projection of [the] sovereign's⁶² great power over the individual; they are rather the concrete, changing soil in which the sovereign's power is grounded, the conditions which make it possible to function.

Foucault 1980c, p. 187

In this quotation some core concepts of Foucault's understanding of power are evident. That is, power is everywhere, power is exercised in all directions (capillary-like), and the recognition that power resides in the everyday. To adopt an everyday view of power requires a recognition that everyday interactions between ordinary people are relations of power. If we continue to assume that the only people able to exercise power are the sovereign, the state or those males who are 'larger than life', the everyday exercise of power remains unacknowledged. There are two dominant representations of the male perpetrator in *The Advertiser*: first, perpetrators are the deviant 'other', whether mentally ill, monster-like, ethnically different, or of celebrity status. Second, are the images that represent perpetrators

⁶² The term 'sovereign' refers to the monarchy or royals governing the individual

through the emblems of fists, raging faces or hyper-masculine bodies. To explore the power relations associated with the everyday man further, I will now move on to examine the men's narrative and then the women's narrative of their husband or partner, their perpetrator.

Men's Representations of 'Perpetrators'

The men attending the men's groups held some assumptions about the types of men that they thought they would be joining in the group. One source of the expectations that men have about the other men at the group is more than likely from the images that have been presented to them within various forms of media. For most of the men attending the groups these stereotypes were challenged by their experiences. Cameron expresses his surprise in the normality of the men attending the group:

Yes, the thing that surprised me was the people themselves. I suppose I had these visions of someone who beats a child or something like that as some ... drunk from the pub or something like that, but some of the people who smash up the furniture and that sort of stuff are businessmen who've got their own businesses and the whole works. So that was like a shock sort of thing. Yes, so to look at people you wouldn't ever think. They must be going through hell in their mind but they don't show it on the outside if you know what I mean. A209M

It is evident that Cameron had been expecting some 'monsters', men not like his construction of himself. Similarly Taj also had some stereotypical expectations about the type of men he would find at the group:

I suppose one thing was the variety of people that were there, although I think they are from the same background as me from what they said that night. And also the different forms of violence that they talked about that night, the guys individually. I was a bit surprised at some

of them because you look at a person and think, 'No, he's not capable of that'. But that's probably what people thought of me as well. A102M

What comes as a surprise to Taj is not only the variety of men, but the other men's similarity to his own background – they are not monsters but are comparable to him. For Jerry it was the cross-section of men attending the group which was unexpected: 'Just that there's so many different people from different walks of life that were there' A101M. Jerry was evidently also expecting to find a certain type of 'violent man' at the group. Finding men that were similar to themselves at the group helped the men to pose the possibility that so-called 'normal' man might also be capable of violence. Hence strongly held stereotypes of the perpetrator of domestic violence as a monster, drunk or 'other', which are reinforced within the media, were challenged through men's attendance at the group. Before examining the women's experience of their partners as monsters or everyday men I will provide some exploration of theoretical constructions of the male body and particular masculinities as relevant to the women's perceptions.

Women's Use of Animal Metaphors

Like David Morgan, I find Arthur Frank's explorations of the dominating body limiting, yet the following reference he makes to the gaze of the male soldier is relevant to my discussion of women's representations of the male perpetrator of domestic violence. Frank refers to Theweleit's description of the gaze of the male soldier:

As if magnetically attracted, their eyes *hunt* [my emphasis] out anything that moves. The more intense and agitated the movement, the better. When they spot such movement they narrow their eyes to slits (defense), sharpen their vision of it as a dead entity by training a

spotlight on it (de-animation), then destroy it, to experience a strange satisfaction at the sight of this 'bloody mass'.

Theweleit 1987, p. 217 cited in Frank 1991, p. 72

Here Frank adopts Theweleit's utilisation of animal metaphors to describe the gaze of the soldier. This has the effect of blurring the image of a soldier with that of an animal. For example, the use of the word hunt and the emphasis on the movements of the soldier's eyes as he uses them like an animal to *hunt* his prey. The soldier's violent behaviour is depicted through the animal imagery, thereby suggesting that violence is a non-human act, 'primal and natural'.

I have found the use of the animal metaphor to be evident within the women's description of their partner and that it implies that the violent behaviour in men, results from a relapse from reason to a more 'primitive' or 'natural' state. The superiority of mind over body in human beings is an entrenched philosophical belief, so much so, that these animal-like representations make the violent actor into pure body or physicality, distanced from his mind/reason. The philosophical separation of the mind from the body allows violence to be presented as a solely embodied action, an action without thought. In the following interviews men too talk about being a body (violent actor) without consciousness or thinking. For example, in Tom's comments:

But when you go into a rage, fits of rage and things like that, you don't really look at the rational side. It's only after it's all been said and done, that's when you start to think about it.

B537M

Similarly Mathew states:

Mathew: 'It [the violence] only used to happen when I didn't think...'

Michelle: 'So it was a lack of thinking?'

Mathew: 'Yes. Lack of understanding.' B531M

In this construction, the (mindless) body of the perpetrator becomes the determining source of the violent act. Without the involvement of the body, in particular the classed primitive or monster-like body, there could be no violence. Associations between the behaviour of male perpetrators and animals were also evident within the interviews with the women who had been the targets of male violence. In the following extract, Nell shows an intimate knowledge of the bodily manifestations which preceded violence in her husband Damien:

He walks very stiffly and he bumps his feet down on the ground. He usually yells, his face gets very red, he looks very angry, extremely angry, *his eyes bulge* [emphasis added]. I know this sounds really funny, but it's pretty terrifying at the time when he's really lost it. He sort of stands in a way that makes you feel that he's about to *pounce*, you know, so it really makes you feel like you have to be very careful of upsetting him any further, just by posture and the level of ---. He's very loud. [laughs] None of us can be heard when Damien's shouting.

A106F

Like Theweleit's descriptions of the soldiers hunting, Nell's use of the term 'pounce' conjures images of wild animals taking position before they attack their prey. As with Theweleit's descriptions of the soldier's eyes, Nell's description also focused on the changes in Damien's eyes. Her use of the common expression he'd 'lost it' refers to loss of control or reason. Other women also give very detailed and vivid accounts of their partners' violence as an embodied act, making particular mention of their eyes. Sian illustrates her capacity to read her husband Paul's bodily reactions:

When he gets angry the first sign I see, *his eyes start ---. He gets a glimmer in his eyes* [emphasis added]. He stops talking to me. Like it's he'll tell me something as a direction, or he wanted to communicate with me, and I'll sort of say, 'Have I done something wrong?'

He'll just look at me and shake his head or something, and then the next step is he starts picking, picking at me and building-up. You can feel the build-up - I can feel it. A208F

Women positioned as targets (prey) learn to detect signs of rage from their partner's eyes. The adage that 'the eyes are a window to the soul' rings true. Sarah relates: 'When he comes at me with *his eyes sticking out of his head* [my emphasis] and like he's going to kill me, and the last time was when he tried to strangle me. I think if I didn't keep yelling, I think I would not be here' A211F. Typically, the men are not attuned to these physical changes in themselves. In the following quotation Paul acknowledges that his wife, Sian, has alerted him to his bodily changes: 'She tells me I get an angry look in my eyes. I never mean to do that - I've never meant to do that. I've often wondered why, why it happens that way' B208M. Paul experiences a lack of control over this 'look'. Here there is both acknowledgment of and tension with the adage that: 'the eyes are the window to the soul'. Popular understanding would have it that the essential person is to be read most accurately through the eyes, as evidenced by expressions: 'I can see what you are thinking', and: 'I can see what is on your mind'. The women clearly invoke and utilise this source of knowledge yet most of the men are unaware of the visual or bodily manifestations of their anger and violence. In Brett's words: 'I never meant to do that [angry look] I often wondered why it happens'. His expression 'it happens' also implies that it is not something that he has decided to do or that he has responsibility for.

Within the speech of the women however, the monster is described as an intrinsic part of their partner's identity, not as separate aberration from a mysterious source as it is sometimes described by men. For the women, the monster image is not separate from their 'everyday' partner. They have incorporated the two images into their reading of their partner. The

absence of this reading by the men (their unawareness of the monster in their eyes) allows men to continue to maintain a distinction between themselves as ‘everyday’ normal men and the others as the ‘monsters’. This also serves to separate themselves from their anger/temper which they speak of as if it has a separate existence. Feminist philosopher of the body, Susan Bordo (1999), also provides a critique of the blurring between man and animal within popular culture, specifically in the movie *Wolf*. *Wolf* stars Jack Nicholson and is a narrative which posits that men require a bit of animal to survive both the business and relationship worlds. Bordo (1999, p. 242) suggests that such representations of masculinity provide men with contradictory messages - that they can be both rough and tough, whilst at the same time sensitive and caring, creating a ‘double bind of masculinity’.

Women’s Representations of the Everyday Man

Whilst narratives of the man as animal or monster were heard from the women, as detailed above, representations of these same men being both loving and good fathers were also evident:

Sally: Well when things are running nicely Brett’s very supportive. He’s very caring. [pause] He’s very good with children. Well he’s a teacher to start [with] but not all teachers are good with children, especially not teachers that have children, understandably. He’s very good with our children. Like he gives them time and he’s very patient. [pause] He’s a very good father.
A208F

Nicole: So he’s a good man as in he’s a really hard worker. He really tries hard to be a good father. ... And I mean yes, we have a good time together when we can make the time and effort to go out. AB531F

Barbara: So he's good, and he's proud. [pause] See it was my home and it was a bit run down when he come on the scene. He's done so much to it and it looks fantastic, and I probably don't tell him a lot. So he does the outside work and inside work (laughs), plus the shopping. I mean he just does everything. He is good with the children. Like, I don't fear for my children.
A209F

Hence, in the women's constructions of their partners and ex-partners, contradictory perceptions of the perpetrator co-exist. Women are in the unique position of seeing both 'everyday' and 'monster' images of their partner. For some women this dissonance is difficult to manage. Cheryl talked with me about being torn between the two dimensions of her husband, especially during intimacy and sex with Doug. She finds it difficult or impossible to be intimate and enjoy sensuous touch with him when memories of 'his painful touch' are also real to her:

Cheryl: It's something I've had a hard time explaining to Doug. The sexual side is very hard for me with Doug because sometimes it's almost like the hurt, the pain. It's like I remember what he's done and I think, 'I can't', and I'm just not in the mood for it.

Michelle: The intimacy?

Cheryl: Yes, [pause] 'If you hurt me that many times Doug and you've touched me in anger that many times, how can you want to be intimate with me, and I don't want it from you just yet. I want to be able to say to you, 'No', without feeling frightened that I'm going to get hurt'. He hasn't been able to accept that. AB748F

The dissonance, articulated here by Cheryl, emerges from seeing Doug, who is both her husband and a perpetrator, as a fragmented subject containing both 'normal' and monstrous qualities. Liz Eckermann (1997) describes modernist sociological theory as engaging in a

universal search for the integration of an individual's beliefs, attitudes, values and actions. Foucault argues against the search for 'internal consistency' proposing instead fragmented subject positions. He argues for a de-centred approach to individual identity and social formations. Eckermann states that to agree with Foucault means that: 'any given individual, and any particular society, can contain multiple, shifting and often self-contradictory identities' (Eckermann 1997, p.153).

Men's Understandings of the Perpetrator

Neither does the men's sense of themselves equate perpetrator with monster. Typically at the beginning of the program the men employ a number of strategies to confirm themselves as the everyday man, not the monster. One of the effects of attending the group to stop violence was that men were taught to attend to and notice the embodied signs of their violence. The reason for this attention is twofold. On the one hand it is pragmatic in that it teaches men to identify signals and intervene to stop their 'build-up' to a violent episode. On the other hand this awareness of signs along with strategies to curtail the violence are crucial steps towards the overt aim of the group process which is to have men take responsibility for their own emotions and actions (and not for those of others). More is happening however than these two effects. Men's attention to the bodily manifestations of signs of violence in themselves forces them to recognise that both the 'monster' and 'everyday' man coexist within them. It forces a disruption of the binary so that men view themselves more in line with the women's view of the complexity of the violent man. Once recognised, the men describe these signs as manifesting themselves physiologically. The signs include sensations of increased temperature or body heat, sweaty palms, tightening across the chest. In the following excerpt

Damien reflects upon his increased awareness of bodily sensations associated with the recognition of his anger, which developed through his attendance at two groups,:

For a long time I've been able to feel things like, you know, you get a tightening across the shoulders, you get tight in the chest, and I just feel funny. You don't feel calm. In the first group they said, you know, 'Try and narrow down some of your feelings', and when I really sat down and thought about it ... and I now am more conscious of it. You then still have to make an accurate choice of whether you want to do something about it though, but if you recognise the feelings it's easier to deal with. You know, don't think that I've got it licked. I don't want it to sound like that. B106M

In Nell and Damien's case, as with many of the couples, the man seemed far less aware of the bodily changes preceding violence than did the woman. The bodily reactions were also read in very different ways, the woman saw them as animal aspects intrinsic to a complex and contradictory person and the man registered them as physiological symptoms in need of control.

