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*What can we learn from understanding the characteristics, circumstances, and patterns of women killed by men and the men who kill them?*

KAREN INGALA-SMITH

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores what can be learned from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women, that is, looking at all instances regardless of the relationship between victim and perpetrator, to understand the characteristics, circumstances and patterns of women killed by men and the men who kill them. Sex differences, both between victims and perpetrators, are hidden in official data and policy responses to fatal violence and historically were overlooked in criminology. This thesis seeks to make the case for keeping sex differences at the forefront, rejecting siloed approaches which overplay the distinctions and overlook the commonalities between sexual and domestic violence and abuse, including prostitution, and for reinstating the concept of patriarchy as central to feminist scholarship whilst bringing together the too often separated approaches of feminist activism, service provision and academia.

A mixed method approach was used wherein quantitative analysis of data regarding UK women killed by men in between 2012 and 2014 (446 women), with an additional purposive sample of women who had been killed by strangers between 2015 and 2017 (63 women) and women who had been involved in prostitution and killed between 2009 and 2011 and 2015 and 2017 (16 women, of whom ten were also in the purposive sample of women who had been killed by strangers, therefore an additional 6 women), was enhanced by case histories ensuring that women's realities remained the focal point of the research and adding depth.

The research found that ignoring sex in analysis of homicide means ignoring the specificities of femicide. The thesis offers both a new definition of femicide and a new model of men's violence against women, incorporating individual, situations/relational, institutional, structural, and cultural contributors recognising intersecting inequalities to contextualise men's violence against women within patriarchal societies.

**Karen Ingala Smith**

*"Okay wer all gud now  
and my new yrs ressy is that I aint going to hit u again  
and I won't hit u 4 this yr next yr the yr after that the next yr after that."*  
Text from Myles Williams to Kirsty Treloar, 1 January 2012

**What can we learn from understanding the  
characteristics, circumstances, and patterns of  
women killed by men and the men who kill  
them?**

**PhD Thesis**

**Department of Sociology**

**Durham University**

**2022**

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## **Statement of Copyright**

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Thank you to André Smith, for your support.

## **Dedication**

In memory of Kirsty Treloar, a young woman who I never met and who should – and in a world without men’s fatal violence against women and girls, would -- still be alive today.

Kirsty’s death, on 2 January 2012, was the catalyst for Counting Dead Women, without which neither the Femicide Census nor this piece of research would exist.

## Chapter One – Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction to the topic: men’s fatal violence against women

‘Femicide is as old as patriarchy,’ (p.vii)

and

‘Femicide: Sexist Terrorism Against Women.’ (p.vii)

Even from the contents page of Jill Radford and Diana Russell’s 1992 anthology, *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*, there could be little doubt that theirs was a proudly feminist piece of work. ‘Naming an injustice, and thereby providing a means of thinking about it, usually precedes the creation of a movement against it.’ (p.xiv) continued Russell in her introduction. Finally, ‘Where do we go from here?’ (p.351) asked Jill Radford in the closing pages. ‘*Femicide*’ then, was not only a ground-breaking book offering a new historical and global perspective on men’s fatal violence against women, it was also a radical feminist manifesto – a demand for and commitment to change.

Why then, twenty years later, when 20-year-old Kirsty Treloar was murdered in January 2012, was the inaccurate piece of misinformation ‘two women a week’ (are, on average, killed by current or former partners in England and Wales) the closest statistic to anything approaching widely held knowledge, even amongst those supposed to have expertise in men’s violence against women? Why, when eight women were killed by men in the UK in the first three days of 2012, were the police still talking about isolated incidents? Why didn’t our official national homicide data even tell us how many women were killed by men?

The aim of this thesis, looking at men’s fatal violence against women in the UK between 2012 and 2014, and my work beyond it, is not to answer those ‘Why?’ questions but to help make sure that the lessons that we learn from the connected analysis of men’s

fatal violence against women are not lost. Lessons which cannot be learned from official homicide statistics, the law, or early criminological homicide studies.

## **1.2 Overview of Homicide: National Statistics**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the UK's recognised statistical institute and largest independent producer of official statistics. Amongst much other data, it produces a detailed annual report on homicide in England and Wales. The report is accompanied by a detailed Excel workbook with (currently) 39 different Excel spreadsheets of data, some of which, for example Table 1 (Offences initially recorded as homicide by current classification), go back as far as January 1960. From this incredible volume of data, it is not possible to disaggregate data to analyse men's fatal violence against women.

The number of officially identified homicides in England and Wales increased from 395 in 1969 to exceeding 700 victims for the first time in 1991 (ONS, 2021). This century, the number of homicides per year has typically been between 650–700 victims per year, with the exception of the year ending March 2003, when 173 victims of Dr Harold Shipman were recorded, bringing the total number of victims that year to 1,043. Other years have seen different anomalies, though the year they are reflected in crime data may not be the year of the death of the victims. Shipman's murders are thought to span some 23 years between 1975 and 1998. The 96 victims of the Hillsborough football stadium disaster, which happened in 1989, were recorded in the year ending March 2017, pending litigation. Other tragedies or atrocities having a marked impact of the total number of homicide victims per year include 20 cockle-pickers drowned in Morecambe Bay in 2004, 52 people killed in London bombings in 2005, 31 victims of terrorist attacks in 2017 and 39 victims of human trafficking found suffocated in a lorry in Essex in 2020 (ONS, 2020).

In the year ending March 2020, 27 per cent of the ONS recorded homicide victims for the year were female. The number of female homicide victims per year has typically

remained around 200, with greater fluctuations in the number of men killed and so correspondingly different annual ratios of female and male victims. Until data for the year ending March 2017, it was not possible, from the ONS data, to link victims and suspects. So, whilst it was possible to identify how many women were killed each year, and going back to April 2009, whether they were killed by a son or daughter, parent, partner/ex-partner, other family member, friend/acquaintance, or stranger, and where the relationship between victim and perpetrator is unknown, it was not possible to identify the sex of the suspect within those groups.

Back in 2012, I was incredulous at the inability to calculate from official data – despite 39 spreadsheets of data on homicide – the number of females killed by males in the UK. I couldn't find a source for the 'two women a week' claim, neither could I find any data to suggest that it was even correct. In 2018, the Office for National Statistics began producing data which permitted the identification of the sex of both the victim and killer dating back to the year ending March 2017. (ONS, 2018)

### **1.3 Overview of Homicide – The legal framework in England and Wales**

Data are never neutral, (Graham, 2015). Homicide data is neither a neutral nor objective measure of deaths caused by a person's actions or inactions, rather it reflects shifting and fluid social realities, (Iliadis and Russo, 2016). Homicide data reflects the law of the jurisdiction. I will therefore briefly outline the legal framework for homicide in England and Wales.

#### **1.3.1 Homicide Act 1957 – murder and manslaughter**

In England and Wales homicide is constituted of two offences: murder and manslaughter, mandated by the Homicide Act, 1957. Femicide is not a specific crime. Murder is committed when a person (or persons) of sound mind unlawfully kills someone and had the intention to kill or cause grievous bodily harm. There are three exceptions which can make a killing manslaughter rather than murder: that there was

intent to murder or cause grievous bodily harm but a partial defence applies; that there was not intent (to kill or cause grievous bodily harm) but the person committing the offence engaged in conduct that was grossly negligent and risked and caused death; or thirdly, that there was no intent but the person committing the offence engaged in conduct that was an unlawful act which involved danger and resulted in death. The first type of manslaughter is 'voluntary manslaughter', the second and third types are 'involuntary manslaughter'. Self-defence may be a full defence to murder or manslaughter. (Crown Prosecution Service, (CPS) 2019).

Murder leads to a mandatory life sentence with a specified tariff, i.e., a recommended minimum number of years to be served, with aggravating and mitigating factors taken into account in the determination of sentence length, (CPS, 2019).

There are other homicide offences, such as infanticide and causing death by dangerous or careless driving, the former only applicable to the killing a child under twelve months of age and committed by the mother, therefore not applicable to this research. The latter presenting interesting sex differences in rates of committing the offence and therefore worthy of consideration as an example of a behaviour resulting from socially constructed gender differences. (CPS, 2019).

The cause of death can be either an act (something done) or an omission (something not done), but the prosecution must always demonstrate a causal link between the act or omission, a duty to act, and the death of the victim. Since 1996, if the act/omission and the death are more than three years apart, the permission of the attorney general must be sought before initiating proceedings (section 2(2) Law Reform (Year and a Day Rule) Act 1996). Prior to this, the accepted time difference was one year and one day. The act/omission need not be the sole or even the main cause of death, but it must be a substantial contributor and the prosecutor must prove that without the action/omission, the victim would not have died. Lesley Chisholm-Lazere, age 59, died in September 2013 of injuries that led to her decline in health over 15 years after she

was assaulted and left paralysed by Alan St Peter. A narrative verdict (meaning the cause of the death was not attributed to a named person) was recorded, however, the coroner noted "The ultimate cause of death can be related back to the consequences of the violent assault." Alan St Peter had been found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm, though had died in prison in 2001. In 2019, Jacqueline Kirk died, aged 61, due to complications arising from injuries she suffered as a result of being set alight 21 years previously by Steven Craig. He had served almost 19 years in jail for grievous bodily harm but in 2022, was found guilty of her murder and will serve a further 15 years in prison.

Partial defences to murder, as noted above, if successfully argued, can lead to the reduction of an offence from murder to manslaughter. There are currently three partial defences to murder: diminished responsibility, loss of control and killing in pursuance of a suicide pact. (CPS, 2019). For crimes committed before 2010, the now abolished partial defence of provocation can still be used.

### **1.3.2 The Coroners and Justice Act 2009**

The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 established a requirement for more transparent and effective coroner services for victims, witnesses, bereaved families and the public, (CPS, 2019). Whilst there remains unfulfilled potential in coroner reports as a tool for tackling femicide, in particular the suicide of women who had been or were being subjected to sexual and domestic violence and abuse, one of the most critical amongst its provisions was the creation of the partial defence of loss of control, and critically ending the defence to murder of provocation by infidelity. Coss (2006) argued that the provocation defence was recognised as a gender-biased anachronism, with a clear gender asymmetry, in which men's controlling and proprietary violence was seen not as an aggravating factor but available as a defence. Horder and Fitz-Gibbon (2015) have raised concerns however that the loss of provocation as a defence has merely led to 'a transfer to similar gendered discourses' (Horder and Fitz-Gibbon, 2015, p2)

'difficulty of achieving meaningful reform to the law of homicide, without also considering the likely impact of sentencing legislation on the success of those reforms in practice,' (ibid p24). Nevertheless, Howe and Alaattinoglu, (2019) maintain that the withdrawal of the defence of provocation has led to a loss of currency of 'red mist' and victim-blaming narratives using the provocation defence which turn the killer into a victim and place responsibility with the slain, thus heralding a growing recognition of 'a woman's right to leave a relationship notwithstanding the stress it might cause her partner' (p19). Howe goes on to argue that with provocation by infidelity off the table as a defence, and if the number and length of convictions for murder are a guide, the reform is at least partially realising its intended effect.

#### **1.4 Overview of homicide: early homicide studies**

Early criminological studies of homicides, led by the USA, whilst in some cases disaggregating on subtypes of relationships between perpetrator and victim, did not focus on intimate-partner or domestic/family homicides. In the small number of cases where intimate or domestic/family homicides were identified as a subtype, none further disaggregated on interpersonal or domestic violence homicides by sex. For example, Boudouris, (1970), in a study of homicides in Detroit between 1926–1968, found the following victim/offender relationships (not in order): domestic/love affairs; friends/acquaintances; business (legitimate businesses); criminal associations; non-criminal e.g., killing of a felon by police; cultural/recreational/casual; subcultural/recreational/casual; other; and unknown. Lashley studied 883 homicides in Chicago occurring between 1926 and 1927, and found a large percentage were justifiable killings, with the next largest categories gang/criminal related (33 per cent), and altercations/brawls (30.4 per cent). Possibly reflecting the particular historic circumstances of Chicago in the 1920s – prohibition and high levels of organised crime – domestic homicides comprised only 8.3 per cent of homicides in Lashley's study.

One of the first to identify the importance of sex disaggregated murder data was Veli Verkko, who undertook statistical research in Finland from the 1920s to 1950s. He observed that the proportion of female homicide victims was higher when general homicide rates were lower and lower when homicide rates were higher. In other words, female homicide rates tended to remain stable and not necessarily reflect fluctuations in homicides of males. This statistical pattern is known as 'Verkko's Static Law' and although this appears to be observable in UK homicides over the last three decades, Wilbanks (1981) tested Verkko's Static and Dynamic 'Laws' (which as he points out, aren't laws at all, merely theories) with data from 42 countries and found that the premise of Verkko's Static Law, that the female homicide rate is relatively stable both across countries and in a particular country over time was false. However, he found that Verkko appeared to be correct in asserting that the ratio of the male to female rate is highly correlated to the overall homicide rate, (the Dynamic law), though the relationship is not causal. Regardless, raising the issue of sex disaggregated data was an important contribution.

In 1958, Wolfgang disaggregated victims of homicide by sex and race. He found that being Black and being male increased the likelihood of victimhood, whereby a homicide rate of 5.7/100,000, when disaggregated was Black males – 36.9/100,000, Black women - 9.6/100,000, white males – 2.9/100,000 and white women – 1/100,000. Though he did not break down relationships between victim and perpetrator, he further found that 25 per cent of homicides were inter-family, 25–34-year-olds were the most likely victims and ten per cent of homicides were sexual intimates non-family.

Like the research described above, and indeed in social sciences more broadly theories of homicide generally did not consider sex differences and therefore the possibility of feminist explanatory frameworks or even the consideration of frameworks of analysis based on the identification of patriarchal society (Westmarland, 2001). Instead, androcentric theories of homicide were largely located within the following:

1. Biological explanations, for example chromosomal abnormalities and eugenics (Galton, 1883), head trauma (Virkkunen et al., 1976), Sheldon's theories of criminality and body shape (1942, 1949) and Lombroso's (1876) long discredited association of murderous criminality to head shape.
2. Psychological explanations that considered factors such as instinct, impulse and attachment theory (Harlow, 1958, 1965) or Skinner's work (1938) on operant conditioning.
3. Psycho-biological explanations such as Eysenck's work on the interactions between neurology, personality and 'ineffective parenting' (1964).
4. Sociological explanations which looked at social organisation, that is structural variables and/or culture/subcultures. (For example, Sykes and Matza (1957) on learned behaviour and rationalisation; Goffman and labelling theory, identity and deviance (1963); Merton's (1957) work on crime as a result of strain between goals and means, and Cohen (1955) on boys and gang culture.)

### **1.5 Where are the women?**

The emergence of feminist criminology is frequently referenced as the 1976 publication of Carol Smart's *Women, Crime and Criminology: A Feminist Critique* (Daly, 2006 ; Howe and Alaattinoglu, 2019). Others (Flynn, 2008; Cullen et al, 2014) have cited Freda Adler's disputed *Sisters in Crime*, published in 1975, which linked the women's liberation movement with the birth of a new female criminality and posited that the motivations behind female crime were the same as those behind male (Islam et al, 2014). Indeed, initially feminist criminology focused on women offenders, and therefore in homicide research on women who kill, rather than women as victims, a division which continues to attract academic and popularist attention. In reality, women's experiences do not divide so neatly, most women in prison in the UK have been victims of more serious crimes than that which they were incarcerated for. The Prison Reform Trust (2017) reported that 57 per cent of women in prison had been

subjected to domestic violence, 53 per cent reported having been subjected to physical, emotional or sexual abuse as a child (compared to 27 per cent of male prisoners) while at least 70 per cent of women in prison are victim-survivors of domestic violence and abuse, (House of Commons Justice Committee, 2013).

Crabbé et al. (2008) reviewed literature on profiling homicide offenders to test support for the consistency hypothesis (that there is either consistency between criminal and non-criminal activities of homicide offenders and/or behavioural consistency across homicide offences) and the specificity hypothesis (variations between homicides reflect variations between offender characteristics). They found a moderate level of support for the consistency hypothesis and stronger support for the specificity hypothesis.

A number of the studies they cited to support their finding that there was stronger support for the specificity hypothesis were crimes where the sexes of victims and offenders were relevant (for example sexually motivated crimes), but they did not explore differences in the applicability of the hypothesis according to either the sex of the victim or offender. They included a number of studies where the sex of the offender and victim would have been relevant, with regards to the consistency hypothesis, for example, Hazelwood et al. (1993 and 2002) found that 'sadists' used similar behaviours in both consensual and non-consensual criminal activities but did not explore whether there were differences in the applicability of the hypothesis according to either the sex of the victim or offender.

Rebecca and Russell Dobash, in '*When Men Murder Women*' (Dobash and Dobash, 2015), stated that an early motivation behind their work on murder was the recognition that most earlier analyses of murder had not split data according to the sex of the victim and that, given that men are more likely to kill men than women, generalisations could be misleading and any specificities regarding men's murder of women would be missed. Indeed, they found when comparing men who murder men to men who

murder women, that men who murder men tended to specialise in (have histories of) violence against men, whilst men who murder women seemed to specialise in violence against women, with the killer having had life backgrounds that could be described as more mainstream/average than the former. I will look at the development of empirical research and theories regarding men's violence against women in Chapter Two and, with regards to femicide in particular, in Chapter Three.

The Dobashes' (2015) findings in *When Men Murder Women* suggest that consistency hypothesis may not only be relevant with regards to murders of women by men but also that there may be differences in its applicability across differently motivated murders. For example, men who had negative attitudes to women (for example that women were disreputable, exploited men and objects for sexual conquest) were much more highly represented in men who murdered older women and men who committed sexually motivated murders than men who murdered current or former intimate partners. Further exploration would be useful and could offer a foundation of empirical evidence supporting feminist analysis that posit a link between sex inequality, the sexual or non-sexual objectification of women, pornography etc., and men's violence against women; therefore, research to establish whether the consistency hypothesis is stronger or not depending on the sexes of victim and offender, would be interesting and the lack of it remains a gap in our knowledge.

## **1.6 Creating Counting Dead Women, The Femicide Census and the rationale for this PhD**

Kirsty Treloar was 20 years old, heavily pregnant, loved by her close family and looking for a way to free herself from her abusive 19-year-old boyfriend. As a result, in November 2011, she had been referred to nia, the charity of which I am CEO. She gave birth in December of that year. As is the case of most women engaging with the specialist sexual and domestic violence and abuse response services that nia offers, I

hadn't met or heard of Kirsty, at least not until the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2012, when I received a call from work telling me that a young woman who had been engaged with our organisation had been abducted and killed the day before. The organisation had been informed of her death by the police and we had been given little additional information. I went to the internet to see if I could find out more and using a pretty generic search term, such as 'woman killed, London' found a surprising number of reports of women who had been killed. At that stage, I had worked in specialist services for women subjected to men's violence for over 20 years and was very familiar with the inaccurate (though I wasn't aware of that at the time) 'two women a week' statistic. It was clear that the information I was seeing was in excess of that and so, I began to note the names of the women being reported as killed, because that was the only way I could calculate how many women had been killed. I would later know that eight women were killed by men in the UK in the first three days of 2012. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, Michael Atherton had shot dead his partner, her sister and her sister's daughter; Aaron Mann had repeatedly hit his partner Claire O'Connor with a blunt object before smothering her with a pillow, wrapping her body in bedding and putting her in the boot of a car. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January, Myles Williams abducted Kirsty Treloar from her family home, stabbed her 29 times and dumped her body two miles away, behind a bin; and burglar Stephen Farrow stabbed pensioner Betty Yates and used her walking stick to inflict blows to her head and neck. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January, John McGrory used a dog lead to strangle Marie McGrory (his wife), she had told him she wanted a divorce some three months prior; and, 40-year-old Gary Kane inflicted 15 blunt force injuries, killing his 87-year-old grandmother, Kathleen Milward.

