

Let's Stop Violence Before It Starts: Using primary prevention strategies to engage men, mobilise communities, and change the world

**Notes of a one-day workshop,
Conference, *United Against Domestic
Violence – Engaging All Men in Prevention.***

**Mt Gambier, South Australia,
14-15 July 2011**

Facilitated by Michael Flood

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
OVERVIEW	4
<i>An overview of the workshop's structure</i>	4
CIRCULATING THESE NOTES	4
THE ROOTS OF MEN'S VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: AN ECOLOGICAL MODEL	9
GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS	9
CAUSES AND CONTEXT	9
<i>Gender roles and relations</i>	9
<i>Social Norms and Practices Relating to Violence / Violence Against Women</i>	10
<i>Access to resources and systems of support</i>	10
STOPPING VIOLENCE BEFORE IT HAPPENS	13
AN INTRODUCTION TO PRIMARY PREVENTION	13
<i>Prevention has become a focus</i>	13
<i>Because of hard work by survivors, advocates, professionals, and others</i>	13
<i>Working upstream and downstream</i>	13
<i>Primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention</i>	13
<i>All contribute to each other</i>	14
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PREVENTION	14
THE SPECTRUM OF PREVENTION	15
<i>A spectrum of primary prevention strategies</i>	15
<i>Level 1: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills</i>	16
<i>Level 2: Promoting Community Education</i>	16
<i>Level 3: Educating Providers (and other professionals)</i>	17
<i>Level 4: Engaging, Strengthening, and Mobilising Communities</i>	17
<i>Level 5: Changing Organizational Practices</i>	19
<i>Level 6: Influencing Policies and Legislation</i>	19
ENGAGING MEN IN PREVENTION	20
<i>The Rationale for Engaging Men</i>	20
<i>This does not mean that everything must involve men. Women-only efforts remain vital</i>	21
<i>Dangers in involving men</i>	21
<i>Some key principles for male involvement</i>	22
CHALLENGES IN WORKING WITH MEN	23
<i>Providing for men</i>	23
<i>Reaching men</i>	23
<i>Appealing to men</i>	23
<i>Educating and changing men</i>	26
<i>Mobilising men</i>	36
CHANGING NORMS, MOBILISING COMMUNITIES, AND BUILDING GENDER EQUALITY	37
MOBILISE MEN AND COMMUNITIES.....	37
<i>Use community workshops and events</i>	37
<i>Work with influential groups. And 'gatekeepers'</i>	37
<i>Use cultural work: art and drama</i>	37
SUPPORT MEN IN GETTING ORGANISED	37
WORK COLLABORATIVELY.....	37
BUILD CAPACITY	38
TALES OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE	38
HAVE THE DANGERS BEEN REALISED? EVALUATING MEN'S VIOLENCE PREVENTION	38
<i>Reducing funding for women's programs and services? No, not here</i>	38
<i>Weakening the feminist orientation? Or exemplifying it?</i>	38
<i>Silencing women – Yes, sometimes</i>	38
<i>Taking over the campaign? I wish</i>	38
<i>Colluding with violent men</i>	39
<i>Rhetorical rather than real support from men</i>	39
<i>Failing to earn women's trust? Or receiving it too easily?</i>	39
THE REAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF MEN'S VIOLENCE PREVENTION THUS FAR.....	39
<i>Raising public and political awareness of the role of men and boys in ending violence against women</i>	39

<i>Mobilising men in groups, networks, and campaigns</i>	40
<i>Shifting the attitudes and behaviours which lead to or constitute violence against women (through education and social marketing)</i>	40
<i>Involving, and shifting, powerful masculine organisations and workplaces</i>	40
<i>Forging partnerships between women’s and men’s networks and organisations</i>	40
<i>Putting male involvement in violence prevention on national policy agendas</i>	41
THE LIMITS (AND FAILURES) OF CONTEMPORARY MEN’S VIOLENCE PREVENTION	41
<i>Few men are involved</i>	41
<i>Efforts are small, scattered, and under-developed</i>	41
<i>Some campaigns are ineffective and inappropriate</i>	41
<i>A focus on men sometimes has been diluted</i>	41
<i>There is a substantial and organised backlash, particularly by anti-feminist men’s groups</i>	42
SOME CASE STUDIES	42
<i>In a sporting code / culture: AFL “Respect and Responsibility” strategy</i>	42
<i>In a male-dominated workplace</i>	43
DEALING WITH RESISTANCE AND BACKLASH	45
ANTI-FEMINIST MALE BACKLASH	45
<i>Fathers, violence, and family law</i>	45
KEY STRATEGIES	47
COMPLEXITIES AND TENSIONS	49
<i>That it is in men’s interests to support progress towards gender equality</i>	49
<i>That our goal is to encourage new, positive masculinities among men</i>	49
<i>That we must focus on engaging men</i>	50
<i>That this work always is effective</i>	51
<i>That we must focus (only) on why men use violence</i>	52
CONCLUSION	52
ONLINE RESOURCES ON MEN’S ROLES IN STOPPING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	53
(1) READINGS AND RESOURCES.....	53
(2) WEB SITES	53
(3) ACADEMIC REFERENCES.....	53

Introduction

This document represents the text of a one-day workshop presented by Dr Michael Flood. Hosted by the women's organisation Soroptimist International, the one-day workshop took place in Mt Gambier, South Australia, on July 15th 2011. The workshop took up the second day of the two-day conference *United Against Domestic Violence – Engaging All Men in Prevention*.

Overview

How can we prevent violence against women? And how can we make progress by engaging men? These workshops provide a comprehensive introduction to frameworks and strategies for primary prevention, with a focus on engaging and mobilising men. The workshops will be engaging, participatory, and packed with strategies, resources, and food for thought.

Primary prevention has become a central focus of community and government efforts to address men's violence against women. This reflects the recognition that we must not only respond to the victims and perpetrators of violence, but also work to prevent this violence from occurring in the first place. The workshop highlights the rapidly developing field of primary prevention, the spectrum of strategies now being adopted, the supports for violence against women they address, and their effectiveness.

Engaging and mobilising men has become an important aspect of prevention work. This work is challenging, even problematic, and yet vital. The workshop emphasises the positive role which men have to play in preventing violence against women. It identifies promising strategies for involving men in work aimed at ending violence against women and building gender equality, drawing on both Australian and international experience. The workshop explores key challenges and dangers, from collusion to backlash, and it emphasises ways in which to extend the reach, appeal and impact of violence prevention among men.

An overview of the workshop's structure

- The Roots of Men's Violence Against Women: An ecological model
- Stopping Violence Before It Happens: Primary prevention
 - The Spectrum of Prevention
 - What Works in Preventing Violence Against Women.
- Engaging Men in Prevention
 - The Positive Roles Men Can Play
 - Tales of Failure and Success
 - Dealing with Resistance and Backlash
- Changing Norms, Mobilising Communities, and Building Gender Equality

Circulating these notes

These notes may be circulated and cited. A suggested citation is as follows:

Flood, M. (2011). *Let's Stop Violence Before It Starts: Using primary prevention strategies to engage men, mobilise communities, and change the world (Workshop notes)*. University of Wollongong. Unpublished.

Please note that sections of the following text have been adapted from the following publications:

Flood, M. (2011). Involving Men in Efforts to End Violence Against Women. *Men and Masculinities*, 14(3), August. <http://www.xyonline.net/content/involving-men-efforts-end-violence-against-women-journal-article>

Flood, M. (2010). *Where Men Stand: Men's roles in ending violence against women*. Sydney: White Ribbon Prevention Research Series, No. 2.

<http://www.xyonline.net/content/where-men-stand-men%E2%80%99s-roles-ending-violence-against-women>

Flood, M. (2010). 'Fathers' Rights' and the Defense of Paternal Authority in Australia.

Violence Against Women, 16(3), 328-347. <http://www.xyonline.net/content/fathers-rights-and-defence-paternal-authority-australia>

Flood, M., L. Fergus, and M. Heenan. (2009). *Respectful Relationships Education: Violence prevention and respectful relationships education in Victorian secondary schools*. Melbourne: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, State of Victoria. URL:

<http://www.xyonline.net/content/respectful-relationships-education-violence-prevention-and-respectful-relationships-educatio>

Flood, M. (2007). Involving Men in Gender Practice and Policy. *Critical Half*, 5: 9-13. URL:

<http://www.xyonline.net/content/engaging-men-%E2%80%9Cwomen%E2%80%99s-issues%E2%80%9D-inclusive-approaches-gender-and-development-%E2%80%93-critical-half-sp>

Flood, M. (2007). "What's Wrong with Fathers' Rights?" *Men Speak Out: Views on gender, sex, and power*. Ed. S. Tarrant. Routledge. <http://www.xyonline.net/content/whats-wrong-fathers-rights>

Flood, M. (2007). Background document for *Preventing Violence Before It Occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

Flood, M. (2006). Violence Against Women and Men in Australia: What the Personal Safety Survey can and can't tell us about domestic violence. *Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre Newsletter*, Summer: 3-10. <http://www.xyonline.net/content/violence-against-women-and-men-australia-what-personal-safety-survey-can-and-cant-tell-us-ab>

Flood, M. (2005-2006). Changing Men: Best practice in sexual violence education. *Women Against Violence*, 18: 26-36. <http://www.xyonline.net/content/changing-men-best-practice-sexual-violence-education>

Flood, M. (2005). Men's Collective Struggles for Gender Justice: The Case of Anti-Violence Activism. In *The Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*. Eds M Kimmel, Jeff Hearn, and R.W. Connell. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (pp. 458-466).

<http://www.xyonline.net/content/men%E2%80%99s-collective-struggles-gender-justice-case-anti-violence-activism-0>

Flood, M. (2004). Backlash: Angry men's movements. In S. E. Rossi. (ed.), *The battle and backlash rage on: Why feminism cannot be obsolete* (pp. 261-278). Philadelphia, PA: Xlibris Press. Backlash: Angry men's movements: <http://www.xyonline.net/content/backlash-angry-mens-movements-0>

Flood, M. (2002-2003). Engaging Men: Strategies and dilemmas in violence prevention education among men. *Women Against Violence: A Feminist Journal*, 13, pp. 25-32.

<http://www.xyonline.net/content/engaging-men-strategies-and-dilemmas-violence-prevention-education-among-men>

Please note that further resources regarding men's roles in violence prevention are listed at the end of this document.

Introduction

Thank you

Thank you to the organisers of this day for inviting me to speak here. I want to start by acknowledging that the work done by the people in this room – by advocates and activists, social workers and counsellors, researchers, policy makers, and others – is really at the frontline of violence prevention work. I have the utmost respect for your work, and I feel both humbled and privileged to be in this forum with you.

What we'll do today

How can we prevent violence against women? And how can we make progress by engaging men? These workshops provide a comprehensive introduction to frameworks and strategies for primary prevention, with a focus on engaging and mobilising men. The workshops will be engaging, participatory, and packed with strategies, resources, and food for thought.

Primary prevention has become a central focus of community and government efforts to address men's violence against women. Engaging and mobilising men has become an important aspect of prevention work. This work is challenging, even problematic, and yet vital. The workshop emphasises the positive role which men have to play in preventing violence against women. It identifies promising strategies for involving men in work aimed at ending violence against women and building gender equality, drawing on both Australian and international experience. The workshop explores key challenges and dangers, from collusion to backlash, and it emphasises ways in which to extend the reach, appeal and impact of violence prevention among men.

An overview of the workshop's structure

- The Roots of Men's Violence Against Women: An ecological model
- Stopping Violence Before It Happens: Primary prevention
 - The Spectrum of Prevention
 - What Works in Preventing Violence Against Women.
- Engaging Men in Prevention
 - The Positive Roles Men Can Play
 - Tales of Failure and Success
 - Dealing with Resistance and Backlash
- Changing Norms, Mobilising Communities, and Building Gender Equality

Who I am

Longstanding involvement in activism regarding gender and violence. Involved in peace and left-wing politics in my late teens. Joined an anti-sexist men's group, meeting for three hours every week for close to two years. We explored all sorts of topics: violence, porn, fathering, bullying, homophobia, and more. I founded a profeminist men's magazine, *XI*, which now continues as a website. For some reason, I decided to do Women's Studies courses at university. And I ended up doing a PhD in Gender Studies. I got involved in Men Against Sexual Assault (MASA), and from there in various other forms of profeminist and anti-violence activism.

I've now had a long involvement in community advocacy and education work focused on men's violence against women. I've worked as a community educator addressing men's violence against women, in schools and with other audiences. I've participated in expert group meetings in

various countries, worked with various organisations (government, sporting, etc.). I continue to maintain the XY website (www.xyonline.net) and the profem e-mail list.

I've worked both in and outside academia, including for domestic violence and sexual health organisations, the Australia Institute (a public policy thinktank), in a position at La Trobe University focused on the prevention of violence against women and funded by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), at the Australian National University. I'm based now at the University of Wollongong, with my teaching and research continuing to focus on men, masculinities and gender.

Through these various involvements, I've developed and demonstrated a fascination with issues of gender and sexuality and a lifelong commitment to profeminist activism and progressive social change.

However, what I'm *not* saying is that I'm some kind of perfect man, some kind of angel.

At this point, I want to warn against a way of thinking about violence which may be tempting among men: that violence is a problem of 'men out there', of 'bad men' who are nothing like me.

It may be easy or comforting to think, I've never bashed a woman. I've never held a knife to a woman's throat and forced her into sex. Violence is a problem of *other* men, men *not* like me. But once we realise that violence and abuse can take various forms, it's not so simple. For me for example, I wouldn't say that I've raped a woman. But I realised that there were times when I had used 'soft pressure', guilt-tripped a woman into sex, or done something or kept going even when I knew she wasn't quite comfortable with it. That's gut-wrenching. I've become more aware of how using porn in my teens shaped my sexual attitudes in dodgy ways. I've become more conscious of the ways I sometimes treat my partner unfairly – and she helps remind me too.

I'm not pretending I've got it all sorted. For men to play a positive role in ending violence against women, we don't have to be perfect or saints. The White Ribbon for example is not a badge of perfection. The bottom line is that we take responsibility for our actions and attitudes, and strive for a higher standard.

For me, this work has had profound personal benefits. It's deepened my relationship with my partner. It's enriched my parenting. It's helped my friendships with other men. And it's allowed me to take part in networks and communities of amazing and inspiring men and women.