Damien refers to bodily actions that he wishes he had control over. Self perception of masculinity requires 'being in control' of themselves and their families. Men 'should' feel in control. Here suggestions of total bodily control contrast with images of male perpetrators as uncontrollable animals or monsters.

Morgan asserts that 'the expectations of bodily control fall more heavily upon men than women' (Morgan 1993, p. 79). In a similar vein, Robert Connell (1995) in his book *Masculinities* refers to independence and control as masculine themes. A lack of control over the perpetrator's anger is used by cognitive behaviourists as an explanation for violence by men against partners and other men. Jenkins refers to 'impulse control' deficit as one (of many) explanations for domestic violence (Jenkins 1990). Techniques of anger management

also presume that 'the problem' is a lack of control which the male has over his feelings and therefore himself. When talking about their violence some of the men rely on this explanation for their violence as a strategy to distance the 'monster' from the 'everyday' normal image of themselves. The men describe a thing (or monster), often known as anger or temper, which exists within them.

Personifications of anger are evident in stories in print media. For example, Paul Lloyd reporter for *The Advertiser* spoke to a domestic violence offender, David: 'who is now learning a better way of life'. In response to a question about how David learnt to identify his anger at a men's group, he was reported as stating: 'you've got to be able to identify it and grab it before it grabs you' (Lloyd 1995, p. 25). Within this statement David distances himself from the anger by creating a being which seemingly is able to 'grab' hold and take over his body. In domestic violence literatures this process has been named 'distancing' (Hearn 1998, p. 72). This strategy allows the men to take responsibility for owning some elements of their behaviour as part of their identity and rejecting others. The men prefer to see their temper or anger as the monster within the man, not as part of the 'true' self. He is then able to adopt the identity of the nice guy who 'loses it' occasionally rather than accepting the alternative representation as monster.

The dissonance produced in men by the acceptance of themselves as both 'monster' and 'everyday' is shown by the lengths to which they went to judge other men (in the group) as more animal-like than themselves. Some of the men denied any possible associations or similarities with the other men in the men's groups they attended. While many of the men were surprised by the normality of the other men in the men's group, in the following

interview, Damien suggests that it is the other men within the group who are deviant and that he is utterly unlike them:

Some of the people surprised me and some of their experiences in life. I don't wish to be rude to them or anything but, my God, [I didn't realise that] people like that actually exist. Like there's a poster in that [group] room at the moment I think that's got a picture of a guy in a suit standing in the front of a BMW saying, you know, 'I'm a perpetrator of domestic violence' or something [like that], and they [such men] probably do. But they're not the ones you see [in the group]. These are the guys that I've run into and some of them are pretty bloody rough. They've had horrible lives. That shocked me a bit. It really has, you know, wow! A106M

In his statement 'people like that actually exist', Damien suggests that these other men are perpetrators, the monsters, reassuring himself that he is not one of them. Damien is able to distance himself from the perpetrator label through what he sees to be the working class and/or 'rough' type of men within the group. The official view as represented in the poster, presents a contrary view that 'any' men, even wealthy men, can be perpetrators. Damien's attendance at the group has however reinforced his stereotype that perpetrators are not wealthy or upper-middle class. Australian criminologist Adrian Howe discovered conflicting representations of class within her media analysis of a series of newspaper articles on domestic violence titled 'The War Against Women' (*The Age*, June 1993). She states that: 'the journalists, and apparently the researchers, are of two minds about the location of domestic violence. They want to say it is concentrated in working-class suburbs, but neither their research nor their map support that finding' (Howe 1997, p. 195).

Feminists have insisted that the incidence of domestic violence crosses all classes. That is, domestic violence is classless. In *The Classing Gaze* Lyn Finch (1993) provides a historical account of the structure of Australian society as it is constructed by the middle class's official

documentation of the working class. In the following quotation, Finch indicates the ways in which class position constructs character types of men and women:

the non-respectable were located as an out-group existing on the fringes of ordered society - ... they were called 'the out-cast'. Within psychological reasoning, these people were classified as the sick, feeble-minded and insane. ...the non-respectable were identified through use of the notion of morality. Observable behaviours, such as drinking and non-conjugal sexual activity, were referred to as evidence of immorality ... intemperance deprived men of the ability to reason (in the process making them more like beasts than men) and positioned them as sites of disorder, and robbed women of control of their sexual urges.

Finch 1993, p. 147

Finch's description of the character types associated with the lower classes (such as sick, feeble-minded, insane) are very similar to those entrenched notions of the perpetrator as described by Dobash and Dobash (1998) such as alcoholic, mentally unstable and socially desperate. Even though Damien recognises himself as an exception to the rule, his 'classing' view of perpetrators serves two functions. One, it separates him from the other men in the group; and two it separates him from the character types associated with being a perpetrator. The above examples show ways that men have acted to distance themselves from their violence and anger. From the interviews the men reveal an uneasy accommodation of the monster within them (spoken of as temper, rage, anger or 'it') and within other men (of a different class or culture).

In opposition to the distancing behaviours witnessed above, in his interview with me, Jack referred in detail to an article in *The Advertiser* in 1996. He stated:

Jack: in the last six months [there have been] deaths all over the country and it is all due to domestic violence.

Michelle: How did you feel reading the article in the [news]paper about the young woman and her 18 month old child?

Jack: Yeah that scared me. Because that is exactly what me and Wendy could have been like. She honestly thought that that was going to be the case. She used to think that.

Michelle: So you talked about that?

Jack: yeah. Ohh yeah and I said [pause] I said to her 'What does this look like to you?' and she said 'that looked like it might've been me' She said 'that looked like the sort of relationship that I was in'. Her mum thought that might have been the answer. I said it never got that serious and she said 'to me it was'. [Hearing] that really [made it] hit home. 427M

This comment to me from Jack details a discussion with his girlfriend, Wendy, about the domestic murder/suicide that was reported in the paper. The article reported a history of domestic violence prior to the murder of Amanda Fergusson and her eighteen month old son Michael, by her partner Salvatore Amuso, who subsequently killed himself. This article provided a reality check for Jack. This reality check that this provided for Jack would suggest that the reporting of cases which 'hit home' to the readers may go some way to help in the deterrence of domestic violence. Alternatively, men have been known to use such stories in media as a further weapon to control their partner.

In contrast with the men's descriptions of themselves, in the main, popular imagery of the perpetrator has portrayed him as an irrational, out of control and embodied male. These interpretations have facilitated monster or animal images rather than human images. Very infrequently, and only in the 1995/1996 period, did media reports represent the male perpetrator of domestic violence as multi-dimensional: an 'ordinary' bloke, a father, able to hold down a job, intelligent. These depictions still, inevitably, draw on traditional understandings of the masculine role. Thus media depictions of domestic violence have a

tendency to reinforce and strengthen the connections between a 'hyper' or exaggerated form of masculinity and violence. I have shown the way *The Advertiser* counteracts the claim of monsterhood, whilst at the same time reinforcing the 'dominant body' as a particular type of masculinity. A strategy used in the reporting of these instances of domestic violence is to normalise the violence in the perpetrator's family life by contrasting it with the level of aggression within the perpetrator's career. Occupations of the celebrities who were discussed suggest a traditionally masculine environment which relies on forms of aggression to succeed. These representations of the perpetrator 'fit' the hegemonic ideal.

In comparison to the media's depictions of men's violence and the men's understandings of the perpetrator, the women's understandings of their partners have provided a much more complex reading of male subjectivity. More complicated notions of male subjectivity are explored further within the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

Masculinities (2) – Self Constructions

Chapter five used women's experiences to provide an insight into the strategies women adopt to control their partners' violence through control of herself and/or children and highlighted the centrality of the space called 'home' as a container, signifier and cultural location which supports his violence. Chapter six examined the public representation of the domestic violence perpetrator. In this chapter I found that rather than viewing their partners as monsters, the women interviewed understood their partner to be multi-dimensional.

This chapter focuses on his emotional space. I now move to examine the contradictory interplay between men's ways of understanding, explaining and justifying their use of violence with their female partner in the 'home' and how they construct a sense of themselves which incorporates their violences. The popular view is that men who use violence lack ethics. In this chapter I will explore the three ways men talk about control: in-control, out-of-control, and control-over-others. I identify the internal contradictions in the men's construction of these forms of control which nevertheless allow the men to position themselves as ethical subjects, even when committing violence against or control over their wives and/or children. The explanation for these contradictions lies in the relationship between the social construction of masculinity and control.

SECTION 1: Control, Individualism and Masculinity

Multiple and conflicting meanings of control are used within domestic violence literatures. Discourses of control are summoned as descriptors of the inter-relationship between the body and the self, the self and others, the self and society. Control can be a 'state of being' as well as representing an action or relation between the self, others and society. Three notions of control will be used within the following discussion of men's use of control in domestic violence. I have found the category in-control to be used by men to describe the times when the men believe that they have control over their own behaviour, thoughts or actions. This requires of the men the ability to enact self-control, a conscious use of self. From a psychological standpoint greater self-control has been equated with greater social acceptance and less involvement in criminal acts (Gottfredson & Hirschi 1990, p. 90). So much has the language of control been absorbed within western society, that popular discourses have evoked the term 'control freak' to explain behaviours, bordering on obsession to attempt to assert control over the self. The term out-of-control is used by the men to describe times when they do not believe they have the ability to stop or manage their behaviours, actions or thoughts. These first two categories represent the desire for control that the men exert (or fail to exert) over their own violent bodies. The third category control over-others refers to the control that the men exert over their partner's and/or children's behaviour, thoughts or actions. The language of control used by men within the relationship creates the relationship as a site for a battle of control, a battle of rights. An exploration of control is relevant to domestic violence as it is a term which is entangled with understandings of power and prescribed constructions of femininity and masculinity.

Feminists have fought (and continue to fight) for a woman's right to have control of her own body as a symbol and practical requirement of autonomy and therefore citizenship. The debates occurring within political, legal and feminist discourses have centred on a woman's right to choose what happens to her pregnant body and her ability to be free from sexual and other forms of violence. Feminist philosophers Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby (1988), whilst commenting on the feminist assertion for bodily control, suggest that a language of control is a language of rights or equality, an individualist language. The ability to 'control one's own destiny' is central to the individualist tenet. Self-control relies on discourses of individualism. Sociologist Bryan Turner (1996, pp. 80-81) suggests that with personhood comes rights and responsibilities: 'to be a human person is to be capable of rational choice and consequently to be held responsible for our actions'. Hence we have control over and responsibility for the behaviours and actions of our bodies. Philosopher Michael Meyer (1989, p. 534) asserts that our capacity to claim rights is dependent upon our ability to maintain control over ourselves.

Contradictions occur when the notions individualism, independence and self-control are located within the space of the couple or family, where competing notions of mutuality and dependence are accepted. Philosopher Jonathon Wolff (1996, p. 215) states that: 'individualism seems particularly inept at explaining the moral relations that arise within the family' yet the language of rights and control are entrenched within the western notion of the family. This is especially evident in the generational control exercised by parents over children. The United Nations Rights of the Child establishes that children have inalienable rights, a view which has clashed with notions of parental rights to control their own children.

Not only is there a conflict between self-control and control by other people, there is also a conflict which involves externally imposed attempts to control other's bodies, one that is particularly evident in relation to women and children. Turner (1996, p. 186) has argued that historically the female body has been the focus of social control through knowledge and authority, suggesting that men's bodies have not had the same surveillance or control. He uses the example of women with anorexia, describing anorexia as a power struggle within the family over food. Turner highlights the contradictions in the government of women's bodies. He states: 'self-starvation gives an enormous sense of self-control via control of biological processes' (Turner 1996, p. 187). He then acknowledges social control of women through the medicalisation of women's bodies. He states: 'to control women's bodies is to control their personalities, and represents an act of authority over the body in the interests of public order organised around male values of what is rational' (Turner 1996, p. 190). In this thesis and through the men's group intervention, the male perpetrator rather than the female victim has become the focus for control by external authorities.