In three days in the UK the body count was eight dead women: three shot, one stabbed, one beaten with her own walking stick and stabbed, one beaten and smothered, one strangled and one bludgeoned to death with a blunt object. I was and remain a social media user with a particular penchant for twitter, I shared my observation and the names of the women I'd identified at the time. One of the police forces responding to

the death of one of the women used the phrase 'isolated incident'. I understand what the police mean when they label a crime an isolated incident, but I was angry that what any feminist can identify as the connections across men's violence against women, are simply written out of the dominant narrative.

I hadn't planned to start a campaign that has now lasted ten years and inspired research and activism in the USA, Kenya and Australia to name just some. I hadn't planned to keep going but I was immediately aware of the different impact of women's names compared to an empty statistic: 'two women a week'. Because the work wasn't planned, I hadn't done any advanced thinking about defining a cohort, I knew that 'two women a week' referred to partners and ex-partners, and often, when a woman's violent death first hits the news, information about her relationship with the man who killed her is not made public. I don't remember much about how my thinking evolved over time, but I do remember that just over three months later, the murders of two young women made me think. Sami Sykes was 18, her friend Kim was 17. Ahmad Otak was in a relationship with Kim's older sister, Elisa. Otak believed that Kim and Sami were trying to influence Elisa to stay away from him, though in her telling of what happened, it is clear that his extreme control and violent abuse was the reason she ended their relationship. Elise moved in with her sister, Kim, and it was on a visit to Kim's flat, purportedly to return some of Elise's belongings, that Otak stabbed Kim to death, in front of Elise. He forced Elise to call Sami and when she arrived at the flat, he answered the door and stabbed her to death too. Otak hadn't killed the young woman he was abusing; he'd killed two of the most important people in her life. Writing my blog, a year later, I said "The murders of Samantha and Kimberley don't fit the definition of domestic violence, but they're absolutely about a man trying to exert power, control and coercion in his relationship. Their deaths made it clear to me that concentrating on what we see as domestic violence isn't enough. It's wider than that. The murders of Kimberley and Samantha were no less about male violence against women than they would have been if he had been the boyfriend of one of them."

I had also begun to notice the number of women killed by their sons and older women killed in burglaries or duped by men they thought they could trust.

I started a blog in March 2013. My third entry, on 25 March, was called *Counting Dead Women*, a piece I wrote to explain my rationale. In May of the same year, I started a separate Twitter account for Counting Dead Women (@CountDeadWomen) as I'd previously been using my own account and that of nia. Today the @CountDeadWomen Twitter feed has over 47,000 followers.

Later in 2013 I was contacted by Clarrie O'Callaghan, at that point she was the Global Head of Pro Bono at international law firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer. Clarrie had also started investigating femicide, was asking questions about the adequacy of the state's response to intimate partner femicide and wanted to build a picture of what was happening in the UK. Shockingly, the most comprehensive information Clarrie had been able to find was my blog. We talked about how our interests were complementary and explored the idea of working together. For both of us, there was a combination of personal, professional, and political interests. It was obvious that this collaboration could bring additional capacity and allow us to hugely expand what I'd been able to do on my own in my spare time. Clarrie had already been engaged in discussion with Deloitte on a related pro bono project, so she knew they had the appetite to develop work around men's violence against women. We needed a piece of work that was robust enough to withstand interrogation in court. The data for the Femicide Census is stored on the software platform Relativity hosted by Deloitte. Relativity is an interactive software platform and has been used primarily by Deloitte for their work involving litigation. Relativity allows analytical searches and statistical breakdowns.

We invited Women's Aid (England) to join us and increase the capacity of the team, and through them Hilary Fisher, who had extensive human rights expertise was an

important part of the development of the project. Women's Aid (England) have not had an active role since 2018.

Originally, solicitors working pro bono at Freshfields sent Freedom of Information requests (FOIs) to all the police forces in England asking for basic demographic details of all women known or suspected to have been killed by men in their areas between 2009 and 2013. They then began to collate the data on Excel spreadsheets until the data was transported to a bespoke database built by Deloitte based on the variables that Hilary Fisher and I had identified. The Femicide Census was launched in February 2015. Thereafter, the FOIs were submitted annually. I spoke at a feminist conference shortly after and as a result of that speech, a feminist philanthropist made a donation big enough for us to employ a part time researcher. From 2018, additional funding allowed us to expand the team and give us sufficient resource to check and backfill previous entries. The Femicide Census launched as an independent entity in 2019 directed by Clarrie O'Callaghan and me. The Femicide Census has published five reports on femicides: 2009–2015, annual reports for 2016, 2017 and 2018, and a ten-year review for 2009–2018. Two further reports on femicides in the UK in 2019 and 2020 were released in 2022.

The Femicide Census is a unique database, the UK's most comprehensive data on 1,680 women killed by men and the men who committed the act. The Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, delivered by Dubravka Šimonović at the November 2016 UN General Assembly, cited the UK Femicide Census as an example of best practice. We, the Femicide Census team, have many ambitions, amongst them to increase awareness of the realities of men's fatal violence against women. Because of the Femicide Census, the 'two women a week' fake statistic has been replaced with the much more accurate 'on average, in the UK a woman is killed by a man every three days' or 'on average, in the UK a woman is killed by a male current or former partner every four days.' Because of Counting Dead Women, in an International Women's Day Parliamentary speech, for which she had to

seek permission to speak for longer than the allotted six minutes, MP Jess Phillips read out the names of all the women in the UK suspected to have been killed since the previous International Women's Day. She has done this every year since. Thus, the names of women killed by men are now recorded in Hansard, the official parliamentary record, in perpetuity.

Writing in 2014, Adrian Howe generously described me as 'the most prolific of a new wave of feminist anti-violence bloggers.' (p276) and said that 'Ingala Smith's relentless counting and naming of all the dead women on social media has a shock value destined to have an impact far greater than that of the endless recitation of the two-women-a-week statistic.' (p288) Continuing that my work makes '... a formidable cumulative case for viewing femicide as a profoundly serious social problem' (p299). My research for the PhD has a unique approach to providing a comprehensive analysis of all known incidences of men's fatal violence against women and girls aged 13 and over in the UK, occurring between 2012 and 2014 by comparing the killings of women committed by current or former partners, relatives, men known in any other capacity, and strangers. It has an expanded purposive sample of women killed by strangers and women killed between 2009 and 2017 who had been involved in prostitution. This research builds upon Counting Dead Women and the Femicide Census to provide in-depth analysis to sit alongside and develop a deeper theoretical understanding of men's fatal violence against women and what we can learn from this. It is both a distinct piece of work based on a separate quantitative data source, but it is also inextricably linked, as it is based on the same women – their deaths and their killers – as both Counting Dead Women and the Femicide Census and could not have been undertaken without the former. I am solely responsible for Counting Dead Women and, of course, this thesis. I played a lead role in the development of the Femicide Census and continue to lead it in partnership with a co-Director. My contribution to each of these pieces of work is informed by more than three decades of work in specialist provision for women who have been subjected to men's violence, at frontline, operational management,

and strategic leadership levels. Ultimately, all of us involved in work addressing men's violence against women are hoping to make a difference, to create a change, to improve the lives of women and reduce the femicide rate. By producing work which touches public consciousness and the media, (Counting Dead Women, the Femicide Census); can be used in policy development, legislation and litigation (The Femicide Census); and meets standards required for academic research, my work on men's fatal violence against women has the greatest chance of being seen as credible and therefore, having an impact.

### **1.7 Research aims and objectives**

The aim of this research is to 'explore what can be learned from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women' – something that until my work, has been absent in previous theoretical and empirical work in the UK. I intend to achieve this aim through the following objective: to understand the 1) characteristics, 2) circumstances and 3) patterns, of women who are killed by men and the men who kill them.

### **1.8 Overview of this thesis**

This thesis is comprised of nine chapters. Following this chapter, Chapter Two looks at activist, academic, policy, provision response's to and the prevalence of men's violence against women and locates my work in the body of existing theory. Chapter Three looks at femicide, the history and evolution of the concept, definitional matters, explanations for geopolitical and temporal differences in femicide rates and some key themes in existing femicide research.

After setting out the context of and background to this research, Chapter Four addresses the methodology used and the importance of feminist methods. The chapter addresses the research design, methods and samples UK women killed by men and the men who killed them between 2012 and 2014 with additional purposive

sampling of women killed by strangers and the killings of women who had been involved in prostitution. It includes ethical considerations, researcher well-being and some of the key limitations of the research.

Chapters Five to Seven address the findings in response to the research question regarding the characteristics, circumstances and the patterns of women killed by men and the men who kill them. Chapter Five focuses on the characteristics of victims and perpetrators. Chapter Six looks at the circumstances, analysing methods of killing and forms of harm in incidents of men's fatal violence against women, whilst Chapter Seven considers the broader contexts of the killings of women.

Chapter Eight pulls together the findings of the research and goes back to the key research question: 'What can be learned from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women?', relates the findings to existing theories and offers a new model to theorise men's violence against women.

Chapter Nine looks at the contribution to knowledge that this thesis has made, my research reflections and recommendations for further research and policy development.

## **Chapter Two – Theory, Policy, Practice and Activism: Men’s violence against women in the UK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Whether working directly in women’s services, challenging men’s violence as a feminist activist, strategising to tackle men’s violence, fighting for legislative change or seeking to quantify and theorise, the shared goal must be social change. This chapter looks at men’s violence against women, the scale of the problem in the UK and in the international context, and responses to men’s violence against women, in theory, policy and activism.

### **2.2 Men’s violence against women: the agenda**

Men’s violence against women gained attention as a serious issue in activism and the academy in the late 1960s and 1970s, a key tenet of second-wave feminism. Though this thesis will focus primarily on the UK, it is important to acknowledge that feminism was a growing force in the global south as well as across the West, in India, the central Americas, Africa, Middle East and Asia.

The 1970s onwards witnessed many advances in the rights and protections of women who had been subjected to men’s violence in law and policy, though there were steps backwards as well as forwards. Now superseded by the Equality Act 2010, the Sex Discrimination Act came into statute in 1975, and the Race Relations Act in 1976. Men’s right to rape women in marriage was made visible in law in 1973 in *Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) v Morgan*. Morgan told three of his friends that his wife was ‘kinky’ and set them up to rape her. He did not frame the planned acts as non-consensual, indeed the three friends claimed that Morgan told them to ignore her if she resisted as feigning protest was part of the ‘game’. They were found guilty of rape, though received derisory sentences. Morgan was not found guilty of rape but of aiding and abetting because being married to the victim meant he could not have raped her, in

other words, marriage was an accepted absolute defence for rape in the English court of law. This remained the case until *R v R* in 1991 when a man was convicted of attempting to rape his wife, after she had left him and moved in with her parents but was still legally married to him. R.'s defence claimed that he could not be guilty of rape/attempted rape because of marital rape exemption. A panel of five judges heard the case and in the judgment, delivered by Lord Lane, it was stated "We take the view that the time has now arrived when the law should declare that a rapist remains a rapist subject to the criminal law, irrespective of his relationship with his victim." (*R v R*, 1991, House of Lords). Reflecting increased recognition of the harms of domestic violence Labour MP Jack Ashley raised the lack of options for women fleeing violent male partners in the British Parliament in 1973, (Bindel, 2021).

Feminist activism has continued to push forward reform. As discussed in Chapter One, in October 2010, a measure to reform the law by ending the defence to murder of provocation by infidelity (known as the nagging and shagging defence), introduced by Harriet Harman, was passed. A new defence of loss of control, which expressly prohibited infidelity came into force, although this defence is not without limitations and criticisms, for example that since *R v Clinton*, the defence no longer services to protect women from aggressive males, (Kewley, 2015) or as already noted, the concern that sexism and misogyny in sentencing undermine the potential of reform. (Horder and Fitz-Gibbon, 2015.)

Joan Smith (1989), in her first book, *Misogynies*, gave a searing account of how misogyny in the West Yorkshire police force hampered attempts to apprehend Peter Sutcliffe, who murdered at least 13 women between 1975 and 1980. Though purportedly no longer dismissing intimate partner violence as 'just a domestic' and with increased acknowledgement of the role of policing in intimate partner violence, reform to policing has been frustratingly slow and references to widespread misogynistic attitudes and 'locker-room cultures' persist (Centre for Women's Justice, 2020). In 2019 the Centre for Women's Justice launched a super-complaint

highlighting failures by the police to use their powers to protect victims of domestic violence and abuse and a report by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services largely upheld complaints raised following the abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021 by serving police officer Wayne Couzens

In 2021, The Femicide Census revealed that since 2009 at least 16 serving or former police officers had killed women, 13 of these being a current or former partner.

(Men's) violence against women continues to attract national and international high-level strategic attention and interventions. In 2021, it was announced that violence against women will be added to the strategic police requirements, meaning that chief constables will be mandated to increase resources and, for the first time, elevate the response to (men's) violence against women to the same status as terrorism, (Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, 2021).

Men's violence against women has become a global atrocity recognised by the United Nations' Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 'as a form and manifestation of gender-based discrimination, used to subordinate and oppress women'. In the domain of international policy, the disproportionate victimisation of women by perpetrators amongst whom men are more disproportionately represented, is most usually referred to as 'gender-based violence' (from example CEDAW General Recommendation No 35). This serves to recognise that men may experience some of the forms of violence and women may also perpetrate some of them. The UK government has favoured the term 'violence against women and girls' and has had a strategy to tackle violence against women and girls since 2010, its third and most recent incarnation was released in 2021. Whilst the UK appellation recognises the victimisation of females, it falls shy of acknowledging the role of men until the third of its three forewords, when activist Nimco Ali identifies that most of the violence is committed by men, and also crucially, because of patriarchal structures.

Sex differences in victimisation and perpetration of sexual and domestic violence are unequivocal. For the year ending March 2020, 74.1 per cent of all victims of recorded domestic-abuse related offences against adults aged between 16 and 74 years were female. This breaks down to women being 74.3 per cent of domestic-abuse related victims of criminal damage and arson, 76.6 per cent of victims of public order offences, 73.4 per cent of victims of crimes against the person, 94.1 per cent of domestic-abuse related sexual offences. 83 per cent of victims of high frequency repeat crimes (more than ten crimes) are women. (Walby and Towers, 2017). According to the Crown Prosecution Service, men constituted 91.8 per cent of defendants in domestic abuse-related prosecutions in England and Wales in the year ending March 2020 (ONS 2021). For the year ending March 2020, 98.3 per cent of perpetrators of rapes or assaults by penetration in England and Wales, were males. In ONS data for the year ending March 2020 based on data from 41 police forces in England and Wales the victim was female in 84 per cent of sexual offences and 90 per cent of victims of rape offences were female. It is estimated that approximately 72,800 people are involved in prostitution in the UK, of whom 88 per cent are female (Brooks-Gordon et al., 2015). Girls are at least three times more likely than boys to report experiences of child sexual abuse. (Parke and Karsna, 2019).

In the 11 years from April 2010 to March 2021, 1,001 people were killed by a current or former partner, 862 (86.1 per cent) of the victims were female, 139 (13.9 per cent) were male, while 88 per cent of perpetrators were male. (ONS, 2022). Compared to men, women suffer greater fear of the partner who is abusing them (Kimmel, 2002, citing Straus). In the UK, on average, a woman is killed by a man every three days, a woman is killed by a male current or former partner every four days. (Femicide Census, 2020).

Using the term 'men's violence against women' serves three main functions. Firstly, it recognises the proportionality of victims and perpetrators, identifying both; secondly, it recognises the overlaps between different manifestations of 'abuse, coercion and

force' (Kelly, 1987, page 59); and thirdly, locates the violence and abuse in a patriarchal system of sex inequalities.

Though Kelly (1987, 1988) used the concept of the 'continuum of sexual violence' more than 30 years ago, the silos inherent in the concepts of sexual and domestic violence and abuse, prostitution, child abuse, sexual exploitation, harassment, and stalking, persist. Whilst there are reasons that it is important to be able to identify and name a particular manifestation of men's violence against and abuse of women, it is equally important that we recognise that no form of patriarchal violence and abuse occurs to the exclusion of all others. Sexual violence and abuse occur in intimate partner and family relationships. Women may be prostituted by men who are their partners or family members, men may pay for sexual access to women and subject them to unwanted acts, including the expectation of sexual exclusivity and romantic attachment. And those we love may sexually exploit us, may take explicit images with or without consent and then share them, with or without consent. Even the concept of consent in the heteronormative patriarchal society is open to critique (Rich, 1980) and whether that which is paid for can ever be considered to be consensually given. Men's use of power and coercion crosses sexual violence and abuse and prostitution. Thus, the term 'men's violence against women' should not be understood to be an umbrella term for several detached or discrete forms of violence and abuse but of overlapping and connected abuses.

Finally, men's violence against women and girls does not operate in an equal society and is both a cause and consequence of that sex inequality. Whilst domestic and sexual violence persist in the most sexually egalitarian societies and domestic abuse and femicide rates largely inversely correlate with indices of sex-equality (Palma-Solis et al., 2008, Corradi and Stöckl, 2014) with the exception of apparently contradictory relationships between high levels of sex-equality and high incidences of intimate partner violence against women in Nordic Countries (Gracia and Merlo, 2016), none of these countries can be said to have achieved equality between women and men. So,

even if rates of perpetration of sexual and domestic violence and abuse were identical, even if the same proportion of women to men sold or paid for sex, the experiences would be different because of the wider social context. Terms like 'domestic violence', 'sexual violence', 'intimate partner violence' and 'gender-based violence', whilst purporting to acknowledge that despite differences of proportionality both sexes can be either victim or aggressor, serve additionally to hide the differential impact that occurs because of structural sex inequality. The impact of an individual act of violence perpetrated by an individual man against an individual woman is not the same as an identical act perpetrated by an individual woman against an individual man because the context is not the same.

It is important to recognise the huge crossover of change makers between theorists, activists, providers, social and political policy makers, and survivors. Those who are now internationally renowned academics like Jalna Hanmer, the Dobashes, and Liz Kelly, were active in developing and supporting Rape Crisis and refuge services, as more recently were Nicole Westmarland, Fiona Vera-Gray, Aisha Gill and Nancy Lombard. The campaigning work of Southall Black Sisters, rooted in their work with survivors has driven change in laws on provocation, domestic violence concessions regarding immigration and opportunities to access support for women with no recourse to public funds. Former Women's Aid children's worker and research and fundraising manager for Respect, Thangam Debonnaire is now an MP, as is Jess Phillips who was previously a Business Development Manager for Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid. Rosie Duffield MP is a survivor of domestic abuse, Naz Shah MP is forced marriage survivor and daughter of a woman imprisoned for killing a man who was abusing her. Purna Sen has worked in and served on boards of small and large Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in academia, and until recently was Director of the Policy Division and then the Executive Co-ordinator and Spokesperson on addressing sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination for UN Women. This

can or should only be good for the society's response to men's violence against women and our ability to recognise its complexities.