Housekeeping

Breaks, food, toilets

Break: 10.30 – 10.50 (20 min)

Lunch: 12.15 – 1.15 (1 hour)

Break: 2.30 – 2.50 (20 min)

Finish: 4.00pm

Group process stuff:

Asking questions

How we'll proceed

- A mix of presentation and participation
 - Including interactive work here and in small groups
- The full text of everything I say will be available.

- There will be time for questions & discussion.

The Roots of Men's Violence Against Women: An ecological model

Good news and bad news

I want to start by offering some good news. As far as we can tell, rates of violence against women in Australia have *declined*. Comparing the 2006 survey by the ABS and the last national survey in 1996, smaller proportions of women experienced physical or sexual violence in the last 12 months than ten years ago. I hasten to add though: the other side of this is that over 440,000 women experienced violence in the last year.

Why might rates of violence have declined? There are several possible factors. First, community attitudes towards men's violence against women have improved. There is growing gender equality in relationships and families, reducing men's willingness or ability to enforce their dominance through violence and abuse.

Another factor is represented by the women and men right here in this room. The presence and influence of domestic and sexual violence services has played a role, in allowing women to leave violent relationships and leave them earlier.

On the other hand, there are other trends which worsen violence against women. Shifts in family law are exposing women and children to ongoing contact with violent ex-husbands and fathers, there have been increases in poverty and inequality, and exposure to sexist and violence-supportive media in pornography and elsewhere is increasing.

QUESTION: Comments? Other factors which are making things better, or worse?

Causes and context

So, what do we know about the causes of men's violence against women? I'm drawing here on a review of the determinants of intimate partner violence I wrote for the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. This covered both domestic violence and sexual violence, and of course, these often go together.

Three decades of research have identified key determinants of intimate partner violence. We can group these into three broad clusters.

Gender roles and relations

The most well-documented determinants of men's violence against women can be found in gender norms and gender relations. Whether at individual, community, or societal levels, there are relationships between how gender is organised and violence against women.

Individual gendered attitudes and beliefs

First, men's gender-role attitudes and beliefs. Men's agreement with sexist, patriarchal, and sexually hostile attitudes is an important predictor of their use of violence against women.

Putting this another way, some men are less likely to use violence than other men. Men who *do not* hold patriarchal and hostile gender norms are *less* likely than other men to use physical or sexual violence against an intimate partner.

Violence-supportive attitudes are based in wider social norms regarding gender and sexuality. In fact, in many ways, violence is part of 'normal' sexual and intimate relations. For example, for many young people, sexual harassment is pervasive, male aggression is expected and normalised, there is constant pressure among boys to behave in sexually aggressive ways, girls are routinely objectified, there is a sexual double standard, and girls are pressured to accommodate male 'needs' and desires.

Relationships and families

There are important determinants of intimate partner violence in relationships and families. A key factor here is the power relations between partners – are they fair and just, or dominated by one partner? Male economic and decision-making dominance in the family is one of the strongest predictors of high levels of violence against women.

Another factor at the level of intimate relationships and families is marital conflict. This conflict interacts with the power structure of the family. When conflict occurs in an asymmetrical power structure, there is a much higher risk of violence.

Peer and organisational cultures

Peer and friendship groups and organisational cultures are important influences too. Some men have 'rape-supporting social relationships', whether in sport, on campus, or in the military, and this feeds into their use of violence against women.

For example, you get higher rates of sexual violence against young women in contexts characterised by gender segregation, a belief in male sexual conquest, strong male bonding, high alcohol consumption, use of pornography, and sexist social norms.

Communities, cultures, and nations

There is also international evidence that the gender roles and norms of entire cultures have an influence on intimate partner violence. Rates of men's violence against women are higher in cultures emphasising traditional gender codes, male dominance in families, male honour, and female chastity.

Social Norms and Practices Relating to Violence / Violence Against Women

What about other social norms and practices related to violence?

Domestic violence resources

There is US evidence that when domestic violence resources – refuges, legal advocacy programs, hotlines, and so on – are available in a community, women are less vulnerable to intimate partner violence.

Violence in the community

Violence in the community appears to be a risk factor for intimate partner violence. Members of disadvantaged communities may learn a greater tolerance of violence through exposure to violence by their parents, delinquent peers, and others.

Childhood exposure to intimate partner violence

Childhood exposure to intimate partner violence contributes to the transmission of violence across generations. Children, especially boys, who witness violence or are subjected to violence themselves are more likely to grow up with violence-supportive attitudes and to use violence.

Access to resources and systems of support

There is consistent evidence that women's and men's access to resources and systems of support shapes intimate partner violence.

Low socioeconomic status, poverty, and unemployment

Rates of reported domestic violence are higher in areas of economic and social disadvantage. Disadvantage may increase the risk of abuse because of the other variables which accompany this, such as crowding, hopelessness, conflict, stress, or a sense of inadequacy in some men.

Lack of social connections and social capital, social isolation

Social isolation is another risk factor for intimate partner violence. Among young women, rates of domestic violence are higher for those who aren't involved in schools or don't experience positive parenting and supervision in their families. In adult couples, social isolation is both a cause and a consequence of wife abuse. Women with strong family and friendship networks experience lower rates of violence.

Neighbourhood and community characteristics

Intimate partner violence is shaped also by neighbourhoods and communities: by levels of poverty and unemployment, and collective efficacy, that is, neighbours' willingness to help other neighbours or to intervene in anti-social or violent behaviour.

In indigenous communities, interpersonal violence is shaped by histories of colonisation and the disintegration of family and community

Personality characteristics (and antisocial behaviour and peers)

Another factor is personality characteristics. Spouse abusers on average tend to have more psychological problems than nonviolent men, including borderline, mood disorders, and depression.

Adolescent delinquency – antisocial and aggressive behaviour committed during adolescence – is a predictor of men's later perpetration of sexual assault.

Alcohol and substance abuse

Men's abuse of alcohol or drugs is a risk factor for intimate partner violence. Men may use being drunk or high to minimise their own responsibility for violent behaviour. Some men may see drunk women as more sexually available, and may use alcohol as a strategy for overcoming women's resistance.

Situational factors, such as separation

There are also situational factors that increase the risk of intimate partner violence. For example, there is evidence that women are at risk of increasingly severe violence when separating from violent partners.

ASK: Anything that surprises you? Anything that's missing? Anything you disagree with? Two minutes to write down..., share with those around you.

Exercise: Risk and Protective Factors

ASK: So, are all men at *equal* risk of perpetrating violence against women?

Your 18-year-old daughter is starting a new relationship. What factors would make it less likely that her new male partner will use violence against her? What factors would make it more likely?

Different scenario: Your 18-year-old son has been *using* violence against his girlfriend. What factors shape his likelihood of recidivism / re-offending, the likelihood that he will continue to use violence?

He is more likely to 'fully reform' (to cease using violence against partner) if:

- Move from denial to... Recognises his violent behaviour and the harm it's caused others and himself. Makes and enacts a commitment to change. Takes responsibility for their own feelings and needs. Learns new skills for talking, listening, and relating.
- Addresses the role of anger and aggression in his life, and in particular, sexist beliefs about acceptability of using anger and violence against partners.

- Surrounds himself with people who avoid violent and criminal behaviour. (Because delinquent peer associations are a factor in men's recidivism.)
- Addresses his alcohol and drug use
- Seeks professional help, through batterers' programs. Is motivated to seek treatment, and completes it.
- Female partner is intolerant of his abusive behaviour.

Stopping Violence Before It Happens

An introduction to primary prevention

Prevention has become a focus

In the last decade and a half, prevention has become a central focus of community and government efforts to address violence against women. This reflects the recognition that we must not only respond to the victims and perpetrators of sexual violence, but also work to prevent violence from occurring in the first place. We must address the underlying causes of sexual violence, in order to reduce rates of violence and ultimately to eliminate it altogether.

Because of hard work by survivors, advocates, professionals, and others

Prevention work has only become possible because of years of hard work and dedication by survivors, advocates, prevention educators, and other professionals (CDC, 2004: 1). In particular, advocates and activists in the women's movement have worked hard to gain recognition for women who have experienced sexual violence, to place sexual violence on the public agenda, and to generate the political will to tackle it (Harvey *et al.*, 2007: 5). Primary prevention efforts complement work with victims and survivors, but do not replace or take priority over it.

Working upstream and downstream

(Note that the 2 Powerpoint slides regarding this metaphor are borrowed from a 2010 draft of VicHealth's short course on preventing violence against women.)

The metaphor of working 'upstream' and 'downstream' is a useful way of understanding different forms of prevention. Consider the following story:

There I am standing by the shore of a swiftly flowing river and I hear the cry of a drowning man. So I jump into the river, put my arms around him, pull him to shore and apply artificial respiration. Just when he begins to breathe, there is another cry for help. So I jump into the river, reach him, pull him to shore, apply artificial respiration, and then just as he begins to breathe, another cry for help. So back in the river again, without end, goes the sequence.

You know I am so busy jumping in, pulling them to shore, applying artificial respiration, that I have no time to see who the hell is upstream pushing them all in. (McKinlay 1974)

Efforts located 'downstream' are critical, in responding to those experiencing violence. But they do not do enough to prevent the problem from occurring in the first place or to prevent other people from experiencing the problem. 'Upstream' efforts, representing primary prevention, are a vital complement to 'midstream' and 'downstream' efforts. In other words, while we very need to continue to pull people out of the river and to assist with their survival and recovery, we must also work on what is allowing them to fall (or be pushed) in the river in the first place.

Primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention

One common way of classifying activities to prevent and respond to violence is in terms of *when* they occur in relation to violence:

- Before the problem starts: *Primary* prevention
 - Activities which take place *before* violence has occurred to prevent initial perpetration or victimisation.
- Once the problem has begun: *Secondary* prevention

- Immediate responses *after* violence has occurred to deal with the short-term consequences of violence, to respond to those at risk, and to prevent the problem from occurring or progressing.
- Responding afterwards: *Tertiary* prevention
 - Long-term responses *after* violence has occurred to deal with the lasting consequences of violence, minimise its impact, and prevent further perpetration and victimisation.

Primary prevention strategies are implemented before the problem ever occurs. They are successful when the first instance of violence is prevented (Foshee *et al.*, 1998: 45).

Secondary prevention focuses on early identification and intervention, targeting those individuals at high risk for either perpetration or victimisation and working to reduce the likelihood of their further or subsequent engagement in or subjection to violence. Secondary prevention is intended to reverse progress towards violence and to reduce its impact. For example, activities may focus on reducing opportunities for violence by supporting the men who are at risk of perpetrating violence. Secondary prevention efforts are successful “when victims stop being victimized [e.g. by leaving violent relationships] or perpetrators stop being violent” (Foshee *et al.*, 1998: 45).

Tertiary prevention is centered on responding after violence has occurred. Activities focus on minimising the impact of violence, restoring health and safety, and preventing further victimisation and perpetration (Chamberlain, 2008: 3). Mostly, these activities include crisis care, counselling and advocacy, and criminal justice and counseling responses to perpetrators.

All contribute to each other.

‘Tertiary’ activities do contribute directly to the prevention of violence. For example, rapid and coordinated responses to individuals perpetrating violence can reduce their opportunities for and likelihood of further perpetration, while effective responses to victims and survivors can reduce the impact of victimisation and prevent revictimisation (Chamberlain, 2008: 4). In short, the effective and systematic application of tertiary strategies complements and supports primary prevention.

The effectiveness of prevention

There has been very little evaluation of primary prevention strategies (Flood 2005-2006). Many efforts have not had any evaluation, and existing evaluations often are poorly designed or limited in what they test.

Nevertheless, some strategies clearly are effective: they show evidence of implementation, evidence of effectiveness, and a theoretical rationale. Others are promising: they show evidence of implementation and a theoretical rationale. Other strategies are potentially promising: they have not been tried or evaluated, but they do have a theoretical rationale.

Exercise: How to spend \$5 million on the primary prevention of VAW (20 minutes)

Question: You have a budget of \$5 million to spend on the primary prevention of violence against women. You can spend it on anything you want. It won’t buy everything, but will buy a lot. What will you spend it on?

Remember: You are focused here on *primary* prevention.

Spend 2 minutes on your own writing your plan (at least in the past, about as long as some governments spend on violence against women planning!). Identify priorities.

Then go around your table. Then collectively identify key priorities.

Comments:

There are a number of rationales you could use for choosing strategies:

It addresses key determinants of violence against women.

It is known to be effective.

It is politically or practically feasible.

Here is the range of strategies that are widely identified...

The Spectrum of Prevention

(Note: This material is drawn from the following journal article: Flood, M. (2011). Involving Men in Efforts to End Violence Against Women. *Men and Masculinities*, 14(3), August.)

A spectrum of primary prevention strategies

I now offer a framework for understanding and assessing men's involvement in violence prevention work. This brings together two developments: the emergence of efforts which engage men in preventing violence against women, and the evolution of the field of violence prevention itself. In the latter, there has been in the last decade a profound shift towards primary prevention, aimed at preventing violence before it occurs. Contemporary violence prevention also includes increased emphases on comprehensive approaches which address multiple levels of the social order, the value of evaluation and evidence of effectiveness, and the targetting of the determinants or causes of violence against women associated with particular settings, communities and social dynamics (Walker *et al.* 2008).

Around the world, there is a now a bewildering variety of initiatives aiming to engage or address men in order to prevent violence against women. To make sense of them, to assess their effectiveness, and to guide further initiatives, the 'spectrum of prevention' provides an invaluable framework. The spectrum of prevention, summarised below, offers a simple framework for understanding and organising prevention initiatives (Davis *et al.* 2006, p. 7). Used in work aimed at preventing men's violence against women, it embodies the recognition that this violence is the outcome of a complex interplay of individual, relationship, community, institutional, and societal factors and that violence prevention too must work at these multiple levels.

Table 1: The Spectrum of Prevention

Level of Spectrum	Definition of Level
Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills	Enhancing an individual's capability of preventing violence and promoting safety
Promoting Community Education	Reaching groups of people with information and resources to prevent violence and promote safety
Educating Providers	Informing providers who will transmit skills and knowledge to others and model positive norms
Fostering Coalitions and Networks	Bringing together groups and individuals for broader goals and greater impact

Changing Organizational Practices	Adopting regulations and shaping norms to prevent violence and improve safety
Influencing Policies and Legislation	Enacting laws and policies that support healthy community norms and a violence-free society

Level 1: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills

The most localised form of prevention is transferring information and skills to individuals and increasing their capacity to prevent or avoid violence against women. For example, teachers, carers, and physicians may help boys and young men to increase their safety and their equitable attitudes, healthcare practitioners may engage patients and parents to promote healthy relationships, and other community leaders may speak to youth to encourage non-violence.