The discussion in this section shifts the focus from the woman's body to the man's as a contested object for control. As recognised in an earlier chapter, social constructions of men's bodies are generally positioned as 'in-control'. Self-control of the male body is assumed and expected. A lack of male bodily control however can be legitimated through the recognition of external constraints. To revisit sociologist David Morgan's (1993) description of the overweight politician, he is deemed to be out of control of his body, yet in his role as politician he maintains control over society⁶³ and so he performs⁶⁴ 'acceptable' control. His

⁶³ Given the general disregard for politicians within Australian society, it is controversial to suggest that they are generally 'in-control'. Other more apt representatives of controlled masculinities might include the 'multi-national corporate leader' such as Bill Gates or Rupert Murdoch.

ability to control others is not challenged. As mentioned earlier there is a societal assumption that men have control of themselves and others but this idea of the men expressing complete self-control of their bodies is limited.

Discourses on men's power and control reveal contradictions to these taken for granted assumptions. Canadian profeminist⁶⁵ Michael Kaufman (1994, p. 145) identifies 'having some sort of power' as the one common feature of dominant forms of contemporary masculinity. He theorises that men experience their power as a capacity to exercise control. In the following quotation he discusses the pressures on men to maintain control:

We've got to perform and stay in control. We've got to conquer, be on top of things, and call the shots. We've got to tough it out, provide and achieve. Meanwhile we learn to beat back our feelings, hide our emotions, and suppress our needs.

Kaufman 1994, p. 148

Kristin Anderson and Debra Umberson's (2001, p. 374) study of violent heterosexual men found that the men used diverse and contradictory strategies to gender violence and that they changed positions as they talked about their violence. For example, on some occasions men would position themselves as masculine actors highlighting their strength, power and rationality and at other times they positioned themselves as vulnerable and powerless. Sociologist Jeff Hearn's examination of men's violence against women identifies men's use of a language of control and identifies the ambiguities in the exercise and experience of power and control. Hearn found that 'in describing their violence, men are constantly invoking paradoxical aspects of power – of feelings of powerfulness and control and feelings of

⁶⁴ Judith Butler (1990: 24-5) puts forward the notion of performativity – that identity is not something we have or achieve but something that we do repetitively.

⁶⁵ Kaufman describes the profeminist men's movement as recognising that men have power and privilege in a male dominated society (1994: 156).

powerlessness and out of control' (1998, p. 220). Men's lack of control as expressed through violence is treated either as an excessive manifestation of self-control, such as is exercised in sports or, as a lack of self-control precipitated by things beyond men's control, such as women failing to make dinner or wearing seductive clothing. This is important to my argument as I explore men's language of control and examine how they provide a rationale for their violence which allows the men to craft themselves as ethical subjects.

In a research study designed to evaluate the success of a domestic violence men's group, psychological tests were used to measure and compare perceived levels of control and tolerance for being controlled within the violent relationship (Petrik, Petrik Olsen and Subotnik 1994). Initially the men were found to:

feel powerless, have low tolerance for being controlled, and have a consequent need to control. They try hard to convey an impression, although a false one, of adequacy to their female partners. The women also feel powerless, but probably because of their socialisation and tolerate more control, presumably in an effort to gain needed reassurance from their partners to forestall abusiveness.

Petrik et al. 1994, pp. 283-284

In this quotation Petrik et al. attribute women's tolerance of external control to their socialisation in a patriarchal world, where subservient femininity is rewarded. The men's groups were found to decrease the men's feelings of powerlessness and to increase their tolerance for being controlled by others while the women were found to feel less powerless and tolerate more control from men (Petrik et al. 1994). Domestic violence researchers, Zvi Eiskovits and Eli Buchbinder (1997; 1999) have undertaken two complementary qualitative analyses of the metaphors used by men and women when talking about violence in the relationship. The authors identified the theme of control as dominant within women's

metaphors and divided it into two major categories - women's metaphors of male self-control, including them gaining and losing control, and women's self-control. From their analyses Eiskovits and Buchbinder identify that women locate control within the self but oriented toward the other, whilst for men, control comes from outside the self. Violence then, is explained by the men's attempt: 'to resist outside attempts of controlling and conquering the self' (Eiskovits and Buchbinder, 1999: 864).

Psychological studies of men's constructions of their violence have often resulted in the development of typologies of men or generalisations about the types of men that commit violence. Researchers Kerrie James, Beth Seddon and Jac Brown (2002) have attributed the in-control and out-of-control distinction between men's violence to differing styles of violence and differing intentions – resulting in the use of the terms 'tyrants and exploders' to explain the men's differing styles of violence. In my analysis the 'in-control' and 'out-of-control' distinction is coupled with a 'control-of-the-other'. I use this distinction, not to demonstrate the differing styles of men's violence like James et al., but to present the men's own description and expression of their violences.

Foucault (1991a, pp. 10-11) sees the subject as active in crafting, making or negotiating his or her own identity. He does not believe the subject to be 'natural and eternal' but that the subject is more fluid and takes different forms of subjectivity through time. As discussed in the preceding chapter, the predominant subject positions previously available to the perpetrator in the public sphere have been that of mentally ill, alcoholic, monster and/or animal. It is the men's creation of the self in the private sphere that forms the focus of this chapter. Eiskovits and Buchbinder (1997) have identified some metaphors used by the men as they talk about their violence: the use of war metaphors, metaphors which present the self as a

dangerous inner space and metaphors of de-escalating and balancing. They claim that the metaphors used are: 'powerful indicators of the way reality is perceived and carried out in men's everyday behaviors' (Eiskovits and Buchbinder 1997, p. 495). The examination of men's language to demonstrate men's changing constructions of themselves is compatible with Foucault's understanding of the subject as contradictory and multi-dimensional. Danaher, Schirato and Webb (2000, p. 124) summarise: 'the kind of subject or person we are in different places and times depends on the rules, discourses and ideas in a culture which determine what can be said, thought and done, and on the social and historical context in which we live.' It can be argued then, that the men interviewed are active in crafting themselves.

This section has identified the contradictions between the constructions of masculinity around the notion of control, suggesting that masculinity does not always equate with self-control. I then provided a brief overview of the psychological and feminist literature about men's perceived control in relation to domestic violence. This section concluded by claiming that the men are active in negotiating multiple discourses as they construct a particular view of themselves. The next section analyses how, and in what ways, the men use their understandings of 'control' in an attempt to craft their sense of self.

SECTION 2: Men's Perceived Levels of Self-Control

When asked to comment on their perceived level of self-control in situations of violence, the men interviewed adopted contradictory positions of being both 'in control' and 'out of control'. Many of the men attributed their violence to their lack of self-control. The men perceived their violence to be a result of 'not thinking'. They describe their actions as a

‘bodily response’ over which they had no rational power as they were ‘out of control’ or ‘taken over’. This chapter explores the contradictory ways that men experience their violence, focusing on two major explanations – violence as a rational act and violence as a loss of control or being ‘taken over’ – both of which supposedly result in the control of the other. For example, some men are able to explain their violence toward their partner (and possibly children) as a purposeful act, whilst others, report having no conscious involvement. Whether this is evidence of ‘denial’ of their motivations or a bodily experience that admits no rational element is not a question I can address here.

‘In-Control’ of the Self

Shane openly admits his purposeful use of violence toward his wife, Catherine. He indicates that he is very much ‘in control’ of his use of violence:

[I] never say ‘I lost it’. I would never say ‘I lost it’. I would always say ‘that I did exactly what I wanted to do’ and I refer back to the incident of the 14th January, or whenever it was. I was too strong, you know. I was still in control. I’m not going to say ‘that I lost control’, further than to say that I gave it [violence] to her and ... I’m responsible for what I did. No, I don’t lose it [control] – I never lose it [control]. 536M

Shane describes how his masculine strength over-powered Catherine, yet he remained rational throughout the attack. Unlike many of the men interviewed Shane admits responsibility for his violence toward Catherine as an attempt to stop Catherine’s drug abuse. He continues to rationally explain his violence:

So no, I use violence because it is the bottom line. You know, ‘You don’t understand what I talk to you about. I write stuff on paper. You read it, you don’t understand it. Do you understand this [shows me his fist]?’ Yes, most people do. Most people understand when

they've been punched or slapped or pushed, that they have maybe not done something wrong, but they've got a nasty reaction out of somebody. If I was getting nasty reactions out of the same person for the same reasons [drug taking], and I wasn't going to get out [of the drug scene], I'd stop giving them those things that they were reacting to. You know, that's the way that I think but it's not the way my wife thinks, not when we're having these physical arguments. C536M

Shane justifies his violent behaviours by identifying his wife's drug addiction as the 'trigger' for his violence. He indicates that he beats her when she uses drugs and that it is meant to act as a deterrent to stop her drug taking. Shane re-casts his violence as an attempt to cure her. In his mind Catherine's drugs are 'worse' than his punishment. In this particular relationship, Shane creates himself as an ethical subject as he rejects her drug taking behaviours and tells me of his attempts to protect their children from harm.

In the confidential environment of the interview, Shane can admit his controlled use of physical violence. Shane's ability to admit his purposeful use of physical violence with Catherine is aided by appealing to discourses which position his violence as punishment (that is as a parent might punish a child) and as the lesser evil, compared to her drug use. Shane can acknowledge the active control of his 'violent' self, as he locates an exterior reason for his violence. Shane represents himself to me as the 'victim of a drug affected woman', in the context of a society which tolerates forms of physical violence in the public sphere, but takes a punitive response to drug related crimes. His intention (to stop her using drugs) is desirable in this societal frame and it provides Shane with a rationale for his violence. However his use of physically controlling behaviours to achieve this aim juxtaposes two socially undesirable behaviours - drug taking and violence against women.

Shane also relies on an equality discourse to provide a rationale for his violence. In the following statement Shane explains the violence between Catherine and himself as reciprocal:

I believe that we both choose the violence. You know, we both know that there are options.

We never take them. Why don't we ever take them? Because we choose violence. C536M

Shane asserts that Catherine chooses violence by choosing to use drugs. He would not be violent if she did not use drugs and so he positions her as active in his use of violence. There is no recognition on Shane's behalf that Catherine has an addiction to drugs, but rather he constructs her as equally free to choose violence. Even though Shane recognises the distinct advantage his greater size offers, he creates her as an equal in capacity for violence and perseverance:

I just go straight for the jugular and that's how come we have so many physical conflicts in my house. My wife is exactly the same. She won't cower - not initially, let's put it that way.

She weighs probably 20 kilos less than me. Clearly I've got a physical advantage over her. But cower, no. Beat to a pulp, to a bloody mess on the ground and maybe, but [she will] never cower. C536M

Despite Shane's protestations that he is trying to get Catherine off drugs, it is clear that he has a desire to see her 'cower', that it is her spirit and determination that he seeks to control and reduce. In stark contrast to the above evidence of Shane's attempts to control Catherine's behaviours, further into his final interview, Shane explicitly states that he wishes to be free from responsibility for the lives of other family members (except until the children are able to exercise control over their own lives):

No. I'm not interested in controlling anybody in my house. I would rather give them complete control, because if I give them complete control over what they do, where are my responsibilities? With me, and that's fine. I don't want to be responsible for what my wife or

my kids do. I realise that until my kids are X years of age, people will hold me responsible for what they do, but they're a separate issue from my wife. C536M

This quotation from Shane indicates his desire for autonomy and freedom from responsibility for other family members. I have shown how Shane admits to his controlled and premeditated use of violence in the marriage, by creating himself as an ethical subject. Shane then denies that his purposeful use of violence may be an attempt to gain control over Catherine's 'undesirable' behaviours. In comparison, Nick, a casual labourer in his early thirties, is reticent to admit his personal self-control during the violence toward Anna, who is his wife and the permanent 'breadwinner' in the family.

Nick, like Shane, was interviewed three times over a two year period. In his third and final interview I asked Nick whether he believes that he exercises self-control over his body and behaviours. At the start of his final interview, Nick goes to great lengths to describe the lack of self-discipline he feels over his body and actions. He commented that if he did have self-discipline he would use it to good effect. For example, he stated 'If I did have control over my own body, I wouldn't be this fat. I'd probably be at the Olympics.' Nick's explanation of a lack of bodily control allows him to distance himself from his violence towards Anna.