Before 2010, specialist services for women survivors of men's violence were not seen as valuable contracts for large generic service providers but were developed by activists and survivors together – and many women were both. Challenging power differentials of sex, class and race was integral to the movement, critically so too was the recognition that any woman could be a victim of men's violence. The personal was the political in practice, and divisions between professionals and survivors were recognised as largely being the result of good fortune. And until the early 1990s, most specialist sexual and domestic violence services were small local charities run as collectives (Hague, 2021). Most, if not all, had been developed when the notion of regular funding seemed like a pipe dream. Although too many small independent women's organisations have been swallowed by the large generic service providers, many of those which remain are led by survivors and some, such as Southall Black Sisters, nia, Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation, actively participate in strategic litigation, retaining their role as agents of social change.

Instead of a unified approach which integrated forms of men's violence against women, as advocated by Kelly, (1987, 1988) silos which divided domestic violence, sexual violence, prostitution, and so-called honour-based crimes became increasingly commonplace in policy, support and service provision, law, academia and even, to some degree, feminist activism. With the exception of female genital mutilation, the compulsion to identify males as potential victims grew stronger and claims of 'gender symmetry' were made by some men's rights activists (Fiebert, 2004). The participants of the Vienna Symposium on Femicide, held in 2012 at the United Nations Office at Vienna, released a declaration which included a 123-word definition of femicide in which the words 'man', 'men' or 'male' do not appear once. The full declaration is over 800 words long, mentioning men and boys once, in reference to 'sensitising education programmes' (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2013). The much lauded

and long-awaited Domestic Abuse Act entered the statute books in 2021 and is 'gender neutral' (Domestic Abuse Act, 2021). Getting men's violence against women onto the mainstream policy agenda has been at the cost of the degree of feminist influence.

### **2.3 Explaining and understanding men's violence against women – the influence of feminist theory**

Reviewing different feminist perspectives, Sylvia Walby (1990) identified four main theoretical strands: Marxist feminism, radical feminism, liberal feminism, and dual systems theory, whilst noting the emerging post-structuralism and the influence of theorists such as Foucault, the need to include an analysis of race and racism, and to ask whether the chief sites of oppression for women of colour might be different from those of white women. Briefly, the core of radical feminism and route of sex inequality is an analysis of patriarchy in both personal and political/social spheres. Marxist feminism considers that capitalism drives sex inequality. Liberalism focuses not on structural analysis but on rights and 'the summation of small-scale deprivations' (Walby, 1990, p.4). Dual-systems theory recognises the interplay of both capitalist and patriarchal power relations. Walby identified two different principal forms of patriarchy: private and public. Private patriarchy was based upon household production as a site of women's oppression whilst public patriarchy could be seen in the institutions of public life.

Focusing on violence against women rather than feminist theory more broadly, Lori Heise (1998) developed an integrated ecological framework. Appearing to position herself outside feminism, Heise said that previous theories of violence had either psychological, sociological, criminological foundations; or were based on ideological and political agendas of feminists, who, she said, were reluctant to acknowledge factors other than patriarchy in the ethology of abuse, which failed to explain why some men were violent and others were not. Her four-level integrated, ecological

framework for understanding the origins of violence against women included individual/ontogenetic, microsystem/situational, exosystem/structural and macrosystem/cultural factors. The framework could either be applied to the individual and their situation to develop their profile, or at the level of the community to better understand why rates of abuse vary. One of the strengths of Heise's model is that every factor included in the four levels of the framework had been empirically linked to rates of violence against women. The framework remains a useful construct though there is now almost a quarter of a century of additional research into the correlates of levels of men's violence against women, which could enrich the model.

Similarly, for Flood and Pease (2009), two clusters of factors, broadly gender and culture, influence attitudes to men's violence against women: individual, organisational (formal institutions), community (informal institutions) and societal. "There is a consistent relationship between men's adherence to sexist, patriarchal, and/or sexually hostile attitudes and their use of violence against women." (Flood and Pease, 2009, p126). Moreover, these attitudes are significant to men's violence against women in three main ways: to men as the perpetrators of violence against women, to women in their responses to this victimisation and in community and institutional responses to men's violence against women.

Carol Hagemann-White et al. (2010) developed a four-level model to explain factors at play in violence against women and girls, grouping the factors into four sub-sets close to those of Heise (though addressed in reverse order): the overall structures in the social order, the macro level; the social norms, practices and institutions which regulate daily life, the meso level; the day to day interactions in the immediate environment, the micro level; and people's individual life histories, ontogenetic level. Corresponding implications for policy were developed to address actions which would be needed to be implemented at each level in order to tackle – end or reduce depending on optimism or ambition – men's violence against women and girls.

According to DeKeseredy (2021), the feminist perspective regarding men's violence against women has weakened in the academic field, particularly over the last decade. He notes that most authors who write about violence against women are now based in psychology, psychiatry, nursing, and medicine. They are grounded in ways of knowing, which focuses more on the individual and loses sight of how broader social, cultural, political, and economic forces, the sociological perspective, shapes violence against women and societal reactions to its shapes and forms. DeKeseredy cites Pease (2019), describing the shift towards gender neutral language which stems from feminist scholars and activists attempting to locate themselves in the dominant discourse to enable themselves to gain some movement on women's victimisation. According to Pease, feminist scholars, or scholars with an interest in sexual and domestic violence and abuse, have entered into an 'unholy alliance' with neoliberal states with no interest in eliminating women's systematic oppression. For DeKeseredy, the feminist theory of woman abuse that prioritises the concept of patriarchy is less valuable to senior administrators in the academy than obtaining grant funding. He argues that feminist academics develop atheoretical, gender-neutral grant proposals in order to ensure their survival in institutions of higher learning. DeKeseredy makes a compelling call arguing for the revival of feminist sociology which centralises theories of patriarchy; albeit one which I find is weakened but not extinguished by his failure to use the precursor 'men's' or 'male' to violence against women.

DeKeseredy's description of academia is mirrored in the development of services for women who have been subjected to men's violence. The multitude of small, independent, local, and proudly feminist domestic violence and abuse agencies are largely gone. Some have merged to create larger women-led charities, but many have been lost as the government led competitive contract culture introduced by the Tony Blair Labour Government has allowed larger non-specialist providers to successfully bid for and subsume services that had been developed over decades by feminists and survivors.

DeKeseredy's critique of the absence of an analysis of patriarchy could be applied to Hagemann White et al.'s four-level model. At the same time, the model illustrates the multi-level coordinated approach that would need to be undertaken to seriously reduce men's violence against women and shows how strategies such as the Government's Strategy to Tackle Violence Against Women (2010, 2016, 2021) are doomed to only have moderate success as they mainly address meso-level (institutional) interventions, with weak interventions at the cultural level, way below anything that could shift cultural norms and values and scant regard for structural inequality. Although 'gender' equality and inequality are mentioned several times, there are no actions identified to address structural sex inequality between women and men. Attention to the existence of our sexist, objectifying and misogynistic dominant culture and its role as a causal component of men's violence against women is absent.

James-Hanman (2017) describes previous governments moving interventions as far from empowering survivors, instead focusing on risk, prosecution, and information sharing; observing that "When the last Labour Government finally capitulated to demands for a national Violence Against Women strategy in 2009, it was notable how much of the content was criminal justice system-focused, even though this was utilised by a minority of survivors," (James-Hanman, 2017, pp 335). The UK government's three successive strategies to tackle men's violence against women and girls, regardless of the political party or parties behind their development exemplify DeKeseredy's point that no neo-liberal state action has an active interest in eliminating women's systematic oppression. Indeed, that the strategy is called 'Tackling violence against women' rather than 'Ending [men's] violence against women' could be seen as an admission of this.

Heise's ecological model preceded the 12 years of desertion of feminist theory identified by DeKeseredy (2021) by at least ten years and Hagemann-White et al.'s would have been on the cusp. Both models address violence against women, so whilst

failing to name the perpetrators, and critiquing feminist analysis as Heise does, whilst not centring patriarchy, at least they are not 'gender neutral'. Whether Heise or Hagemann-White et al. rejected a feminist analysis which names and centres patriarchy, as Heise implied, or downplayed it whilst integrating feminist principles, perhaps in order to make the model more appealing to policy makers, both failed to build in intersecting inequalities of race and class, identified as necessary by Walby (1990), or indeed others such as those relating to sexuality or disability.

Kelly (2016) developed her work on the continuum of sexual violence arguing that legislative frameworks, specifically the United Nations 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women's definition of violence against women, unhelpfully conflated forms of violence and contexts of violence. She describes how the concept of a conducive context arose when she was researching trafficking in Central Asia and how, in order to address trafficking, it was necessary to address not only those victimised or potentially victimised and those involved in organised crime, but to look also at "interconnecting social, political and economic conditions within which exploitative operators profit from the misfortunes of others" (Kelly, 2016 para 5). Noting that feminists had already identified the family, institutions, conflict, public space and more recently online environments as conducive contexts for men's violence against women, she argues that the vulnerability of women and girls can be accentuated by other contexts such as conflict and migration, connecting this to Crenshaw's (1991) work on intersectionality and the understanding that different forms of structural inequality, discrimination, and hate can overlap and compound one another.

In '*Honour Killing and Violence*', Gill et al. (2014) present an anthology of pieces exploring the balance between cultural essentialism and recognising the specificities of so-called 'honour' based violence (HBV) as a manifestation of men's violence against women and girls. 'HBV is often viewed as an expression of minority culture's atavistic nature', (Gill, 2014, p9) as a harmful traditional practice associated with non-Western

cultures. This is often a xenophobic position which overlooks the harmful practices and traditions in Western cultures and pays less attention to the agency/choices of the perpetrators as individuals, focusing on cultural pressures compared to a perpetrator with very similar motivations from a Western cultural background where individual pathology and motivations may be more likely to be the focus of attempts to explain his behaviour. Little regard is paid to the patriarchal values and norms that underpin all forms of men's violence against women and girls. It is important to remember also, that most people do not carry out HBV despite equal exposure to the honour-based norms as those who do.

Siddiqui (2014) describes how state policy on race relations moved from an assimilationist approach in the 1950s and 1960s which gave way to a neo-liberal but still neo-colonial multiculturalist approach from the mid-1960s. This multiculturalism ignored structural racism and, as Black feminists argued, also violence against women for Black, Asian and other minority ethnic communities. Such challenges led to the development of a new 'mature multiculturalism' emphasising greater equality between the sexes whilst recognising cultural differences. Later, the post 9/11 world with re-energised religious fundamentalism pushed a return to assimilationist policies dressed up as social cohesion/multi-faithism which again deprioritised sex inequality. Siddiqui goes on to reflect on the development of her own ideas, as a key member of the unparalleled Black feminist support provider for women who had been subjected to violence, Southall Black Sisters. Recounting how she had, in her earlier work, challenged the acceptability of 'arranged marriages'; she later developed the term 'mature multiculturalism' which emphasised gender-equality and the rights of minority women. For Siddiqui "This position recognises similarity and difference between BME and white majority women, avoiding both the constructs of the collective victimhood, which denies the specificity of BME women's experiences, and the 'diversity' argument which does not recognise the commonalities."

Socio-economic class has become a neglected area in feminist scholarship addressing men's violence against women. Unfortunately following the well-trodden criminological path of failing to routinely disaggregate data by sex even though they had looked at sex as a risk factor, Shaw et al. (2004) found that between 1996 and 2000, people living in the poorest ten per cent of Britain were 5.7 times more likely to be murdered than those living in the least poor ten per cent and that whilst murder rates increased overall in the UK, in the most affluent parts they had decreased. They concluded that this meant efforts to reduce homicide should focus on young men in deprived areas and the use of knives and bottles. Their disassociation of murder from perpetrators prevented them from an analysis of the different perpetration and victim rates between women and men, and therefore prevented them from identifying sex inequality as a driver behind women's disproportionate victimhood to perpetration. Similarly, in the USA, geographical areas with higher levels of social capital have been found to exhibit lower homicide rates, (Rosenfeld et al., 2001); though they related this to a breakdown of anomie. Had they addressed men's violence against women, they might have considered that rather than a rejection of the social norms which govern behaviour, higher rates of men's violence against women may represent norms which support and enable men's violence against women. Again, illustrating a problem with theories of fatal violence that do not take account of sex differences. Scrambler (2019) argues that whilst neo-liberal responses may claim to address sexism, racism, and sexuality, the movement can only persist by legitimising the widening of socioeconomic inequalities and that class has lost its salience for identity formation 'but it has lost none of its structural force. If it has a reduced impact "subjectively", it has [...] enhanced its impact "objectively"' (Scrambler, 2019 p.1).

Walby and Allen's 2004 analysis of the British Crime Survey found that vulnerability to inter-personal violence is associated with lack of access to economic resources. Women in households with an income less than £10,000 were three and a half times more at risk of domestic violence than those in households over £20,000, at that time,

half the national average wage, with women who would not be able to find £100 at short notice also three and a half times more likely to be at risk of domestic violence than those who could. Risk of sexual violence was also found to be double that for those who could not access £100 as those who could. There were also differential risks according to employment and housing status.

A feminist theory/model of men's violence against women must be able to consider – and address – additional inequalities that many, indeed most, women face. It must be able to address specificities and commonalities in women's experiences, though these inequalities must include race, class, disability, age, and the multiple disadvantages that some women's lives present.

#### **2.4 Locating my research within this body of theory**

My work, including this thesis, is not gender neutral. Sex and gender have long been contested terms in feminist sociology (Walby, 1990). Gender is not neutral, it is a socially constructed hierarchy that functions to reproduce and maintain sex inequality. (N'guessan, 2011; Berdahl, 2007). Sex is biologically based. Despite increased and increasingly heated attention to the issue of defining sex, there is 'no serious challenge to the idea of two-natural, pre-given sexes;' concluded Stock after examining the three challenges to this assertion: the gamete, chromosome, and cluster (morphological characteristic) (Stock, 2021 pp. 44-75).

I posit that the connection between men's fatal violence against women occurring in different contexts and perpetrated by men upon women with whom they had an intimate, family, or other relationship or lack of it, have, more in common with each other than the same type of homicide between different sex combinations of victim and survivor.

Looking at the commonalities between different forms of men's fatal violence against women has the potential to yield more important lessons for causality and

interventions needed for genuine prevention than a misplaced focus on interpersonal violence as a root or causal factor requiring rectification. Men's violence against women and girls is both a symptom of patriarchy and a reinforcer of women's subjugation by men. Moreover, by framing my work as addressing men's fatal violence against women, I am naming the agent and victim, making very clear that my work is anything but gender neutral, and places patriarchy central to analysis and theorising. However, any theories of men's violence against women must also take into account social contexts that are wider than sex/gender inequality – such as class, racism, disability, conflict, organised crime – which accentuate inequalities of sex/gender and the conducive context of men's violence against some women.

## **2.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has looked at how men's violence against women came to be recognised as a key issue, the force of second-wave feminism driving activism, the development of specialist services and legal and policy reform and the importance of the feminist resistance to the concept of 'us and them' when looking at men's violence against women as a woman. No woman is an outsider and there is huge overlap between victim/survivor, theorist, activist, and service provider.

Using the term 'men's violence against women' is important. It recognises that the sex of both victims and perpetrators, the overlaps between different manifestations of coercion, abuse, and violence, and enables us to locate the problem within patriarchal sex inequality.

Some of the key theories attempting to explain and contextualise men's violence against women were explored, including: Walby's identification of public and private patriarchy, Heise's ecological model and Hagemann-White et al.'s four-level model and DeKeseredy's compelling case for bringing the concept of patriarchy back into the research and theorising about men's violence against women.

I clarified why my work addresses women (and men) as a sex class and made it clear that my approach is not gender neutral, but posits socially constructed gender as a tool of patriarchy; and stressed that any feminist analysis of men's violence against women must take account of intersecting inequalities, be they due to socio-economic class, race, disability, age, and looked at how our responses must take account of similarities and specificities or differences between women.

## **Chapter Three – Femicide**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter moves on from the theory, policy, practice and activism in responding to men's violence against women in the UK to focus on femicide: 'the misogynistic killing of women by men' (Radford and Russell, 1992, p.3). I will explore the history of the word, its emergence into and evolution in feminist diction and the complexities of definition. I will then examine the prevalence of femicide in the UK and, briefly, in the global context before moving on to a thematic review of femicide research.

### **3.2 History and evolution of the concept of femicide**

Hess and Marx Ferree (1987) identified three chronological stages in the study of women and men: starting with an analysis of sex differences, through increasing awareness of sex roles and stereotypes, socially constructed gender and socialisation to recognition of the centrality of gender in all social systems. The study of men's fatal violence against women can be seen to have evolved following a similar trajectory, from early identification of sex differences (Wolfgang (1958), through the identification of domestic violence as a significant and disproportionate threat to women (Straus 1980, Cannings 1984) and on to femicide, the killing of women because they are women (Radford and Russell, 1992).

#### **3.2.1 19<sup>th</sup> Century and before**

The earliest referenced written version of the term 'femicide' in the UK is over two hundred years old and appeared in J. Corry's '*A Satirical View of London*', 1801:

'This species of delinquency may be denominated femicide; for the monster who betrays a credulous virgin and consigns her to infamy, in reality is a most relentless murderer.' (Corry, 1801, cited in Russell, 2008).

The term appears again in 1848 in Wharton's Law Lexicon suggesting that some awareness of sex-specific murder was recognised by law (cited in Russell, 2008). However, the earlier absence of a word referring to the sex-specific killing of women, or lack of written reference to it, does not indicate that sex-specific killings of women did not occur or were not recognised. 'The concept of femicide ..... is as old as patriarchy itself.' wrote Jill Radford in the introduction of *'Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing'* (Radford and Russell, 1995). Early known examples were given, including lesbicide in ancient Rome and so called 'witch' hunting in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century England. Similarly, fatal intimate partner violence is not a recent phenomenon, and doubtlessly existed long before it was written about in 1878 by Frances Power-Cobbe, although Power-Cobbe does not use the term 'femicide' in her 1878 work, *'Wife Torture'* (reproduced in Hamilton, 2005, p124 -49). Nevertheless, the piece is a clear antecedent of, and should be considered in the context of, contemporary femicide activism both in terms of content and intent. The piece was produced as part of campaigns for revisions to the Matrimonial Causes Act (introduced in 1857) to give protections to women who were subjected to men's violence in marriage, which would allow them to obtain a protection order and custody of their children. Power-Cobbe lists 28 examples of intimate partner femicide throughout the piece, which she terms 'specimens of the tortures', starting with:

- 'Edward Deacon, shoemaker, murdered his wife by cutting her head with a chopper
- John Thomas Green, painter, shot his wife, with a pistol
- John Eblethrift, labourer, murdered his wife by stabbing
- Charles O'Donnell, labourer, murdered his wife by beating
- Henry Webster, labourer, murdered his wife by cutting her throat'

Building the detail of cited cases:

'John Mills poured out vitriol deliberately, and threw it in his wife's face, because she asked him to give her some of his wages. He had said previously that he would blind her.' (cited in Hamilton, 1995, pp. 124-49)

and ending with a page-long extract from a newspaper about Thomas Harlow, imprisoned for the manslaughter of 45-year-old Ellen Harlow. Notably, Power-Cobbe names the perpetrators not the victims in all but the final case, where Ellen Harlow is named in the news report.