It is particularly important that we address services to boys who have witnessed or experienced violence in families, as these boys are more likely to grow up adhering to violence-supportive attitudes and perpetrating violence themselves (Flood and Pease 2006).

Level 2: Promoting Community Education

The second level of strategy concerns community education, and I focus here on four streams of education.

Face-to-face educational groups and programs

The first is face-to-face educational groups and programs. The most extensive body of evidence in the evaluation of primary prevention efforts concerns educational programs among children, youth, and young adults. From a series of evaluations of violence prevention education, delivered in schools and universities in particular, it is clear such interventions can have positive effects. For example, male and female secondary school and university students who have attended rape education sessions show less adherence to rape myths, express less violence-supportive attitudes, and/or report greater victim empathy than those in control groups.

Certainly not all educational interventions are effective, and changes in attitudes often ‘rebound’ to pre-intervention levels one or two months after the intervention. However, education programs which are intensive, lengthy, and use a variety of teaching approaches have been shown to produce positive and lasting change in attitudes and behaviours (Flood 2005-2006).

Communication and social marketing

We know that communication and social marketing campaigns can produce positive change in the attitudes and behaviours associated with men’s perpetration of violence against women.

Men’s groups and networks have adopted a wide range of creative communication strategies. In Brazil, Program H developed postcards, banners, and comics which drew on mass media and youth culture to promote respectful identities and gender-equitable lifestyles among young men and women. In the USA, Men Can Stop Rape have developed an innovative poster campaign centered on the theme “My strength is not for hurting”, encouraging men to practise consent and respect in their sexual relations.

Local educational strategies: ‘social norms’ and ‘bystander intervention’ campaigns

Two further approaches are promising ones for primary prevention. ‘Social norms’ campaigns highlight the gap between men’s perceptions of other men’s agreement with violence-supportive and sexist norms and the actual extent of this agreement. By gathering and publicising data on

men's attitudes and behaviour, they seek to undermine men's conformity to sexist peer norms and increase their willingness to intervene in violent behaviour (Flood 2005–2006).

'Bystander intervention' approaches seek to place "a sense of responsibility and empowerment for ending sexual violence on the shoulders of all community members". They teach men (and women) skills in de-escalating risky situations and being effective allies for survivors and foster a sense of community responsibility for violence prevention.

Other media strategies

The fourth stream of community education concerns other media strategies. In a media advocacy approach, journalists and news media are encouraged to report on violence against women in more appropriate ways, for example as social problems requiring public intervention.

Media literacy involves teaching critical viewing and thinking skills, to improve viewers' ability to ignore or resist anti-social messages. It is particularly important that we tackle boys' consumption of violence-supportive media such as pornography (Flood 2007a).

Perhaps the most controversial form of intervention into media is the regulation of media content: the regulation for example of portrayals of violence in children's television and forms of Internet pornography.

Level 3: Educating Providers (and other professionals)

Workforce strategies for the primary prevention of violence against women are scattered and underdeveloped, but they are promising ones.

Workplace strategies often involve working with *men*, given that police, law, and medical institutions typically are dominated by men. Very little primary prevention work has been conducted with men in workplaces in gender-sensitive ways. But there are some inspiring and promising instances of such work, among male sports coaches and police.

We must also increase workforce capacity to prevent violence against women, by developing resources and technical assistance.

Level 4: Engaging, Strengthening, and Mobilising Communities

To prevent violence against women, we must change the social norms, gender roles, and power relations which feed into violence. We must build local communities' capacity to respond effectively to violence, encourage their ownership of the issue, and foster local efforts addressing the social contexts in which intimate partner violence occurs.

Promising community strategies include community and media education campaigns, 'community action teams' which involve communities in building strategies for community safety, and effective community leadership in violence prevention.

Involve male community leaders

We must also involve male community leaders in such efforts. For example, while religious beliefs historically have been used to justify violence against women (Flood and Pease 2006), religious institutions and leaders also have a potentially powerful role to play in encouraging an ethic of non-violence.

Foster coalitions and networks

We must also foster coalitions and networks to increase the 'critical mass' behind prevention efforts and improve collaboration on interventions.

Mobilise communities through events, networks, and campaigns

Community development strategies are complemented by strategies of community mobilisation. We must not only educate men and women but also organise them for collective action.

We must create opportunities for individuals to mobilise their communities through events, networks, and campaigns, art and drama, and grassroots men's and women's groups and networks.

It is particularly important that we mobilise men through such work, because of men's relative absence from efforts to end violence against women. Around the world, a variety of grassroots men's groups and networks are working to engage men in stopping violence against women. The most prominent example of an anti-violence campaign organised by men is the White Ribbon Campaign.

More on mobilising: What men can do

Men have a vital role to play in reducing and preventing men's violence against women. There are three key kinds of things men can do.

Put our own houses in order.

First, we have to put our own houses in order. We have to take responsibility for violent behaviour and attitudes, and try to build respectful relations with the women and girls (and other men and boys) in our lives.

It may be easy or comforting to think, I've never bashed a woman. I've never held a knife to a woman's throat and forced her into sex. Violence is a problem of *other* men, men *not* like me. But once we realise that violence and abuse can take various forms, it's not so simple. For me for example, I wouldn't say that I've raped a woman. But I realised that there were times when I had used 'soft pressure', guilt-tripped a woman into sex, or done something or kept going even when I knew she wasn't quite comfortable with it. That's gut-wrenching. I've become more aware of how using porn in my teens shaped my sexual attitudes in dodgy ways. I've become more conscious of the ways I sometimes treat my partner unfairly – and she helps remind me too.

I'm not pretending I've got it all sorted. For men to play a positive role in ending violence against women, we don't have to be perfect or saints. The White Ribbon is not a badge of perfection. The bottom line is that we take responsibility for our actions and attitudes, and strive for a higher standard.

For me, this work has had profound personal benefits. It's deepened my relationship with my partner. It's enriched my parenting. It's helped my friendships with other men. And it's allowed me to take part in networks and communities of amazing and inspiring men and women.

Challenge violence and violence-supportive behaviour in our daily lives. Act as positive 'bystanders'.

Back to what men can do. Second, men can take steps to challenge violence and violence-supportive behaviour around us, in our daily lives. We can act as positive 'bystanders': intervening in incidents of violence or the situations which lead up to them, supporting victims, challenging perpetrators, or other actions.

Work for wider social and cultural change.

Third, men have to tackle the social and cultural causes of violence, the social foundations of violence. This is vital, because without wider culture change, we'll *never* end violence against women. Some men take part in challenging the attitudes and norms, behaviours, and inequalities which feed into violence against women. Men advocate for and champion change in their workplaces and organisations, participate in campaigns like the White Ribbon Campaign, and take other steps to build gender-equal and gender-just communities and societies.

Level 5: Changing Organizational Practices

Changing the practices of organisations and institutions can have a significant impact on community norms. For example, healthcare institutions can adopt workplace policies modeling egalitarian relationships, and churches may encourage their members to relate in non-abusive ways.

And organisational or institutional cultures

Violence-supportive attitudes are encouraged and institutionalised in the peer relations and cultures of particular organisations and contexts, especially in male-dominated and homosocially-focused male university colleges, sporting clubs, workplaces, and military institutions (Flood and Pease 2006). Intensive interventions in such contexts is necessary to address their violence-supportive local cultures.

There are some powerful examples of sporting institutions taking action to address tolerance for or the perpetration of violence against women among professional male athletes. In Australia, the professional sporting codes of National Rugby League (NRL) and the Australian Football League (AFL) are developing education programs for their players, codes of conduct, and other measures in response to a series of alleged sexual assaults by players in 2004.

Level 6: Influencing Policies and Legislation

Law and policy are crucial tools of primary prevention. Violence prevention requires a whole of government approach, with a national funding base, involving integrated prevention plans at national and state levels.

Law and policy are promising tools too in establishing particular strategies of primary prevention, such as supporting violence prevention curricula in schools, influencing the availability of alcohol, and restricting gun use.

The criminal justice system

The criminal justice system only responds to a very small proportion of domestic violence and sexual assault matters, given both low rates of reporting and attrition through the legal process. At the same time, the criminal justice system does have an important symbolic role in shaping community perceptions of violence against women (Flood and Pease 2006).

Research monitoring and evaluation

Ongoing research into the determinants of violence against women is needed to extend our understanding of the risk factors for and dynamics of violence. In addition, our efforts at primary prevention themselves must be subjected to rigorous scrutiny.

Finally, of course, these primary prevention efforts must be complemented by strategies of intervention and by the kinds of inspiring coalface work represented here.

Engaging Men in Prevention

Exercise: Debate – We should engage men in the primary prevention of violence against women. (15 min)

Split the class into two groups, for and against the proposition above. In your groups, prepare key points. Anticipate the other side's arguments and how you will respond to these. Then have the debate...

The Rationale for Engaging Men

One of the most significant efforts to alter men's involvements in gender relations centres on men's violence against women. There is a growing consensus in violence prevention circles that to end this violence, we must involve and work with men. While men have long been addressed in secondary- and tertiary-based interventions as perpetrators, now they are also being addressed as 'partners' in prevention (Flood 2005-2006). There are growing efforts to involve boys and men in various capacities associated with the prevention of violence against women: as participants in education programs, as targets of social marketing campaigns, as policy makers and gatekeepers, and as activists and advocates. There is a steadily increasing body of experience and knowledge regarding effective violence prevention practice among boys and young men, often grounded in wider efforts to involve men in building gender equality.¹ As I note below, this work is growing in both theoretical and political sophistication.

The rationale for addressing men in ending violence against women has three key elements. First and most importantly, efforts to prevent violence against women must address men because largely it is men who perpetrate this violence. For example, a nationally-representative sample of 16,000 men and women in the United States documents that violence against women is predominantly male violence. Of the women who had been physically assaulted since the age of 18, 92 per cent had been assaulted by a male, and of the women who had been sexually assaulted, all had been raped by males (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000, p. 46). Thus, to make progress towards eliminating violence against women, we will need to change *men* – men's attitudes, behaviours, identities, and relations.

Second, constructions of masculinity play a crucial role in shaping violence against women: at the individual level, in families and relationships, in communities, and societies as a whole. A wide variety of studies have found for example that men's adherence to sexist, patriarchal, and/or sexually hostile attitudes is an important predictor of their use of violence against women, as several meta-analyses document (Murnen *et al.* 2002, Sugarman and Frankel 1996, Schumacher *et al.* 2001, Stith *et al.* 2004). While masculine attitudes are one factor, another is male dominance itself. Male economic and decision-making dominance in the family is one of the strongest predictors of high levels of violence against women (Heise 1998, Heise 2006, p. 35).

These first two insights boil down to the point that we have no choice but to address men and masculinities if we want to stop violence against women. However, violence prevention work with men has been fuelled also by a third and more hopeful insight: that men have a positive role to play in helping to stop violence against women. Violence is an issue of concern to women and men alike and men have a stake in ending violence against women. While men receive a 'patriarchal dividend' from gendered structures of inequality (Connell 1995), men can be motivated by other interests. There are various ways in which such interests and of the benefits to men of progress towards the elimination of violence against women have been articulated (Expert Group 2003, Kaufman 2003). Nevertheless, they typically include personal well-being

¹ See for example publications by Bannon and Correia (2006), Espen (2006), Family Violence Prevention Fund (2003, 2004), Greig and Peacock (2005), Instituto Promundo (2002), Ruxton (2004), and World Health Organization (2007).

(freedom from the costs of conformity with dominant definitions of masculinity), relational interests (men's care and love for the women and girls in their lives), collective and community interests (the benefits to communities for example of a diminution in the civil and international violence associated with aggressive constructions of masculinity and patriarchal nation states), and principle (men's ethical, political, or spiritual commitments).

There are further reasons for engaging men to do with the detrimental effects of male exclusion and the positive effects of male inclusion. Excluding men from work on gender relations can provoke male hostility and retaliation. It can intensify gender inequalities and thus leave women with yet more work to do among unsympathetic men and patriarchal power relations (Chant and Guttman 2000).

Given that women already interact with men on a daily basis in their households and public lives, involving men in the re-negotiation of gender relations can make interventions more relevant and workable and create lasting change. Male inclusion increases men's responsibility for change and their belief that they too will gain from gender equality, and can address many men's sense of anxiety and fear as traditional masculinities are undermined (Chant and Guttman, 2000).

ASK: Does this mean that women-only spaces should end? That all programs and funding should be directed to *both* women and men? Take a vote...

This does not mean that everything must involve men. Women-only efforts remain vital.

However, it's *not* the case that existing domestic and sexual violence services necessarily must engage men (other than as victims of these forms of violence).

I'd caution against doing so because of;

- Overly optimistic perception of the numbers of men out there who are keen to support violence prevention efforts;

- Assumption that women-only and women-focused efforts are somehow less legitimate.

While men must take action in support of gender justice, this in no way means that women's groups and campaigns must include men. There continue to be reasons why 'women's space', women-only and women-focused campaigns are vital: to support those who are most disadvantaged by pervasive gender inequalities, to maintain women's solidarity and leadership, and to foster women's consciousness-raising and collective empowerment. Women still have much to do among women, and should not be burdened with sole responsibility for mobilising men (Win, 2001: 114-115). Nor should growing attention to male involvement threaten resources for women and women's programs. At the same time, reaching men to reduce and prevent violence against women is by definition spending money to meet the interests and needs of women, and will expand the financial and political support available to women's programs (Kaufman, 2003: 11).

Example: Reclaim The Night (Canberra)

As I said in a speech on the night: The men who are here can show their support for Reclaim The Night by joining the march, marching *behind* the women, behind the banner "Men Who Support Reclaim The Night". Marching behind the women is respectful, honourable, and fair. Men's participation is a powerful statement of men's support, the commitment that men share with women and children to a world free of violence.

Dangers in involving men

There is no doubt that involving men in the work of preventing violence against women involves dangers: the dilution of a feminist agenda, the lessening of resources for the victims and survivors of this violence, and the marginalisation of women's voices and leadership. These

dangers overlap with those associated with involving men in gender-related programming and policy in general (Flood 2007). At the same time, there is also a compelling feminist rationale for addressing men. Hence, efforts to involve men must be guided by a feminist agenda and done in partnership with, and even be accountable to, women and women's groups (Flood 2004a).