In forming himself as an ethical subject, Nick attempts to disavow any rational control over his violence toward Anna. When discussing violence toward other men, Nick admits freely to being violent. During his final interview, Nick described a car accident in which he drove into the back of another vehicle, a potentially volatile situation. He described his experience of anger at this situation. He also described the ways in which he maintained self-control over his anger toward the other male driver, boasting of his ability to exercise self-restraint. I then

questioned Nick about the difference in his ability to exercise self-discipline in the potentially violent situation with the male stranger in public, compared to the potentially violent situations with Anna in private. He responded:

Nick: With the guy, if I had to hit him I would have had to hit him, right, and - - - [inaudible].

Michelle: Like hit him close-fisted?

Nick: Yes.

Michelle: Which is what you don't do with [Anna]?

Nick: That's right.

Michelle: Why would you have had to hit him close-fisted?

Nick: Well if someone's saying to me, 'Hit me', and I'm in a fight, if I'm going to fight another male - - - [inaudible].

Michelle: That's the way it happens.

Nick: It's got to be hard so that I don't get [hit] back, you know. Fights [have to be] over with in thirty seconds these days. 539M

Nick indicates the difference between the violence and amount of force he would use when fighting a man as compared to the forced used against Anna. To be violent in public against another male Nick actively weighed up the potential gains with the losses and opted not to be provoked. In the above quotation Nick talks about fighting 'like a man'. Nick expresses a form of 'hard' and all-powerful masculinity, one based on brute strength:

Michelle: So do you get into pushing, shoving games with Anna then because you can win?

Nick: No, not because I can win, because she pisses me off.

Michelle: What's the difference [between a fight with a man and a fight with your partner]?

Nick: The difference is I would have had to smack the hell out of that guy. With Anna just a push will get her out of the way.

Michelle: So you don't actually have to resort to [punching her with a closed fist].

Nick: I don't think I'm being violent now when I push her on to the bed. It's a fucking water bed for goodness sake, you know. I might scare her more than anything. 539M

From the second part of the above quotation we can see that the intent of Nick's actions is to scare Anna, into doing, or not doing, what he would like her to do, not to hurt her but to control her behaviour and actions. By contrast the intention of his violence with the male driver would have been to knock him out to stop him from hitting or fighting back. Nick articulates differences between the violences he uses in public fights with men and those in private with Anna. In public, he relies on hard physical punching whereas in private he pushes and shoves and relies on her fear of him to control her behaviours. This section of the interview provides insight into some differences between Nick's expression of violence in public with men, compared with violence in private with Anna. In both instances Nick chooses not to use 'unnecessary' force with both Anna and the man on the street, but the man on the street is considered a 'worthy adversary' and so has to be either knocked out or scared with a bigger punch than that which will scare Anna. There is an ethic in Nick's construction of events - one which suggests that a man should not use 'unnecessary' force with a woman. This is the ethical position from which Nick explains his violence with Anna. It suggests that what he does with Anna is not 'real' or 'masculine' violence. This has the effect of diminishing his responsibility for the violence, whilst also diminishing her ability to speak as a victim of the violence, as it is not 'real' violence or not the level of violence that he is 'really' capable of. Although earlier in the interview Nick refused to acknowledge control over his body he now, as can be seen in the following statement, admits that he exercises control over his physical violence. Hence Nick admits that he controls the levels of violence he uses with Anna. He concedes:

Nick: I think I'm being violent to Anna, I do yes, but not to an extent [of] what I could be. I am controlling it to a certain extent when I'm being violent with Anna. I'm definitely controlling it because I'd like to kill her sometimes, you know.

Michelle: So it is a controlled form?

Nick: Yes, definitely – oh definitely, yes. Definitely has --[inaudible]. Yes. And with that guy it was controlled. You know, I could have [hit him] but it would have ended up [messy].

It's definitely controlled form with Anna as well, yes, and just a push or a shove. 539M

Nick recognises that he maintains self-control over his violent acts so as to reduce the severity of the violence that he uses against Anna; hence he is in-control. The statement that he would 'like to kill her sometimes' establishes the outer limits of how far his violence may extend. In his final interview Nick initially denied his ability to control his body and violences. But when pushed to compare violence against a man and against Anna, Nick's thinking shifts and he is able to recognise his violent behaviour as being a controllable entity. Towards the end of his final interview Nick acknowledged his conscious use of self-control in his violence against Anna.

Nick does not explicitly indicate the outcomes of his use of violence, yet he recognises that Anna is scared of him:

Michelle: How do you feel about it [Anna being scared of you]?

Nick: Oh it pisses me off. Yes, I hate it.

Michelle: What do you do as a response? You don't like it when she's scared of you. What don't you like about her being scared of you?

Nick: Well she shouldn't be scared. She shouldn't be scared of me. 539M

Nick's discomfort with his wife's fear of him may challenge Nick's understanding of the relationship as 'equal'. Throughout the series of three interviews Nick has continually

asserted that his relationship with Anna is equal. Nick states: 'I don't strive for power. Like I said, we're equal. Like I said everyone should be equal. I don't strive for power.' Nick's assertion that they are equal partners in the relationship extends to being equal partners in the violence and provides yet another point of contradiction. Nick states: 'of course it's a fifty/fifty thing. It takes two people to argue so, you know, it can't be one person's fault.' Nick's reinforcement of the equal nature of the relationship extends to the fact that she argues back. Nick feels that he is unable to battle with her equally at the verbal level and so he utilises physical violence. He states: 'I am provoked by her language, by her nastiness, by her verbal abuse. I am provoked into pushing her or telling her to get the fuck out' 539M. So whilst Nick justifies his violence on the basis of their equal relationship, he contradicts this position by describing the unequal violence he uses when he fights with her, even though their physical power is unequal, he tempers his level of 'public' violence when fighting privately with his wife. He also positions himself as victim of her greater verbal skill. The use of language is a powerful symbol of intelligence and rationality in western culture. This acknowledgement of her greater verbal skill reinforces gender stereotypes of her doing the talking and emotional work within the relationship. Anna is verbally astute and hence powerful, whilst he is the 'dumb' but powerful brute. Nick states: 'But then she still pushes me to that point sometimes, you know. Not to my full potential, but she still pushes me and she even said she knows...' 539M This statement shows how Nick easily reverts to his original understanding of his violence that, it is Anna's responsibility to control the level of his violence through her behaviour and actions. That is, since she knows how violent he gets, it is up to her to stop 'provoking' him if she does not wish to face the *full* (equivalent to his public violence) level of his violence. Once again the responsibility for the emotional work and her own safety within the relationship is attributed to Anna. Nick attempts to justify his

use of violence with Anna by comparing his ‘tempered’ use of violence toward his wife to the discipline or smacking of a child:

Nick: I think she probably deserves it sometimes. So yes, I’m condoning it [violence toward Anna], you know. But like I condone a smack on the legs for a child – same thing.

Michelle: So because [you think] it’s not bad [violence] it’s OK [violence]?

Nick: A smack on the bum never hurt anyone. That’s what [you do to] your children. Once you give them a smack, they might go in their bedroom and bawl their eyes out for half an hour. They’ll come back out and they’ll be apologetic and they’ll say, ‘Sorry’, and now they know what they’ve done wrong. 539M

His reference to the discipline of children as being similar to the ‘discipline of his wife’ reinforces his masculine position as head of the house and disciplinarian of *all* family members. Yet in creating himself as disciplinarian of all members of the family, he again undermines his claim that he and Anna are ‘equal’ partners in the relationship.

Both Shane and Nick explicitly deny their desire to control the behaviour of their partner, even though at some level there is recognition that their violence is being used to alter their partner’s behaviour. For Shane the purpose is to stop Catherine’s drug-taking and for Nick to get Anna to do what he wants around the house. In the following quotation Shane reflects on his use of violence with an ex-girlfriend:

Shane: From my perspective I used the physical violence so that I could gain control of a situation that I could see I was losing control over rapidly.

Michelle: So what did you think you were going to achieve by using violence?

Shane: What I thought I was going to achieve by using the violence was I thought that I would regain control of the situation and I was absolutely right. I regained control of the situation. The relationships still finished but what had happened was I’d given them [his ex-girlfriend] a

good reason to [go] because the reasons that they had weren't good enough for me. Now I see. ... As long as I've got a good reason I'll do it and we'll work with the aftermath. So the reason that I used physical violence - - - [inaudible]. And it was specific, Michelle, it was absolutely specific. I could see that the first relationship was finished ... Because my partner was in fact working at a Women's Shelter, so that one physical confrontation that was the last time I saw her for three weeks, but I did it because I wanted to. I wanted control of the situation and, as I said, as far as I'm concerned I had control. A punch on the back of the head and you have a good reason to leave here, take it. 536M

Here Shane indicates that his use of physical violence was productive, he got the outcomes that he desired through his use of physical violence. Shane indicates that he knew that his girlfriend was going to leave the relationship anyway and so he gave her a 'good reason' to do so. Maybe he actually gave himself a good reason for her to leave. Had he not been violent, it would have been clear that she had left *him*, not the violent self. His violence toward her provided him with a reason for her leaving – not leaving him but leaving his violence. During the series of interviews Shane identified the only deterrent to his physical violence as the criminal justice system, but he is able to manipulate the police in his current situation because of his wife's drug taking behaviours.

Shane and Nick both draw on differing discourses to create themselves as ethical subjects. For Shane it is one of anti-drugs and for Nick it is that his violence against Anna is not 'real masculine' violence.

'Out-of-Control' of the Self

Men do not usually regard themselves as out-of-control. Out of control is an emotional state, women are usually considered to be 'out-of-control', emotionally and bodily. To be feminine

is to be uncontrolled, uncontrollable and irrational. To be masculine is to maintain rationality, exercise self-control or be in-control in both public and the private spaces (Morgan, 1993). When men are out-of-control then, one would expect that they provide a challenge to these notions of masculinity. Men who explain their actions in terms of irrationality are relying on a so-called feminine trait. However, when men use the expression 'out-of-control', it does not challenge these social constructions of masculinity as it instead becomes productive, an expression of male power. Men's out-of-control behaviour is seen as another weapon in an armory of violences, whereas women are hystericalised for being out-of-control. Jeff Hearn (1998, p. 99) reports men's experiences of being out-of-control as more than 'beating-up' and 'battering' women, suggesting that men's descriptions of being out-of-control usually entail situations where greater force was used than necessary, and the result can be nearly killing the woman. This demonstrates that the men can be very destructive when out-of-control and so rely on another aspect of masculinity – the power to destroy. These descriptions of out-of-control promote the animal-like images of instinctual drives and animalistic savagery. As discussed earlier, popular imagery of the male perpetrator of domestic violence, in public discourses, exaggerates these particular representations. This section moves beyond these simplistic images to explore the implications of these and other positions that men adopted.

In the following quotation Tom claims irrationality for his violences, suggesting that his 'fits of rage' are an irrational embodied response:

Michelle: What are you trying to do when using violence?

Tom: Well at the particular time when it's happening I suppose it's hurt, I suppose - to hurt my partner. But when *you* go into a rage, fits of rage and things like that, *you* don't really look

at the rational side. It's only after it's all been said and done, that's when *you* start to think about it. 537M

At the same time as claiming irrationality, Tom also reports that he is consciously trying to hurt his partner when the rage overcomes his ability to rationalise and think clearly. Throughout this quotation when Tom talks about being violent he refers to himself as 'you' rather than 'I' or 'me'. In the following quotation Patrick also infers a lack of rational contemplation for his violence as he describes notions of out-of-control.

As their relationship was breaking down Patrick and Sarah had moved to the city from the country. For Sarah the country life was tarnished with violence, isolation and humiliation. In the following quotation taken from the second of my three interviews with Patrick he utilises an understanding of 'out-of-control' to explain his violence:

Patrick: There has been [I've] noticed over the last three years a couple of times when it's sort of got *out-of-control* in the relationship. The anger and whatever hasn't got - - - [inaudible]. Well, I don't know, I say it hasn't got too far *out-of-control*, but a couple of times *it* got really nasty. Instead of hitting my wife or anything, *you* just smash a door down or something, or do something like that. 211M

In describing the violence in this way Patrick removes ownership of the anger and locates it within the relationship, not within himself. Similar to Tom's use of 'you', Patrick uses the terms '*the* anger' rather than '*my* anger' and '*It* got really nasty' instead of '*my temper* got nasty' or '*I* got nasty'. Distancing allows Patrick to separate himself from his violence. It allows him to explain his violence as an abstraction from his 'normal' self. Alternatively he locates his violence as part of the relationship rather than as belonging to him. This process of distancing allows Patrick to retain his sense of himself as ethical and somehow outside of his own violence. Patrick also suggests a level of self-control when he identifies his violence as 'really nasty' but not too far out of control.