Hamilton (2005) argues that Power-Cobbe uses violated women's bodies to guarantee political acts and interventions, which I would hope is a motivation that all academics, activists and practitioners addressing femicide share. Power-Cobbe identified this for herself, later describing the catalyst for *Wife Torture* in her autobiographical work (*Life of Frances Power-Cobbe as Told by Herself*, 1904):

'I was by chance reading a newspaper in which a whole series of frightful cases ... were recorded. ...I got up out of my armchair, half dazed, and said to myself: "I will never rest till I have tried what I can do to stop this."' (Power-Cobbe, 1894)

Hamilton further argues that Power-Cobbe uses a popular culture narrative mode – the narrative of sensation – carefully patrolled exposure to representations of horrific violence to solicit a response for political ends. Moreover, that she brought her feminist analysis of 'wife-beating' to a large, mainstream, and influential audience through the periodical press which offered readers the opportunity to access considered and analytical pieces rather than the reportage of the daily or weekly press. This choice of placing, prioritising a mainstream audience, has been the preferred target of the UK's Femicide Census almost one hundred and fifty years later, and the same narrative tool of the 'carefully patrolled exposure' or refusal to make invisible the repetitive brutality of extreme violence of femicide and listing case-by-case examples is also used in my own work, *Counting Dead Women*, and sister project the Femicide Census.

### 3.2.2 Second-wave feminism and politicising woman-killing

Mary Daly used the term 'gynocide' in 1973 to describe 'the killing of the female spirit' (p73). Like its linguistic and political counterpart 'genocide', Daly used 'gynocide' to describe not only the literal deliberate killing of a group or class of people (in the case of gynocide the sex-class women) but also the intentional and systemic destruction of that people's language, traditions, morale, sense of unity and culture. Gynocide was not only harmful to women in the bodily sense but it was also a 'patriarchal attempt to erase female creativity'. She cited historical and/or globally broad examples which included Chinese foot-binding, widow burning, witch burning, and female genital mutilation but avoided xenophobic othering, recognising that although modern day gynocide may be 'masked', it included examples from American harmful cultural practices such as 'wife beating', rape, child abuse, pornography and gynaecology. (Daly, 1973). For Daly, gynocide was as good as unavoidable in patriarchal society, identifying patriarchy as 'the prevailing religion of the entire planet, and its essential message is necrophilia.' (Daly, 1978, pp 3). The concept was later defined by Andrea Dworkin as 'the systematic crippling, raping, and/or killing of women by men ...The relentless violence perpetrated by the gender class men on the gender class women' (Dworkin, 1976, pp 16).

Diana Russell is widely acknowledged as bringing the term 'femicide' into modern usage and its first specifically feminist application. She used the word publicly for the first time at the first Tribunal on Crimes Against Women, in Brussels in 1976, a gathering of approximately 2,000 women from 40 countries across the world. She defined femicide, she later stated, though did not do so in her speech at the time, as 'a hate killing of females perpetrated by males' (Russell, 2011, online). Russell acknowledges that she first heard the term in 1974 when a friend told her that a woman (later identified as Carol Orlock) was planning to write a book called *Femicide* (which never came to be). (Russell, 2011, online). Russell says that she was unaware of the nineteenth century history of the term at that time and stresses that femicide is

not synonymous with gynocide. Unlike gynocide, which included all forms of male violence against women as well as social and cultural erasure, femicide was concerned exclusively with killing.

In 1985, Mary Ann Warren, looking at the issue of sex-selective abortion used the term 'gendercide', defining it as 'the deliberate extermination of persons of a particular sex (or gender)' (Warren, 1985). Warren deliberately selected a sex-neutral term, arguing that sexually discriminatory killing was no more acceptable if the victims happened to be male. This may be true, but it is irrelevant to the question of the value of the sex-specific term femicide. The concepts of femicide and gynocide do not have to be seen to suggest that the sexually discriminatory killing of men is acceptable. They merely position femicide and gynocide within patriarchal society where men's supremacy and the oppression of women are structural; implying otherwise merely demeans the potentially useful term of gendercide (in appropriate contexts) and places it alongside current day cries of 'What about the men?'

### **3.3 Defining Femicide**

#### **3.3.1 Developing Femicide as a Feminist Issue in the Context of Men's Violence Against Women**

1992 saw the publication of Russell and Radford's *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*, a co-edited anthology. The book offered the first known written and explicitly feminist definition of femicide as 'the misogynistic killing of women by men' (1992, p.3) in its introduction by Jill Radford, later referred to as 'the killing of women because they're women'. Femicide was presented as a form of sexual violence, where sexual violence, as defined by Kelly (1992), was 'any physical, visual, verbal or sexual act' experienced by a woman or girl 'at the time or later, as a threat, invasion, or assault, that has the effect of hurting or degrading her and/or takes away her ability to control intimate contact' (1992, p.3). In her introductory chapter, Jill Radford placed femicide

as occurring within the framework of sexual violence, itself within 'the context of the overall oppression of women in a patriarchal society.' (1992, p.3).

Kelly's concept of sexual violence enabled links to be made across all forms of men's violence against women and for the concept of a 'continuum of sexual violence' to be seen as a form of social control which had a critical role in the maintenance of patriarchy. Radford expanded the application of the concept to femicide in its patriarchal context to allow the radical feminist analysis of the law, the media and social policy. So, for example, the role of the media was considered, which then – as it does still – all but ignored the misogynistic motivations of men who killed women; therefore, overlooking the sexual politics of femicide and contributing to the maintenance of patriarchy and simultaneously that of men's violence against women. For Radford and Russell, naming and defining femicide was crucial in order to promote awareness and generate resistance. For Russell, naming femicide had a political purpose, as she explained in a personal communication in 2015 'You can't mobilize against something with no name' (cited in Corradi et al., 2016). Jill Radford, reflecting on the book in 2015 in a presentation she gave at the launch of the Femicide Census some 23 years after publication, described their feminist analysis of femicide as:

- theoretically located, shoring-up male dominance, power and control
- recognising that the phenomenon was not a new issue but 'as old as patriarchy'
- inclusive of common and diverse forms across times, between cultures and within societies
- named from women's standpoints rather than through perpetrators' intentions, denials, minimisations, justifications and excuses
- collating a body of evidence in one place of 40 accounts of femicide from the UK, USA and India
- offering a platform for resistance and campaigns for change

In 2001, Diana Russell redefined femicide as 'the killing of females by males because they are female' in the co-edited book *Femicide in Global Perspective*. The motivation of misogyny was thus removed from the definition and replaced by the comparatively nebulous 'because they are female'. Critically, as I will address later, men as the agent continued to be identified. In a piece written in 2011, she reiterated this definition and gave the following examples:

'the stoning to death of females (which I consider a form of torture-femicide); murders of females for so-called "honor;" rape murders; murders of women and girls by their husbands, boyfriends, and dates, for having an affair, or being rebellious, or any number of other excuses; wife-killing by immolation because of too little dowry; deaths as a result of genital mutilations; female sex slaves, trafficked females, and prostituted females, murdered by their "owners", traffickers, "johns" and pimps, and females killed by misogynist strangers, acquaintances, and serial killers'. (Russell, 2011, online.)

Speaking at the United Nations Symposium on Femicide in 2012, she stated that this, her 2001 definition, was the one she still used to that day. She made clear that her definition did not and still does not include killings of women by men that are not because of gender, citing accidental killings or 'the murders of women by men in which the victims' gender is irrelevant' such as in the context of bank robberies; and that whilst, by using the term female, she was denoting the inclusion of babies and older girls who would be excluded from the term 'woman', she did not include sex-selective abortion which she argued should correctly be termed 'female feticide' (Russell, 2014).

Russell had earlier stated that not all cases of 'wife murder' qualify as femicide, giving the example of 'when husbands murder their wives for economic reasons', whereas where men murder their wives in a jealous rage or in outrage that they left or were intending to leave them, do qualify, (Russell, 2002). I question Russell's rejection of 'economic reasons', however, as when men murder women partners or ex-partners

and use the excuse of 'economic reasons,' like many other excuses to explain away their violence, it is dependent on them viewing women as their possession or their problem and seeing her life as being less important than their solvency/financial health; on capitalist patriarchy's positioning of many women, especially those with children, as financially dependent on men; the stereotype of a woman as being a financial drain on 'men's finances' and also upon the notion of man the provider which is frequently bound up in the concept of masculinity. It is absolutely rooted in patriarchy. Similarly, the example of bank robbers is open to question for its focus only on the 'gender' (her term, I'd use sex here) of the victim. If the sex of both the victim and perpetrator are important to defining femicide, and if the perpetrator is carrying out an activity disproportionately carried out by one sex (for example bank robbery), then socially constructed gender in this is not irrelevant, (Feyerick, D. and Steffen, S. 2009). In other words, if the impact of socially constructed gender on female and male victimisation and perpetration of homicide was more fully incorporated into our understanding of femicide, the circumstances of women's deaths at the hands of men, then the term would have wider application.

### **3.3.2 Femicidio or feminicidio and the question of who owns a concept**

Russell recounted that she was asked permission by Mexican feminist academic and Congresswoman Marcela Lagarde (Russell, 2011) to translate the term femicide into 'feminicidio' (rather than femicidio) in Spanish and also to arrange translations into Spanish of her co-edited books from 1992 and 2001. She refers to her delight at this request in the same piece and her consent in her 2012 Vienna Symposium speech. Russell credits Lagarde for the terms 'femicidio' and 'feminicidio' becoming widely used in Mexico and then spreading across Central and Southern America and the resultant feminist and/or state actions to tackle femicide. (The term 'feminicidio' is used in laws in Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala, whereas 'femicidio' is used in other South American countries.) Indeed, Lagarde herself, during her term as a federal deputy in Mexico, helped to pass the General Law to Provide Women with Access to a

Life Free of Violence in 2007. The law recognised the misogynistic context of violence against women and cited feminicidio as an extreme form of this violence (Russell, 2011).

However, by 2005, Lagarde had changed her definition of feminicidio to include impunity, or state complicity through negligence, omission, inaction and/or ineptitude, with particular reference to the high rates of femicide in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. According to Corradi et al. (2016), this was in recognition of the specific context of 'narco-culture, organised crime and structural violence' in Mexico. However, this new framing was resisted by Russell, who interpreted it, not as reflecting a particular context of impunity and impotence in a failed state, but as suggesting that where femicide perpetrators are arrested, charged, and imprisoned, the killing would no longer be regarded as femicide because the condition of impunity was not met. Therefore, in the USA and UK where most femicides and homicides result in criminal sanctions, and so can much less justifiably be seen as subjected to impunity or state compliance, rates of femicide would be much lower than the rates of fatal violence against women because a definition which included those concepts would exclude the deaths of women where men were held to account and to which the state responded appropriately.

Russell also stated that she did not like the word because it sounds too closely 'resembles the oppressive concept of Femininity' to English speakers, whom she refers to as 'massive numbers of individuals in the world', (Russell, 2011, online); notwithstanding that those same English speakers have managed to understand that the word 'feminist' – also sounding very similar to the word 'feminine' – means something quite different. Finally, it was reported that Russell claimed that having two terms in Spanish: 'femicidio' and 'feminicidio', has led to a situation where advocates of one term refuse to collaborate with those of the other (Russell, 2011, *ibid*). Not long after, Russell added that she considered 'it vitally important to adhere to only one term, namely femicide, regardless of the languages spoken in non-English-speaking

countries.' She referred to her distress about Lagarde being credited as coining either the terms 'femicidio' or 'feminicidio', stating that redefinition/translation is not the same as coining a term and without her using the term femicide, there would be no such term, including feminicidio (Russell, 2011, online). Corradi et al. (2016) offer a more generous interpretation, that the word was translated from English into 'another language and applied in a very specific socio-political context, so that it became instrumental in changing reality and improving the lives of women' (p. 983).

Corradi et al. allow for acknowledgment of the contribution of both Russell and Lagarde in the act of naming forms of men's violence against women and their patriarchal context. The wrestle over naming, conceptualising, definitions, and ownership however let slip an important hazard, that of ethnocentrism. Not only in the sense of translating and recognising differences and commonalities in global issues – such as femicide, or men's fatal violence against women. For example, in Russell's 2011 definition, cited earlier, the stoning to death of women is singled out as being torture-femicide. This overlooks many different examples of men killing women, including those murdering their partners or ex-partners, as examples of torture. Torture is the deliberate inflicting of severe pain on someone as a punishment or in order to force them to do or say something. Many intimate-partner homicides meet this definition. It is important that definitions do not problematise forms of violence more prevalent in parts of the world outside those in which the concept developed, if we wish to claim a global application.

Clearly, across the world, governments are far from doing everything possible to reduce men's violence against women and girls. To do so would require tackling the root cause of that violence: sex inequality in patriarchal societies. As Russell states, femicide is not synonymous with female homicide, it is a feminist political term. However, in a patriarchal society, I question whether a man killing a woman can ever not be a political act, or ever be free from the trappings of socially constructed gender.

### **3.4 Femicide as an issue for the international state – depoliticisation**

The concept of femicide is receiving international state attention and the problems of the lack of an agreed definition are recognised. Rashida Manjoo's (Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women to the United Nations) 2012 report to the Human Rights Council, was the first UN document to focus on the issue. She identified that 'the different frameworks, definitions and classifications used in the conceptualisation of femicide often complicate the collection of data from different sources and could lead to documentation that may not be comparable across communities or regions' and noted that weakness in information systems and poor data are major barriers to investigating femicides, developing prevention strategies, and advocating for improved policies. Critically, Manjoo recognised the importance of the wider social context of men's violence against women, of which 'gender-related killings are the extreme manifestation of existing forms of violence against women' stating that the elimination of all forms of violence against women requires that 'systemic discrimination, oppression, and marginalization of women [must] be addressed at the political, operative, judicial and administrative levels.' This note echoes Lagarde's concept of *feminicidio* as specifically including the role of the state, it also can be traced back to Jill Radford's introduction to Russell and Radford's *Femicide* (1992), which includes, as previously quoted, 'the context of the overall oppression of women in a patriarchal society' (p. 3).

Manjoo presented her report and spoke at the Vienna Symposium on Femicide at the United Nations Office in Vienna, in November 2012. The symposium produced the Vienna Declaration which included the following definition of Femicide, based on Manjoo's report (Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS), 2013):

'Femicide is the killing of women and girls because of their gender, which can take the form of, inter alia: 1) the murder of women as a result of intimate partner violence; 2) the torture and misogynist slaying of women; 3) killing of women and girls in the name

of 'honour'; 4) targeted killing of women and girls in the context of armed conflict; 5) dowry-related killings of women; 6) killing of women and girls because of their sexual orientation and gender identity; 7) the killing of Aboriginal and Indigenous women and girls because of their gender; 8) female infanticide and gender-based sex selection foeticide; 9) genital mutilation related femicide; 10) accusations of witchcraft; and 11) other femicides connected with gangs, organized crime, drug dealers, human trafficking, and the proliferation of small arms' (2013, p. 4)

This definition and list of examples includes 'female infanticide and gender-based sex selection foeticide' which had been excluded by Diana Russell. Although this thesis will focus on the killings of adult women and the sample for research includes females aged 14 and over only, I concur that the killing of female infants and foetuses should be included in a definition of femicide.

With the exception of the references to organised crime and human trafficking, the definition excludes many women killed through involvement in commercial sexual exploitation, referred to by Russell as women killed as 'female sex slaves, trafficked females, and prostituted females, murdered by their "owners", traffickers, "johns" and pimps' (Russell, 2011). Women killed directly and indirectly through links to the global pornography industry should also be added. Whilst the term 'inter alia' (meaning 'among other things') indicates that the authors acknowledged their list did not include everything and should not be considered exhaustive, the commodification of people is not proportionately replicated across the sexes. It is clearly linked to the unequal status of women and men. Its omission, save for the reference to trafficking, indicates the normalisation and acceptance of the commodification of women and perhaps reflects different perspectives resulting from different international approaches to the legalisation – or otherwise – of prostitution. Women in prostitution have a death rate that is 40 times higher than women who are not involved in prostitution (Farley, 2004) due to health issues as well as fatal violence. In addition, prostituted women are

repeatedly the specific focus of serial killers; so, the lack of explicit reference to the killings of women associated with prostitution and pornography must be challenged.

The Vienna Symposium definition brings three other problems. Firstly, as is not uncommon, it conflates biological sex and socially constructed gender. They are not the same and treating them as such not only prevents an analysis of gender as a symptom and tool of inequality between women and men, it also prevents analysis of sex roles and gender as contributing to men's propensity to perpetrate violent crime and women's victimisation through masculine and feminine social norms. In addition, it unhelpfully allows for the inclusion of male victims in femicide, which the reference to gender identify at point six confirms, whilst not making what is being included clear to a reader not already well versed in the issue. The phrase 'gender identity' would not have been as widely recognised and understood in 2012 as it is a decade later. Secondly, as discussed at 2.2, the male agent is completely removed from the definition. The argument that femicide can also include the killings of women by women because of the influence of patriarchal values is valid but not to the exclusion of identifying men as overwhelmingly the perpetrators of femicide. The vast majority of women who are killed are killed by men. As discussed in the previous chapter, one of the significant achievements of feminism is getting male violence against women into the mainstream and onto the policy agenda. One of the threats against this achievement is that those with power take the concepts and under the auspices of dealing with the problem shake some of the most basic elements of feminist understanding right out of them. The journey of the word femicide from Russell and Radford's early use to its adoption by the United Nations at the Vienna Symposium is a fitting example. Although the UN and CEDAW make clear the connections between sex inequality and violence against women, this illustrates again DeKeseredy's point that neo-liberal state action is doomed to fail to fulfil the elimination of women's systematic oppression, apparently even when the opposite is espoused. It is absolutely essential that any definition or conception of femicide includes men as the primary

agent and/or beneficiary, with the more sophisticated versions managing to include women acting under the influence of patriarchal values. 'Naming the agent is required for an adequate analysis of atrocities.' (Daly, 1999, cited in Charkowski, 2013) This was reinforced by Julia Penelope in her book '*peaking Freely: Unlearning the Lies of the Fathers' Tongues*', who stated 'Agent deletion is a dangerous and common mind-muddying flaw' (Penelope, 1992, cited in Charkowski, 2013).

Thirdly, as addressed earlier in relation to the Russell's example of torture in femicide, it is important to consider and resist ethnocentrism. The exclusion of pornography and prostitution as harmful practices omitted from the Vienna Symposium definition (discussed above) is another example. In addition, whilst there is rightly the inclusion of the killing of women through FGM, those killed through non-medically required surgery in Europe and America, for example, through plastic surgery including labiaplasty, liposuction and buttock implants or cancer-related deaths to breast implants, almost always undertaken to satisfy the male gaze, are excluded from most definitions of femicide. All are cultural practices which may result in death and are disproportionately or solely inflicted on women. Neo-liberal concepts of choice, which may be argued to apply to labiaplasty but not to FGM, fail to recognise that choice is socially constructed and reflect patriarchal values. I am not arguing that these two procedures are synonymous with each other but that just as it is important to include the specific violations made upon women from non-Western countries, it is important that we avoid exotic atavism, rendering that occurring in cultures in which we personally are not steeped, as primitive, and failing to turn the critical lens upon ourselves and our cultural conditioning. However, my methodology means that this research also fails to include any deaths of women under such circumstances.