Some key principles for male involvement

There are principles which should guide any engagement of men in the prevention of men's violence against women:

- Feminist content / frameworks etc.
 - Any incorporation of men and men's gendered issues should further feminist goals. The rationale of gender equality must be kept central. I.e., frame male involvement within a clear feminist political agenda.
- Partnerships with women and women's groups. And even accountability.
- Protection of 'women's space', women-only, and women-focused programs.
 - These are vital, e.g. to support those who are most disadvantaged by pervasive gender inequalities; to maintain women's solidarity and leadership; and to foster women's consciousness-raising and collective empowerment.

Challenges in working with men

I will discuss some of the key challenges in working with men and some of the key strategies which are effective in engaging, educating, and mobilising men.

Providing for men

First, there is the challenge of whether to address men at all. Among many women's groups and organisations there is understandable caution about working with men. Involving men in gender policy and programming can threaten funding and resources for programs and services directed at women, and it can mean the dilution of the feminist content and orientation of services. At the same time, there is a clear feminist rationale for working with men: that we will need to change *men* – men's attitudes, behaviours, identities, and relations – if we are to make progress towards gender equality.

I have written elsewhere (Flood 2007b) of the principles which should guide any work with men. Above all, this work must be pro-feminist. It must be guided by feminist content and framed with a feminist political agenda. It must be done in partnership with, and even be accountable to, women and women's groups. And it must involve the protection of 'women's space', women-only, and women-focused programs. Second, this work must be committed to enhancing boys' and men's lives. Third, work with men must acknowledge both commonalities and diversities, and the complex ways in which manhood and gender are structured by race, class, sexuality, age and other forms of social difference.

Reaching men

The second challenge is how to reach men. There are two clusters of strategies here: go to men, and bring them to you. Successful strategies for going to men include peer education, targeting the workplaces, sporting and entertainment events at which men dominate, and community outreach strategies in the places where young and adult men congregate (United Nations Population Fund 2000: 139-162). The other side of reaching boys and men is bringing them to you, by making our services and programs more attractive to men or 'male-friendly'.

Exercise (5 minutes)

How can we appeal to men? How can we make the case that violence against women is something that men should be concerned about?

Quickly write down some ways in which you think we can make the case to men that violence against women is something about which they should be concerned.

Appealing to men

Third, how do we appeal to men? How do we engage their interest and commitment? There is widespread acknowledgement that what works best is to begin with *the positive* – to begin with what is working, with the fact that most men treat women and girls with respect, that most men do not use violence, and so on. Approaching men with a 'deficit' perspective, focused on the negative, is likely to prompt defensiveness (Lang 2002: 17; Ruxton 2004: 208). However, beginning with the positive does not mean condoning men's endorsement of sexist or oppressive understandings and practices. Any work with men must retain a fundamental, feminist-informed concern with gender equality and a critique of those practices, understandings, and relations which sustain inequality.

Second, ground the language and content in men's own experience and concerns. For example, in my writing and activism, I have tried to create a language through which men can take on the issue of violence against women as their own. I have argued that violence against women is also a

'men's issue'. The following models an accessible language for arguing to men that violence against women is a men's issue.

Violence against women is a men's issue

Most men are not violent, and most treat the women in their lives with respect and care. Yet most have done little to challenge the violence perpetrated by a minority of men. Men have a crucial role to play in joining with women to end this violence and helping to build a culture based on non-violence and gender equality.

Most men know that domestic violence and sexual assault are wrong, but we have done little to reduce this violence in our lives, families and communities. Too many men believe common myths about violence, have ignored women's fears and concerns about their safety, and have stayed silent in the face of other men's violence-supportive attitudes and behaviours. At the same time, a growing number of men are taking public action to help end violence against women.

Men's positive roles

Men have a crucial role to play in preventing the physical and sexual violence that so many women suffer, and men have much to gain from doing so. If we are to end this violence, men themselves will need to take part in this project. A minority of men use violence against women. And too many men condone this violence, ignoring, trivialising, or even laughing about it.

There are simple, positive steps any man can take to be part of the solution. Find out about the violence that many women experience. Don't condone the view that the victim is to blame. Check out how we treat the women around us. Speak out when friends, relatives, or others use violence or abuse. Be a good role model, whether you're a dad, a boss, a teacher or a coach. And, beyond these individual actions, take part in public actions and campaigns such as the White Ribbon Campaign.

To really stop violence against women, we will need to change the social norms and power inequalities that feed into violence. Men must join with women to encourage norms of consent, respect, and gender equality; to challenge the unfair power relations which promote violence; and promote gender roles based on non-violence and gender justice.

A men's issue

Violence against women is often seen as a women's issue. This makes sense, as its focus is the sexual and physical violence that women suffer. But I want to stress that violence against women is also a 'men's issue'.

Violence against women is a 'men's issue' because it is men's wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, and friends whose lives are limited by violence and abuse. It's a men's issue because, as community leaders and decision-makers, men can play a key role in helping stop violence against women. It's a men's issue because men can speak out and step in when male friends and relatives insult or attack women. And it's a men's issue because a minority of men treat women and girls with contempt and violence, and it is up to the majority of men to help create a culture in which this is unacceptable.

While most men treat women with care and respect, violence against women *is* men's problem. Some men's violence gives all men a bad name. For example, if I am walking down the street at night and there is a woman walking in front of me, she is likely to think, "Is he following me? Is he about to assault me?" Some men's violence makes all men seem a potential threat, makes all men seem dangerous.

Violence against women is men's problem because many men find themselves dealing with the impact of *other* men's violence on the women and children that we love. Men struggle to respond

to the emotional and psychological scars borne by our girlfriends, wives, female friends and others, the damaging results of earlier experiences of abuse by other men.

Violence is men's problem because sometimes we are the bystanders to other men's violence. We make the choice: do we stay silent and look the other way when our male friends and relatives insult or attack women, or do we speak up? And of course, violence is men's problem because sometimes we have used violence ourselves.

I've come to realise that violence against women is a deeply personal issue for men, just as it is for women. I've been saddened to realise how many of the women I know have had to deal with childhood abuse, forced sex, or controlling boyfriends. I've felt shock and despair in hearing about the harassment, threats, and humiliations that women experience far too often. I've felt angry at the victim-blaming I've sometimes heard from male colleagues and acquaintances. And I've been humbled and shamed in realising my own ignorance and in reflecting on times when I may have been coercive or abusive.

At the same time, I've also felt inspired by the strength and courage of women who've lived through violence. I've found hope and energy in participating in a growing network of women and men who've taken on the challenge of working to stop violence against women. In making personal changes and taking collective action, I've found joy and delight in the enriching of my friendships with women and men and my relationships with women.

It has been particularly inspiring to see large numbers of men (and women) take up the White Ribbon Campaign, a campaign inviting men to wear a white ribbon to show their commitment to ending violence against women. The White Ribbon Campaign focuses on the positive roles that men can play in helping to stop violence against women. It is built on a fundamental hope and optimism for both women's and men's lives, and a fundamental belief that both women and men have a stake in ending violence against women.

A better world

In campaigning against sexual and physical assault, it is important to remind ourselves of what we are *for*. We desire sexual lives based on consent, safety, and mutual pleasure. We hope for friendships and relationships that are respectful and empowering. And we dream of communities which are just and peaceful.

Men have a personal stake in ending violence against women. Men will benefit from a world free of violence against women, a world based on gender equality. In our relations with women, instead of experiencing distrust and disconnection we will find closeness and connection. We will be able to take up a healthier, emotionally in-touch and proud masculinity. Men's sexual lives will be more mutual and pleasurable, rather than obsessive and predatory. And boys and men will be free from the threat of other men's violence.

We must ensure that our interventions are culturally appropriate – where this is understood as embodying not just a sensitivity to cultural diversities, but a sensitivity to *gender* cultures and the diverse constructions of masculinity and sexuality which are dominant in particular social contexts and communities (Flood 2005-2006). I return to this later below.

Third, emphasise the shared benefits for men and women and, in particular, the ways in which men will gain from gender equality. Most if not all contemporary societies are characterised by men's institutional privilege (Messner 1997: 5), such that men in general receive a 'patriarchal dividend', a patriarchal pay-off, from gendered structures of inequality (Connell 1995: 79-82). However, men can be motivated by other interests. However, men can be and are motivated by interests other than those associated with gender privilege. There are important resources in men's lives for the construction of egalitarian identities and relations.

There are two broad answers to the question, ‘Why should men change?’ First, men ought to change. Given the fact of men’s unjust privilege, there is an ethical obligation for men to act in support of the elimination of that privilege. Second, it is in men’s interests to change. Men themselves will benefit from supporting feminism and advancing towards gender equality (Flood 2005).

There are four important resources in men’s lives for the construction of egalitarian and non-violent identities and relations. There is *personal well-being*: men pay heavy costs for conformity with dominant definitions of masculinity (Messner 1997). There are men’s *relational interests*: men’s care and love for the women and girls in their lives. There are men’s *collective and community interests*. Gender reform benefits the wellbeing of the communities in which men live. For example, our communities benefit from a diminishing of the civil and international violence associated with aggressive constructions of masculinity and patriarchal nation states. Finally, there is *principle*. Men may support gender equality because of their ethical, political, or spiritual commitments.

One of the most significant challenges in work with men is to minimise their reactions of defensiveness and hostility. For example, in educational work on violence against women, many men already feel defensive and blamed about the issue, and defensive reactions are common among men attending anti-violence workshops. Measures that can lessen men’s defensiveness include approaching males as partners in solving the problem rather than as perpetrators of the problem, addressing men as bystanders to other men’s sexism or violence, creating safe and non-judgmental environments for open discussion and dialogue, using male facilitators, and acknowledging men’s own victimisation (Flood 2006).

Educating and changing men

What works in educating men? A growing body of expertise suggests that the following strategies are useful.

Use all-male groups and workshops.

[Note that this is borrowed from Flood *et al.*’s report *Respectful Relationships Education*.]

It is often argued in violence prevention education that separate-sex programs are more effective than mixed-sex programs. The evidence regarding the significance of sex composition comes largely from sexual violence prevention programs among university students in the United States. It suggests that there are obvious advantages to single-sex groups in schools-based violence prevention, for females and males alike and for men in particular. Arguments for single-sex groups for females and males alike include differently gendered involvements in violence, comfort and safety, and participant preference.

- Males and females are in different places in relation to violence, and violence prevention therefore should engage them in different ways.
 - Males and females differ systematically in their attitudes towards and involvements in violence, for example with males showing higher agreement with violence-supportive attitudes and far higher involvements in perpetration. Goals and strategies in working with males and females may therefore be different, and there will difficulties in combining them.
- Both males and females may be more comfortable and expressive in single-sex groups. In sexuality education, for example, there is evidence that young people can be

uncomfortable when asked to discuss sexual matters in front of members of the other sex and reluctant to fully participate in sessions held in a mixed-sex environment.²

- Mixed-sex discussions can become polarised.³
- Working in single-sex groups can minimise the harmful, gendered forms of interaction that are common in mixed-sex groups. Men may look to women for approval, forgiveness or support and women may adopt nurturing or caretaking roles for men (Mohan and Schultz 2001).
- Girls and women with prior histories of sexual assault may experience mixed-gender workshops as revictimising, while potential male perpetrators may misuse information on how girls and women can reduce their risk of assault.⁴
- There is some evidence that female and male participants prefer single-sex workshops.⁵

Scholarship on violence prevention education among men in particular tends to emphasise the need for male-only groups, for example because:

- men are more comfortable, less defensive and more honest in all male groups
- men are less likely to talk openly in the presence of women
 - single-sex groups reveal a diversity of opinions among men that may not be expressed when women are present
- men may be more prepared to reveal, and thus reflect critically, on sexist and abusive histories in all-male settings
- men's attitudes and behaviour are shaped in powerful ways by their male peers (Kimmel 1994, pp. 128-129), and male-male influence can be harnessed for positive ends in all-male groups (Berkowitz 2004a, p. 4).
- there may be greater opportunity to discuss and craft roles for males in ending sexism and violence.⁶

At the same time, there are clear benefits for mixed-sex groups. In particular, they:

- create opportunities for dialogue between females and males regarding gender, sexuality, violence and relationships, fostering cross-gender understanding and alliance
- create opportunities for males to listen to females regarding these issues
- can lessen the potential for male-male collusion regarding sexism and violence. Male facilitators may bond with male participants, making 'male-male bargains' that then limit their ability to address difficult issues of gender and power (Keating 2004: 59).
- can give girls and young women useful exposure to problematic male understandings and behaviours and valuable experience in challenging these or seeing them challenged.

The most significant question in relation to group composition is 'What is most effective?'. There has been some consensus that violence prevention education is most effective when conducted in

² Wight 1993.

³ Berkowitz, A. D. (2002). Fostering Men's Responsibility for Preventing Sexual Assault. In *Preventing Violence in Relationships*. Ed. P. Schewe. Washington, DC, American Psychological Association.

⁴ Yeater and O'Donohue.

⁵ Tutty *et al.*, p. 15; Berkowitz, A. D. (2001). Critical Elements of Sexual Assault Prevention and Risk Reduction Programs for Men and Women. In: C. Kilmartin, *Sexual Assault in Context: Teaching College Men About Gender*. Holmes Beach: Learning Publications; Berkowitz 2002.

⁶ Berkowitz 2002; Funk, R. E. (2006). *Reaching Men: Strategies for Preventing Sexist Attitudes, Behaviors and Violence*. Indianapolis, IN: Jist Publishing, pp. 64-66.

sex-specific groups. This reflects the fact that various evaluations of US university-based programs find that separate-sex programs are more effective than mixed-sex programs.⁷ A 2001 meta-analysis supported the argument for single-sex sessions for male participants, and showed that interventions had more impact on male participants in single-sex than mixed-sex programs.⁸ Conversely, a more recent meta-analysis reported that there was no evidence that men were more likely to benefit from single-sex group interventions than mixed-group interventions.⁹ One possible explanation for the contradiction is that while the 2001 meta-analysis did not include behavioural intentions, the 2005 one did.

