

# Who's in control? Rethinking domestic violence research and practice

Dr Elizabeth Bates

[Elizabeth.Bates@cumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.Bates@cumbria.ac.uk)

# Overview

To give a brief overview of the background literature

Present findings of a study that tested the male control theory of men's partner violence

Present findings of a review of UK domestic violence perpetrator programmes

To discuss the lack of research informed practice in this area

To discuss the implications and future directions

# Intimate Partner Violence Research

## Stereotypical view

1970s emergence of IPV as a social issue: Erin Pizzey

## Early research

Typologies – to influence treatment

Women's experiences of victimisation



## Feminist Theory and Literature

Violence against Women should be studied separately

Not psychopathology or personality but socially and historically constructed control – patriarchy

Women's violence is trivial or self-defence

Challenge gender neutral terms

Police and crime data

*Dobash and Dobash (1979; 2004)*

# Feminist Theory and Literature

Cause of IPV is gender; it is a gendered crime

IPV is driven by patriarchal values and control

Patriarchal society tolerates this

Women's aggression is expressive and motivated mainly by self-defence.

IPV male perpetrators are different from other offenders



# Control

Foundation of feminist theory

Overlap with emotional aggression

Men's patriarchal use of IPV to control and dominate women

Predicts worse health outcomes (e.g. Leone et al., 2004)

Acknowledged now as a crime

EXCLUSIVE

## Fiancée stubbed cigs out on me, poured boiling water in my lap and held a steam iron on my arm.. I never hit back



12 months of hell ... Ian shows burn mark inflicted on his left shoulder with a steam iron

STAFF REPORTERS

Last Updated: 12 Jan 2011

News > UK > Crime

## Male domestic violence victim: 'I never imagined something like this would happen to me'

Ken Gregory suffered first and second-degree burns to over 14% of his body

Rose Troup Buchanan | Friday 13 March 2015



## Review launched following the murder of David Edwards by his abusive wife



TROUBLE BREWING: David and Sharon Edwards on their wedding day



A review has been launched to see what lessons can be learned from the tragic death of solicitor David Edwards, who was murdered by his abusive wife.



# Family Violence Research

This research raised issue of male victims

Steinmetz (1978) “Battered Husband Syndrome”.

Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, 1979)

Archer (2000) 82 studies (N = 64,000)





# “Riding the Donkey backwards” (George, 2007)

Historical punishment of male victims of IPV

Humiliation– animal horns (cuckolded) and patriarchy as an evolutionary concern for paternity uncertainty

Patriarchy reacting to tradition being threatened.



# Family Violence Research and Chivalry

IPV not “special” – personality,  
criminal history

Society doesn't tolerate it – from early  
age there is a normative protection of  
women (Felson, 2002)

Men's violence more condemned  
(Harris & Cook, 1994)

Risk factors and causes – Erin Pizzey



## Is women's violence trivial?

"She beat me up, punched me . . . . She raped me . . . I tried to fight her off, but she was too strong. . . . I was bleeding and she wouldn't let me get to the doctor's."

"I was writhing, crying in the corner . . . I couldn't get up for two hours . . . she kicked me in the groin at least 12 times."

"I don't know our phone number here because she changed it and it's unlisted. I have tried to get it but I haven't been able to . . . She checks the caller ID to see who has called when she comes home from work and she locks up my sneakers in the daytime."

"I started the car and she stood behind the car with the baby... Then she put the baby on the ground behind the car where I couldn't see her so I wouldn't leave."