### **3.5 Revival of the Concept of Femicide**

The last decade has seen an unprecedented use of the term 'femicide', particularly in feminist activism and academia. Geographically this renewed vigour has seen activism

in Europe (notably the UK, Spain, Italy and Turkey), India, Canada (including a focus of Indigenous women), Australia and Latin America. Though perhaps with the exception of the Canadian Femicide Observatory, Rita Banerji's work in India, and my own work in the UK, there is often a gap between academic and feminist activist responses.

Focusing on academic responses, Corradi et al. (2016) identified five different but sometimes overlapping approaches to the analysis of femicide: feminist, sociological, criminological, human-rights, and decolonial. In brief, the differences are largely that the feminist approach includes an analysis of patriarchy and misogynistic intent; the sociological approach looks at empirical evidence to identify not just individuals but situations, avoiding the need for a misogynistic motive without data to evidence it; the criminological looks at femicide as a distinct phenomenon within homicide studies; the human rights approach describes the attentions of the United Nations and is grounded in international legislation such as CEDAW; whilst the decolonial approach looks at femicide in the context of colonial domination, including as a symbol of resistance to colonisers. This categorisation perhaps underestimates feminist sociology, which is entirely capable of being grounded in empirical evidence, as demonstrated by Dawson and Carrigan (2021), integrating a human right focus whilst recognising patriarchal social structures and should always require itself to be both anti-racist and take into account different cultural contexts including histories of domination and exploitation. Corradi et al. go on to observe that the feminist approach, whilst rightly struggling against sexism and patriarchy, has not solved men's violence against women even in societies which have become 'less patriarchal'. This overlooks that less patriarchal and less pronounced sex-inequality is still patriarchal and incorporates sex inequality; moreover, that with globalisation, such societies and the men in them are not immune to the global influence of the objectification of women. Patriarchy has not rolled onto its back and showed feminists its belly in the countries ranked highest for sex equality, notably Nordic countries and Canada.

### **3.6 Critique of feminist theories of femicide and men's violence against women**

It is important to acknowledge that feminist analysis of men's violence against women is not without critique, such as the assertion that sex differences are deviant but not misogynistically motivated, because men commit most violence regardless of the sex of the victim; and so, sex difference in intimate partner homicides are merely consistent with this (Felson, 2002). This approach however fails to account for the possibility that misogyny and sexism are dominant not deviant beliefs, culturally sanctioned and embedded in social institutions, and functioning to maintain structural inequality. Also, that later research has found clear links between attitudes to women, misogyny and structural sex in/equality. (Dobash and Dobash, 2015; Heise and Kotsadam, 2015).

Taylor and Jasinski (2011) undertook a review of feminist perspectives to explain sex differences in intimate partner killings and to address the major contentions of those in opposition. They demonstrated that empirical evidence supports the value of feminist perspectives, and that the latter provide the best framework for greater understanding and ultimately reducing rates of femicide. They also voiced concern that some policies enacted to support women in ending relationships with violent men may further endanger women, especially without adequate support resources or where the existence of resources is something of which women are unaware. 'Laws intended to protect women from abuse seem to expose them to a greater risk of lethal violence.' (Gauthier and Bankston, 2004, pp 116). They may also expose women to great control from the state, for example, the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme. Year on year increases in use are assumed to reflect that victim-survivors, usually women, are accessing information about their partner's histories of violence to improve their safety but Hadjimatheou (2021) found that a large proportion of women were 'using the scheme' as a result of pressure from social care and that this was a means of holding women responsible for harm to their children from the abuse of their partner. These

are consistent with DeKeseredy's later critique of neo-liberal interventions which have no interest in women's liberation (DeKeseredy, 2021).

### **3.7 Revisiting definitions: what do we need from a definition of femicide?**

Femicide existed before there was a term for it and it continues to exist across the world regardless of whether the term is widely used or not and regardless of how it is defined. The lack of an agreed definition and parameters, rather than the word itself, is the problem as this prevents international data comparison, which might help to identify the cultural contexts that are conducive or otherwise to men's fatal violence against women.

As stated above, the first known written and explicitly feminist definition of femicide as 'the misogynistic killing of women by men,' was in Radford and Russell's *Femicide* in 1992, though this is some 16 years after Russell herself used the term publicly; and Jill Radford later referred to femicide as 'the killing of women because they're women.'

Campbell and Runyan (1998), expanded the definition of femicide to include all killings of women by males or females, regardless of motivation or relationship.. Others have used the term simply as an alternative for homicides of female intimate partners (Richards et al., 2011) or, like Walklate et al. (2020), justified a focus on homicides of female current or former intimate partners as the most common form of femicide. Natalie Panther, defined femicide as: 'The killing of women to maintain male dominant status' (Panther, 2007 p.2).

Any definition must name the agent, allow for patriarchal influences of killings of women by women, avoid the conflation of sex and gender, be free of ethnocentrism, and also be capable of encompassing the intersecting inequalities facing women. I have therefore developed the following definition of femicide:

the killing of women, girls and female infants and foetuses, predominantly but not always committed by men, functioning to maintain individual and/or collective male dominant status, or reflecting the lower status of females.

However, problems remain with this definition. For example, what happens when men kill a woman but at the same time kill a man, for example when a son kills both parents, or a burglar kills an elderly couple? A woman has been killed by a man, but is this femicide? Does his intent or motivation need to be misogynistic or reinforcing sex inequality? The sex of the killer in the example matches that of the majority group of killers. The Office for National Statistics' findings from the 2018/19 Crime Survey for England and Wales showed homicide convictions for 427 suspects. 93 per cent of all homicide conviction were handed down to males (66.3 per cent were for murder, 26.7 per cent were for manslaughter). Of the seven per cent of homicide convictions handed down to women, 3.5 per cent were for murder and 3.5 per cent for manslaughter. 95 per cent of all convictions for murder were of men. Socially constructed masculinity cannot be irrelevant if it leads to the death of a woman. If femicide is to remain a political term, must a definition address its impact as a reinforcer of patriarchy in order to do so? Or is the male agent and female victim sufficient in a patriarchal context in which gender is a social construct? Surely socially constructed masculine behaviours are a product of patriarchy. In which case, the definition could simply be:

'The killing of women, girls and female infants and foetuses, predominantly but not always committed by men, in patriarchal societies.'

Do we need to accept that femicide does not capture all of men's fatal violence against women? Diana Russell had argued that the term 'woman killing' should be used for all female homicides instead of altering the definition of femicide and removing its politicised nature. It is important that femicide is recognised as patriarchal violence against women just as it is important to recognise that that all forms of men's violence against women, girls, and children function to maintain patriarchal sex inequality. Is a

definition a theoretical tool or a statistical one? Does it need to be both? This thesis does not seek to answer these questions and therefore whilst I endorse calls to recognise the political importance of the term femicide, I will use the term 'men's fatal violence against women' for the research. The term 'men's' rather than 'male' is selected to signify that the violence has socio-political roots, in patriarchy, in other words, it is a social construct rather than as a form of violence inherent in men's biology, their maleness. The phrase then is optimistic and offers the potential for change in a way that 'male violence' denies.<sup>1</sup>

### **3.8 Prevalence of femicide and explaining geopolitical and temporal differences**

Whether or not we use the term femicide, or men's fatal violence against women, the problem is a global issue. About 66,000 women and girls are violently killed every year, (Small Arms Survey, 2012). Comparing country-by-country data is challenging, partly because there isn't a globally accepted definition, or even a globally agreed need for a definition, so different interpretations are reflected in any data available. Also, because many countries' data-collection systems do not record the necessary information, whether that is the sex of the victim and perpetrator, their relationship, or any known motives for the killing. Across the world women are at greater risk than men of intimate-partner homicides and are overwhelmingly killed by males, with countries recording that between 29 and 69 per cent of women homicide victims are killed by male partners or ex-partners, or other family members, (UNDOC, 2019). Across everything that divides societies globally, they share in common that men's violence against women is normalised, tolerated and justified and that there is a lack

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<sup>1</sup> With reference to the work of the Femicide Census, we built a database where data can be extrapolated according to variables including the relationship between the victim and perpetrator and their context. This means that the data can be adapted to be directly comparable to data from other research and so, the work that I continue outside this thesis can withstand challenges such as those I have identified.

of truly proactive and deeply rooted state initiatives to protect women's right to life. (Garcia-Moreno, 2013; Heise, 1999.)

Countries with the highest femicide levels perhaps unsurprisingly correspond to those with the highest rates of fatal violence. El Salvador has the highest femicide rate (14.0 per 100,000 female population), followed by Jamaica (10.9), Guatemala (9.7), and South Africa (9.6). Half of the countries with the highest estimated femicide rates are in Latin America, with South Africa and Russian and Eastern European countries having disproportionately high rates, (Nowak, 2012). High rates of female infanticide, sex-selective and forced abortion suggest that if data were available, countries including India and China (DeLugan, 20013), would be contenders for inclusion in those countries with high rates. England and Wales's femicide rate, by comparison, was 0.63 per 100,000 female population for the year ending March 2015.<sup>2</sup>

Gun licensing laws affect femicide rates and in particular intimate partner femicides and mass killings, including increases in murder-suicides in countries including the USA and Switzerland, (Nowak, 2012). Patriarchal power relations mean that men are more likely to be bearers of guns, (Women's International League for Freedom, n.d.). Women were found to be three times more likely to be murdered if there was a gun in their home, (Langley, 2008), and research from the USA has also shown a correlation between women obtaining a gun for their own protection and risk of murder. Forty per cent of the variance in femicide rates in US states is explained by state, 2021-level firearm ownership rates alone, (Siegel and Rothman, 2016). Between 2009 and 2018, at least 54 percent of mass shootings in the USA, defined as shootings in which more than three people are killed in one event, were related to domestic or family violence. (Everytown For Gun Safety, 2021). Between 2006 and 2020, 92.5 per cent of all mass shooters in the USA were male, 89.9 per cent of mass shooters who killed family members were male, with 56.3 per cent of victims of mass family shootings and 47.1

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<sup>2</sup> Based on a population of 58,307,456, comprised of 50.8 per cent females and 186 female victims of homicide.

per cent of all mass shootings being female, (Fox and Levin, 2021). Meanwhile the confluence of guns, misogyny male entitlement and resentment of women's emancipation from subservient and dependent gender roles can be seen in the 1989 massacre at the Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal, Canada, when Marc Lepine killed 14 women, and injured 14 others before killing himself, claiming that he was 'fighting feminism' before opening fire. The incident prompted the tightening of gun control laws in Canada (Fleming, 2012), and has been identified as the first so-called 'incel' (involuntary celibate) related murder, influencing later incel perpetrated mass murders (Bloom, 2022), such as that committed by Elliot Rodger, 22, in Isla Vista, California, in which he killed 6 people (3 shot and three stabbed) and injured 14 others. On acquiring his first gun Rodgers wrote that he "felt a new sense of power. I was now armed. Who's the alpha male now, bitches? I thought to myself, regarding all of the girls who've looked down on me in the past." (Solnit 2015) and in his video diary said "I will slaughter every single spoiled, stuck-up, blond slut I see inside there. All those girls I've desired so much. They have all rejected me and looked down on me as an inferior man." (Garvey, 2014.) Only two of the six people that Elliot killed were women but the men he killed were those he considered to be taking women away from him. Elliot's murderous rampage was also racially motivated, three of the young men he killed who were stealing the women he felt he was entitled to were of Asian hereditary.

When we look at any contemporaneous form of male violence against women in a global context, as discussed, it is important to recognise the connections and similarities across culturally and geographically disparate countries, as well as the differences. Femicide, like any other form of men's sexist violence, reflects macro level socio-political and economic institutions and formal and informal ideologies. Palma-Solis et al (2008) compared femicide rates across 61 countries to economic data, political indicators and 'gender progress' indicators. They found that femicide rates were highest in countries with medium-high income, and that civil liberties/political rights were important correlates. Their work supports a social constructivist

component in a multi-level model (for example Heise, 1998; Hagemann-White et al, 2010) as individual pathology alone would not produce such patterns.

There are also differences in homicide and femicide rates within given societies according to ethnicity. Although in the UK the majority of both femicide and homicide victims are white, Black and Asian people and those from some other minority groups are disproportionately victimised. (ONS, 2020; Femicide Census, 2019). Empirical evidence therefore supports calls such as those from Gill (2009) and Siddiqui (2014) that any model claiming to underpin femicide must integrate the specificities of communities where the conducive context (Kelly, 2016) exacerbates the dynamics of men's violence against women. Sabri et al. (2016) explored differences in intimate partner homicides between Asian people and the wider community in the USA, and also differences between ethnic sub-groups of Asians. They found that, in common with wider society, women were at far greater risk of being a victim of IPH and men were far more likely to be the perpetrator but the differences between the sexes was even more pronounced than is the case in the wider population. Other findings included that, in contrast with the general population, Asian couples were less likely to have separated at the time of the homicide and that knives rather than guns, (in the USA), were the most often used method of killing; that there were variations in methods of killing and the average age of victims (but not perpetrators) between some Asian sub-groups.

There is a gap in research looking at class differences in femicide rates in the UK but international research has found evidence of links between poverty, unemployment and elevated femicide rates. (Joseph, 2017, Stout, 1992). In addition, although domestic abuse crosses boundaries of socioeconomic class as it does any other demographic, there is evidence that women from lower income households are more at risk of abuse. Skafida et al (2021) found that mothers in the lowest income quintile were far more likely to experience any form of abuse compared to mothers in the highest income quartile.

Looking outside femicide specifically and looking at intimate partner violence against women, Heise and Kotsadam (2015) compiled data on rates of intimate partner violence from 44 countries. They found that intimate partner violence is related to women's status, 'gender' inequality and male violence against/control of women. They also found that for every log increase in gross national product, the prevalence of intimate partner violence decreased by 5.5 per cent but that the correlation became non-existent if norms around "wife-beating" and male authority/control did not accompany the economic development. This trilateral nature of the relationship between economic development, economic equality between the sexes and norms around violence against women illustrates the breadth of actions that need to be tackled to reduce men's violence against women.

Corradi and Stockl, (2014) looked at the relationship between femicide, feminist activism and government policy in European countries since the 1970s. They found a relationship between the collection of data and policy activity and feminist activism and argued that the women's movement is a crucial catalyst of political change and is most effective when it is independent of government. However, they also found there was no evident link between rates of intimate partner violence and government policies to address intimate partner violence. Their findings support the call for structural responses to sex inequality and men's violence against women, suggesting that current policy initiatives either do not go far enough or are too exclusively focused on criminal justice and/or individual behavioural factors.

However, Gracia and Merlo (2016) found apparently contradictory relationships between high levels of gender equality and a high incidence of intimate partner violence against women in Nordic Countries (Sweden, Finland and Denmark), referred to as the 'Nordic paradox'. Theories posited to explain this have included a backlash against women, increased conflict because of increased equality, the clash of individually held sexist beliefs and egalitarian social norms and increased disclosure due to decreased inequality and a societally agreed condemnation of men's violence

against women. An earlier study (Yllö, 1984) in the USA had also found 'wife abuse' did not have a linear relationship with women's status, but was curvilinear, in that 'wife abuse' was high in states where women had lower status, declined as women's status increased but then increased again in states where women's status was highest relative to men.

Research into variations in homicide and femicide rates over time is also valuable in the identification of correlates. Femicide rates are generally highest in countries with the highest homicide rates but fluctuations in homicide rates over time do not necessarily correspond with parallel fluctuations in femicide rates. For example, in England and Wales, homicide numbers rose from around 300 per year in the 1960s, to a peak of over 700 in 2002, faster than the rate of population growth for the same period. Then, from 2002, homicide rates began to fall whilst the population continued to grow. Female and male homicide rates, however, showed different patterns. In the 1960s, reports the ONS, the proportion of homicide victims of either sex was relatively even. Currently, approximately 27 per cent of homicide victims in England and Wales are female. Over this period, the number of female homicide victims has fluctuated between 180–250 a year but the number of male homicide victims rose steadily from the 1960s until 2001 to 2005, when it began to decline. The year ending March 2015 saw the lowest number of male homicide victims in 25 years. Since 2015, the number of male victims has again begun to increase. Whereas the number of female victims has been relatively stable, declining slightly in the year ending March 2020 for the first time since the year ending March 2016, (Stripe, 2022). At the time of writing, ONS data does not go beyond March 2020. My work at Counting Dead Women indicates that homicide rates for female victims will increase by 20–25 per cent for the year ending March 2021.

A striking historical period of femicides can be seen in the sixteenth and seventeenth century 'witch' persecutions in England, Scotland, and some areas of mainland Europe. Marianne Hester (1989, in Radford and Russell, 1992) identified the phenomenon as

an attempt at maintaining and restoring male supremacy, citing Henry Kamen (1971), who observed that 'In every European country the most extensive outbreaks of witch persecution were in times of disaster,' (Kamen, 1971, pp 276, cited in Radford and Russell (1992) pp 29) she identified that periods of witch-hunting occurred during times of religious, economic and political change. Secondly, that demographic features of the population were also usually changing, women had begun to outnumber men and the age of marriage in lower classes began to increase. Thirdly, women were beginning to enter aspects of life which had been formerly male preserves. In England, more than 90 per cent of those accused of being witches were female, and they tended to be older, lower-class, poor, and single or widowed. The fear of being accused of being a witch was a profound means of social control of women. Hester argued that 'The witch-craze is not a unique event to be filed under 'the historical and unrepeatable past,' rather it was 'part of the ongoing attempt by men – acting as a group and with the support of some women – to ensure the continuation of male supremacy'. (Hester in Radford and Russell, 1992, p36)

Consideration of the links between terrorism and misogyny has begun to develop and includes links to men's fatal violence against women and the presence or absence of deaths related to terrorism may have a significant impact on a country's femicide rate and rates between countries. Terrorism is the unlawful use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims. In the UK, in 2017, 36 people were killed in terrorist attacks, 61 per cent of the victims were female with the deadliest attack taking place at Manchester Arena at a concert of an artist popular with young girls. The UK attacks were mostly Jihadist in origin. Daesh claimed responsibility and so the attack is rightly framed in the context of religious extremism. The patriarchal oppression of women by men is at the heart of this ideology. I have already addressed the links between countries with higher levels of sex inequality and high rates of men's violence against women and girls. There are links between terrorism and violence against women and girls at the ontogenetic (individual) level, too. Joan Smith (2019) explored links

between terrorist attacks and perpetrators' histories of violence against women. She found that four of the five men responsible for the UK terror attacks had histories of violence against women. She found the connection was repeated in terrorist attacks in the USA. Dhaliwal (2019) also looked at the same attacks and considered their connections to men's violence against women at the macro level. Though she also looks at the histories of the men who perpetrated the attacks, she considers them in the context of human rights and fundamentalism/secularisation. She argues that 'bodily autonomy and security of women and girls is indicative of conducive contexts for fundamentalist and other right-wing mobilisations' (p.43). Echoing Siddiqui's (2014) critique of the return to assimilationist policies which deprioritise women's rights, which was addressed in the previous chapter, she also argues for a radical universalist approach and rejects the nationalistic and neo-liberal governance response. The rights of women and girls must be central, not an add on, in attempts to tackle fundamentalism.