Thus, there is less consensus on the greater effectiveness of single-sex groups than first appeared. A key question here is 'Effective for whom?'. A recent manual on educating men suggests that 'men benefit more than women from mixed-gender programs, and ... mixed-gender programs are less effective for women than single-sex presentations'.¹⁰ Support for this comes from a study of over 1180 participants in four schools-based sexual violence preventions. It found that boys, but not girls, had steeper rates of improvement in attitudes towards sexual coercion in mixed-sex than single-sex groups. In other words, for boys in particular, participation in mixed-sex groups was influential in improving their knowledge and attitudes.¹¹

The most effective sex composition of groups may depend on such factors as the age of the group, the focus and goals of the teaching sessions, and the nature of the teaching methods used. In relation to age, for example, there seems to be significant debate (at least in Canada) regarding the sex composition of groups of children,¹² while agreement that single-sex groups should be at least a component of programming is more common for programs for young adults. In relation to the goals of the session, mixed-sex groups may be more effective if the program or session is intended to encourage male empathy for females or victims of violence, to create gender dialogue, or to create opportunities for males to listen to females. However, if the program or session is intended, for example, to encourage males' 'ownership' of the issue or to facilitate their move from bystander to ally, then single-sex groups may be more effective.¹³ Finally, particularly in working with adolescents, there is some argument for using different sex compositions at different points in an education program, such as working with males and females separately, and then bringing them together.¹⁴

Use men to engage men: male facilitators and educators, and women and men working together.

[Note that this is borrowed from Flood *et al.*'s report *Respectful Relationships Education*.]

Most violence prevention educators in Australia are female, reflecting women's much higher levels of participation and employment in services, agencies and community efforts addressing men's violence against women. However, as engaging boys and men in violence prevention has become more prominent, there has also been some emphasis on the need for work with boys and men to be conducted by male facilitators in particular. Arguments for using male facilitators and peer educators when working with all-male audiences include the following:

- Given the benefits of all-male groups or classes (see the discussion above), male educators or facilitators are a necessary complement to this.

⁷ Berkowitz 2002, pp. 166–177; Earle.

⁸ Brecklin, L. and D. Forde. (2001). A meta-analysis of rape education programs. *Violence and Victims*, 16: 303–321.

⁹ Anderson, L. A. and S. C. Whiston. (2005). Sexual Assault Education Programs: A Meta-Analytic Examination Of Their Effectiveness. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 29(4).

¹⁰ Funk 2006, p. 63.

¹¹ Clinton-Sherrrod *et al.*, p. 26s.s

¹² Ellis.

¹³ Funk 2006, p. 64.

¹⁴ Tutty *et al.*, p. 15.

- Male educators and participants can act as role models for other men. Men can act as models of a gender-equitable masculinity, demonstrating anti-sexism and taking responsibility for their own sexist behaviour.
- Male educators possess an insider's knowledge of the workings of masculinity and can use this to critical advantage with male audiences.
- Male educators tend to be perceived as more credible and more persuasive by male participants (Kilmartin 2001, pp. 51-52). In the context of negative stereotypes of feminists and feminism and cultural constructions of male authority, men may be listened to more and taken more seriously than women speaking about the same issues. While this is unfortunate, it can be harnessed for anti-patriarchal ends.
- The use of male educators embodies the recognition that men must take responsibility for helping to end men's violence against women, rather than leaving it up to women.¹⁵

However, female facilitators can work very effectively with boys and men, and there are benefits to women and men working together. Such partnerships demonstrate to participants a model of egalitarian working relationships across gender; they model women's and men's shared interest in non-violence and gender justice; they give men opportunities to hear of women's experiences and concerns and to further mobilise their care for the women and girls in their own lives; and they enhance accountability to women and women's services.¹⁶

In any case, most violence prevention education is likely to continue to be done by women. Women already shoulder this work, and the pool of men with both feminist sympathies and educational skills is small indeed.

There are some barriers in women and men working collaboratively, based in men's and women's different experiences and wider gender inequalities:

Women have been leading the work. Women may feel reluctant to allow men to assume responsibility for ending violence against women because women have done the work for so long they are afraid to let it go. It may also be difficult for women to see men's role in ending violence against women and delegate tasks accordingly. On the other hand, some men may find it difficult to accept women's leadership because this is an unfamiliar experience. When men and women work together, they can talk about ways to honor the expertise, experiences and unique perspectives men and women bring to violence against women prevention efforts.

Building trust. Gender-based discrepancies in pay, recognition men get for doing antiviolence work and personal experiences of violence and sexism in our communities, all create barriers to trusting the intentions and actions of men interested in anti-violence efforts. It is helpful to take time to build relationships between women and girls and men and boys so any conflicts or mistrust can be addressed directly. Creating accountability and equitable opportunities for advancement, credit and compensation applicable to all anti-violence workers regardless of gender can help overcome barriers.

Creating equality. Women may fear men's socialization, as people who take control and dominate situations, will have a negative impact on the work. They may fear, given the opportunity to lead projects independently of women, men will no longer be accountable to women. Men and women working together to end violence against women have the opportunity to practice equality. We can be mindful of who is making decisions, controlling

¹⁵ Flood 2005-06.

¹⁶ Ibid.

conversations, and speaking for the group. We can strive to make sure everyone's voice is heard and no one is set up to be the "hero" or the person who is singlehandedly responsible for ending violence. Some groups find it helpful to establish processes that ensure the full participation of all collaborators. (Men's Nonviolence Project 2010: 79)

Create safe spaces for men to talk and learn.

The evidence is that programs with the greatest effectiveness are characterised by interactive participation in which men honestly share real feelings, concerns, and experiences and engage in discussion and reflection (Berkowitz 2002, p. 169; Lang 2002: 17-18). It is critical that we create space for men to explore their own experiences, identities, and understandings (Keating 2004: 52-53). In Malaysia for example, as gender awareness has developed within the credit cooperative movement, men have been encouraged to increase their share of household and domestic labour, and male-only 'men's clubs' have been adopted as tools for developing men's self-awareness and gender-sensitivity (Sinappan 2001: 42). Creating space for men to talk and learn about gender includes giving men opportunities to learn about the influence of gender on their lives and relations and to understand themselves as gendered beings (Greig and Peacock 2005: s1.3).

Offer programs which are comprehensive, intensive, relevant to the audience, and based on positive messages.

We know that well-designed education programs can produce lasting change for example in the attitudes, values and behaviours associated with violence against women (Flood 2004c). Effective violence prevention programs have four key features. Effective prevention programs are *comprehensive*, in that they address and involve all relevant community members and systems (Berkowitz 2001, p. 78). Effective programs are *intensive*, in that they offer learning opportunities that are interactive, involve active participation, are sustained over time and have multiple points of contact with reinforcing messages (Berkowitz 2004b, p. 1). Effective programs are *relevant to the audience*. They are tailored to the characteristics of the participants and acknowledge the special needs and concerns of particular communities. They focus on peer-related variables and use peers in leadership roles (Berkowitz 2001, p. 82). Finally, effective programs offer *positive messages* which build on men's values and predisposition to act in a positive manner. They document and reinforce healthy behaviors and norms and encourage individuals to focus on what they can do, not on what they should not do (Berkowitz 2001, pp. 82-83).

Use interventions with sufficient intensity, in terms of both length and depth.

Interventions must have sufficient intensity and sufficient personal relevance to produce change (Heppner *et al.* 1999, p. 17). To generate educational 'intensity', effective programs require both length and depth. Interventions need to be short enough to be practical, but long and intensive enough to be effective (Heppner *et al.* 1999, p. 17).

Address cognitive, affective or emotional, and behavioural domains.

Programs will be most effective if they address three domains: cognitions, affective or emotional responses, and behaviour (Heppner *et al.* 1999, p. 18). Some programs engage participants only at the cognitive level, by offering information in a lecture format or by interactive exercises on 'myths' and 'facts'. But programs that explore only what participants know are less effective than programs that also address how they feel and what they do.

Cognitive: Educators can address the cognitive domain through the provision of facts and information and the debunking of myths and stereotypes.

Emotional: To engage men emotionally however, it will be necessary for example to have men hear of the pain, suffering, or disadvantage women experience as a result of gender inequality. For example, some violence prevention programs rely on a panel of rape survivors speaking of

the aftermath and long-term effects that rape has had on their lives, and on male allies speaking of supporting friends who had been raped, their emotional reactions to this and so on. Such exercises are designed to elicit empathy among the participants (Heppner *et al.* 1999, p. 18).

In the Gender Seminar for Men developed in the Philippines, there was an emphasis on balancing cognitive awareness with affective commitment, based on the recognition that we have to touch personal lives and inspire personal engagement (Cruz 2002: 3).

Behavioural: Strategies for addressing the behavioural domain of gender inequality and equality include interactive role plays, in which the audience rewrites the scene to show gender equality, non-violence, and so on (Heppner *et al.* 1999, p. 21). Such an exercise facilitates behavioural change by modeling the specific behaviours men can adopt to practise respect, sexual consent, non-violent conflict resolution, and so on.

Exercise: Cultural appropriateness

One of the common guidelines in primary prevention work is that our interventions must be ‘culturally appropriate’. *Teach* me about the local context. What would someone doing violence prevention in *this* context, or in particular contexts here, need to know and do? (10 minutes)

Each table to discuss. Each table then to identify five key elements to a culturally appropriate approach.

Make your interventions culturally appropriate – including sensitivity to *gender* cultures.

Effective education programs among men must also be ‘culturally appropriate’ and sensitive to cultural diversities. This goes far beyond such measures as the use of culturally inclusive language, to the exploration of the ways in which women’s and men’s involvements in gender relations are organised by class, race and ethnicity, age and other forms of social division.

Efforts must:

- Examine how women’s and men’s involvements in gender relations are organised by class, race and ethnicity, age, and other social divisions and relations.
- Acknowledge the social, cultural and historical contexts of communities (including e.g. social injustice, colonisation, economic shifts, and so on).
- Be based on community ownership and partnership
- Be based in holistic approaches to family and community violence (without losing sight of the highly gendered character for example of intimate partner violence).
- Reflect this in program characteristics and practices

To highlight another dimension of cultural appropriateness, violence prevention work in Australia’s rural and remote areas must be attentive to the factors in such contexts which shape violence against women and its prevention. Australian and international data document higher rates of intimate partner violence, including homicide, in rural and remote areas (WESNET 2000: 8). Because of such factors as:

- Conservative gender ideologies
- Social isolation (including lack of access to transport or adequate telecommunications)
- Poverty and disadvantage
- Lack of services and recreational activities
- Lower education

- Social disintegration and other shifts associated with rapid socioeconomic change
- Women's economic dependence and limited work opportunities
- Under-resourced police responses and barriers to using them
- Lack of domestic violence services (Flood 2007).

Be sensitive to local *gender* cultures.

'Cultural appropriateness' conventionally is understood to refer to a sensitivity to ethnic diversity, but it should refer also to a sensitivity to *gender* cultures. Among men, there is enormous diversity in the constructions of masculinity and sexuality which are dominant in particular social contexts and communities. This diversity certainly is shaped by ethnic differences, but also by many other forms of social differentiation. One of the first steps in working with a particular group or community of men should be to map their gendered and sexual culture, in order to see what aspects of this culture contribute to gender inequality and what aspects can be mobilised in support of equality.

Address culturally specific supports for gender inequality. And draw on local resources and texts in promoting gender equality.

For example, Christian men may defend gender inequality by claiming that male dominance is mandated by God and legitimated in the Bible. This can be undermined by finding *other* Christian accounts which reject such privilege, including Biblical references which state that God created man and woman equally, that a Christian marriage should be a partnership, and so on. Other aspects of this work include placing 'tradition' in its social and historical context, showing that 'tradition' has varied over time and is shaped by many forces and factors, and inviting assessment of the positive and negative aspects of tradition (Greig and Peacock 2005). A second strategy is to look for and build on local resources, texts, and norms in promoting gender equality.

Greig and Peacock (2005: s1.4) suggest that we 'work within and against the grain of culture'. In other words, be "strategic in terms of when and how to challenge traditional practices and strongly held cultural beliefs, and when to work with the 'grain' of culture".

Match your intervention to men's stage of change.

Making one's intervention relevant also means matching it to men's level of awareness about and willingness to take responsibility for problems of gender inequality. Men are at different places along the continuum from passive indifference to active intervention, and different educational approaches should be adopted for men at earlier and later stages of change (Berkowitz 2002, p. 177). In addition, because of gendered life experiences, men and women do not come to a gender perspective in identical ways. Men need much more convincing than women of the reality of women's oppression because they have not experienced it directly, and men take longer to move from mental cognition of gender issues to emotional identification (Cruz 2002: 3-7).

This matching can be done in two ways. First, education programs can take men through different developmental stages over the course of the program. In the Gender Seminar for Men, participants are taken through six phases, beginning with exercises in which they hear of women's pain, to games focused on giving them practice in articulating women's issues (through a card game of 'feminist poker'), to a ritual in which each man makes a commitment regarding what he can do to lessen the burden of oppression among one or two women in his life, ending with further reflection and planning for action (Cruz 2002: 4-7).

Second, different educational approaches can be used with men who are at different stages of awareness and commitment. Strategies such as empathy induction are suited to men with little recognition of the problem. Skills training begins to teach men to change their personal behaviour, and requires deeper changes in assumptions about gender. Bystander intervention and

social norms approaches go further still, in fostering change in peer relations and masculine culture (Berkowitz 2002, pp. 177-178).

Exercise: Average Joe and Activist Joe

Get four men down the front, arranged in a line. Explain that at one end is 'Average Joe': little awareness, commitment, or involvement. At the other end is 'Activist Joe', with strong awareness, commitment, and involvement. Tell us more about where each man is at, the differences between them.

Average Joe is someone who has given little thought to and may be resistant to conversations about gender-based violence. Joe realizes that friends and loved ones are impacted by this violence, which in turn moves to awareness (Aware Joe) and a desire to protect those he loves. Joe then is concerned for others being impacted by male privilege and his own participation in sexism, thus becoming "Internalized Joe." He comes to the understanding that everyone is hurt by a system that constrains people into narrow gender roles and begins to understand his participation as both oppressor and oppressed. He becomes "Activist Joe," and does the hard work necessary for personal and societal change. (Grove 2011: 8)

	Aware Joe	Internalised Joe	Activist Joe
Aspiring Ally for:	Self-Interest	Altruism	Social Justice
Motivation	Selfish – for people I know and love	Other – I do this for them	Combined – Selfishness and Altruism – we do this for us
Ally to . . .	A Person	Target Group	An Issue
Relationship to system	Not interested in systems – just stopping the bad people	An exception from the system, yet ultimately perpetuates it	Seeks to escape, amend, and/or redefine the system
Privilege	Doesn't see privilege – but wants to maintain status quo	Feels guilty about privilege and tries to distance self from privilege	Sees illumination of privilege as liberating
Power	I'm powerful – protective	Empower them – they need our help	Empower us all
Admitting Mistakes	I don't make mistakes – I'm good, and perpetrators are just bad people	Difficult – struggles with critique or own issues – highly defensive about behavior	Seeks critique and admits mistakes – has accepted own isms and seeks help
Focus of the work	Perpetrators	Other members of the dominant group	My people – doesn't separate self from other agents

(Modified from Grove 2011: 9).