*(Hines et al., 2007)*

# Johnson's Theory of IPV

Johnson (1995) tried to bridge gap in research

“Patriarchal terrorism” vs. “common couple violence”

Later: “violent resistance” and “mutual violent control”

Evidence for the typology subtypes

Not for gender differences

# Sex Differences in Aggression

Differing pattern of sex differences

Parity in perpetration for IPV

Men are more aggressive to other men

Crime statistics – 19% vs 10% of 16-25 commit violent crimes. Men are most at risk for violence

Effect of target relationship or sex? (Cross et al., 2012)

Women increase with intimacy

Men decrease for target sex



# Testing Male Control Theory of IPV

To test the male control theory (feminist perspective) of IPV

Men would show more controlling behavior to partner

Controlling behavior to a partner would be linked to IPV for men

Men's controlling behavior to a partner would be unrelated other aggression

Additionally test assumptions from Johnson's Typology:

Similar proportions of men and women are to be found among perpetrators of low-level non-controlling physical aggression ("situational couple violence"),

Men are to be found disproportionately among the perpetrators of high-level controlling physical aggression ("intimate terrorists").

## Method

$N=1104$  participants were recruited with 706 women and 398 men.

The following measures were used:

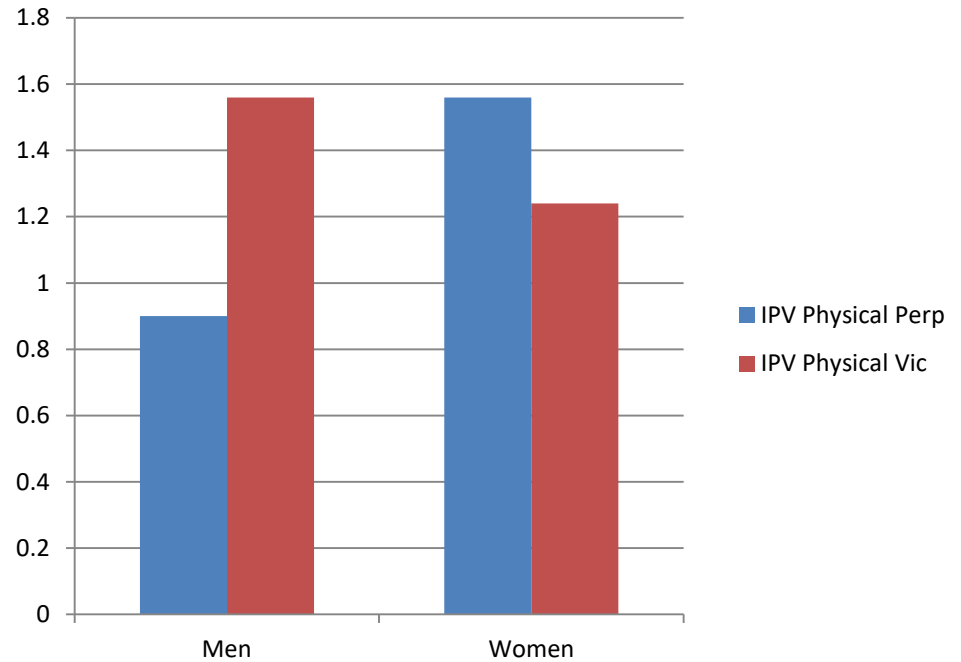
Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1979) – Perpetration and Victimisation for IPV, Perpetration for aggression to same-sex non-intimates

Controlling Behaviour Scale (CBS-R: Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2005) – Perpetration and Victimisation