The conducive context of colonialist histories and ineffective neoliberal responses can be seen in femicides in Australia and Canada. It is linked to the Latin American concept of feminicidio, where state indifference or incompetence leads to the murders of some women being met with impunity. In Australia, Aboriginal people were not even counted in the human population until the amendment to the federal constitution in 1967. Therefore, crimes against them were not included in state data on violence, including fatal violence. But moreover, as Walklate et al. (2020) observe, the fact that they are now counted has not meant that Aboriginal people are not subjected to gross inequality. In Juarez, meanwhile, as previously addressed, the high femicide rates occur in the context of organised crime and the drugs trade.

In addition to the broader political contexts affecting femicide rates over time, so too does the development of our understanding of men's violence against women. Although it is more than twenty years since Bhardwaj (2001) addressed suicide and self-harm in young Asian women, the links between women's suicide and men's

violence is only recently beginning to receive broader attention; earlier research on the links between femicide and suicide focused on the suicide of the male perpetrator (Dawson, 2005). This is linked to increased understanding and articulation of the same regarding coercive control, which became a criminal offence in the UK in 2015.

The (separate) deaths of two women in 2017 saw the first convictions of men in the UK regarding their female intimate partner's suicide. Kellie Sutton, 30, was found unconscious in her home in Hertfordshire and died in hospital three days later. She had hanged herself. Steven Gane was jailed for controlling and coercive behaviour, assault occasioning actual bodily harm, and assault by beating. On sentencing, Judge Philip Grey told Gane: 'Your behaviour drove Kellie Sutton to hang herself that morning' and 'You beat her and ground her down and broke her spirits.' Gane had been reported to the police by three separate former partners. Justene Reece, 46, also hanged herself in 2017. Nicholas Allen, 47, was found guilty of manslaughter. Like Gane, he had a history of violence against previous partners that was known to the police. On sentencing, Judge Michael Chambers QC told Allen 'She committed suicide as a direct result of your sustained and determined criminal actions – actions which you clearly knew were having a profound effect upon her.'

Other circumstances in which women have killed themselves after men's violence and/or the criminal justice response to such violence should also be included in our conception of the links between men's violence and women's deaths such as the suicide of Eleanor De Freitas, aged 24 in 2014, three days before she was due to stand trial for perverting the course of justice for allegedly making a false allegation of rape against Alexander Economou, son of a shipping billionaire. Or the deaths of Sam Gould, 16, in 2018 and her sister Chris, 17, in 2019, after they had learned that the allegations of long-term sexual abuse that they had made would not result in prosecutions.

Like the deaths of Eleanor De Freitas, Sam Gould and Chris Gould, most cases of women's suicide following allegations of abuse by men do not result in men being held to account by the criminal justice system and inquests following suicides rarely address any history of abuse suffered by the deceased. Thus, in the UK, it is currently very difficult to calculate the number of women who have taken their own lives as a result of the abuse that they have been subjected to by men. The concept of femicide, any definition, and any count of femicide must adapt to reflect this if we are to fully comprehend the scale of the premature ending of women's lives directly or indirectly because of the actions of men and functioning of patriarchy. That we have to yet addressed this issue brings us back to Lagarde's consideration of the matter of the impunity of men and inadequacy of the state response, (Lagarde, 2005).

### **3.9 Why count and the risks of counting?**

Walklate et al. (2020) provide an overview on the growing global movement to record femicide. The authors included women from the UK, Canada and Australia. They look at who is counting and how, trends in counting femicide, and the benefits and risks of counting.

They warn of the dangers of associating numbers with objectivity, reminding the reader that numbers may produce evidence that bears little resemblance to women's lived realities. They join the growing body of research which questions the efficacy of risk assessment (Dutton, 2000; Robin et al, 2014; James-Hanman, 2017) and caution that risk is often and mistakenly seen as the master key with which the most pressing social problems of the age – men's violence against women – can be unlocked. Attempts to address men's violence against women based on risk models may risk loss of the influence of patriarchy and sex inequality and are doomed only to have a limited impact. Unfortunately, drawing on my experience as CEO of a service supporting women, I am all too aware that policy and commissioning of community-based services relating to domestic violence and abuse remains tied to the Independent

Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) model. Specialist organisations are reliant upon successfully bidding for the contracts that are available and in reality, despite platitudes to the contrary, often have little influence in shaping services commissioned. Service providers frequently know that a flexible support model based on women's needs and choices is what would work best, instead they are bound to provision based on identifying high risk, high client turnover and performance monitoring based on targets relating to risk assessment and client numbers. Those bidding at the lowest cost for the highest numbers are often the ones successfully awarded the contracts.

Walklate et al. (2020) also remind us of a critical limitation of the concept of femicide as a measure of the lethality of men's violence against and their abuse of women, namely 'slow femicide' where premature death is the culmination of a process, perhaps a lifetime of abuse which has led to homelessness, poor health, problematic substance use, ultimately ending with the death of a woman that is neither treated as a homicide by the police and criminal justice system, or as a femicide by a femicide count. In my professional career I have seen a slow but steady stream of deaths of women at the margins, women who have endured years of abuse by men, sometimes from childhood (surely earlier if one considers what will have been done to some of their mothers) until death. Fathers, stepfathers, brothers, uncles, replaced by partners, pimps and punters. Women who died of heart conditions, septicaemia, cancers, substance use, and with eating-disorders, to name just some of the conditions which curtailed both their life quality and lifespan substantially.

The authors caution that not being counted in life may lead to the danger of not being counted in death. They identify the under representation of Aboriginal women in Australia and Indigenous women in Canada in homicide and femicide data. They justify a focus on intimate partner femicide perpetrated by male partners because it is 'the most common form of femicide' (Walklate et al, 2020, pp2). This risks perhaps an unintended lack of attention to the contexts of the deaths of over a third of women

killed at the hands of men. The killing of women in the context of prostitution or pornography, for example, is absolutely patriarchal and involves the deaths of highly marginalised women, often with lower socio-economic status, women from minoritised ethnic groups, and women with problematic substance use, usually women not making a choice to enter prostitution but entering prostitution through lack of choice. The women are frequently regarded as of lesser value than other women. The institution of prostitution also has an impact on the status of all women, (Stuart, 1995; Hill, 1993; Coy et al. 2019). It's possible to focus on intimate partner femicide if that is one's research focus, but it is equally possible and I argue, necessary, to consider intimate partner femicide as one context within the broader problem of femicide. I concur with Walklate et al. (2020) to the extent that it is necessary to be able to disaggregate the different contexts in which femicide occurs and in particular the different relationships between victim and perpetrator. Indeed, as Westmarland (2015) cautioned, a disservice is done by subsuming intimate partner and family homicides under the category 'domestic'. The solution, as we have done with the Femicide Census, and as I do in this thesis, is to produce data that can be disaggregated by relationship and contextual factors as well as addressed as an entire body according to the matter being considered, not to sideline femicides outside intimate partner killings.

Walklate et al. (2020) stress the importance of an approach that is 'gender-based' rather than 'sex-based' and address the issue of paradigms affecting what is counted. They suggest that counts based on sex do 'not necessarily equate to a commitment to embed gender critically' (p 71). The sex/gender paradigm itself however, is rapidly shifting. Where we may previously have read 'sex' and 'gender' as interchangeable, or 'sex' as relating to that which is biological and 'gender' as that which is socially constructed, the current gender paradigm invites the inclusion of males who identify as transwomen in femicide victim data, or in some cases the exclusion of those males from perpetrator data. A number of femicide projects make it explicitly clear that they

include males with transgender identities, for example the 'End Femicide Now' (2021) campaign by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership based at Rutgers University, New Jersey. The inclusion of males as femicide victims or, depending on one's definition of femicide, their exclusion from perpetrators, risks seriously skewing data and therefore our understanding of and steps to prevent femicide.

For this reason, my preference is an approach which is built upon sex and sex differences, but which recognises the crucial role played by gender socialisation, enforcement and social standards. Counts based on sex do not necessarily mean that we exclude analysis of socially constructed gender and patriarchy. In their concluding chapter, Walklate et al. say 'Preventing femicide must include dismantling the social hierarchies that create fertile ground for the killing of women by their male partners and make it so difficult for so many women to find or regain safety and security in their everyday lives.' (p.96). In this their approach and mine converge. Counting femicide is a means to an end, not an end in and of itself. The prevention of femicide also requires us to look beyond heteronormative intimate relationships and failing to do so risks failing to address broader structural and cultural influences but should not extend to the inclusion of males who do not conform to the gender-stereotypes associated with their sex. Counts of femicide must be contextualised in the wider cultural contexts of patriarchal cultures. Feminist research cannot inure itself from the broader business of women's liberation from subjugation under patriarchy.

### **3.10 Who is counting?**

In conjunction with the revival of the concept of femicide in analysis of men's violence against women, the last decade has seen an unprecedented growth of femicide counts, mainly run by academics, feminists, or practitioners.

Weil et al. (2018) reviewed state definitions – including the absence of one – of femicide, and the existence or lack of femicide data in 26 European countries. Looking at police statistics, they found data was available on the victims' sex and the victim-

perpetrator relationship in 14 countries, that data was available but there was no precise relationship breakdown in eight countries and that there was no data available or not a breakdown by sex in six countries. The picture regarding justice statistics was even more bleak. Data including the victims' sex and the victim-perpetrator relationship was available in five countries, excluded the victim-perpetrator relationship in seven countries and there was an absence of criminal justice data breaking down the sex of the victim in 16 countries. The team of academics, working together in a project funded by the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) body, COST Action IS1206: Femicide Across Europe, went on to look at femicide counts in Europe undertaken by NGOs, public and government bodies, private research centres and activists. Whilst they found that in most European countries, official statistics on femicide did not exist, there were a multitude of ongoing small and larger scale programmes addressing femicide in their own countries. Amongst these were the following examples from Italy, Ireland, and the UK:

1. The Economic and Social Research Centre in Italy has been collecting data on homicide from media sources since 1990. This includes a focus on femicide, collecting data on age, marital status, education, employment of both victims and perpetrator.
2. Women's Aid Ireland have counted victims of femicide in the Republic of Ireland since 1996, making theirs one of the earliest, if not the earliest, activist national counts of femicide. They have recorded the killings of 236 women and 18 children at the hands of men between 1996 and 2020, with 55 per cent of all solved cases having been committed by a current or former male partner. Eighteen women (7.6 per cent) were killed by their sons, an illustration consistent with the findings of the Femicide Census UK report for 2009–2018.
3. The Femicide Census in the UK, combining NGO expertise, activism and corporate pro-bono support, launched in 2015 and has records of men's fatal violence against women in the UK since 2009.

The COST Action IS1206 on femicide went on to launch the European Observatory on Femicide (EOF) in 2018. The EOF consists of research focal points in 23 countries and has three main objectives: to create a Europe-wide data collection system to measure and raise awareness about the extent of femicide, to provide background information for better intervention and prevention, and to undertake Europe-wide femicide reviews to identify gaps in response to violence against women.

Cullen et al. (2019) conducted a cross sectional in-depth review of femicide cases (81 victims) in Australia, from cases identified on the Counting Dead Women Australia census between 1 January and 31 December 2014. The Australian CDW was modelled on my own UK version, starting two years later, though their sample includes all women killed violently, including those killed by women. They were able to find details of 70/81 femicides; and details of the relationships between victims and perpetrator for 59/70 cases. Intimate partner femicide accounted for 32/59 (54 per cent) of women's deaths, in which all perpetrators were male. Matricides accounted for 7/59, (12 per cent) of women's deaths of which 6/7 perpetrators were male. 4/59 (seven per cent) women were killed by strangers, of which two were male and two were female. They also identified 'other family' and 'other known' as relationship cohorts but did not give the numbers of women involved. Thirty per cent of women killed by men were killed with knives, ten per cent with guns, 18 per cent were strangled and in 42 per cent of cases other methods were used.

There are a growing number of projects counting and addressing femicide across the globe. In addition to the projects above, these include (but are not limited to):

1. The Canadian Femicide Observatory was established by the Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence (CSSLRV) at the University of Guelph in 2017. It is directed by Myrna Dawson, an academic with a long track record in work on femicide and violence against women and involves a large expert advisory panel. They focus on documenting social and state responses to

femicide in Canada, counting and tracking cases of femicide as they occur, whilst also remembering and honouring women and girls.

2. A growing number of activist-led projects, several acknowledging the inspiration of my project Counting Dead Women. These include Women Count USA; Black Femicide USA; and Counting Dead Women, Kenya; Femicide Map in Turkey; Femicidio Ecuador.
3. Other projects address specific forms of femicide, for example the Sex Industry Kills project which tracks murders, attempted murders and suicides of women and men, disproportionately women, killed in the context of prostitution across the world.
4. Other projects, whilst not necessarily counting femicides raise awareness of femicide including racially motivated femicides, which like Lagarde's concept of Femicidio, acknowledge state negligence for Indigenous women or women generally regarded as being of low status. These include the 50 Million Missing online campaign to raise awareness of 'gendercide' in India, founded by feminist activist and author Rita Banerji; and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Project (MMIWG) in Canada which seeks to 'give life to the truth' of violence against women, including the murders of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women and girls with the aim of reducing violence and increasing safety for future generations. The MMIWG project was preceded by the Sisters in Spirit activist project of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) who documented that by 2010 over 580 Indigenous women and girls across Canada were murdered or missing. Their initial estimate has since risen to over 1,200 women and girls.

These projects remain divided by the lack of an agreed definition of femicide or parameters for counting. Our best hope is broad data that can be disaggregated if we seek to make international comparisons. These can be particularly useful for the identifications of factors which inhibit or enable femicide.

These ongoing projects are augmented by an ever-growing body of academic works addressing femicide, though unfortunately many if not most of these tend to be time limited and contained pieces of work, usually dependent on funding. We know that femicide is a global problem spanning centuries. The lack of sustainable research into femicide reflects the status of women and the failure to fully confront sex inequality and men's violence against women.

### **3.11 Beyond the bodies, what should we count?**

Dawson and Carrigan (2021) address the question of what variables should be considered when researching femicide, asking whether numerous sex/gender-related motives and indicators (SGRMIs) such as identified in the Latin American Model protocol for the Investigation of Gender-Related Killings of Women were, in reality, indicators of femicide. They compared their prevalence across homicides in Canada according to whether the perpetrator was male and the victim female (femicides), the perpetrator was female and the victim male (including a number of female perpetrated domestic homicides and with same sex victims and perpetrators (i.e. male victim with a male perpetrator or female victim with a female perpetrator). They also examined data in an ongoing research project documenting all femicides and homicides in Canada for gaps in data availability of SGRMIs.

They found that incident variables and pre-incident characteristics demonstrated most variety across the different combinations of female/male victim/perpetrator combinations, with significantly higher prevalence of the following pre-incident variables: police contact (42 per cent), recent separation (38 per cent), prior threats against victims (65 per cent), estrangement (25 per cent), intimate/familial relationships (82 per cent), and premeditation (60 per cent). The incident variables significantly more prevalent in male perpetrated homicides with female victims were: femicidal motive (38 per cent), sexual assault (19 per cent), mutilation (seven per cent), excessive force (38 per cent), body found nude (23 per cent), proximate methods, for

example, beating (64 per cent), multiple methods (18 per cent), and femicidal contexts (57 per cent). Thus, illustrating that it is possible to identify features of femicides that make them inherently different from other homicides.

They found missing information on relevant variables from traditional data sources used by social science researchers (coroner/medical examiner records, crown attorney files, court documents and media coverage) ranged from three per cent for victim age to 96 per cent for perpetrator history of child abuse. They make a compelling argument about the significance of these data gaps in terms of the negative impact on the possible prevention of understanding and ultimately reducing femicide and men's violence against women more broadly. They draw on Walby's (1990) concept of public patriarchy, arguing 'that a key contributor is the historical and ongoing impacts of patriarchal social structures, including historical and contemporary decision-makers for whom the collection of these data was and is not seen as a priority. These same decision makers continue to act as gatekeepers of these data, when it is available, deciding who and how the data will be used.' Going on to conclude 'If we cannot document femicide in a reliable and valid manner, what is the hope of ever documenting, consistently and accurately, other forms of sexual violence or gender-related violence against women and girls?' (p.698).

Dawson and Carrigan's work highlights the importance and some of the challenges of the collection and analysis of femicide data; it also is a further demonstration that the state, through public patriarchy including its inactions and failures to respond to the findings of feminist research, allows men's violence against women and girls to continue.

### **3.12 Dobash and Dobash's murder study**

Dobash and Dobash made an important contribution to looking at different contexts in which men murder women. *When Men Murder Women*, Dobash and Dobash (2015), builds upon previous work, including but not limited to: *Not an Ordinary Killer – Just*

*an Ordinary Guy* (Dobash and Dobash et al., 2004), *Lethal and Non-Lethal Violence Against an Intimate Partner* (Dobash and Dobash et al., 2007), and '*Out of the Blue: Men Who Murder an Intimate Partner*' (Dobash and Dobash et al., 2009). The foundation for this work, The Murder Study, involved collection of data from the England and Wales Homicide Index for murders committed between 1980 and 2000, examination of casefiles of 786 men and 80 women serving prison sentences for murders in England, Wales and Scotland between 1991 and 1995, and in-depth interviews with 180 of these men and 20 women. Quantitative data was used to identify patterns and qualitative data to illustrate and add depth to those patterns.

Of the 786 adult (aged over 16) men who had murdered other adults, 424 (61 per cent) had murdered men, 271 (39 per cent) had murdered women. Of the 271 who had murdered women, 90 per cent (n=243) could be categorised into three types, excluding the remaining 10 per cent (28 cases, of which 14 were IPH collateral murders), the categories were:

- 105 (43 per cent) intimate partner murders (includes 17 sexual attacks)
- 98 (40 per cent) sexual murders
- 40 (17 per cent) murders of older women (aged over 65) (includes 19 sexual attacks).

An early motivation behind the Dobashes' work on murder was the recognition that most earlier analyses of murder had not split data according to the sex of the victim and that, given that men are more likely to kill men than women, generalisations could be misleading and any specificities regarding men's murder of women would be missed. Indeed, the Dobashes found, when comparing men who murder men to men who murder women, that men who murder men tended to specialise in (have histories of) violence against men, whilst men who murder women seemed to specialise in violence against women with the killer having had a life background that could be described as more mainstream/average than the former. When *Men Murder Women* takes this work a step further and looks at differences in three main sub-groups of

men who murder women according to the classification of the attack in the types above: intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or violence against older women.

Comparing men who murder current or former intimate partners, men who commit sexually motivated murders and men who murder older women, the Dobashes looked for and found a number of differences in the murder event itself, the men's adult life circumstances, their early lives/childhoods and their assessments in prison.