Kevin and Julia have been married for nearly ten years, they have two children. In the following statement Kevin identifies his serious physical violence as occurring when he is out-of-control:

Kevin: Oh, we'd end up in a huge row - we'd end up in an argument. In the eight years that I was married to Julia *we* only ever came to blows three times, and on one occasion I threw her across the lounge on to a couch. It was usually when *it* got out-of-control like that, was when *I got out-of-control*. You know, she could do all the ranting and raving that she liked but *it* ever only got out-of-control when I flipped or lost a little - whatever the term is. ... The first time I struck her was just after our son was born. We'd been married about sixteen months at the time and we had a huge row about something - I can't even remember what it was about - and she flew into me and kicked me and punched me and of course I slapped her, knocked her to the floor, and then both of us sat crying because it was something that neither of us wanted obviously. From that day on, I mean, it was something that happened very, very rarely but *it* would just get out-of-control. But the last time was just after we were separated. Well, it was two months ago. 858M

Kevin searches for the right language to describe his violent actions towards his wife 'whatever the term is' settling for 'out-of-control'. Kevin, like Patrick and Tom, engages in a process of distancing by referring to his violence as 'it' or 'we'. Unlike Patrick and Tom, Kevin at one point admits 'I got out-of-control'. The way in which he moves back and forth from 'I' to 'we' and 'it' demonstrates some ambivalence about owning his actions and not wishing to define himself as 'out-of-control'. Kevin is not yet taking full responsibility for his violent actions toward Julia.

‘Control-Over’ the Other

‘Manhood is equated with having some sort of power’ and so ‘men have come to see power as a capacity to impose control on others and on our own unruly emotions.’ (Kaufman 1994, p. 145) Control of both others and the self are considered valid uses of male power. In the following quotation, Gary identifies a paradox of his violent behaviour that when he uses violence it has the opposite effect, pushing his family further away, rather than controlling their behaviours. Gary recognises the negative outcomes of enforcing control over other family members:

It [violence] used to [be a way to keep control over my partner and the family], it used to, I will admit, but having the violence and trying to overrule your partner or your children, it just eventually pushes them away and then you kill what you’re actually looking for [love]. You’re killing it. And then you tend to get more violent to try and get it all back but you’re not. You’re actually pushing it away and you’re killing it. 428M

I read the unspoken word of what Gary is looking for as being love/respect/affection and Gary suggests that violence kills the love that existed in the relationship. Gary speaks of his violent behaviour as a means of controlling his family and whilst not actually stating it, an attempt to get respect and love. Gary has however come to the realisation that his violence has the opposite effect – that of pushing his family members further away.

In the following excerpt, Damien speaks about the changes he has noticed in himself since attending the group. It is his first interview (of three) with me and he reflects on what he has learnt from the two groups he has attended. In the following quotation, Damien describes his wife’s comments about the outcomes of his attendance at the groups. He illustrates this by

describing his response to Louise (his step-daughter) after she had just thrown her dinner at him:

I know that Nell [Damien's wife] saw results [since attending the first men's group] and I saw results, and I could feel the results in me, that I was calmer, that I was able to walk away from really tricky situations [use 'time out']. Like the time that Louise called me a dickhead, I'd spent two hours straight at the table. Mind you, I felt like getting up and just punching her, but I got her to come back to the table, clean the mess up and I took my meal outside and I ate my meal outside. And at the end of that, then I sat down and talked to Nell about what had happened. She [Louise] initially had the power [by] tipping the food on the table ... That de-powered her and it gave me complete control over the situation and that one incident was a real turning point for me. By not yelling and screaming, by not actually doing anything, other than take sort of positive action, then I actually had more control. That really made an impression on me. But it hasn't always worked for me. I've lost it [my temper] since then and I will again unfortunately. That I think will always stand out in my mind, and that happened during the course. A106M

Louise's behaviour, throwing her meal on the table, is not appropriate behaviour and it is appropriate for non-violent disciplinary action to be instigated by parental figures. Damien's behaviour can then be considered successful, in that he did not explode or punch his step-daughter, however what is interesting in this quotation is Damien's focus on his ability to gain control over others rather than his new found self-control. Damien learnt ways to regain control over himself (and his violences) but these behaviours also allowed him to increase his control over his family members. He found that the non-physical strategies he then used to control his step-daughter's behaviour had the desired effect on her behaviour without resorting to a show of physical violence (which makes him look bad). He believes that it is a lack of his self-control which results in a lack of control over his family and so his

improvement in self-control actually gains him greater control over others (which, in effect, is also the desired outcome of using physical violence). In this example, Damien is using self-control to gain control over Louise, his wife's daughter. Damien presents himself as a rational strategist, he calculates the results of the battle. Damien believes he has 'won' this battle by utilising the strategies he has learnt from the group. The dilemma is that while he has learnt not to 'lose-control' (an achievement of which he is proud) Damien is merely utilising other behaviours to achieve the same goal, which is 'control over' the behaviours and actions of his step-daughter. Damien indicates his potential power and violence in this situation when he states what he would have liked to do to her as: 'getting up and just punching her'. This comment illustrates what he is capable of, but his self-control prevented him from undertaking this 'obvious' display of 'out-of-control' behaviour and 'irrationality'.

This could be considered a good outcome as a result of his attendance at the men's group, he has maintained self-control, yet his desire to dominate and control the behaviours of other family members is still very evident. Whilst Damien draws on an example of his ability to seek control over his step-daughter's behaviour, I would suggest that Damien believes in the generalisability of these new skills and that they extend to his right to exercise similar means of control over his wife's behaviour.

The irony of this example, is that Damien is now conscious of how his physically violent behaviour contributed to a reduction in his overall 'power' in such a situation. Damien's use of 'power' relies on a modernist interpretation, suggesting that one can hold and wield power over others. This interview with Damien shows the way in which discipline of the self can be effective in controlling the behaviours of other family members. Damien articulates a feeling of success that he has not been physically violent, but he has still been able to achieve the

same result of exerting control over family members. Damien's realisation reflects one of Foucault's central ideas in *Discipline and Punish* that is, the changing nature of discipline. Foucault (1991b) argues that discipline has changed from overt, public and obvious means of physical violence to that of more subtle means of manipulation and control. He illustrates this with the example of sovereign or state forms of punishment, for example during the 16th century, public hangings and lashings were common forms of punishments. This he argues has changed in more recent times to punishment that involves the use of imprisonment and the containment of liberty and the idea that people learn through self-surveillance to change their behaviours (Foucault 1991b).

Patrick reflects on the changes in his interactions with family members since his attendance at the group. He admits to having and even liking his control over family members:

Patrick: I think I liked the control, so having people do what I [want] - you know, in the family - do what I wanted them to do, yes. But [now] I accept things more. You know, I suggest things or something, but I don't demand that something gets done because I know it's not right.

Michelle: Does that mean that you feel powerless now?

Patrick: No, I don't feel powerless. I feel more in control in myself than [before the group].

Yes, far better for it. No, I don't feel powerless. I feel more in control of myself and yes, just better for it. 211M

Like Damien, Patrick also recognises the self-control he has gained since the men's group, but unlike Damien, there is a sense for Patrick that he has changed his expectations and loosened his need to have other family members do as he wishes.

Whilst some men seek and relish control over family members, the expectation of control as a masculine trait also carries a heavy burden of responsibility. George explains the burden of this expectation of control:

There's some part. I don't know exactly how much. To a large degree I think I was expected to be in control [of the relationship]. My wife, as I said, was a fairly timid decision maker. Even though I encouraged her to be active[ly] involved in decision making, often she would quite frustratingly say something like, 'I'll go along with you'. And so yes, to some degree I think I was expected to be in control and I think from what I hear people say in different relationships, I think that's a common situation with the male – that the male is expected to be in control whether you want to be or not, and sometimes you've got to make out that you are. That's certainly true for me. My wife expected me to know and if I didn't, well that wasn't good enough sometimes. 208M

George challenges the masculine expectation of control over that he felt was placed on him and at the same time highlights the binary opposition that women are passive and controllable. In performing femininity George's wife, Sally, conforms to the expectations of masculinity and femininity, expecting George to exercise control over certain decisions in the relationship: supposedly if he does not, his masculinity can then be questioned. In George's narrative of his relationship traditional gendered expectations of femininity and masculinity are reinscribed in the debate about control over.

SECTION 3: Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom

In the preceding section the men's constructions of themselves as either in-control, out-of-control or having control over others has been explored. Hence the men have internally contradictory experiences of having control or feeling as though they have no control. This

finding is in line with Hearn's finding that men have contradictory experiences of power and control (1998, p. 220). In each of these examples I have highlighted the ways in which the men have crafted the constructions of their selves to establish their behaviour as ethical and justified, drawing on either an ethic of rights or an ethic of care. In relation to an ethic of rights, the man claims that as the breadwinner he has the right to exercise discipline and control over the behaviours of other family members; or that based on notions of equality within the relationship, his use of violence is merely balancing the claims of the other, with the self. In claiming an ethic of care for the self the man places his needs and priorities ahead of others in his care.

In the third volume of his later work *The History of Sexuality: The Care of the Self* Foucault (1990b) locates competing foci of ethics in western societies as they relate to sexual practices and pleasures. His study of Greco-Roman culture establishes that attitudes toward certain sexual acts are arbitrary and change dramatically from era to era. Relevant to this thesis, Foucault's investigation also highlights the philosophical development of the individual through the practice of an ethic of care for the self. Foucault (1991a, p. 8) argues that 'it is the power over self which will regulate the power over others'. This implies that to influence or control others' behaviour or thoughts one must first achieve control over the self or self-control. The problematic element within this argument is that the ability to regulate others through the use of power is assumed rather than questioned.

For Foucault, to care for the self is to have and develop knowledge about the self. The process whereby one takes care of the self is the site where Foucault suggests that ethics is linked to games of truth (Foucault 2000a, p. 285). Foucault holds that there is no one truth about the self and that there are a series of practices which compose the self:

It is the development of an art of existence that revolves around the question of the self, of its dependence and independence, of its universal form and of the connection it can and should establish with others, of the procedures by which it exerts control over itself, and of the way in which it can establish a complete supremacy over itself.

Foucault, 1990b, pp. 238-239

Foucault insists that we are able to work at ‘crafting’ our lives to reinvent ourselves as subjects better fitted for living with ourselves, and as a consequence, with others. Shane constructed his violent behaviour toward his wife as a legitimate means of stopping his wife’s drug-taking behaviours. For Foucault the act of making a deliberate choice to construct oneself as an ethical subject, in relation to the self and others is a practice of freedom (Foucault, 1992, p. 77). The concept of freedom that Foucault relies on is political in nature. He explains ‘being free means not being a slave to oneself and one’s appetites, which means that in respect to oneself one establishes a certain relationship of domination, of mastery, which was called *arkhe* or power, command’ (Foucault 2000a, pp. 286-287). This idea of freedom thus relies on a notion of being in-control of the self. Hence without self-control one cannot attain freedom. Care of the self is ethical in itself, Foucault argues, and the ethos of freedom implies complex yet caring relationships with others (2000a, p. 287). And so, in an interview with Becker, Fernet-Betancourt and Gomez-Muller, Foucault responded in the affirmative to a question clarifying that care for the self implies the care for others. Foucault responded ‘he who takes care of himself to the point of knowing exactly what duties he has as master of a household and as a husband and father will find that he enjoys a *proper*⁶⁶ relationship with his wife and children’ (Foucault 2000a, p. 289). In claiming this gesture toward linking ethics and politics, Foucault does not distinguish what possibilities are desirable and worth striving for (White and Hunt 2000, p. 100), he assumes that self-control

of the desires will result in ethical conduct. This is I suggest the opportunity by which the ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom provides men with the possibility to construct themselves as ethical, even though they are violent toward their family members. For example, Shane takes the higher moral ground as a non-drug user and as a consequence he is able to claim he is in-control of his violence with his wife. Hence, while Shane and Nick suggest they are engaging in behaviours where they are ‘in control of the self’, they are arguably exercising violent behaviours and in their own self-interest, an ethic of care for the self which does not extend to an ethic of care for others. Hence I propose that Foucault’s ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom is an ethic based on notions of individualism and patriarchal privilege which contradict the desired notions of mutuality and equality within relationships. I would argue that while based on similar premises, an ethic of care for the self, stands in contrast to an ethic of care for others, in terms of their primary focus. Foucault has a lack of judgement on behavioural outcomes of their actions – he requires that people act with integrity. If self-control aligns with ‘caring’ behaviour towards self and others and if one’s notion of the self in control includes both in control of oneself and others (such as Foucault’s notion of ‘master of the household’ would suggest) then patriarchal, controlling, perhaps even ‘cold-blooded’ violence would apparently be justified.