Use innovative and engaging techniques to foster men's support for and commitment to gender equality.

Exercise: Fostering men's support for gender equality and non-violence

Ask: Hands up, all those in the room who know at least one man who treats...

Now reflect on: How can we foster men's personal support for and commitment to gender equality?

Fostering men's support for gender equality should be a theme running throughout our work with men, but I want to spend a little time on the particular educational strategies that can be used to do this. Some of the ways in which we can encourage a commitment to gender equality among men are to;

- Increase men's awareness of women's subordination, through exercises in which they document or gather data on patterns of gender in their local communities, analyse popular culture, and so on;
- Use scenarios of gender reversal or 'walking in women's shoes' to encourage awareness and empathy (e.g. in which the participants wake up the next morning as a woman).
- Or have men listen directly to women's experiences, e.g. through 'Gender Fishbowl' exercises.
- Use personal stories, anecdotes, and local examples to make gender inequalities both real and relevant.
- Personalise women's suffering to encourage men's empathy, drawing on men's relationships with women in their lives (mothers, sisters, aunts, daughters, and so on). E.g., "How would you feel if that [violence] happened to your wife or sister?" (Greig and Peacock 2005: s1.4). While being mindful of the danger that this will encourage simply a feeling of paternalistic protection, or that men's engagement with gender issues will be confined to specific relationships rather than generalised to gender relations (Greig and Peacock 2005: s2.2).
- Make comparisons with other forms of inequality or unjust power, e.g. to do with race, class, caste, etc. E.g., pointing out that the language, practices, and relations of colonialism (e.g. of forced dependence, exclusion from control of resources, etc.) also are evident in gender relations (Keating 2004: 53). Or use analogies of conflict and war, and the unnecessary energy expended on these, in criticising men's efforts to exert their dominance (Keating 2004: 54).
- Draw on culturally appropriate texts and stories in critiquing gender inequality, such as religious texts (Keating 2004: 57), local myths and fables, and so on.
- (On the other hand) Use universalising languages of human rights, fairness, justice, and so on.

Be prepared for, and respond to, resistance.

Men may resist engagement into work to end violence against women, e.g. saying that:

- Men are victims of violence too
- Women ask for it
- Why are you concerned with this issue? Is it this something you have experience of?
- Men can't help themselves, it is a part of their make up
- It's a private matter: a man should not interfere in another man's business.
- Criticising other men's sexist behaviour or language will make other men think I am not a real man

We must be prepared to respond to men's reactions of defensiveness and hostility when they do occur, and more generally to forms of resistance – delaying tactics, lip-service, tokenism, and so on (Ruxton 2004: 224). While some men act in support of gender equality in their personal or public lives, other men actively resist gender equality. Men may maintain masculinised workplace cultures and undermine measures for gender equality, boys may be hostile to girls or boys who question gender norms and may resist anti-sexist curricula, some men's groups take up

explicitly anti-feminist agendas, and so on (Connell 2003: 8-9). Resistance represents the defence of privilege, but also can express men's fears and discomfort regarding change and uncertainty (Greig and Peacock 2005: s1.4).

I've already described some strategies which are relevant in overcoming men's resistance to gender equality. But some further strategies are to;

- Acknowledge and work with men's fears about gender equality. E.g., men's fears about a future in which women dominate. By exploring models of 'power with' rather than 'power over', exploring the benefits of gender equality for men, and so on (Greig and Peacock 2005: s1.4).
- Acknowledge men's own victimisation and perceived grievances (Flood 2002-2003). [Wrote in "Changing Men" piece: Perhaps the most fraught measure is to offer an acknowledgement of men's own victimisation (Flood 2002-2003). This may involve hearing and deconstructing men's perceptions of blame or denigration, acknowledging that men too are victims of violence, and emphasising that men are most at risk of violence from other men.]

Focus on the practical action men can take.

It is essential that our work with men explore the concrete actions that men can take to advance non-violence gender equality. Some of the obvious forms of action men may take up include: Making a commitment to specific changes in their families and personal relations; Telling other men and boys in their communities about their experiences with the program (and this is also a very valuable method of recruitment); Working as peer educators; Presenting the program to other organisations in their communities; And so on (Greig and Peacock 2005: 1.5).

Provide small steps for well-meaning men to become involved and take action.

One of the reasons why men do not join the anti-violence movement is patriarchal investment and resistance, but it is not the only reason. Further important reasons include a sense of helplessness, a lack of knowledge about how to help, and a fear that they will not be welcome (Crooks *et al.* 2007: 219).

I worry that we expect men to have completed a thorough self-evaluation and reconstruction *prior* to their involvement in anti-violence work (Crooks *et al.* 2007: 223), and to come with an already sophisticated understanding of gender equality, violence against women, and power and control. That is, we may adopt unrealistic standards.

Instead, give the average man an identifiable action list. Get men to take specific actions which, in turn, will alter their attitudes to masculinity and raise their awareness of gender issues (Crooks *et al.* 2007: 224).

Engage well-meaning men.

Engage 'well-meaning men', who sit in a middle ground between violent and profeminist men (Crooks *et al.* 2007: 224). 'Nice guys', who are not directly involved in perpetration of obvious physical or sexual violence, who profess at least some basic support for GE, and commitment to reasonable treatment of and respect for the women in their life.

Provide positive reinforcement for engagement in violence prevention.

Rewards for the behaviour can be intrinsic or extrinsic (Crooks *et al.* 2007: 234). Extrinsic awards might include initiatives like leadership awards night. Intrinsic or inherent rewards can be provided for example by establishing groups with positive identities (whether school clubs or community mobilising), including reinforcing group dynamics (Crooks *et al.* 2007: 234).

Assess the impact of your work.

Systematic evaluation should always be part of our efforts.

Mobilising men

After lunch: *Mobilising men...*

Changing Norms, Mobilising Communities, and Building Gender Equality

Mobilise Men and Communities

Achieving progress towards gender equality requires that we go beyond working with men as isolated individuals (Greig and Peacock 2005: s.8) and work towards broader forms of social and political change in the communities in which they live.

Some of the key strategies we may use are as follows.

Use community workshops and events.

- Work through pre-existing groups of men and community structures;

- Use the preparation process as a tool for mobilising people;

- Use the power of personal testimony;

- Use the media, for both recruitment and social marketing;

- Document the event;

- Plan for follow-up (Greig and Peacock 2005: s.8).

Work with influential groups. And 'gatekeepers'.

Use cultural work: art and drama

- Use creative and innovative strategies, e.g. murals, street theatre, etc.;

- Use the process of creating the art or drama as a change experience in itself;

- Orient towards solutions and not just problems (Greig and Peacock 2005: s.8).

Support men in getting organised

This work involves “not only educating men but also organising them for collective action” (Greig and Peacock 2005, s.9). In other words, we must organise and foster grassroots men’s groups and networks committed to advocacy for gender equality.

In the Asia-Pacific region, some of the most powerful examples of grassroots male support for gender equality are centred on the issue of violence against women. In the Philippines, the Kauswagan Community Social Centre held the Southeast Asian Regional Workshop on Men’s Role in Violence Against Women in 2001, and attracted participants from Singapore, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia. In Cambodia, the Cambodian Men’s Network is ‘an alliance of men from all walks of life, religions and ethnicities who are committed to the eradication of violence against women for a fairer and more just society’. The Cambodian Men’s Network has run the White Ribbon Campaign, an international campaign to encourage men to wear a white ribbon to show their support for stopping violence against women.

Supporting men in ‘getting organised’ involves providing technical assistance, addressing issues of resources and sustainability, hosting regular community meetings, and so on (Greig and Peacock 2005, s.9.1).

Work collaboratively

Addressing pervasive problems of gender inequality also requires institutional strength, networking, and collaboration. Key strategies here are to;

- Build the network;

Strengthen civil society coalitions: A 'big tent' approach;

Collaborate with government;

Develop innovative civil society-government partnerships (Greig and Peacock 2005, s.10).

Build capacity

Finally, in order to enhance the quality, coverage, and sustainability of work with men, we must build its capacity, through training and competencies, programme planning, organisational development, and management support (Greig and Peacock 2005, s.11).

Using a tiered model of technical assistance;

Focusing on programme planning and organisational development;

Facilitating peer-to-peer learning;

Getting management support (Greig and Peacock 2005: s.11).

Tales of Success and Failure

A series of dangers are routinely identified in the writings of those advocating engaging men in violence prevention work. So, to what extent have these dangers actually been realised?

Have the dangers been realised? Evaluating men's violence prevention

Reducing funding for women's programs and services? No, not here.

I do not believe that there are any examples in Australia of violence prevention work with men directly taking away funding from work with women. One *could* argue that directing resources to work with men takes resources away from work with women by definition, given a limited funding pie. And assessing the implications of this would then be a matter in part of assessing their relative value and effectiveness in ending violence against women.

Weakening the feminist orientation? Or exemplifying it?

Yes, involving men may dilute feminist agendas. At the same time, involving men can be seen to *exemplify* a feminist agenda. There is a long history of feminist women and organisations calling for violence prevention efforts to directly address men and men's roles, right back to Andrea Dworkin's historic call to men in 1983 for "a twenty-four-hour truce in which there is no rape".

Silencing women – Yes, sometimes

As I wrote in a chapter of the *The Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities* (2005),

The public reception of men's anti-violence work also is shaped by patriarchal privilege. First, men's groups receive greater media attention and interest than similar groups of women (Luxton, 1993: 368). This is partly the result of the former's novelty, but it is also a function of the status and cultural legitimacy granted to men's voices in general. Second, men acting for gender justice receive praise and credit (especially from women) that is often out of proportion to their efforts. Any positive action by men may be seen as gratifying in the face of other men's apathy about and complicity in violence against women. Third, men are able to draw on their and other men's institutional privilege to attract levels of support and funding rarely granted to women (Landsberg, 2000: 15). This can of course be turned to strategic advantage in pursuing an end to men's violence.

Male speakers are listened to more readily by men than female speakers. Yes, there is a potential to contribute to marginalisation of women's voices and stories (Pease 2008: 8).

Taking over the campaign? I wish.

What about men taking over campaigns against men's violence? First, while there are international examples of men taking over programs on gender, I do not believe that there are any examples of men taking over women's or feminist violence prevention campaigns. Men often argue for their right to involvement e.g. in Reclaim The Night marches, and often argue against campaigns and efforts focused on violence against women rather than 'against everyone', but such arguments rarely if ever come from men involved in violence prevention itself.

I think that the more important danger here is not about male involvement, but about *lack* of male involvement: that too few men will become involved. Too few men join efforts to prevent violence against women. Rather than taking over the campaign, I am concerned that men won't take *up* the campaign.

Colluding with violent men

This too is a danger.

Rhetorical rather than real support from men

Yes, there is a real danger that men's support will be rhetorical rather than real. That men will make token efforts, basking in the pride of their paltry involvement.

For any man involved in anti-violence and pro-feminist work, there are some easy mistakes to make.

One is *claiming to be free of sexism*, to be non-sexist. In this society, all men learn sexist thoughts and behaviours, all of us receive patriarchal privileges whether we want to or not, and all of us are complicit to some degree in sexism. Our task is not to be non-sexist, as this is impossible, but to be anti-sexist. Yes, we can rid ourselves of particular sexist assumptions and stop practising particular sexist behaviours, but in a sexist culture we can never be entirely free of sexism.

Another issue is *talking the talk but not walking the walk*. There is sometimes a gap between our political aspirations and our personal practices. Perhaps this is inevitable. Personal change is partial and uneven, and our personal lives are messy and complex. Still, men have a responsibility to shift our practice, not just our rhetoric.

Another mistake is *out-feministing feminists*. Some men use their knowledge of feminism to do power to women: claiming to be better feminists than women, playing off one feminist against another, or taking over feminist spaces.

Failing to earn women's trust? Or receiving it too easily?

Another danger that Pease (2008) notes is that men's violence prevention efforts will fail to earn women's trust. In fact, I suspect that men's efforts at present receive women's trust too easily. This is in line with Bob's earlier point, and mine too, that men involved in this work receive praise out of proportion to their efforts. For very understandable reasons, some women have too much hope, too much faith, in violence prevention efforts addressing men.

The real achievements of men's violence prevention thus far

There are significant achievements in men's violence prevention which deserve mention.

Raising public and political awareness of the role of men and boys in ending violence against women.

The growing emphasis on involving men in violence prevention represents one of a number of significant shifts in this field. And we should not underestimate what a profound achievement this is. Yes, there are dangers and downsides, but on the whole this is a very valuable achievement. It locates the problem of violence against women firmly with men: men's attitudes, behaviours, and relations.

The White Ribbon Campaign, in its newly invigorated form, is perhaps the best Australian example of this. It has achieved very substantial institutional presence and support, distributed over 200,000 ribbons in each of the last four years, and generated significant media coverage and community awareness.

Mobilising men in groups, networks, and campaigns

Another significant achievement, evident in Australia and internationally, is the mobilisation of men in groups, networks and campaigns.

Shifting the attitudes and behaviours which lead to or constitute violence against women (through education and social marketing)

There is now a substantial body of evidence that violence prevention programs among men can make a difference. That, done well, education programs can shift the attitudes among boys and men that lead to physical and sexual violence, that they can shift behaviours – that they can lessen males' actual perpetration of violence.

A wide range of evaluations of violence prevention education, delivered in schools and universities in particular, document that they can have positive effects on participants' attitudes towards and participation in intimate partner violence (Flood 2005–2006). Male school and university students who have attended rape education sessions show less adherence to rape myths, express less rape-supportive attitudes, and/or report greater victim empathy than those in control groups. True, far too few interventions have been evaluated, and existing evaluations often are limited in methodological and conceptual terms (Cornelius and Resseguie 2007). However, education programs which are intensive, lengthy, and use a variety of pedagogical approaches have been shown to produce positive and lasting change in attitudes and behaviours (Flood 2005–2006).

A recent international review by the WHO, titled *Engaging Men and Boys in Changing Gender-Based Inequity in Health* (2007), documents 57 interventions with evaluations. It reports that well-designed programs *do* show evidence of leading to change in behaviour and attitudes (WHO 2007: 4). Programs which are gender-transformative – which seek to transform gender roles and promote more gender-equitable relationships between men and women – had a higher level of effectiveness, as did programs which were integrated within community outreach, mobilization and mass-media campaigns and thus reached beyond individuals to their social contexts (3–4; 11).

