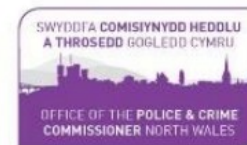


Misogyny as a Risk Factor Leading to Serious Harm in Cases of Domestic Abuse

- Funded by All-Wales Policing Academic Collaboration
- Researcher: Claire Hodgkinson
- Supervisors: Prof. Martina Feilzer & Dr. Bethan Loftus



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY



* NB. This presentation includes quotations of offensive language and descriptions of abusive behaviour.

Misogyny

Misogyny is a method to enforce sexist and patriarchal norms within society (Manne, 2017)

Misogyny is used to target women or groups of women who challenge the socially accepted rules of female behaviour and traditional male superiority (Richardson-Self, 2018).

Misogyny is believed to manifest itself in domestic and sexual abuse and always has clear and violent intention (Anderson, 2014).

Recent Home Office research found that attitudes supportive of violence against women (VAW), misogyny and patriarchal views were amongst the strongest direct risk factors in domestic abuse (DA) (Clemmow *et al.*, 2023).



Methodology

Stage 1

- Five domestic homicide case reviews within North Wales Police force area between 2018-2022.
- Nine semi-structured interviews with professionals working within North Wales Police and Welsh Women's Aid.

Stage 2

- Attempted murder case files from across Welsh police forces
 - Investigated as Attempted Murder and concluded at court level.
 - Male perpetrator and female victim.
 - Intimate relationship or previous intimate relationship between perpetrator and victim.
 - Victim statement in case file.
 - Occurred in either 2019 or 2022.
- Semi-structured interviews with women who have experienced domestic abuse.

Findings from Interviews with Professionals

Definitions of misogyny aligned with research.

Described witnessing misogyny in behaviours which were vindictive, belittling, derogatory and had a level of malice attached.

All considered misogyny a risk factor, but one which was intricately linked to coercive controlling behaviour to gain power and control.

Believed misogyny could be captured on DASH/DARA as bolt on question/prompt but that training for frontline officers was needed.

All felt misogyny should be covered in initial officer training alongside DA training.

Those who had received 8-stage Domestic Homicide Timeline training felt it would be valuable for frontline officers to receive to understand escalating risk and where misogyny sat within it.



Case study themes- Ownership/Possessiveness

"She's mine now"

"He said he'd shoot me if I didn't get up and make him something to eat"

"We're married now, so she is mine"

The men treated their partners as possessions and controlled most elements of their lives including finances, monitoring mobile phones, restricting access to work, alienating from family and friends, and dictating daily life such as the food eaten and what time tea should be ready. All three men focused on infidelity and the partners were all regularly accused of having affairs and lived under constant suspicion- they were expected to prove their fidelity to their partner.

"I was too scared of him to report to the police"

"If I find them together, I will kill them"

"If I can't have you, no-one will"

"He has the bank card for everything"



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**



**PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY**



Ysgoloriaethau Sgiliau Economi Gwybodaeth
Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships

Sexual Entitlement

“Slag”

“Slut”

“In his mother’s house he locked me in the bedroom and forced me to have sex with him”

“He would turn up at the caravan anytime day or night demanding sex”

Sexual coercion was a common feature in the three cases. The men felt entitled to sex and the focus was on male gratification. One woman was plied with alcohol regularly so her partner could have sex, was raped during sleep, and coerced into a threesome. Another faced verbal abuse if she did not have sex and often did for “an easy life”. One perpetrator showed a pattern of sexual abuse including rape, threats, and sexually humiliating his partners by openly flaunting affairs.

“If I can’t get it whilst she’s awake I’ll get it when she’s asleep”

“[He] made [her] sleep with his brother. [He] would say she was boring, and it would be fun. He got into her head and as a result she did it. She was upset and heartbroken. I wanted her to go to the police, but she didn’t want [the children] growing up knowing about it”



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**



**PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY**



Ysgoloriaethau Sgiliau Economi Gwybodaeth
Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships

Traditional Gender Roles

“He wanted [her] to be his housewife. He would try to mould her into the ideal wife”

Witnesses describe the perpetrators as being “old-fashioned” and considering themselves as the “breadwinner” in the relationships. Financial abuse was a feature in two of the relationships demonstrated as withholding the finances, keeping hold of bank cards, tying partners to them in loan debt, and selling a house “in anger” leaving the family homeless. In the other case the victim had inherited money and the imbalance this caused in the power dynamics of the relationship became a regular point of jealousy and friction.