Feminist philosopher and psychologist Carol Gilligan discovered gender differentiated ethics, an ethics of care and an ethics of justice. In her study of ethics Gilligan (1982, p. 171) found that women, in their moral reasoning, have an orientation of caring for others. The women she studied focused on emotional relationships of attachment as compared with moral reasoning based on a justice or rights based approach. Gilligan (1982, p. 174) states that: ‘an ethic of

⁶⁶Foucault does not explain his use of the term ‘proper’.

justice proceeds from the premise of equality – that everyone should be treated the same – an ethic of care [for others] rests on the premise of nonviolence – that no one should be hurt’. While Gilligan found this form of moral reasoning to be a trend amongst the women she studied, she does not claim it to be a pattern for all women. In her introduction Gilligan states:

The different voice I describe is characterized not by gender but by theme. Its association with women is an empirical observation, and it is primarily through women’s voices that I trace its development. But this association is not absolute, and the contrasts between male and female voices are presented here to highlight a distinction between two modes of thought and to focus a problem of interpretation rather than to represent a generalization about either sex.

Gilligan 1982, p. 2

In my view an ethic of care for others is vital within the domestic sphere to sustain, not only romantic ideals of mutuality, non-violence and inter-dependence within the domestic relationship, but also non-violent inter-generational relationships. In making this statement I do not want to suggest that the responsibility for caring for others be primarily that of the woman partner within the heterosexual couple. However, on several occasions throughout this thesis the data reported make it clear that the woman partner bears the major responsibility for the emotional labour within both the relationship and the family.

The men construct themselves as ethical subjects where violence is not the central part of their subjectivity. Violence is either used purposefully whereby the men position their violence as the lesser of two evils or violence is incidental whereby men’s out-of-control behaviour is considered an extension of their masculinity. Both of these forms of control, consciously or unconsciously, are about gaining control over other family members. In both of these

instances men's behaviours are considered to be acceptable forms of hegemonic masculinity. Men's violence against women provides an instance where the problem of self control is played out upon the relations one has with others. Foucault's ethic of care for the self provides the men with the ability to construct themselves as ethical subjects freely and independently of their relationship even though they are violent toward their family members. This contrasts with Gilligan's ethic of care for others which would ensure that the relationship – both couple and family members – be placed at the centre of the construction of the self. This would have the outcome of ensuring that the effects of men's violence for the couple and family be considered before the violence occurs.

CONCLUSION

Reflecting back upon the opening quotation of this thesis and on Sarah's bewilderment at Patrick's description of nearly strangling her during a fight as 'nothing', it is evident that Patrick's and Sarah's experience of the same incident held very different meanings for each of them. Throughout this thesis it has become apparent that the dominant way in which domestic violence is 'read' (both by feminist and non-feminist commentators) is as a manifestation of a particular form of masculinity. Men's violence within relationships continues to be understood in patterned gendered ways, where women have been used as experts about men's violences, inadvertently placing responsibility for the violence with her.

The typical theoretical construction of men's violence towards their partners is that violence is an expression of the exercise of power and control as a central element of hegemonic masculinity, meaning that inevitably an understanding of men's violence attends to identity construction. This thesis has examined the ways in which men accommodate their violence into their sense of self. Several inherent contradictions within dominant constructions of masculinity and femininity have been identified. For example, dominant masculinity is meant to be rational, to value ethics and to remain in control, whilst acts of violence would appear to be irrational, embodied, unethical and out of control. This thesis challenges the idea that men who use violence against women lack ethics, but rather argues that they re-inscribe their behaviour and interpret it as ethical in order avoid self-identifying as a 'violent' man.

I have also explored the ways in which women have accommodated men's violence into their relationship and sense of self, given that the ideal relationship is based on mutual dependence, love and one true self. It is evident that the women engage in much emotional work to re-inscribe their partner's violence in such a way as to justify their commitment to him and to the relationship. Typically, this is achieved by the women producing counter or oppositional discourses in which men are positioned as multi-dimensional ('good' fathers and providers) and hence are much more than their violences. Women's emotional work extends to caring for the health of the relationship, so that men are exempt from any responsibility for the relationship or the family, instead being seen as accountable only for themselves.

In this thesis I adopted a poststructuralist approach to analysing men's own understandings of their violence. This thesis began by examining the limitations to viewing domestic violence through individualist and structuralist perspectives. The individualist approach was found to construct the rational independent subject, a male in the breadwinner role, in contrast to the irrational dependent woman, a housewife. In terms of power, the individualist construction also relies on the classic notion of liberalism, of the agent exercising rational willful control over self and power over others. Ironically, to some extent Foucault's ethics of care seems to reproduce such a subject, certainly to the extent that it does not acknowledge interdependence. In contrast to the individualist (largely psychological) understanding of power and violence, the structural approach to power, in the hands of radical feminists for example, suggests that *all* men have power over *all* women. In this paradigm, patriarchy is seen as intrinsic to defining gender relations, relations that accord men advantages variously attributed to their superior strength, money, control, knowledge and access to or control over social institutions.

In its application to domestic violence, the individualist approach suggests that domestic violence is the result of biology, psychological illness or men's inherent nature which is unleashed by disinhibitors such as alcohol and drugs. By contrast, the structuralist approach suggests that violence is due to a structural context that men inhabit which might include isolation, unemployment, stress or the gender order, and which produces men's aggressiveness and women's subordination and passivity. The poststructuralist approach focuses on the analysis of text to break this simplistic agent/society dualism and shows how language functions to produce discourses which in some ways are enabling and in other ways disabling for individuals. The reiteration of examples from my research illustrates the way that resistance is enabled within the constraint imposed by the violence. For example, several women who had been prescribed and were taking anti-depressants to cope with the effects of their partner's violence suggested that the drugs had the effect of changing their behaviour with a resulting reduction in his use of violence. These women thereby gained some relief from attack but firmly remain positioned as responsible for his violence. As an indication of the disabling effects of this 'responsibility' for his violence, when one of these women, Nell, left her partner, she became well.

This thesis has presented the possibility of examining domestic violence through a poststructural lens whilst at the same time recognising the structural and gendered environment within which men's violence occurs. Whilst recognising that we live in a patriarchal world, where men on the whole wield power, this thesis supports the argument that in this context women are simultaneously placed (and place themselves) as both strong women and as victims. A poststructural understanding of the subject has provided opportunities to reveal women's resistance to men's violence, resistances which continue to

occur within discourses and frameworks which privilege men. At the same time, a poststructural lens allows men who are violent to their female partners to be recognised as multi-dimensional – able to hold down a job and be ‘good’ fathers to children, whilst simultaneously abusing a key dimension of a ‘good’ relationship through their violence.

My analysis of the way domestic violence is portrayed in the public arena shows that there has been a change in the representation of violence in both policy documents and the media. This change in policy moves from seeing domestic violence as an individual problem of the woman and a health issue to a focus on the criminality of the perpetrator’s behaviour. The latter representation called for a structural response, invoking the criminal justice system to incarcerate violent men and providing a ‘safe haven’ for women in shelters. A ‘partnerships’ approach has been adopted by policy makers which not only understands violence as illegal but also seeks to therapeutically ‘work’ with men. The rhetoric which underpins the ‘partnership’ of legal and therapeutic approaches gains its authority from being seen as ‘prevention’ rather than simply a ‘reactive’ approach. Earlier approaches characterised by the provision of shelter services to women and/or the prosecution of offenders are presented as reactive and inadequate. This change within the discursive construction of domestic violence as ‘partnership’ ironically invokes joint responsibility for the violence, rather than, for example, a feminist approach which clearly locates responsibility for the violence with the male partner.

In another public arena, media representations of domestic violence have also changed. Domestic violence has gained currency as a political issue such that perpetrators’ behaviour is ‘demonised’, although not to the extent that perpetrators lose their professional standing. In these representations the perpetrator’s masculinity is not challenged but accepted in an

extreme form. The hyper-masculine male body features prominently in pictorial representations with the male fist as the signifier of domestic violence, privileging obvious physical forms of violence over more subtle, manipulative forms of control.

Foucault offers the subject as an active agent in self-formation through discourse, identifying the key role of discourse in the construction of the subject. The thesis explores the ways in which men's self-understandings negotiate and adapt the public discourses of domestic violence, paying particular attention to the media and professional discourses. In doing so, the men typically reject the popular constructions of the violent partner as 'other'. That is, the men in the group did not apply these constructions to themselves, but did sometimes to other men in the group. In the media these constructions often take the form of the 'monster', the alcoholic or mentally unstable perpetrator. These public discourses serve to reinforce dominant notions of hegemonic masculinity compared with the discourses used in the men's groups. Professionals' definitions vary depending upon the discipline of the definer. For example, definitions as represented by the medical and the legal professions rely on the sign more than the symptom, meaning that the obvious physical results of violence (such as bruises and bodily injury) were privileged in the understandings of domestic violence. These definitions were more easily accepted by the men as compared to the feminist and the human services definitions, which incorporate women's symptoms or experiences into the definition. The group leaders used feminist and human services variations of definitions within the men's groups and hence provided a point of challenge to the men's understandings of domestic violence. Ironically, the challenge invokes liberal individualist understandings of the man as 'responsible' for his own actions and thereby able and required to reject hegemonic masculinity. Hence the men were asked to act as liberal

rational individuals in an attempt to stop their violence and so the poststructuralist notion of the multifarious subject was not made available to them in their understanding of themselves.

Foucault designates power to have multiple forms ranging from strategic games between liberties (suggesting equality between players) to domination, a regulation of the conduct of others (Hindess 1996; p. 97). Foucault's interest lies in governmentality, in technologies of self reconstruction which lie between strategic games and domination, and in which the examination, the confession and bio-power play a part in techniques of the self. The men's groups, in which men were required to scrutinise their own motivations and behaviours whilst being scrutinised by the other group members and the group leaders, provides a vivid instance of surveillance and its normalising effects. Surveillance, adapted to become a form of professional intervention, makes the subject visible through the examination, the individual text within social structures, and judges her/him against 'normality'. This, coupled with self-surveillance and bio-power, produces the docile subject, the disciplined body. The men's quest for 'control' over what they often represented as an internal/wild aspect of the self (temper/anger) is a disciplinary strategy. Men's attendance at the group provided the women with a brief period, within their normally private relationship, where public 'professional eyes' viewed the relationship. This can have both positive and negative effects. For example, Damian's attendance at the group provided Nell with some safety from his physical violence for the period of the group program. However, Damian used the language of the men's group to be more psychologically controlling of both his step-daughter and wife, whilst now claiming that he did not 'lose' control of his temper.

In most cases, however, the men did not learn lessons of self-surveillance. Within the institution of the couple, it was the women who were found to engage in practices of self-surveillance whilst violent men were typically non-reflective about how they appeared to or impacted upon their partner and/or children. A key reason for this lies in the capacity of the men to write their own texts within normalising discourses. They did this by referring to the sign of physical violence, suggesting they are not 'hitters' (like other men in the group, or like the monsters in the media); alternatively, they shifted the gaze away from themselves to their partner and/or children, invoking discourses of provocation which normalised their violence as a reaction to her 'abnormal' or provocative behaviour. For example, Catherine's drug-taking and Anna's greater linguistic power served as justifications for their partners' use of violence. The men do not appear to feel under surveillance even while in the men's group. So instead of producing self-surveillance, I argue that the men produce notions of control as an ethics of care for the self. A key point of difference between self-surveillance and self-control is that self-surveillance demonstrates a concern about one's impact on the social context, whilst self-control is about being master of one's domain. The men understand control in two key aspects. Firstly, they focus their attention on maintaining control over family members' behaviour, and secondly, they seek self-control (and some men experience momentary lapses of self-control). Hence the men invoke an 'ethics of control', where the men position themselves as their central concern and others' behaviour is incidentally manipulated for their own advantage. In deconstructing violent heterosexual masculinities I sought to observe forms of non-violent heterosexual masculinities which desire not only to 'know himself' but also to 'know your woman' and take responsibility for and share in the emotional work within the relationship and family. I did not find any such constructions.