Men who murdered intimate partners were the least likely of the three groups to come from broken families, to have suffered physical or sexual abuse as children, to have had problems at school or to have had five or more criminal convictions by the time they reached the age of 16. Men who committed sexually motivated murders were the most likely to have been physically or sexually abused as a child. Men who murdered older women were the most likely to have had problems at school, to have been considered disruptive and to have taken drugs before they were 16 years old.

As adults, men who murdered older women were typically living alone, had problems in their relationships with women, were the most likely to have problems with alcohol, the most likely to have committed persistent criminal behaviour and to have spent time in prison. The adult lives of men who committed sexually motivated murders were characterised by unemployment, and, like men who murdered older women, excessive alcohol consumption, problematic relationships, criminality, and periods of incarceration were common. Twenty-one per cent had prior convictions for rape and 56 per cent had prior convictions for violence against women. Men who murdered intimate partners were least likely to have served time in prison, to have drug or alcohol problems and to be unemployed. They were the most likely to have had breakups in previous significant relationships, to have been violent in other relationships and to have good levels of education.

According to their study, looking at the circumstances of the murder, men who murdered intimate partners were least likely to be intoxicated and least likely to inflict

five or more injuries on them. Thirty-seven per cent of women killed in sexually motivated attacks were killed by strangers, they were the most likely to be strangled. The murders of older women were split between robberies (21/40) and sexually motivated attacks (19/40). Of the women murdered by men, older women were the most likely to have been bludgeoned to death and the most likely to have suffered five or more injuries. Their killers were the most likely to have been intoxicated at the time of the murder. Sixty-nine per cent (9/13) of women who were over 80 when they were murdered were also victims of sexual assault.

Differences between the groups of men who had killed women continued to be apparent whilst they were in prison. Murderers of older women were the least likely to express remorse or empathy. Men who had committed sexual murders were the most likely to be assessed as having a problem with women (87 per cent) and to be judged a risk to public safety [women]. Men who murdered intimate partners were less likely than other men who killed women to be considered a danger to the public. They were most likely to be considered a model prisoner. All the men who killed women, compared to men who killed men, were much more likely to be assessed as having a problem with women.

The subjects of the Dobashes' study had all been convicted of murder, therefore differ from the men who have killed women in this study in several different ways. Men who were convicted of manslaughter are absent, as are men who were not convicted, and those who killed themselves after killing a woman. In this study, of men who killed women between 2012 and 2014, those receiving manslaughter convictions represented 16.5 per cent (or  $n=72/436$ ), 9.6 per cent ( $n=40/436$ ) of men killed themselves, and those who were convicted of neither murder nor manslaughter, but did not kill themselves, represented 13.6 per cent of the cohort. Together, these three groups amount to almost 40 per cent of men who killed women. It's possible that some of the trends identified by the Dobashes would be consistent, but without extending their analysis this cannot be assumed. Therefore, it is important to remember that in

confining their research to men convicted of murder, they were looking at the equivalent of 60.3 per cent of the sample of UK woman-killers in this study, and that their killers had been selected on the basis of the UK's patriarchal and iniquitous legal system.

There are other important differences in the sample of men they studied compared to those who killed women (and the women they killed) in this study. Only 1/271 (0.36 per cent) men had killed their mothers in the Dobashes' study, in this study the figure is 28/436 (6.4 per cent). The background to and dynamics behind matricide are highly likely to differ from those behind intimate partner femicide, sexually motivated murder and murder of elderly women who are strangers or associates. It would have been interesting to see the analysis of this form of men's fatal violence against women in the Dobashes' research.

The oldest woman killed by her partner in the Dobashes' study was 56 years old. In this study 19 per cent of women killed by a current or former intimate partner were aged 57 or above. The oldest woman killed by her partner was 88 years old. One implication is that the claim made by the Dobashes, of a trend towards homicide gender symmetry in older victims (p.193, 199) (not in younger victims, where the number of men killed overall – predominantly by men – is far greater) is therefore possibly understated. These are differences beyond what could be reasonably expected due to the time difference, the Dobashes were looking at murders that took place between 1980 and 2000, this study looks at men's fatal violence against women between 2012 and 2014.

The Dobashes note that sexual violence in murders is highly likely to be underestimated due to: lack of training of police officers and pathologists to spot indicators of sexual violence; prosecutors only proceeding with the most serious charge; and deference to the memory of victims and their families act as contributory factors in their own work, this will only be exacerbated through reliance upon publicly

available information as is the case in this study. Their finding of low incidences of sexual violence in intimate partner femicides (16 per cent of cases of intimate partner femicide) perhaps needs to be treated with additional caution. The British Crime Survey analysis (2004) found that 54 per cent of rapes had been committed by a partner or ex-partner indicating high levels of sexual violence in intimate relationships. It is possible that the circumstances of shared lives (where this remains the case) means sexual violence is less difficult to detect in intimate partner femicides and also, if sexual violence did not take place in a final fatal assault, this does not mean it was absent in the relationship.

One of the significant contributions of *'When Men Murder Women'* was the identification of the phenomenon of murders of older women in the UK (17 per cent of the Dobashes' sample were women aged over 65, in this study it is very close, 17.3 per cent). They also identified that older women were most likely to have been bludgeoned to death and were the most likely to have suffered five or more injuries. The Dobashes suggest that older women are doubly vulnerable, by virtue of their age and sex. What they do not look at is whether older women are doubly despised; and, if so, whether this may contribute to the increase in brutality and the higher likelihood of sexual assault. To everyday misogyny, a derision towards the older woman is added. Women are too frequently valued according to their adherence to patriarchal beauty standards and as we age, our value declines. Women are recognised as becoming invisible with age, (Simcock, 2015). The absence of older women from the popular understanding of the women who are killed by men reflects this invisibility and has also been noted with regards to data regarding rape, Bows, 2017). It is important therefore, that the Dobashes have contributed to the deconstruction of this stereotype. Dobash and Dobash rarely use the term 'femicide' in *When Men Murder Women*, but by looking at sexually motivated murders and murders of older women beyond murders of intimate partners or family members, they make an important contribution to the understanding of men's fatal violence against women as a social problem that

goes beyond intimate partner violence. It is regrettable that it is not possible to replicate their categorisation with this study because of data and subject access restrictions, limited as it is to publicly available information. The Dobashes and their research team were able to interview perpetrators in person. Without such access, it is not possible, for example, to identify variables such as killers' attitudes to women.

### **3.13 Development of femicide research**

As research into femicide has advanced, bodies of work addressing specific contexts of femicide, whether as a result of the relationship between victim and perpetrator, broader socio-political contexts or features of the fatal incident itself, for example, the use of guns or sexualised violence, have developed. I will move on to look at work addressing specific femicide contexts rather than the issue of femicide in general.

#### **3.13.1 Intimate partner femicide**

According to the Femicide Census (2019) between 2009 and 2018, 62 per cent of women killed by men were killed by a current or former partner. Forty-three per cent of these women had separated or had taken steps to separate from their ex-partner. Globally, of an estimated 87,000 women intentionally killed in 2017, more than a third (30,000) were killed by their current or former intimate partner (UNODC, 2019). The regions with the largest number of females killed by current or former intimate partners in 2017 were Asia and Africa (both approximately 11,000 women), followed by the Americas (6,000 women), Europe (2,000 women) and Oceania (200 women). However, also according to UNODC, Oceania has the largest proportion of all regions in terms of women killed by intimate partners, at 42 per cent, while Europe has the lowest, at 29 per cent. It could be that countries in Europe with lower rates of intimate partner femicide reduce this percentage, as it is very different from the data from the UK, also the UNODC data does not specify the sex of the perpetrator (though we know that the majority will be male). Nevertheless, it is clear that in any attempts to

understand, tackle and end men's fatal violence against women, addressing men's violence against and abuse of intimate partners will play a very significant role.

As discussed previously, this has led some, such as Walklate et al. (2020) to argue for the prioritisation of intimate partner femicides, which risks producing data/findings decontextualized from gendered dynamics given that, globally, based on UNODC data, this risk excluding two-thirds of women. And, even in the UK where the proportion of women killed by partner's or ex-partners is almost double that, it would risk the exclusion of over a third of women killed by men. Others, for example, Gillespie et al. (2013) simply and not helpfully use the term 'femicide' as if it were synonymous with intimate partner homicide of females. Nevertheless, it remains the fact that the leading risk of homicide for a woman is to be or to have been in a relationship with a man. (Walklate et al., 2020.)

Theories of domestic homicide can be divided into two broad subgroups: escalation theory and typology theory. The latter superseding the former, which saw domestic homicide as the outcome of a more or less linear escalation of severity of abuse. The latter, more credibly identifying that some men have a greater propensity to become perpetrators of domestic homicide under certain conditions, which are more likely to be predictors of homicide risk where they appear in clusters.

More recently, research on intimate partner femicide in the UK has focused on coercive control based on a typology approach and the acknowledgement that whilst violence, fear, and abuse are markers of domestic abuse, separation and escalation in control are better markers of risk of homicide (Dobash & Dobash, 2015; Stark, 2009).

### **3.13.2 Combining escalation and typology approaches: Jane Monckton-Smith's eight-stage model of domestic homicide**

Jane Monckton-Smith presents an alternative framework, positing domestic abuse as coercive control, rather than seeing coercive control as a tool of domestic abuse. Applying learning from her history as a police officer, Monckton-Smith developed an

eight-stage model of domestic homicide (2020, 2021) illustrating the dynamics of control escalating to homicide. As Monckton-Smith says, this framework presents different opportunities for intervention – and also for different focuses in interventions.

She started with 575 homicide cases from 2012 to 2015 involving women killed by men, which were identified by my work on the Counting Dead Women database (Ingala Smith, 2018) Then she identified 372 intimate partner femicide cases which were reviewed using publicly available materials (media and published DHRs) to identify broad themes. She initially identified three themes: pre-relationship, relationship, and post-relationship. Through the initial analysis, five additional themes were identified, creating the following sequence: pre-relationship, early relationship, relationship, trigger event, escalation, change in thinking, planning homicide, and homicide. Monckton-Smith then used a convenience sample of 25 cases, of which she had access to more detailed information through her professional work. As Monckton-Smith identifies, the eight-stage model offers a temporal sequence which presents opportunities for interventions which may prevent homicides.

Monckton-Smith also uses the work to develop understanding of domestic abuse as coercive control, which may or may not include incidents of physical violence. 'Coercive control is frequently driven by the fears of its perpetrators and maintained by the fears of its victims.' (p.93). The importance of moving away from an understanding of domestic violence based on a pattern of incidents has been explored by Kelly and Westmarland in Naming and Defining 'Domestic Violence', (2016). They argued that the reduction of domestic violence to discrete incidents supports and maintains how perpetrators themselves talk about their use of violence and that this has an impact on shaping interventions. They contrast this with how women themselves speak about domestic abuse, about being micromanaged: what to wear, where to go, who to see, household management and childcare. Like Monckton-Smith, they cite Stark (2009), that domestic abuse is not solely about safety, it is also about liberty. Monckton-Smith also addresses how compliance may appear to be consensual, indeed may be

consensual, but this may not be a permanent protection against escalation and/or homicide, as life transitions like the inevitable aging process disrupts the status quo and the life conditions that the perpetrator has created. Women modify their behaviour to avoid upsetting the perpetrator. Through painful experience they are taught to prioritise the needs of the controlling partner above their own. In addition, it is also important to acknowledge that women's consent is socially engineered in heteropatriarchal societies. This apparent consent cannot be regarded as freely given if it is a product of coercion.

### **3.13.3 Religious and cultural legacies**

Many cultures, including those based in Christianity, have historical legacies where women and children are seen as chattels and property of males. Campaigning for the abolition of infidelity as a provocation defence in homicide, the then Solicitor General, Harriet Harman, was leading the reform and called such killings 'our own version of honour killings'. (Cited in Howe and Alaatinoglu, 2019). Harman was recognising commonalities across intimate partner femicide, and the cross-cultural centrality of a woman's faithfulness in heteropatriarchy. Separating 'honour' crimes can serve to render crimes susceptible to exoticisation. Interpretations which prioritise cultural explanations, especially those that consider 'honour'-based violence as something which happened in 'othered communities' to 'othered women' diverts attention away from sex inequality and the fact that men's violence against women happens across the spectrum. In no culture are women and girls free from gendered behavioural expectations or the threat and reality of men's violence. At the same time, it is important to recognise the specific connotations of 'honour', which differ across different cultural and linguistic groups (Gill et al., 2014) and the different ways families and communities enforce adherence to the concept of honour, including the different meanings that have been ascribed to the purpose of marriage. In cultures practicing 'honour-based' violence, the function of marriage is widely accepted as being to uphold social structures and alliances between families/clans and the pursuit of

romance may be viewed as a form of personal gratification, which can trigger ostracisation, even violence from the entire family. For this reason many cases of suspected 'honour' killings remain unsolved due to family/community unwillingness to testify. The object is 'to acknowledge commonalities without ignoring diversity'. (Gill et al., 2014)

#### **3.13.4 Jealousy and possessiveness**

Myrna Dawson (2005) had compared intimate partner femicides committed by men in cases which were, and cases which were not, followed by the suicide of the perpetrator, looking at whether premeditation and jealousy/possessiveness and/or the ill-health of the victim were different between the two groups of men. She found that men who killed themselves after intimate partner femicide were three times more likely to have planned the killing than those who did not. She also found that those who were motivated by jealousy were almost twice as likely to kill themselves and those who were motivated by the ill-health of their partner seven times more likely to kill themselves than those who were not demonstrably motivated by either of these factors. Dawson's work suggests that preventative measures should address men's jealousy/possessiveness, or, in other words, their sense of ownership of women. Preventative measures should also support the needs of men with ill partners. These issues appeared to be related to a pre-planned killing and therefore provide opportunities for effective interventions.

#### **3.13.5 Differences between married and cohabitating partners**

Shackelford (2001) compared intimate partner femicide between married and cohabitating women by age of partners and age differences between partners using US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) homicide reports between 1976–1994. He found that the prevalence of intimate partner femicide was much higher amongst cohabitants compared to married couples. Further, he found that within married relationships, risk is lower and decreases with age; while within cohabitating

relationships, risk to women is greatest in middle-age; and that risk is greatest with age difference. Shackelford recognised that it may not be the status of the relationship that was the determining factor, but that cohabitation could be a correlate of other factors such as age, poverty, or the presence of stepchildren, though he did not consider whether men's jealousy/insecurity may be greater if they are in cohabitating relationships.

### **3.13.6 Applying learning from intimate partner femicide research to practice supporting women subjected to intimate partner violence and abuse**

Stark, Kelly, Westmarland, Monckton-Smith and others have presented a powerful counterpoint to challenge the dominant narratives on domestic violence and abuse, placing coercive control and the reduction of liberty in the centre, not simply as another form of abuse that coexists with physical violence.

It is of critical importance that the understanding of control and the risk of escalation posed by loss of control is reflected in practice. In response to men's violence and abuse of women, girls, and children, it is often the case that practice precedes academic discourse. However, I fear that with coercive control, in some cases, this is not happening. This may be related to the move to competitive tendering and contracts awarded by local authorities for domestic violence and abuse services. In a period of now almost two decades, this has seen the replacement of many specialist feminist-/survivor-led independent charities by larger generic support providers. (Mouj, 2008; Walby and Towers, 2012; Hirst and Rinne, 2012; Women's Aid, 2015). A recent example is an email (sent 12 October 2021) that I saw through my professional work, sent by the organisation Hestia (which now runs many UK refuges for women fleeing domestic violence, through winning contracts) which asked for 'date of last incident' as the eleventh of eleven initial referral questions (including basic demographic data such as name and date of birth) for women requiring access to

refuge. This suggests a lack of organisational learning reflected in practice with regards to coercive control or the risk of separation.

Kelly and Westmarland identified that 'incident talk' provided men with a way to avoid taking responsibility for the impact of the way they treat their partners: 'There is no recurring pattern, no power and control, and very little impact, beyond the occasional physical injury, that was never intended and always regretted' (p.120).

Moving away from the conception of domestic abuse as a series of isolated incidents of physical violence in a relationship has parallels with moving away from the police description of a domestic homicide as an isolated incident, so frequently followed with 'posing no threat to the wider community.' Just as seeing those 'incidents' as episodes within the coercive control imposed by a perpetrator in a relationship helps us understand the impact of the control on the individual. Seeing instances of fatal violence not as isolated incidents but as one of the many manifestations of violence against women which act to subjugate women as a sex class, helps us recognise how, in a patriarchal society (as in an abusive relationship) control is maintained. This is a central theme of my thesis and yet I have still referred to the killings of women by men as incidents and collected variables that pertain to a final fatal incident. It is self-evident that in most homicides, there is a final incident. Though also, the understanding of the men's violence on women's mortality would be more accurate if it was better able to include the death of a woman from sepsis after decades of abuse that weakened her immune system, or from hypothermia as a result of homelessness that was the outcome of abuse. We cannot see incidents as isolated and we must see them as connected, whether in the context of a relationship or across society, but this cannot stop us from identifying incidents either.

### **3.13.7 Women killing male intimate partners is not a reverse image of men killing female intimate partners**

Although this thesis is about women killing, it is useful to look at work addressing female perpetrated domestic homicides of male victims, or which looks at sex differences, in order to make that case for an integrated approach to considering the different circumstances and contexts of men's violence against women rather than, for example, across intimate partner homicide.

Comparing data regarding female and male victims of intimate partner femicide shows different patterns over time, suggesting that the variables relevant to one are not the same as the other. For example, studies from the USA show that a decline in intimate partner homicides over time is more closely associated with intimate partner homicides perpetrated by females than males. (Reckdenwald and Parker, 2012; Fox and Zawitz, 2007) found that intimate partner homicides with male victims declined 75 per cent over two decades while that involving female victims was stable. Caman et al. (2017) looked at trends in intimate partner homicides in the context of homicide generally in Sweden over 24 years from 1990 to 2013. They found a steady decline of non-intimate partner homicide from 1990 onwards whereas intimate partner homicides remained relatively stable until 2006. Unlike research from America and Canada, they found a modest but significant decline in male perpetrated intimate partner homicide, meanwhile they detected no significant decline in female perpetrated intimate partner homicide. They also found that a slight increase in male perpetrators being gainfully employed at the time of the incident while the reverse was true of female perpetrators, a significant decrease in male alcohol-intoxicated perpetrators, no decline in female perpetrators being intoxicated, and a reduction in male intimate partner homicide perpetrators with a known history of intimate partner violence but no decline in known histories associated with female partners, which they said included both female victims and perpetrators.

They theorised that this reflected that government actions might have been more successful in preventing some sub-types of intimate partner violence – for example, that characterised by males’ heavy drinking and a clear history of intimate partner violence – and less efficient with the more conventional subtypes. They also noted that many women’s refuges have restrictive intake policies to women with problematic substance use, therefore the increased access to routes to safety associated with the reduction in female perpetrated intimate homicides is not so readily available to this subgroup.