“I was asleep in bed one day and he woke me up and demanded I make a cup of tea. He sat on me and pinned me to the bed. I made the tea to be able to get back to sleep.”

“He has the bank card for everything”

“He expected [her] to look after the kids and to be there when he got home from work with his tea ready for him”



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**



**PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY**



Ysgoloriaethau Sgiliau Economi Gwybodaeth
Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships

Victim Blaming

“I’ll get her back for this.”

The perpetrators took little responsibility for their actions within the relationship and felt justified in acting when they believed their partner had wronged them. The homicides were a consequence of suspected affairs or being “*pushed so far*” in being asked to move out. This shows that, in the prospect of losing power and control, the perpetrators felt justified in taking misogynistic action to take ultimate control.

“I can only be pushed so far, and everybody has a breaking point.”

“You don’t know, you don’t know what I’ve gone through for years.”

“He’d rant about other girlfriends, and I’d cop for it.”



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**



**PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY**



Ysgoloriaethau Sgiliau Economi Gwybodaeth
Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships

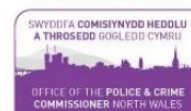
Initial attempted murder case review findings

Reluctance from victims to initially engage with police to provide statements.

- Fear of repercussion
- Concern for the mental health of partner.
- Involvement of drugs and alcohol.

Progression of victim engagement in one case- further statements give more detail and background to relationship with support from WWA/ Domestic Abuse Officers.

Similar themes emerging in perpetrator behaviour- evidence of CCB, sexual degradation, accusations of infidelity and ownership/possessiveness.



Victim Interview initial findings

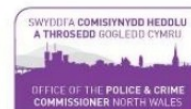
“He’d say ‘Women are like snakes with tits.’” (Interview 2)

“One night when I was asleep, he was just trying to help himself to me.” (Interview 1)

“That was me as the new bride. And I remember feeling like I've been slapped in the face...straight away I had to ask for everything food wise, wasn't given the key to the car, standing the street with my bags waiting for him to lock the front door to let me in the car, people were looking at me, you know. Yet, he'd want the key to my shop.” (Interview 1)

“I’d visit him in his flat every weekend and it would be trashed. He’d make me clean it because I’m the woman” (Interview3)

“So I’m trying to breastfeed my son but he was jealous of me feeding him. He was being lewd and disgusting about my breasts every time and I just thought ‘I can’t do this’. So I’ve never breastfed any of my babies after that” (Interview 4)



Partial Recommendations (Stage 1)

Training to be rolled out to frontline officers to increase understanding of misogyny and its presentation and associated risk.

Inclusion of prompts within the new DARA risk assessment to encourage officers to ask victims about abusers' attitudes.

When making professional judgements on risk to be aware of the level of vindictiveness and malice in the language and behaviour of the abusive partner.

Further research to review cases of serious DA to gain a victim's perspective and enhance understanding of the presentation of misogyny.



References

- Anderson, K.J. (2014) *Modern Misogyny: Anti-Feminism in a Post-Feminism Era*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Clemmow, C., Rottweiler, B., Marchment, Z, Wolfowicz, M., Kiprianides, A., Doherty, P., Seaward, A. & Gill, P., 2023, Risk & protective factors for domestic abuse perpetration: Establishing the evidence base to support the prevention, management, and risk assessment of domestic abuse perpetrators in the UK, [Online], Available at: [DA Report_final_23 \(ucl.ac.uk\)](#)
- Manne, K. (2017) *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Monckton Smith, J., 2020, Intimate Partner Femicide: Using Foucauldian Analysis to Track an Eight Stage Progression to Homicide, *Violence Against Women*, 26(11), pp.1267–1285.
- Richardson-Self, L. (2018) Woman-Hating: On Misogyny, Sexism and Hate Speech. *Hypatia* 33 (2), pp. 256-272.