In exploring this notion of self-control further, I draw on Foucault, who suggests that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the wife was in a relationship of domination. In support of this relationship Foucault identified an ethic of care for the self, which retained the man as ‘master of the household’ (Foucault 2000a, p. 289). The women in my study (late twentieth century) are positioned (at least theoretically) as autonomous, rights-bearing individuals and as such have strategies of resistance which ‘the wife’ in the earlier periods lacked. For example, they live within a legal system outlawing (physical) domestic violence; an economic system in which women can own property and are assumed to be joint owners of marital property and a discourse in which women are premised as equal subjects (regardless of the reality of this in most heterosexual relationships in relation to housework or domestic violence). But Foucault, in placing the self at the centre of ethical concerns and recommending the man remain ‘master of the household’, reinforces patriarchal privilege⁶⁷ rather than moving as far towards ‘strategic games between liberties’ (Foucault, 1991a, p. 19) as feminists, perhaps, would. The men in the interviews were found to exploit either rights-based or equality discourses to justify their violences, ensuring that they focused on their own rights (or their parental rights) rather than the rights of others. In contrast to positioning the self as central, Gilligan (1982, p. 171) suggests that women use an ethic of care for others which prioritises relationships with others, and would move closer towards a feminist interpretation of ‘strategic games between liberties’.

This thesis has explored the insights offered by a poststructural feminist reconceptualisation of domestic violence. Foucault’s analysis of power has been useful on two accounts. Firstly, his analysis of power relations as a series of localised events between bodies of knowledge,

⁶⁷ In using the term ‘patriarchal privilege’ I refer to the gains that men experience from being associated with

discourses and practices is useful because of the particularised sites, such as the couple and family, in which domestic violence occurs. By contrast, in most therapeutic and feminist discourses, domestic violence continues to be presented as a universal event defined by one normalising definition. As an alternative to this, I have argued for a relationship specific understanding of domestic violence, which draws on sexual harassment legislation for its model, where the victim is active in defining the crime: what constitutes harassment is based on the experiences of the target or victim. Claims of relativism, whereby one woman's violence is considered another woman's normality, could be offset by striking a balance between the sign and the symptom. That is, domestic violence would be defined by the target or victim, where her fears are taken seriously and form the centre of the understanding of what constitutes violent behaviour, rather than as an addendum. This would need to be done in conjunction with the provision of guidelines outlining commonly accepted forms of violent behaviour so as to delineate violence and not exclude women whose experiences of violence have been so normalised as to no longer instill fear in the women experiencing these forms of domination.

Secondly, Foucault problematises the concept of power that feminists have used to explain domestic violence. Radical feminists in particular equate power with domination and violence. Foucault's concept of power offers an alternative construction where power is productive as well as, rather than solely, destructive. To achieve this understanding, Foucault conceptualised power as operating when both parties have freedom to engage in power relations (Foucault, 1992, p. 77). Foucault does not refer to an *absolute* freedom, but the ability to react, disrupt, challenge or maneuver. In a domestic couple where the man is violent, the extent to which the woman within the relationship is free to act, challenge or

that particular group.

maneuver without risk of death is arguable. The domestic relationship does not occur within a vacuum and is influenced by discourses which position the players within it. Whilst it is certainly true that the formal constraints on women in marriage have progressively changed throughout the centuries, gender inequalities in society mean that Foucault's notion of having 'freedom to act' is a limited concept. Hence, while Foucault's view of power has been useful in understanding the subtleties of power relations, it is limiting when examining domination and violence within the domestic relationship.

An aim of men's groups is for the group leaders to guide the men on a path of change, self-discovery and non-violence. In the last chapter I argued that the men are able to view their violence in such a way that they position their violence, and hence themselves, as ethical. Hence the men may not be compelled by the messages suggesting a path of change, as they are already able to justify their use of violence. These men typically reason on the basis of being in an egalitarian relationship (where she fights back) or from an ethics of care for the self – 'looking out for number one' (rather than care for others). Hence men do, as Foucault suggests, actively craft themselves within the available discourses into either a position of 'non-violent' or 'justifiably violent' works of art. Most of the time men actively resist discourses (such as those presented within the group) which challenge their masculinity by suggesting that use of violence is a sign of weakness. Rather, they construct their use of violence as a necessary masculine strength rather than a weakness. While many of the men may be active in resisting the subject positions on offer within the men's groups, the challenges to their subject position within the men's group environment do provide some moments of transformation and a questioning of their self-construction as non-violent. For example, when the group leaders described violence in its many forms, some of the men

expressed surprise to discover that their partners may actually live in fear of them and their actions. The broadened definition of domestic violence as more than physical violence encourages the men to reconsider their own behaviours and women's experience of them. This study of competing and incompatible discourses demonstrates that these moments of challenge or dissent occur within a structural environment of individual liberalism that reinforces male hegemony.

As I indicated in the introduction, I do not claim to have the answers which will solve the 'problem' of domestic violence, nor do I believe there to be one answer or cure. However, through analysis of the men's and women's narratives, I have been able to identify some areas requiring further change and consideration within the men's groups, changes which would disrupt the normalising practices I have identified.

Women were found to be excluded from the information presented in the men's groups. This further disadvantaged the women, as the men were able to use the women's lack of information and knowledge against them. This was demonstrated with the time-out strategy, where some men in the group changed the rules of the intervention to support their violence. The men in the group need to include in their ethics of care the capacity to better understand the meaning of violence to women, coupled with the desire to stop their own violence. Further, the group leaders need to actively engage with men in deconstructing the definitions of domestic violence to produce understandings of domestic violence which recognise women's shifting experiences and understandings of violence. In order to overcome the women's exclusion (and potential manipulation) from the information delivered within the group, group leaders need to have some contact with women, especially those who continue in relationships with the group members. The format could be similar to a truth and

reconciliation commission, in which the women's narratives are an essential element. This would need to be done in a way that does not require women to 'watch' their partner's behaviour or be the 'eyes' of the group leader, but rather invokes men's desire to change for themselves and for their relationships. This would in turn focus on replacing men's exercise of self-control with self-surveillance, and an ethics of control with an ethics of care.

There are several discourses currently available to the men in explaining their violence: the rational individual who can and will change his behaviour; violence as the sign rather than the symptom, where physical violence is considered 'real' violence and privileged over subtle means of control; that violence is the 'out of control' anger of the monster, and not that of the man who does it from an ethics of care – either for his partner or himself. These discourses are available to be taken up by men through their attendance at the men's group. While these discourses, which allow men to take less responsibility, are accessible through the group, the men will invariably opt for them as explanations of their behaviours. Rather than using the cycle metaphor, which privileges physical violence, relies on women's reading of men's emotional and physical behaviour and suggests repetitive and never-changing behaviour, 'narratives of disruption' or possibilities for change could be offered to the men.

The rational singular self does not capture people's experience of themselves or Foucault's description of the complexity of relationships. The meanings of and responses to violence will vary from relationship to relationship and over time, and so 'narratives of disruption' seek to build on both partners' input into understanding men's violence within the domestic relationship. 'Narratives of disruption' allow the men to produce new forms of masculine performance which both satisfy their own re-crafted sense of what it is to be a man and also responds to their partner's experience of their violence. The men's response to the violence

can be crafted by each man to reflect the persuasiveness of hegemonic masculinity, the privileging of the rational, self-controlled actor and the prominence of the sign. For the men to understand their violence as more than ‘a fight about nothing’, they need to become aware of how their partner understands and experiences their violence, as well as developing an awareness of their own linguistic ability to excuse or justify their violences. Further they need the ability to develop other meanings linking their self identity with their own particular and situated performance of masculinity.

Until the persistent discourses which reinforce the links between violence and hegemonic masculinity are challenged and disrupted, men will continue to accept their violence as ‘normal’ and view their violences as ‘a fight about nothing’.

APPENDIX A

GROUPS FOR MEN PERPETRATING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The groups to be evaluated are those which meet certain obvious criteria, such as course length (around 12 sessions of about 2.5 hours per session), program content (similar to the 12 session program in use by several agencies for some years), and a mixture of didactic and interactional learning methods.

The more difficult criteria are those surrounding both content subtleties and process.

WHAT THE PROGRAM IS:

The program is a responsibility model which focuses on participants owning their behaviour, taking responsibility for it, and accepting any consequences.

The program incorporates various models and techniques to:

1. Identify the various forms of violence and abuse, with all their subtleties.
2. Enable participants to identify their own forms of violence and abuse, and address them.
3. Challenge the common excuses for violence and enable participants to apply this learning to their personal situations.
4. Highlight violence and abuse as a method of controlling their partners.
5. Enable participants to understand the impact of their violence on their partners.
6. Enable participants to identify their verbal, nonverbal, and physical cues that precede their violence.
7. Enable participants to identify their escalating negative self talk.
8. Enable men to formulate safety plans that entail steps they must take to minimise the possibility of future violence.
9. Facilitate the identification, discussion, and changing of men's expectations of themselves and their partners.
10. Facilitate the identification and discussion of how men's beliefs devalue women and the change of such beliefs.
11. Provide information about communication, assertiveness, reciprocity, and rights and responsibilities.
12. Maintain the focus on the responsibility of the group members and not on the behaviour of their partners.
13. Encourage participants to relate more intimately with one another.
14. Encourage participants to take responsibility for them selves in a manner that respects the rights of others.
15. Promote sensitisation to the cultural norms that promote violence against women, discrimination against women, and sexist beliefs.
16. Develop an understanding of the socialisation process on men, and how this affects their attitudes and behaviour toward women.
17. Encourage and support interaction, self awareness, and sharing of vulnerability.

18. Develop a process where men are expected to challenge and support one another in making and maintaining changes in their attitudes and behaviours towards women.
19. Develop the taking of responsibility for past, present, and any future acts of violence and the accepting of the consequences of their behaviour.
20. Provide for appropriate referrals and follow-up for participants.
21. Facilitating men freeing themselves from behaviours and beliefs that are counterproductive to their relationship. Developing respectful, enjoyable and caring relationships.

WHAT THE PROGRAM IS NOT:

It is not based on a psycho dynamic model. Although psycho dynamic issues are not denied, they are not the focus of the program, nor a major part of the program. Violence in domestic relationships is not primarily about individual psycho dynamics.

It is not based on an anger management model. While anger is a significant emotion in the expression of domestic violence, and while many perpetrators (and others) see it as a major factor, addressing the anger is a small part of a total package to address the violence. Dealing with the anger alone will produce little effect if the contextual factors leading to the anger (the socio-political dimensions) are not dealt with. Many perpetrators are charming outside the domestic relationship; they can manage their anger very well!

It is not based on an interactional understanding of violence where the interactional patterns between the couple are seen to produce the behaviour. The model is not based on a belief that responsibility for the violence is in anyway shared. It does not leave any room for belief in provocation.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION SHEET

Domestic Violence: What difference do men's groups make?

Why this project is being conducted.

Domestic violence is a problem which is far more common than was once realised. More and more men are attending groups designed to help them overcome their violence. Generally the men find these groups are helpful, especially in stopping physical abuse. We know very little from the women's point of view, about the changes that the men's groups achieve.

The evaluation will seek the opinion of men who participate in twelve week men's groups to deal with violence and the opinions of their wives/partners on the usefulness or otherwise of the men's group program. It will allow a comparison before and after the group as well as a longer term follow-up eighteen months later to measure lasting effects.

What being part of the project will involve.

Each participant will be interviewed separately from their partner and completely confidentially. They will each be interviewed three times: once at the beginning of the group and then the end of the men's group program and finally eighteen months later. The interviewer guarantees that nothing said by one person will be divulged to their partner. The point of interviewing both people is not to use one person's views to check up on the other, but to better understand which aspects of violent and controlling behaviour are helped by the groups and which may not be. We expect that women and men may have different perspectives on what change has occurred and what is desired.

The information that people provide for the study will not be discussed with others or published in a way that could identify individuals. Each person's information will be identified by code and with the use of a false name, details that could identify individuals or organisations will be eliminated or altered.

The interviews will allow individuals to provide a personal view of their own situation. Because everyone's circumstances and relationships are different the interviews will be really important to gain a more detailed picture of the differences among people as to what they found the men's group achieved. Possibilities of both good and bad effects will be discussed. Interviews will not be formal, with set questions, but will be more like a conversation, where the person will be asked to talk about the relationship, the violence, and their perceptions about what change, if any, has occurred or they would like to occur.