Involving, and shifting, powerful masculine organisations and workplaces

Another significant achievement is the involvement and support of powerful masculine organisations and workplaces in violence prevention. Important examples in Victoria for example include the AFL and the trucking company Linfox.

Forging partnerships between women's and men's networks and organisations

Bob's paper notes some accounts of women's problematic experiences of working with men in violence prevention. Such stories should be told. But so should the other stories of productive and inspiring partnerships.

Examples of productive collaborations between men's and women's groups and networks

There are important examples of productive collaborations between men's and women's groups and networks. Early ones include:

Canberra Rape Crisis Centre and SAMSSA;

Domestic Violence Crisis Service and the Men's Reference Group (to set up Mensline);

Some earlier collaborations between Men Against Sexual Assault groups and women's services.

More recently, there have been collaborations between No To Violence and women's services in Melbourne. And there is a substantial collaboration between UNIFEM and various male-dominated or masculine organisations in the White Ribbon Day campaign.

Putting male involvement in violence prevention on national policy agendas

Male involvement in violence prevention is increasingly visible in the plans of state and national governments. (See my account in *Where Men Stand* (2010).)

The limits (and failures) of contemporary men's violence prevention

Few men are involved.

The most significant criticism I can make of men's violence prevention is that it is so small.

Few men actually take up the cause of preventing violence against women. Relatively few men are advocates for the prevention of violence against women.

The number of men who are actively campaigning *against* feminism (and its various efforts, including to prevent and respond to violence against women) is at least as large, if not larger, than the number of men campaigning for feminism.

Efforts are small, scattered, and under-developed.

Existing efforts to mobilise men as activists and organisers in grassroots anti-violence groups have been small and scattered. For example, Men Against Sexual Assault groups in the early to mid 1990s suffered the same fate as many volunteer-based, grassroots groups, losing members and momentum after several years.

Face-to-face education programs directed at boys and young men are scattered and under-developed, and few have been well evaluated. (This is changing however.)

Some campaigns are ineffective and inappropriate.

To focus on the White Ribbon Campaign for a moment:

The WRC's media materials (TV and print advertisements) over the past three years are vulnerable to the criticism that they were ineffective or even damaging. There was particular controversy over the 2006 ads produced by Saatchi and Saatchi... This represented a lost opportunity to produce effective and appropriate social marketing campaigns.

The WRC has not done enough to foster local and community take-up of the campaign, relying more on top-down approaches (although community development and community mobilisation approaches are challenging and labour-intensive).

A focus on men sometimes has been diluted.

The WRC, and 'White Ribbon Day' (as it's been termed in Australia), in some ways has come to overshadow the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW). Perhaps this is one example of the male 'takeover' about which Bob warns us, albeit a *discursive* one. IDEVAW increasingly is seen *as* WRD, rather than the WRD falling on IDEVAW.

Combined with the fact that in general women are more likely than men to support any campaign on men's violence against women, this has had a problematic consequence. It means that the White Ribbon Campaign increasingly is being understood as a campaign for *anyone* to wear a white ribbon, rather than a campaign focused on men.

The WRC's 'big tent' approach has been politically controversial, particularly when socially conservative figures such as Cardinal Pell have become 'Ambassadors' for the campaign.

There is a substantial and organised backlash, particularly by anti-feminist men's groups.

See below regarding this.

Some case studies

I turn now to two case studies of violence prevention.

In a sporting code / culture: AFL "Respect and Responsibility" strategy

(Note: This is excerpted from a VicHealth discussion of this project.)

In 2004 the Australian Football League (AFL) sought assistance to respond to incidents of alleged sexual assault of women by players. A Working Party (comprising experienced practitioners and academics), the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Sexual Assault and the Victorian Government's Office of Women's Policy worked with the AFL to develop the Respect and Responsibility Policy, launched in November 2005.

The broad intention of the Policy is to position the AFL as a leader in advocating cultural change across the football industry and to develop programs at all levels of Australian Rules Football that promote safe and inclusive environments for women. Development of the policy included thorough research of national and international sources to identify best practice approaches.

The policy includes commitment to:

- introduce model anti-sexual harassment and anti-sexual discrimination procedures across the AFL and its 16 Clubs
- develop organisational policies and procedures to ensure a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for women
- make changes to AFL rules relating to 'Conduct Unbecoming' which cover the specific context of allegations of sexual assault
- provide education for players, club officials and draftees
- disseminate model policies and procedures to support Respect and Responsibility Programs at the community club level
- develop a public education campaign

Over a two year period, various activities were undertaken to support sustained, practical application of the policy components:

- A model anti-sexual harassment/anti-discrimination policy was developed and adopted and training delivered to all staff
- The 'conduct unbecoming' rule was changed to include specific reference to allegations of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking and drink-driving related offences
- Education and training sessions for AFL players were developed using international and national standards of best practice. The 90-minute sessions are delivered by trainers with expertise in the area of gender-based violence prevention, and co-facilitated by former AFL players. Sessions are delivered to existing AFL players and officials and have been incorporated into the draftee Induction Camp Program each year.
- The sessions are evaluated with assistance from La Trobe University using pre- and post-session surveys and the results used to inform ongoing development. It is anticipated that following further refinement of the training package, modules will be delivered across all State Leagues and to the under 18s in all TAC Cup Clubs.

- The Community Club Resource, Fair Game: Respect Matters was developed following consultation conducted by the Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society (ARCSHS) with women and girls who were already active in local community Clubs. The resource aims to positively promote women's and girls' involvement in community football clubs and help build club environments that are safe and supportive for all members. A dissemination strategy, including a pilot involving approximately 42 local senior and junior clubs across the Northern Football League is being implemented by AFL Victoria and rigorously evaluated by ARCSHS during 2008 – 2010.
- VicHealth is working with the AFL towards the development of a social marketing campaign and media strategy principally targeting young men, that will promote the benefits of engaging in respectful relationships.

Senior level commitment has been one of the key factors contributing to the achievements to date. There have been challenges - some related to the organisation/setting and some due to the public profile of the AFL.

If the Policy is to become effectively embedded, broader efforts towards the development of a more respectful, equitable workplace culture are needed. This will require deeper examination of the cultural values that remain entrenched within football club environments, and improved understanding of the factors that contribute to violence against women.

Maintaining a strong commitment to the Policy is critical for the AFL, particularly in response to any breaches of the spirit of the policy. Immediate and serious action with players who are violent, abusive or harassing towards women reinforces the Policy and its objectives and publicly demonstrates the AFL's position.

The challenge remains for the AFL to align the Respect and Responsibility policy with organisational policies and structures. While almost half the staff working at the AFL are women, most occupy administrative or supporting roles. It is only this year that a woman was appointed to the AFL's previously all-male Executive Leadership Team. A specific leadership program to support increased women's participation and to mentor women to develop professional careers within the football industry would help to realise the intention of the policy.

The AFL remains steadfastly committed to embedding Respect & Responsibility through tailoring programs for each of the AFL clubs. The draftee and player education sessions are ongoing and a permanent full-time position to manage the continued implementation of the policy ensures that the AFL sees the Respect & Responsibility Program as something they can never again do without.

In a male-dominated workplace

Women's Health Victoria, a community organisation, is coordinating the project 'Working Together Against Violence', in collaboration with Linfox trucking company. The project aims to strengthen the organisational capacity of male-dominated workplaces to develop and implement policies and programs aimed at promoting respectful and responsible relationships between men and women.

This project involves:

- Training: 'Harm in the Home', centered on a bystander approach (mainly for workers, but also for senior managers).
- Workplace policy
- Development and promotion of a Workplace Resource Kit, including transferable tools and systems (including a training package with 'train the trainer' module).

- A forum, to launch and promote the training package.

The “Harm in the Home” training includes five simple tools with which individuals can speak up against harm in the home. The facilitators’ text associated with the program states:

Imagine you are sitting around a BBQ with a few mates. Someone starts talking about a football player and his girlfriend who was beaten up by him. One of your friends says “She must enjoy it” or “She must have had that one coming”. Comments like this say that harm in the home is ok. To stop this we need to speak up.

Sometimes people who make these kind of comments expect others to go along with them and to laugh or agree – they do not expect to be questioned. By using tool 1, “make it clear” and saying something like “Sorry mate, I missed that. What did you say?” or “I’m not sure what you mean” will help to change the flow of the conversation. Asking a question encourages people to think about what is being said. It is important to say this one in a non-aggressive way.

Or we could use tool 2, “Bring it home”. Saying something like “what if that was your sister / daughter / son” reminds them that this is a real person they are talking about.

Tool 3 “I Reckon...” is a great way to then give your opinion eg. “I reckon... it would be terrifying to leave a violent partner” By using “I” instead of “you” is often easier for people to hear since it is not attacking anyone and people will feel less defensive.

Tool 4: “We Reckon...” Have you ever been in a situation with a group of mates and you feel really uncomfortable about what is being said? The chances are that you are not alone. Asking “Am I the only one uncomfortable with this?” can let others know that they are not alone in their discomfort and will encourage others to speak up.

Tool 5: “Chat”. Talk to the person privately about what they said or did and its impact on others. This avoids humiliating the person and increases the chance that he / she will hear and listen to what we say.

Dealing with Resistance and Backlash

Anti-feminist male backlash

(Note: Some of the following was borrowed from Flood, M. "What's Wrong with Fathers' Rights?" *Men Speak Out: Views on gender, sex, and power*. Ed. S. Tarrant. Routledge, 2007.)

Fathers, violence, and family law

There are four ways in which the fathers' rights movement has had a damaging impact in the field of violence against women. These are readily apparent in Australia, and probably evident in the US and elsewhere as well.

(1) Privileging contact over safety

First, fathers' rights groups have negatively influenced laws and policies that affect the victims and perpetrators of men's violence against women, particularly when it comes to cases of separation, divorce, and child custody.

Above all, fathers' *contact* with children has been privileged, over children's *safety* from violence. In large part due to publicity efforts by fathers' rights groups, an uncritical assumption that children's contact with both parents is necessary now pervades the courts and the media. In Australia, the Family Court's new principle of the "right to contact" is overriding its principle of the right to "safety from violence". In short, family law increasingly is being guided by two mistaken beliefs: that all children see contact with both parents as in their best interests in every case, and that a violent father is better than no father at all. Greater numbers of parents who are the victims of violence are being subject to further violence and harassment by abusive ex-partners, while children are being pressured into contact with abusive or violent parents. The Court now is more likely to make interim orders for children's unsupervised contact in cases involving domestic violence or child abuse, to use hand-over arrangements rather than suspend contact until trial, and to make orders for joint residence where there is a high level of conflict between the separated parents and one parent strongly objects to shared residence.

(1) Discrediting victims

Second, fathers' rights groups have had a negative impact on community understandings of violence against women and children. They have discredited female and child victims of violence, by spreading the lie that women routinely make false accusations of child abuse to gain advantage in family law proceedings and to arbitrarily deny their ex-partners' access to the children. The Australian evidence is that allegations of child abuse are rare, false allegations are rare, and false allegations are made by fathers and mothers at equal rates. In any case, allegations of child abuse rarely result in the denial of parental contact.

Fathers' rights groups also claim that women routinely make up allegations of domestic violence to gain advantage in family law cases and use protection orders for vindictive reasons rather than any real experience or fear of violence. Again, Australian research finds instead that women living with domestic violence often do not take out protection orders at all, and when they do it is only as a last resort in the face of severe violence.

(3) Influencing perceptions of intimate partner violence, e.g. as gender-equal

Another dimension of the fathers' rights movement's damaging impact on community perceptions is to do with men's versus women's violence. Advocates encourage the mistaken belief that domestic violence is gender-equal. I've debunked this claim in detail elsewhere, but here is a lightning-quick critique.

It's simply not true that men and women assault each other at equal rates and with equal effects. To support the claim that domestic violence is gender-symmetrical, advocates draw almost

exclusively on studies using a measurement tool called the Conflict Tactics Scale. But anti-feminist advocates use CTS results only selectively. More importantly, the CTS is a very poor method for measuring domestic violence: it asks only about violent acts, ignoring their initiation, intensity, context, history, consequences, or meaning.

Let's say that I've been systematically abusing my wife over the last year. I've hit her, I've constantly put her down, I've controlled her movements, and I've forced her into sex. And once, in the midst of another of my violent attacks on her, she hit me back. My various strategies of power and control have left her physically bruised and emotionally battered. And her one act of self-defence just made me laugh. But according to the CTS, we've 'both' committed at least one violent act. So the CTS counts us as equivalent. (Note here that, if our positions were reversed and it was my *wife* who'd been systematically abusing *me*, the CTS would still be a poor measure of the violence. It's crappy either way.)

There's a whole mountain of evidence – crime victimization surveys, police statistics, and hospital data – that domestic violence is not gender-neutral. Men do under-report, but no more than, and probably less than, women. Yes, some men are victims of domestic violence, including by female partners. And there are important contrasts in women's and men's experiences of domestic violence. When it comes to violence by partners or ex-partners, women are far more likely than men to be subjected to frequent, prolonged, and extreme violence, to sustain injuries, to be subjected to a range of controlling strategies, to fear for their lives, to be sexually assaulted, to experience post-separation violence, and to use violence only in self-defence.

Exercise: Ask: How can you tell that men's rights and fathers' rights groups do not have a genuine concern for male victims of violence (including male victims of domestic violence?)

There are obvious signs that the fathers' rights movement's attention to domestic violence against men is not motivated by a genuine concern for male victimization. The movement focuses on domestic violence when the great majority of the violence inflicted on men is not by female partners but by *other men*. For example, a four-year study of admissions to the Emergency Department of a Missouri hospital found that among the over eight thousand men who had been assaulted and injured, only 45 men were injured by their intimate female partners or ex-partners, representing 0.55 per cent of male assault visits and 0.05 per cent of all male visits. Boys and men are most at risk of physical harm from other boys and men.

(4) Protecting perpetrators and undermining supports for victims

In addition, the efforts of the fathers' rights' movement to modify public responses to the victims and perpetrators of violence harm female and male victims of domestic violence alike. This is the fourth kind of impact the movement has had on interpersonal violence. The fathers' rights movement tries to erode the protections available to victims of domestic violence and to boost the rights and freedoms of alleged perpetrators. The Lone Fathers' Association and other groups argue that claims of violence or abuse should be made under oath, they should require police or hospital records as proof, and people who make allegations that are not then substantiated should be subject to criminal prosecution. They call for similar limitations to do with protection orders. Fathers' rights groups also attempt to undermine the ways in which domestic violence is treated as criminal behavior. They emphasize the need to keep the family together, call for the greater use of mediation and counseling, and reject pro-arrest policies.