# Results

Women perpetrated significantly more physically and verbally aggression

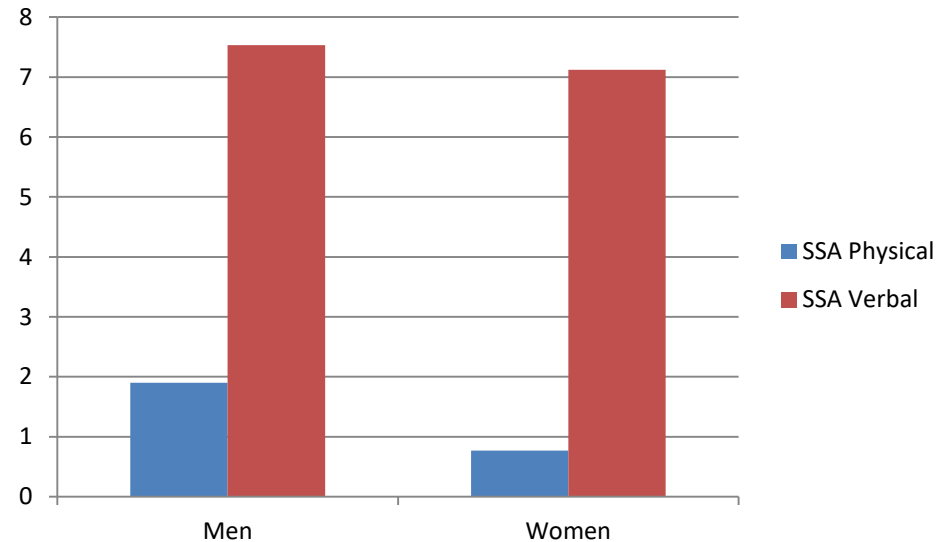
Women reported more verbal aggression victimisation but no difference for physical





# Results

Men used significantly more verbal and physical aggression to same-sex non intimates



# Results

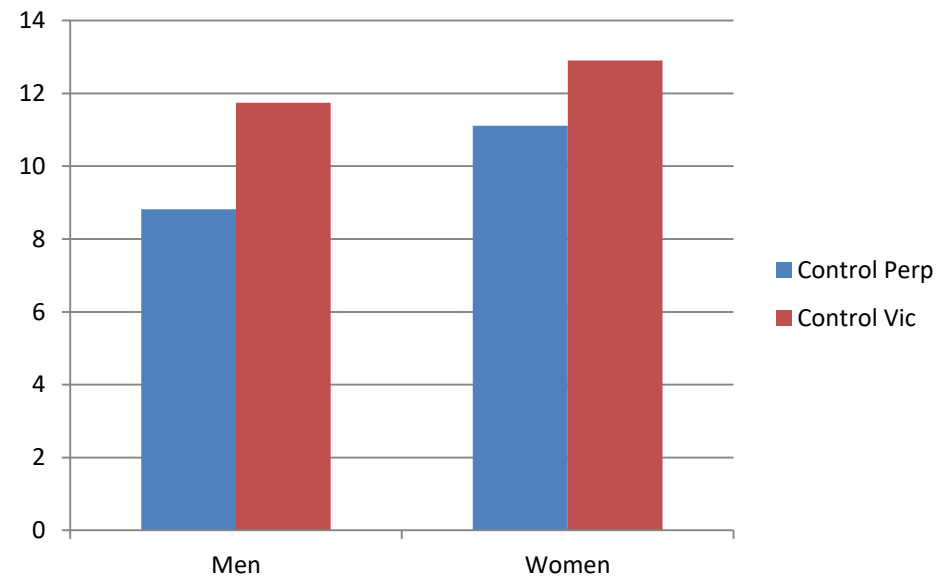
## Within-subjects analyses of $d$ values

The within-subjects effect size for physical aggression was  $d = -.22$  ( $t = -4.21, p < .001$ ) for men, and  $d = .20$  ( $t = 5.21; p < .001$ ) for women.

This indicates that men lower their aggression from same-sex non-intimates to their partners whereas women raise their aggression from same-sex non-intimates to partner to a similar extent.