The interviews will be tape recorded, and after all identifying information has been removed or altered relevant sections will be transcribed and used in the reports of the findings of the study. The tape recordings will be kept securely until the end of the study and will then be erased.

On each of the three occasions (before and after the group and at follow-up) each person will be asked to fill out questionnaires as well as being interviewed. The standard questionnaire forms will help us gain a generalised picture of the long term effectiveness of the men's groups.

Who is conducting the project.

The person responsible for conducting the project is Dr Margie Ripper of The University of Adelaide, Department of Women's Studies. If you have questions or problems in relation to the study she can be contacted by phone on Ph: 303 5947.

The interviewer is Michelle Jones, she is a post graduate student at Adelaide University. She too can be contacted to answer questions or provide further information. Michelle is the person who will keep close contact with everybody in the study. She will be located at the Inner Southern Community Health Centre at 1140a South Road, Clovelly Park 5042. Ph 277 2488.

The project has been funded by a grant from the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Health Research and Development Grants Advisory Committee.

The project has been approved by The University of Adelaide Human Ethics Committee.

APPENDIX C

Men's interview schedules and prompts

First Interview:

1. Tell me a bit about yourself and your family life/marriage/relationship. What is going on at home?
Prompts: What are the best things about your marriage? What are the trouble spots? What do you get most angry about? What happens?
2. Fill me in on what you've done up to now about this problem (DV/temper/violence)? What has been helpful? What made you decide to come to the group?
Prompts: Kids?, criminal record/police involvement? Wife leaving – what do you do that upsets her the most? Family/friends pressure?
3. What do you think needs to change to solve the problems you've come to the group for?
Prompts: What will be the hardest to change?
4. Do you expect that the group will help?
Prompt: How so/not?
5. We want to make the evaluation as useful to you as possible. Did you have any problems filling out the questionnaire?
6. Was your own upbringing much the same as it was for your children? As it was for your wife/partner? In what ways?
7. Was there anything else you wanted to raise or was there anything that you thought we might talk about but didn't?

Second Interview:

1. Tell me a little bit about what has been going on since I saw you last...
Prompts: do you feel differently about your relationship with your wife? Do you think your feelings of trust have changed? Do you think that she trusts you more? Do you think that you scare her as often or as much as you use to?
2. When you think about your own case what do you think are the real reasons that you have a problem with violence?
Prompts: why do you think that you react to your wife with violence? What were you trying to achieve by using violence? Intention?
3. What do you see will be the continuing issues/problems for you within the relationship?
Prompts: What is the worst thing that could happen now for you in the relationship?
4. What has the group made the biggest difference to?
Prompts: has the group created any problems for you? What did you get out of the group? Positives/negatives? What surprised you about the group? How do you feel about going it alone now that the group is over?
5. If you were talking to a trusted male about the group what are the key things you would want him to know?
6. If your wife (partner, kids, friends) were here now and I asked her what changes she had noticed in you what would she say was different about you (your behaviour)?
7. Has the evaluation created any problems for you?

8. I may not see you for another year looking forward to then, what would you hope to be your situation that we talk about then?

Prompts: do you think there will be a time in your life when violence won't be a problem for you?

9. Was there anything else you wanted to mention or thought we might talk about but didn't?

Third Interview:

1. Tell me what has been happening since I saw you last...

Prompts: *in your relationship?* – pick-up on ongoing points of conflict, what contact with (ex)partner, what issues with new partner (if any)

in your life? - pick up on changes in life circumstances – pregnancies/births, employment /unemployment, injury/accidental or inflicted what outcomes? Leaving/separation/divorce/ who initiated how long? How felt? Children leaving/joining? Moving house /property settlement? New relationships/affairs/re-uniting? Family or criminal court decisions? *in your feelings about your violence?* are there things they still have a problem with? Have they considered getting help? What?

2. Thinking back to the group now do you think that it has made a difference for you either for better or worse?

Prompts: other help sought/interventions received? Counseling? Medication? Police/court/prison? Groups? Marriage guidance?

3. I'd like to move on now and talk more generally about domestic violence and get your ideas on some of the things that other men have been saying to us...

A: A fair few of the men who were interviewed thought that their violence was a way to try and keep control over their partner and the kids in the family. They felt powerful when they were in control. Do you think this plays much of a part for you? If yes – elaborate. If no, why is it they achieve from using violence?

B: A number of men said that inside they felt very sacred that their partner was going to leave them or stop loving them. They felt very dependent on the relationship continuing. How does that fit with you?

C: Some men have been given something by their doctor – some medication that was supposed to help them overcome their violence. Have you ever had anything like that suggested? If yes what are you taking? Did it help? How? Why didn't you accept it/take it?

D: From the last set of interviews it seems that sex is often at the heart of the problem, different needs and expectations and so resentments. From your own experience why do you think sex is such an issue?

E: Some people have said that you can stop physical violence but that the aggression just shows up in another way.

If not violent ... You've indicated that you are not physically violent. What do you think the idea that you might still be being aggressive in other ways?

F: Thinking back to the men's group do you remember seeing the cycle of violence? Did it apply to you? Do you think you are still part of the cycle/have you broken it/or were you never in it?

4. At the end of the last interview I asked where you thought you might be in 18 months and you said ... How close is that? In your opinion is it better/worse (in what ways)? What changed the path that you had imagined?

Women's Interview Schedules and Prompts

First Interview:

1. Tell me a bit about yourself and your family life/marriage/relationship. What is going on at home?
Prompts: What are the best things about your marriage? What are the trouble spots? What does your partner get most angry about? What happens when he gets angry? Which aspects of his violence is most distressing for you? If he could change himself to be the partner you wanted, what would you like him to leave the same and what would you want him to change?
2. Fill me in on what you have done up to now about his problem (DV/temper/violence)? What has been helpful? What do you think made him decide to come to the group?
Prompts: Kids?, criminal record/police involvement? Wife leaving – what do you do that upsets her the most? Family/friends pressure?
3. What do you think he needs to change to solve the problems he has come to the group for?
Prompts: What will be the hardest to change?
4. Do you expect that the group will help him?
Prompt: How so/not?
5. Was your own upbringing much the same as it was for your children? As it was for your husband/partner? In what ways?
6. We want to make the evaluation as useful to you as possible. Did you have any problems filling out the questionnaire?
7. Was there anything else you wanted to raise or was there anything that you thought we might talk about but didn't?

Second Interview:

1. Tell me a little bit about what has been going on since I saw you last...
Prompts: do you feel differently about your relationship? Do you think your feelings of trust have changed? Do you trust him more? Are you as scared as much or as often as you use to be?
2. When you think about your own case what do you think are the real reasons that he has a problem with violence?
Prompts: why do you think that he reacts to? What was he trying to achieve by using violence? Intention?
3. What do you see will be the continuing issues/problems for you within the relationship?
Prompts: What is the worst thing that could happen now for you in the relationship?
4. What has the group made the biggest difference to?
Prompts: has the group created any problems for you? What did you get out of the group? How do you feel about going it alone now that the group is over? What would help?
5. Has the evaluation created any problems for you?
6. I may not see you for another year looking forward to then, what would you hope to be your situation that we talk about then?
Prompts: do you think there will be a time in his life when violence won't be a problem for him?
9. Was there anything else you wanted to mention or thought we might talk about but didn't?

Third Interview:

1. Tell me what has been happening since I saw you last...

Prompts: *in your relationship?* – pick-up on ongoing points of conflict, what contact with (ex)partner, what issues with new partner (if any)
in your life? - pick up on changes in life circumstances – pregnancies/births, employment /unemployment, injury/accidental or inflicted what outcomes? Leaving/separation/divorce/ who initiated how long? How felt? Children leaving/joining? Moving house /property settlement? New relationships/affairs/re-uniting? Family or criminal court decisions?
in your feelings about your violence? are there things they still have a problem with? Have they considered getting help? What?

2. Thinking back to the group now do you think that it has made a difference for him either for better or worse?

Prompts: other help sought/interventions received? Counseling? Medication? Police/court/prison? Groups? Marriage guidance?

3. I'd like to move on now and talk more generally about domestic violence and get your ideas on some of the things that other men have been saying to us...

A: A fair few of the men who were interviewed thought that their violence was a way to try and keep control over their partner and the kids in the family. They felt powerful when they were in control. Do you think this plays much of a part for PARTNER'S NAME? If yes – elaborate. If no, what is it you think he achieves from using violence?

B: A number of men said that inside they felt very sacred that their partner was going to leave them or stop loving them. They felt very dependent on the relationship continuing. How does that fit with PARTNER'S NAME?

C: Some men have been given something by their doctor – some medication that was supposed to help them overcome their violence. Has PARTNER'S NAME ever had anything like that suggested? If yes what is he taking? Did it help? How? Why didn't he accept it/take it?

D: From the last set of interviews it seems that sex is often at the heart of the problem, different needs and expectations and so resentments. From your own experience why do you think sex is such an issue?

E: Some men were saying they'd been given something by their doctor – some medication that was supposed to help them overcome their violence. Has PARTNER'S NAME ever had anything like that suggested? If yes, what are they (you) taking? Did it help? – how? Why didn't they accept it or stop taking it?

F: Some people have said that you can stop physical violence but that the aggression just shows up in another way.

What do you think of the idea that he shows his aggression in other ways? Has this shown to be true for PARTNER'S NAME?

G: Thinking back to the men's group do you remember seeing the cycle of violence? Did it apply to you? Do you think you are still part of the cycle/have you broken it/or were you never in it?

If they have left the relationship...

H: Some women have said that when they've left – that for some time they find themselves thinking about and fearing their husband/ partner almost constantly. It is as if he is more present than when he is there. How does this fit with your experience?

4. Looking back would you have called yourself a “victim” of violence? How easily does this term sit with you?

5. At the end of the last interview I asked where you thought you might be in 18 months and you said ... How close is that? In your opinion is it better/worse (in what ways)? What changed the path that you had imagined?

APPENDIX D

Sportsman: Paul Gascoigne

A further sportsman report in this Australian newspaper was of English soccer player, Paul Gascoigne who was alleged to have assaulted his wife following the loss of a soccer game (Toy 1996, p 3). There is no reference to police intervention and the article is not written in the form of a court or police report of the incident. This article is presented in tabloid style, providing a series of photos of his wife at their wedding and following the assault. It provides graphic details of the physical assault, stating ‘She suffered four dislocated fingers, a black eye and bruising.’ By requesting that the team doctor care for his wife Gascoigne’s allegedly attempts to cover up his wife’s injuries, whilst also inferring that her injuries were serious and similar to those received by players on the soccer field. Within the article the hotel’s duty manager is reported as stating ‘The [Gascoigne] family was just relaxing and having fun like everyone else and they seemed to really enjoy Gleneagles [the hotel]’. His comparison of the Gascoigne family with other hotel patrons portrays the family as ‘normal’ and everyday.

Two reasons are implied for the attack by Gascoigne one is heavy drinking, the second is the anger, rage and disappointment at the first loss of a home game. Again the incident is rendered explicable by this sportsman’s inability to contain his professional (aggressive) behaviour in his relationship (and home). References to an increase in domestic violence following bitter disappointment of the loss of a game is anticipated in an article published months before which predicted an increase in domestic violence in England if their soccer team lost the Euro 96 soccer semi-final against Germany (The Advertiser 25 June 1996, p. 9). Gascoigne is portrayed as reckless and uncontrollable through comments describing him as ‘subject to violent mood swings and temper tantrums’ and ‘in a drunken rage’. This article

suggests then that disappointment or anger in one area of men's lives can be expected to be 'taken out' on the women they love. The implication is that the 'everyday' man is potentially violent and that the target of that violence is somewhat arbitrary (in that it is not necessarily related to the source of their disappointment or anger). In this scenario women are the targets of abuse simply because they are there and available to be the butt of rage.

Threats to Gascoigne's soccer career⁶⁸ were posed at the beginning of the article and were discounted by the end when a team spokesperson suggested that 'what went on between a player and his wife was nobody's business but their own.' This statement is ironic in that it is placed at the end of an article which makes the soccer star and his wife's private lives very public. In this instance the team spokesperson calls on the private when required in an attempt to protect the player.

⁶⁸ Gascoigne was recruited to do some summer soccer training for Perth Glory (an Australian team). His image did not suffer as a result of this incident. He has retained his status as a soccer player.

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