These changes would represent a profound erosion of the protections and legal redress available to the victims of violence, whether female or male. This agenda betrays the fact that the concern for male victims of domestic violence often professed by fathers' rights groups is hollow. Fathers' rights groups often respond to issues of domestic and sexual violence from the point of view of the perpetrator. And they respond in the same way as actual male perpetrators: they minimize and deny the extent of this violence, blame the victim, and explain the violence as mutual or

reciprocal. Fathers' rights advocates have expressed understanding or justification for men who use violence against women and children in the context of family law proceedings. And, ironically, they use men's violence to demonstrate how victimized men are by the family law system.

Fathers' rights groups also attack media and community campaigns focused on men's violence against women and harass community sector and women's organizations that respond to the victims of violence.

Yes, male victims of domestic violence deserve the same support as female victims. And we don't need to pretend that they're 50 per cent of victims to establish this. And we're certainly not doing them any favors by attacking the systems and services set up to support and protect them or the women who put the issue on the public agenda in the first place.

Key strategies

The following are some of the political strategies we can use to help beat the fathers' rights backlash.

Discredit fathers' rights groups. Emphasise that they;

Are interested only in reducing their financial obligations to their children;

Are interested only in extending or regaining power and authority over ex-partners and children.

Do nothing to increase men's actual share of childcare / parenting or men's positive involvement in parenting both before and after separation.

Collude with perpetrators of violence against women and children, protect and advocate for perpetrators, or are perpetrators.

Produce critiques of their lies and their strategies;

Which are credible and accessible.

Co-opt the new politics of fatherhood;

Support positive efforts to respond to separated fathers. (And emphasise that FR groups fix men in anger and blame, rather than helping them to heal.)

Build on men's desires to be involved (and nonviolent) parents.

Find alternative male voices: supportive men and men's / fathers' networks and groups.

'Speaking as a father...'

Tell women's stories

Atrocity tales: Stories of abuse and inequality.

In letters, submissions, on talkback, etc.

(But beware of the ways in which these can (a) portray women only as victims, (b) homogenise and essentialise women's (diverse) experiences of violence, and (c) undermine credibility and support.¹⁷)

¹⁷ For example, if we focus only on 'extreme' incidents of violence, such as intimate homicides, we risk giving the implausible impression that such incidents constitute the majority of the 'violence against women' of which we speak,

Find and nurture male allies: in government, the community sector, academic, etc.

and we risk drawing attention away from the everyday 'dripping tap' of physical and sexual assaults and sexual harassment.

Complexities and tensions

So far, I have offered a comprehensive argument for why, and how, we should engage men in the prevention of men's violence against women. I want now to complicate some of what we know regarding this field.

That it is in men's interests to support progress towards gender equality.

Like others, I've long argued that men will benefit from gender equality. But we also must recognise the ways in which it is *not* in men's interests to support gender equality. For gender equality to be established, men must also give up power and privileges or have them taken away. I.e., it's now always 'win win' (Pease 2006: 5). We need a more substantial recognition of issues of power and privilege – not just of female disadvantage, but of male advantage or privilege. And we must craft strategies for engaging men that address this. Otherwise, we'll fail to change fundamental forms of male privilege.

Many men, perhaps most, do not see the apparent gains of gender equality as genuine benefits. Some work addressing men's roles in building gender equality seems to rest on the naïve idea that if we can construct a good enough argument, men will simply change their minds (Pease 2006: 8).

Instead, we need;

- More challenging and confrontational strategies of education and engagement, and;
- Change in the structural and institutional conditions within which men make choices about how to behave.

Force men to change, by changing social contexts and structures.

Violence prevention efforts should include efforts to change the structural and institutional conditions within which men make choices about how to behave. We must change the structure of costs and benefits, and not just men's calculation of them, such that the costs of behaving in oppressive and sexist ways outweigh the benefits. One obvious example of such an effort is to increase the criminal justice system's policing and punishment of men's violence against women. Others include empowering women, decreasing their economic dependence on men, and raising their expectations of men, as well as changing laws and policies, workplace and sporting cultures, and so on.

That our goal is to encourage new, positive masculinities among men.

Are we trying to encourage new, positive masculinities among men, or to deconstruct masculinity altogether?

Appeals to 'real men' are complicit in dominant masculinity.

Efforts to lessen men's tolerance of violence against women at times have attempted to redefine violence as unmanly or manliness as non-violent, therefore representing violence and masculinity as contradictory. "Real men don't bash or rape women" was the bold message of some posters in the 1993-1994 national campaign by the Office of the Status of Women (OSW). Similarly, the NSW campaign materials state that "sports role models can show that a masculine man is not a violent man" (Violence Against Women Specialist Unit 2000, p. 24). Although the notion of redefining masculinity as non-violent was not explicit in the NSW posters and advertisements, a quarter of men who had seen the campaign described the main message as being, 'You don't have to be violent to be a real man' (Hubert 2003, pp. 38-39).

Community education campaigns overseas have used similar strategies. The American campaign "My strength is not for hurting," encourages men to practise consent and respect in their sexual

relations. This campaign attempts to reconfigure a trait traditionally associated with masculinity, strength, such that it now embodies non-violence and moral selfhood. Among boys and young men, another American approach asks, “Are you *man enough* to turn away from violence [or] to stand up to violence?” This draws upon boys’ existing investments in male identity and desires to become adult men, in order to invite non-violence. Similarly, violence may be described as ‘weak’ or ‘cowardly’, and thus as in opposition to the qualities of strength, bravery, self-control and moral courage associated with ‘true’ masculinity (Gilbert & Gilbert 1998, p. 247).

Such approaches represent a strategy of both complicity in and challenge to masculinity. On the one hand, appeals to male identity and stereotypically masculine qualities are complicit in common constructions of masculinity and collude with males’ investments in manhood. On the other hand, such appeals also challenge masculinity, in attempting to shift the meanings associated with maleness.

We should be wary of approaches which appeal to men’s sense of ‘real’ manhood or invite them to ‘prove themselves *as men*’. These may intensify men’s investment in male identity, and this is part of what keeps patriarchy in place (Stoltenberg 1990). Such appeals are especially problematic if they suggest that there are particular qualities which are essentially or exclusively male. This simply reinforces notions of biological essentialism and determinism, and denies valuable qualities such as strength and courage to women.

Nevertheless, community education addressing males should speak to questions of identity. Boys and young men in particular struggle with the formation of their gendered identities, negotiating competing discourses of manhood and heterosexuality. There is often a dichotomy between their public projection of a confident masculinity and their experience of private anxieties and insecurities (Mac an Ghail 1994, p. 99). Boys’ and young men’s processes of identity formation represent a critical opportunity for violence prevention. Education campaigns can model identities based on moral reasoning, justice and selfhood rather than gender-identity anxiety, dominance and manhood (Stoltenberg 2001).

A strategy of complicity and challenge is an understandable and indeed desirable response to the real challenge of educating men on gender issues. Efforts to reach men must negotiate a tension between two necessary elements: between speaking to men in ways which engage with the realities of their lives on the one hand, and transforming the patriarchal power relations and gendered discourses which are the fabric of those same lives on the other.

There are times when we should be encouraging men to disinvest in masculinity. And to be ‘sissies’ and ‘mama’s boys’.

Rather than simply reassuring men that they’re not sissies for questioning gender inequalities and dominant constructions of manhood, we should ask them, “What’s so bad about being a sissy?” And we should work to undermine the misogyny and homophobia implicit (and often explicit) in men’s hostility towards ‘sissies’, ‘pansies’ and ‘faggots’.

Much work with men uses the language of ‘reconstructing’ masculinity. But there is a significant debate in Western profeminist circles regarding this rather than abandoning masculinity altogether. This must be explored further.

That we must focus on engaging men.

I have spent a day arguing for the political need to engage men in preventing violence against women. But I also want to note that some of the most effective strategies to change men may involve engaging *women*.

Could it be that more general strategies to build gender equality are the most effective ones in ending violence against women? We know that improving women’s empowerment – their economic independence, social and civil rights – is a critical strategy for ending violence against

women. (At the same time, it is no magic solution, given the evidence of how violence against women can worsen when men's and women's gender roles are in transition.)

It may be more effective to empower women in order to change men.

Historically, girls and women have been the focus of primary prevention efforts addressing intimate partner violence. Girls and women are taught in school programs and elsewhere to watch out for the 'warning signs' of abuse in relationships, to avoid risky situations or respond effectively to them, to use clear and effective communication in sexual and intimate situations, and to reject violence-supportive myths and norms (Hanson and Gidycz 1993). While such strategies have an obvious rationale, they have also been criticised for potentially exacerbating victim-blaming. They may imply that it is women's responsibility to avoid being raped or assaulted, not men's to avoid raping or assaulting. And they can result in self-blame when some women inevitably are unsuccessful at applying the skills and lessons learnt (Yeater and O'Donohue 1999).

On the other hand, it would be problematic to focus education efforts exclusively on men. Not all men will participate in education programs, those who do are likely to have a lower potential of perpetrating intimate partner violence, and even if all men participated, no intervention is 100 per cent effective (Yeater and O'Donohue 1999). Failing to direct violence prevention efforts to women would be to miss the opportunity to increase women's critical understandings of intimate partner violence and to build on women's already-existing skills in recognising, resisting, and rejecting violence. In addition, educating women can change men: by shifting women's expectations of partners and intimate relations, interventions may increase the pressures on and incentives for heterosexual men to adopt non-violent practices and identities. As Adams-Curtis and Forbes (2004) argue, interventions can harness men's motivations to be accepted and liked by women, by encouraging women's unwillingness to associate with sexist and aggressive men. Yes, this is unfair, but it is no more unfair or damaging than the consequences of current gender relations.

Primary prevention strategies addressing the potential victims of men's intimate partner violence, that is, women, are a desirable component of violence prevention programming, and there is evidence that they can lessen women's risks of victimisation and re-victimisation. Yeater and O'Donohue (1999) provide a useful discussion of ideal elements of education programs in this context. They suggest that women's and men's education programs should complement each other, to create synergistic effects which will accelerate shifts in social norms and gender relations. Primary prevention efforts among women also can move beyond education programs towards forms of community-based empowerment and mobilisation. Among immigrant and refugee women in Canada for example, such strategies have proved effective in empowering women and perhaps in shifting community norms.

Emphases on 'partnership' between women and men may produce an imperative to male inclusion.

The language of women and men as 'partners' or as working in 'partnership' is increasingly common in violence prevention work, as it is in other fields such as sexual and reproductive health. However, this language and the approaches associated with it runs the risk of:

- Closing off women-only and women-focused work;
- Leaving women dependent on men, by assuming that women necessarily are men's partners;
- Adopting narrow and heterosexist approaches to kinship, family, and intimacy.

That this work always is effective

I and others have emphasised that violence prevention work with men can make a real difference to men's attitudes, behaviours, and gender relations. But we must also acknowledge that some efforts do not work, producing little or no change. Even more troubling, some efforts have negative effects, with men's attitudes or behaviours worsening after the intervention.

That we must focus (only) on why men use violence

It remains vital to investigate how and why men use violence against women. At the same time, we must also investigate and intensify men's anti-patriarchal attitudes, behaviours, identities, and relations.

We need to know much more about how and why some men come to anti-patriarchal identities and relations: why some men are resistant to patriarchal masculinities, others condone them, while others are their shock troops. We need to know much more about *how* we shift men's sense of their interests, and *how* men's interests can and do change.

Explore why some men do *not* use or support violence.

Bob Pease has expressed concern about the oft-repeated claim that 'most men do not use violence'. Pease (2008) writes that this claim often follows, and necessarily undermines, the point that violence is perpetrated primarily by men. I see the statements as compatible. Yes, the former statement can weaken the rhetorical impact of the second, but in the circumstances where it is true¹⁸, it is also both honest and politically useful. Yes, stating that 'most men do not use violence' can neglect the wider patterns of coercion and control perpetrated by men. But it would be a mistake to assume therefore that men's involvements in violence, coercion and control are homogenous and uniform.

Furthermore, there is a valuable question here, regarding diversity in men's practices and social relations. Whether a majority of men or only a minority do not use violence, surely it's valuable to know how their non-violent practice has come about, to try to foster non-violence more widely? And to examine the social conditions which foster non-violence.

Conclusion

As I wrote in a recent journal article,

Preventing men's violence against women will require sustained and systematic efforts at the levels of families and relationships, communities, institutions, and societies. Men must be engaged in this work: as participants in education programs, as community leaders, as professionals and providers, and as advocates and activists working in alliance with women. We will only make progress in preventing violence against women if we can change the attitudes, identities, and relations among some men which sustain violence. To stop the physical and sexual assault of women and girls, we must build on the fact that most men do not use violence and that most men, if only privately, believe that such violence is unthinkable. We must erode the cultural and collective supports for violence found among many men and boys and replace them with norms of consent, sexual respect and gender equality. While some men are part of the problem, all men are part of the solution. (Flood 2011)

¹⁸ In some countries and contexts, in fact the *majority* of men have used physical or sexual violence.

Online resources on men's roles in stopping violence against women

(1) Readings and Resources

XOnline, a major website on men and gender, includes key articles on men's work in helping to stop violence against women, here: <http://www.xonline.net/category/article-content/violence>.

The site also includes key resources on working with men, including guides and manuals, here: <http://www.xonline.net/category/article-content/resources>

(2) Web sites

XOnline also includes a substantial collection of links to other websites on men and masculinities, here: <http://www.xonline.net/links>

This includes links on men's anti-violence work, here: <http://www.xonline.net/links#a2>

Australian websites on violence against women: <http://www.xonline.net/links#ViolenceAustralia>

International websites on violence against women: <http://www.xonline.net/links#a12>

(3) Academic references

The Men's Bibliography is a comprehensive bibliography of writing on men, masculinities, gender, and sexualities, listing over 20,000 books and articles. It is free at: <http://mensbiblio.xonline.net/>.

The bibliography includes a substantial section on men's anti-violence work, here: <http://mensbiblio.xonline.net/violence2.html#Antiviolenceactivism>

The bibliography also includes a substantial section on violence prevention, here: <http://mensbiblio.xonline.net/violence3.html#Violenceprevention>