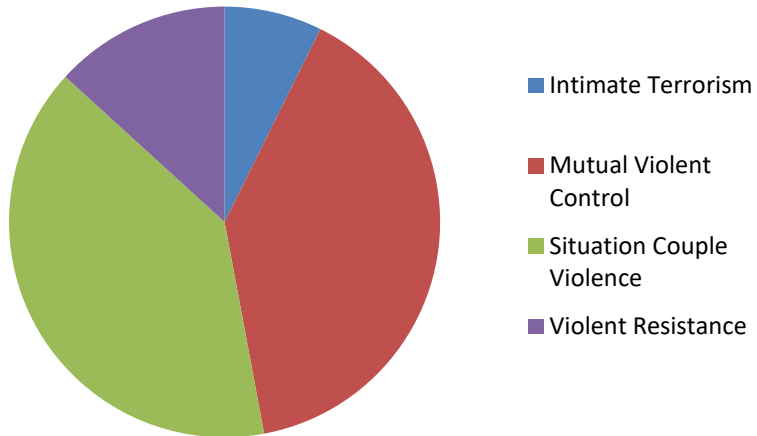
# Results

Women perpetrated significantly more controlling behaviour but similar victimisation scores

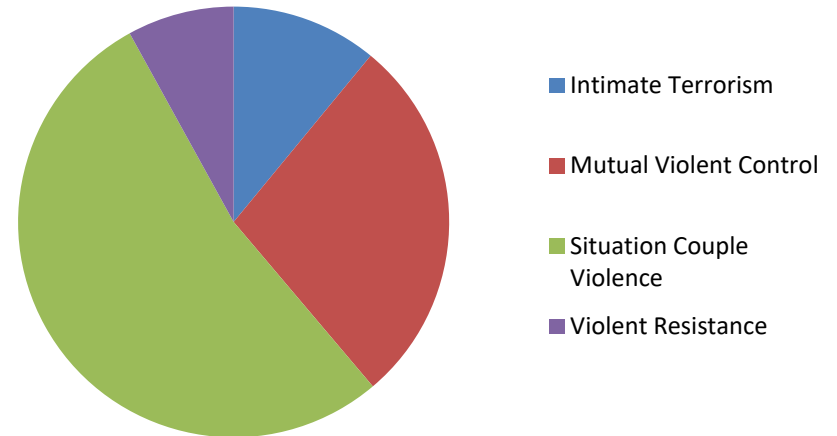


# Johnson's Typology

## Men



## Women



## IPV and other aggression

IPV, aggression to same-sex others and control were all strongly associated

This was for both men and women

Men and women had similar predictors and to a similar magnitude

Contradicts several aspects of the theory

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## Implications for Research

Supports studying IPV with other types of aggression – focus on perpetrator characteristics

Control is characteristic of men's and women's behaviour

Control and same-sex aggression - controlling IPV perpetrators have a coercive interpersonal style (e.g. Corvo & deLara, 2009)

Change is needed in how we perceived IPV



# Implications for Victims

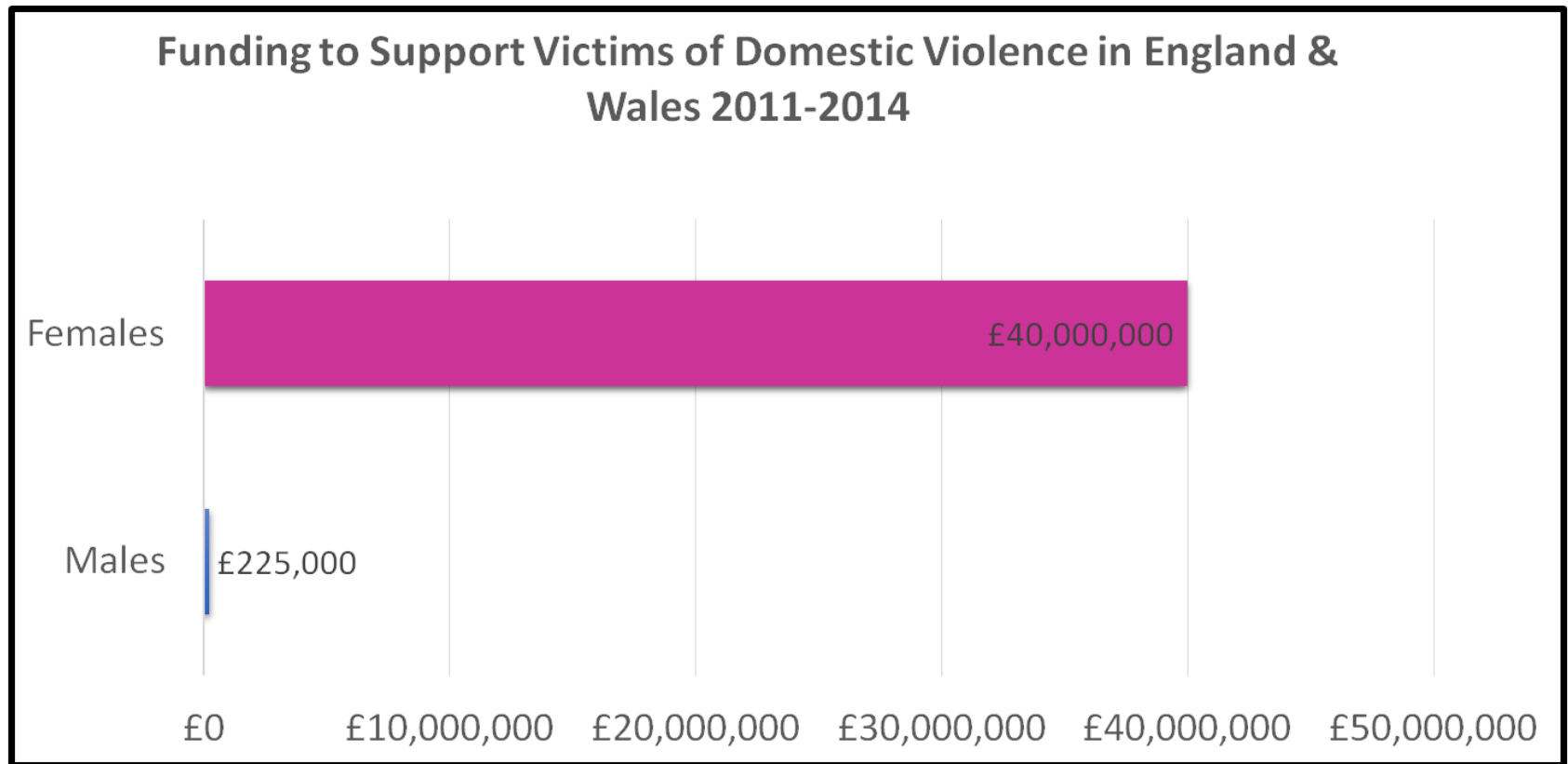


Figure 2: A Graph showing the sex difference in funds supporting victims of Domestic Violence in England and Wales 2011-2014 (Violence against women and girls [VAWG] 2015; Home Office, 2012) **Taken from McCann (2016)**

## What about the impact for victims?

12 organisations offer refuge for male victims in the UK – 63 spaces, 17 for men only.

For women: 400 specialist domestic violence organisations providing 4,000 spaces.

On at least 120 occasions men decided not to consider a refuge due to distance (often having to leave their children and their job behind)

## Implications for Victims

“ ...in addition, male victims have unique experiences in that their female abusers are able to use a system that is designed to aide female victims of domestic violence. Thus, some female perpetrators of IPV manipulate their husbands because they know that the system is designed without the abused male’s experiences in mind, and that more often than not people will not believe or take seriously these men’s victimisation.”

*Hines et al., (2007)*

# How does it impact perpetrator interventions?

Duluth: first multi-disciplinary program

Re-education not treatment

Men's violence understood as not "stemming from individual pathology, but rather from a socially reinforced sense of entitlement." (Paymar & Barnes, ND)



# The Duluth Model



Pence & Paymar,  
(1993)

Developed by activists  
with 5 battered  
women and 4 men

IPV is men's use of  
patriarchal power and  
control - political

# Effectiveness

Research shows it is unsuccessful – e.g. Babcock et al. (2004) meta-analysis ( $N=22$ ) found minimal effects.

Effect sizes close to zero (Jewel & Wormith, 2010)

Feminist researchers speak more favourably (e.g. Gondolf & Jones, 2001) – issues with evaluation design

Others grounded in evidence based practice (e.g. Dutton & Corvo, 2007) are more critical and using different methods have demonstrated different outcomes

# What the Duluth Model ignores

Risk factors

Overlap between IPV, aggression and control

Sex parity and mutuality in IPV perpetration

Perceptions of IPV

Same-sex relationships

## Issues with evaluations of current DVPP

Issues with entry criteria and retention/attrition

Lack of attention to situation/contextual factors

Often qualitative and only using victim data

Lack of long-term follow up or lack of effect sizes reported

Small sample sizes and a lack of a control group

Duluth model experiences “immunity” from empirical evaluation



## Review of UK DVPP (part of larger review)

Aim of the review was to conduct a review of current IPV perpetrator provision within these areas

The objective of the review was to address the following key research question: what are the characteristics of IPV perpetrator intervention programs within the UK?

This will include reviewing the population they serve (e.g. male or female; age range), source referral (e.g. court-mandated, voluntary/self-referred) and the program characteristics (e.g. curriculum informing the program).

## Method

Questionnaire – developed in US with ADVIP

Recruited from prison, probation, PCCs, online searches and charities

Responses: 21 out of 218 contacted – 10%

Further reviewed accreditation procedures within UK

## Key Findings (Descriptive)

Noteworthy reluctance to engage: “Now I know the source of the research I do not wish to respond”

Range of settings (e.g. groups) and skills (e.g. communication skills, managing emotions)

Majority approach – CBT (85.7%) and Power/control (52.4%)

Variation in length (12-52 sessions o 12-70 for high intensity)

Males only (81%) and LGBTQ specific services (14.3%)

Data: 95% did, 61.9% descriptive, only 28.6% recidivism rates and 23.8% external evaluations

# Key Findings from literature

## Correctional services Advice and Accreditation Panel

- 1) Healthy Relationships problem thinking and attitudes
- 2) Community DVP – community delivered
- 3) Integrated domestic abuse programme – community based, more feminist
- 4) Building better relationships – “next stage”

## Few reviews available

- Bloomfield & Dixon (2015)  $N = 6,695$  small but significant reductions in reoffending – many men still reoffended
- Bullock et al. (2010) – variety in delivery and data collection – only 40/2986 collected pre, post and follow up

# Key Findings from literature

## Respect accreditation

- Based in feminist theory

- Holds men solely responsible, choose violence due to gender based entitlement

- “denial and minimisation of abusive behaviour or any justifications for abusive behaviour including the use of drugs or alcohol”

## Project Mirabal (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015)

- Data from women – interviews or nominal data

- No pre and post analysis, lack of clarity around sample size, no consideration of women’s behaviour, no effect sizes

# Key Findings from literature

Dixon et al. (2012) critiqued Respect's mission statement

Focused on key issues: gender as cause, majority of men's violence, women's violence if self-defensive, gender is most important risk factor

Respect refused requests for an up to date mission statement

Men's Advice Line

## Evidence Based Practice?

Lack of evidence based practice – evidence is not informing DVPP

Lack of methodologically rigorous evaluations – immune from the need

Lack of available DVPP for women or LGBT community

# Concluding Thoughts

Evidence against men's control theory

Still influential model in practice

There is a need for change for:

- More services for men
- Intervention for women perpetrators
- Perpetrator programmes grounded in evidence based practice and not politics



# Thank you for listening!

Bates, E. A., Graham-Kevan, N., & Archer, J. (2014) Testing predictions from the male control theory of men's partner violence. *Aggressive Behavior*, 40 (1) 42-55

Bates, E. A., Graham-Kevan, N., Bolam, L. T. & Thornton, A. J. (in press) Review of Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programs in the UK. *Partner Abuse*.

[Elizabeth.Bates@cumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.Bates@cumbria.ac.uk)

01228 616328