An earlier piece of work had looked at female perpetrated intimate partner femicide as a form of self-help. Peterson (1999) used a self-help perspective to explain the ‘vast majority’ of intimate partner homicide committed by women. She argued that criminality motivated by self-help is best viewed as an illegal attempt to exact justice utilised by those for whom the law is relatively inaccessible, or perceived to be inaccessible, or unhelpful when compared to others with a similar socioeconomic status. She cited data showing that women who killed their male partner were more likely to have criminal histories than those who didn’t and therefore were more likely to see the law as an oppressor rather than a source of support. Also, a higher proportion of women in her sample who had resorted to intimate partner homicide had either never called police regarding abuse perpetrated upon them by their partner or had called them eight times or more, suggesting that perception of the helpfulness of the legal system was an important variable. Paterson’s study suggests that socioeconomic status is an important factor which can affect an individual’s perception of their options and therefore their behaviour. This echoed findings of Grant and Curry (1993) that women who killed intimate partners were more socially isolated and perceived themselves to be in greater danger than women who went in to refuges.

Sex differences between those who perpetrated prior domestic abuse is also clearly identifiable in intimate partner homicides by males or females. Swatt and He (2006) compared data for women and men killed in heterosexual intimate partner homicides

to test whether certain variables were predictors of the sex of the killer. They found that women were more likely to be the perpetrator in cases where the perpetrator had a history of being the victim of abuse, and in cases where the incident involved knives or guns. This suggests that fatal intimate partner violence perpetrated by women is more likely to be a defensive reaction to prior abuse suffered. This supports the idea in my work that the differences between men and women who commit fatal intimate partner violence are more significant than the differences between men who commit intimate partner femicide and men who kill other women.

There have been challenges to the body of work suggesting that women who kill male partners are more likely to have been victims of abuse than abusers. Bourget and Gagné (2012) conducted a retrospective clinical review of coroners' files containing all cases of spousal homicide in Quebec over a 20-year period from 1991 to 2010. They found that most female victims had no personal history of violent behaviour and over a quarter had a known family history of experiencing it; while over half of men had a personal history of violent behaviour and one third had a history of family violence, most of them having inflicted it. They claimed that their work showed 'most of the women who killed their mates were not subjected to previous violence by their victims' (p.611), however they failed to take account of under-reporting of intimate partner violence and appear to have accepted that a lack of a report indicates a lack of violence. Therefore, given that their findings are inconsistent with other studies looking at histories of victimisation in women who kill their partners, their findings are questionable.

The Femicide Census report on men's fatal violence against women between 2009 and 2018 and the Centre for Women's Justice report (2021), on women who kill current or former partners both present recent data on intimate partner homicides perpetrated in the UK. The Femicide Census found evidence in 59 per cent of cases that the men who killed female current or former partners had been violent and/or abusive to them in the past. Given that this was reliant upon information found in the media and other

publicly available data, this is very likely to be an undercount. The Centre for Women's Justice (CWJ) looked at women who have killed current or former male partners. They found a very different picture, that in 77 per cent of cases it was the man who had been killed who had been abusing the woman who killed him. Requesting information from the ONS by FOI request, they found that 108 men had been killed by female partners between April 2008 and March 2018, in comparison to 840 women killed by male current/former partners in the same time period. CWJ collected data on 92 of these cases and found that in 77 per cent of the cases where women killed male partners, it was the killer – the woman – who had been a victim of prior abuse.

### **3.13.8 Splitting 'domestic homicides' into family and partner perpetrated homicides**

Sharp-Jeffs and Kelly (2016) undertook an analysis of 34 domestic homicide reviews (DHRs) produced by associates of the domestic violence and abuse charity, Standing Together. They split their analysis into intimate partner homicides and family homicides, recognising that the dynamics are quite different for the two groups. Regarding intimate partner homicides, of which there were 24 cases in their sample, there were 22 female and two male victims with 23 male perpetrators and one female. Their thematic analysis of reviews found that those most commonly identified were: victim/perpetrator contact with GP; mental health; safeguarding adults; safeguarding children; the role and knowledge of informal networks; and risk assessment. Key findings with regards to the intimate partner DHR analysis included that only a third of cases had undergone risk assessment by the police, which shows a lack of understanding of coercive control, and inconsistencies in risk assessment application. They found that no cases had been identified as high risk prior to the homicide and that risk assessment was one sided, focused on the victims not the perpetrators.

### **3.14 Domestic/family perpetrated femicides**

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) introduced a statutory definition of domestic abuse. Previous definitions used by the state (whilst not statutory definitions) and the draft definition included abuse perpetrated by intimate partners and family members. However, the dynamics of abuse between intimate partners and family members are quite different and research recognises this. As noted earlier, Westmarland wrote, 'A disservice is being done by subsuming parent abuse under the heading of domestic violence in definition and policy. This has almost certainly contributed to its invisibility and the relative lack of research attention and therefore theoretical development' (Westmarland, 2015, p.58).

Sharp-Jeffs and Kelly (2016) divided their analysis of domestic homicide reviews into those perpetrated by current and former partners and those killed by other family members, identifying the latter group as 'adult family violence'. They noted the comparative lack of research into this group compared to intimate partner homicides. Eight of the DHRs they analysed were committed by adult family members: Five mothers had been killed by sons, two fathers had been killed by sons, and one brother had been killed by his brother. All perpetrators were male. For adult family homicides, the key themes identified in their review were victim/perpetrator contact with GP, mental health, safeguarding adults, safeguarding children, the role and knowledge of informal networks, and risk assessment. Bracewell et al. (2021) expanded upon Sharp-Jeffs and Kelly's review of DHRs of family members, looking at DHR review reports for family homicides committed in England and Wales between 2011 and 2016. Seventy-three per cent of victims had been killed by a son or daughter, 13 per cent by a sibling and 11 per cent by an extended family member. Fifty-six per cent of the victims were female and 91 per cent of the perpetrators were male. Though it's important to remember that these statistics, drawn from available DHR reports, are not necessarily a representative sample of adult family homicides committed. They identified five key and interlinked themes as factors prevalent in the perpetration of adult family

homicides: mental health and substance use issues; a history of criminal behaviour; childhood trauma; financial issues; and the dynamics of caring responsibilities. They recommended that agencies dealing with these issues should have a more clearly articulated safeguarding role beyond the immediate client, as they currently largely fail to identify domestic violence and abuse. Their recommendations did not include addressing the capacity of specialist domestic abuse agencies and partnerships between specialist domestic abuse agencies and statutory services. This may reflect the dynamics of domestic homicide review panels which are largely composed of senior staff from statutory services who, in my experience, tend to overlook the expertise and benefits of development of specialist domestic violence and abuse agencies.

One of the limitations of Counting Dead Women, the Femicide Census, and this thesis is the lack of comparative data for males killing males and females killing either males or females. Research by Condry and Miles (2022) addresses this deficit with regards to parricides. They conducted research on 271 parricides committed in the UK between 2002 and 2017. They found that parricide victims were equally likely to be female or male, therefore females are comparatively over-represented as they comprise approximately one third of UK homicide victims and suspects were overwhelmingly male (88 per cent). Almost half of the suspects had never married, more than a third lived with the parent they killed at the time of the parricide and almost a third were intoxicated by drink or drugs at the time of the homicide. A case study of the deaths of 59 people in 57 parricide incidents in one police force area between 2002 and 2007, (34 mothers and 25 fathers), found evidence of mental illness in 74 per cent (n=42) of perpetrators. Fifty-five of 59 perpetrators were identified as sons and four out of 59 were identified as daughters, although one of the daughters was a male with a transgender identification.

Condry and Miles outline parental proximity and poor mental health provision as key issues with the over-representation of female victims, a result of patriarchal sex

differences in caring responsibilities. There was a high prevalence of parents caring for mentally ill sons and mentally ill sons caring for aging parents. In either of these scenarios the victim/perpetrator was plugging holes in the provision of clinical care with parent victims subjected to 'double bind' of 'responsibilisation' and 'marginalisation' in the care of their mentally ill adult child and the broader context of a shift from institutionalised to community care and increasing cuts to mental health provision, an increasing reliance upon families to provide care for loved ones with very severe mental illness providing important context.

Although the researchers offered a solid and credible explanation of why women were over-represented as victims, unfortunately they did not address the far greater over-representation of male perpetrators. In addition, in one case they accepted the preferred gender identity of one of the perpetrators in the case study, rather than his sex. In doing so they increased the number of female perpetrators of parricide by one third. This illustrates the dangers of using gender identify rather than sex in data for serious crime, especially if that data is used as the basis for policy development.

In the previous chapter on men's violence against women, I discussed the argument of Gill et al. (2014) and Siddiqui (2014) that so-called 'honour'-based violence should be considered in the context of men's violence against women. It is in the context of family violence that most so-called 'honour'-based violence occurs. The concept of honour carries different and overlapping connotations in different cultural and linguistic groups, related to 'pride, esteem, dignity, reputation and virtue'. Whilst the concept applies to both females and males, there are different obligations on the sexes. Valued masculine qualities include generosity, hospitality, and responsiveness to threats to honour with displays of strength, power, and toughness, while women's symbolic virtue, their chastity and faithfulness are strongly associated with the family's standing within the community. A man's honour may be harmed if he is not seen to respond sufficiently robustly to transgressions of a female for whom he is deemed to hold responsibility. Murder may be justifiable in the eyes of some as a legitimate way

of protecting honour. The vast majority of victims are female (typically girls and young women), perpetrators are most often male blood relatives of the victim or in-laws. However, older women especially mothers and mothers-in-law may play a part in perpetuation (judging, calling for action, reputation trashing) and this may serve to bolster their own honour or power (Gill et al., 2014).

Given Gill et al.'s identification of young women abused by family members and Condry and Miles' work on parricide as two quite different contexts of adult - perpetrated family homicide, it is worth remembering Westmarland's warning of the dangers of conflating different forms of abuse. Indeed, although one of the four main cohorts analysed in my research is women killed by family members, I will on occasion look at women killed by their sons in isolation for that reason.

### **3.15 Sexual violence in femicides**

Sexual violence is both a particular form of violence and a motivation. As noted, the Dobashes, in their Murder Study, found that 40 per cent of murders of women committed by men could be characterised by the use of sexual violence. The prevalence of sexual violence identified was much lower in the Femicide Census 10-year report, at six per cent. It should be noted that the Dobashes considered 40 per cent an under-identification. One of the key differences to explain this disparity could be the level of information that the Dobashes had access to, as they were able to use confidential prison records. They recognised that in intimate partner femicides in particular, the use of sexual violence/coercion could be explained away. For example, it is much easier to explain the presence of sperm on or in a female body if that body belonged to one's partner than if it is that of an elderly woman whose home you burgled. Forty-three per cent of the women in their sample were murdered by current or former partners, whereas in the Femicide Census the cohort was 62 per cent and included manslaughter as well as murder cases. In addition, they identified that sexual violence could be hidden in criminal justice proceeding records if a decision is made

to prosecute only the most serious offence, which would be more of a problem for the Femicide Census (without access to privileged records). Fourthly, there is the possibility that the media may sanitise their reports on femicides. And finally, that police crime scene investigations fail to identify sexualised violence. On the other hand, Soothill et al. (2000), found that four per cent of homicides committed in England and Wales had a definite sexual element and, given that they did not specify the sex of the victims, this is much more consistent with the prevalence identified by the Femicide Census. Kerr and Beech (2015), interviewed eight killers, who had committed sexually motivated homicides, in order to explore functional analysis of sexual homicide. They found four key motivational themes: avenging sexual abuse, homicidal impulse, cathartic (emotional) reaction, and emotional loneliness. They concluded that motivational models (those which focus on the psychology of the perpetrator) underestimate the power of the situation in cases of homicide, in other words they failed to look at the wider social context. Thus, a feminist analysis is precluded. Higgs et al. (2016), analysed data from seven pre-existing studies of sexual murder selected through a series of data quality assurance tests to try to ascertain whether it was possible to find subsets within sexual murders. They found that most sexual murderers were men, and most victims were women, and that there were three distinct types:

1. sexualised murder, driven by deviant sexual fantasies
2. grievance murder, driven by anger/aggression
3. rape murder, with only an indirect link between the sexualised murder and the sexual offence. The perpetrators planned to sexually offend without planning to kill but are prepared to use violence to overcome resistance or as a detection avoidance strategy

The theme of 'unplanned' sexual violence itself, rather than unplanned murder after planned sexual violence, was identified by Scully (1990), in a study which included interviews with 114 convicted rapists. She found that 39 per cent of the convicted

rapists had also been found guilty of robbery or burglary in relation to the rapes that they had committed. Her research found that in the majority of cases the men's original intention was rape, and that robbery was an afterthought. But, that 'a surprising number of the men indicated that the reverse pattern was true' (p.141), that their original intent had been robbery or burglary and that rape was 'an added bonus', an opportunity availed of because it presented itself. Unfortunately, it was outside the capacity of my research to ascertain whether rape, robbery, or killing a woman was the original intent of the perpetrator. I had noticed the use of sexual violence in murders and robberies, particularly of older women, in my work on *Counting Dead Women*. The methodology I developed for this thesis therefore included measures of these variables and the separation of relationships, contexts and forms of violence used.

### **3.16 Older women**

The subject of killing older women has also been mentioned above in the sections addressing fatal violence against female family members and sexual violence.

In their study of women murdered by men, Dobash and Dobash found that (17 per cent (n=40) of the victims in their sample were women aged 65 and over and that 48 per cent of these women had been subjected to sexual violence when they were killed. Hannah Bows (writing in the *Femicide Census, 2020*) introduced her research into violence against older women in the UK, including sexual violence and murders. Bows highlights that women aged over 60 had until recently been absent in crime statistics, including domestic and sexual violence and stalking, and that those aged 75 and over or those living in care homes or hospitals continue to be excluded. The *Femicide Census* found that between 2009 and 2018, 14 per cent of UK female victims of men's fatal violence were aged 66 and over. Of these, 34 per cent of women had been killed by a current or former partner, 25 per cent by a son and a further seven per cent by another family member. Thirteen per cent of women aged 66 and over were killed in the context of a burglary/robbery. Forty-nine per cent of victims had been subjected

to overkilling, that is levels of violence greater than that which was necessary to kill them. Bows has suggested that murders of older women, particularly by intimate partners or family members, may be under identified because killing someone who is expected to die soon is an effective strategy to hide murder.

Selecting older women because of physical vulnerability has a long precedent. Albert DeSalvo, sometimes known as the Boston Strangler, who murdered and sexually assaulted 13 women in Boston between 1962 and 1964, started his femicide career by selecting older women because of their physical vulnerability, more confident that he would have the power to overcome them. As his confidence grew, he moved on to younger women. The first six women he killed were aged between 56 and 85 years old. Of the next seven, only one was over 27 years of age.

Despite 22 years of experience of service delivery to women, 13 of them as a frontline worker or manager based directly in an accommodation service, when I started Counting Dead Women in 2012, one of the few things that surprised me was the number of women who were killed by their sons. Older women are under-represented in refuges and hostels, older women escaping violence from their sons, even more so. At nia, the organisation I work for, conducts an annual diversity audit on age, ethnicity, sexuality, and disability to identify whether the women accessing our service reflect our local population demographic. Women aged over 55 are under-represented in all our services (unpublished internal data) except those working directly with GP services. At nia, we have recently applied for and been awarded funding for Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) specialising in work with older women. The need for them has been identified by the data from Counting Dead Women and the Femicide Census, as well, critically, as feedback from frontline workers who identified additional barriers facing older women who had been referred to the service. These posts, outside their day-to-day function, have two main purposes: to work proactively to make the service accessible to older women; and secondly, to provide a service tailored to the needs of older women. This often involves working in partnership with

external agencies (in particular, housing, mental health and substance use services) to address circumstances relating to the abuser(s) insofar as they have an impact on the safety and well-being of the woman in a way that is quite different to how the work is approached with a woman being subjected to intimate partner violence and abuse. The abusers are almost always sons, sometimes grandsons.

### **3.17 The sex industry and pornography**

Women in prostitution are at an increased risk of murder in the UK, (Brookman and Maguire, 2003; O’Kane, 2002; Ward et al., 2006).

Some critiques of feminist analysis question the inclusion of prostitution and pornography as forms of violence against women, instead claiming that ‘sex work is work’ (Alexander, 1998; Williams, 2012). Others, like myself, not only argue that prostitution and pornography are violence against women in and of themselves but that they contribute to the conducive context where men’s violence against women flourishes. Gail Dines (2010) also addresses the role of pornography in desensitising men, eroticising the abuse of, and violence against, women, and reminds us of the links between capitalism and patriarchy: ‘Pornographers have done an incredible job of selling their product as being all about sex, and not about a particular constructed version of sex that is developed within a profit-driven setting’ (p.xi).

Women in prostitution, particularly street-based prostitution can be easy targets for men who plan to use violence, to rape or kill (Lee and Reid, 2018). Prostitution requires women to go to isolated places with men that they do not know. In addition, women in prostitution can become the focus of men who fear or despise women and women’s sexuality, an issue exacerbated by stigmatisation.

Salfati et al. (2008) compared the murders of women killed who were known to be involved in prostitution to those of women with no known links to prostitution, who were killed in either sexualised or non-sexual murders. They found that overall,

homicides of women involved in prostitution are more similar to sexual murders than non-sexual murders but that there were also some significant differences between the murders of women involved in prostitution and sexual murders, in particular with regards to the backgrounds of the location where victims' bodies were found and other crime scene behaviours. Women victims of serial killers are increasingly likely to be women involved in prostitution, (Quinet, 2011). Furthermore, amongst serial killers, men who kill women in prostitution kill a greater average number of victims than those who do not target prostituted women; and those who kill women in prostitution tend to have a longer period of actively killing women before detection (ibid).

Racism also can be eroticised in prostitution and pornography. Women from minoritised ethnic groups are over-represented in prostitution, usually linked to socioeconomic inequality. And pornography frequently relies upon racist sexualised tropes linking stereotypes of exoticisation, submissiveness or rampant sexual appetite. (Mayall, 1993; Dines et al., 1998; Miller-Young, 2010). The murders of eight people, six of them women, at three 'massage parlours' in Atlanta, Georgia in March 2021, demonstrate a confluence of femicide, racism, race inequality, prostitution, male sexual entitlement, objectification and gun control. Six of the victims were Asian (of which four were Korean). They were shot dead by a white male, Robert Aaron Long. Long was raised in a conservative Christian community and used claims of a 'sex addiction' on his defence and identified the sites as a temptation, (Futrelle, 2021).

With regards to the impact of the legalisation of prostitution, Schon and Hoheide (2021) looked at murders of women in the German sex trade between 1920 and 2017. They found that since the 'liberalisation' of prostitution in Germany in 2002, although the numbers of women killed between 2002 and 2017 appeared to decline, the numbers of women reporting attempted murder increased dramatically. They concluded that the liberalisation of prostitution does not eliminate serious violence against women in prostitution.

These examples serve to further challenge of the omission of deaths of women in the sex trade – with the exception of the references to organised crime and human trafficking – in some classifications of examples of femicide such as the one championed by the 2012 Vienna Symposium on Femicide.

### **3.18 Chapter summary**

This chapter has visited some of the critical concepts and scholars in the field of men's fatal violence against women. I have looked at the concept of femicide, its history and evolution and definitional issues, explaining why, although the concept is important and a definition useful, the subject matter of this thesis is men's fatal violence against women.

I have considered examples of geopolitical and temporal variations in femicide and made the case for why counting women victims of men's fatal violence is important. I have made the case for including all forms of men's fatal violence in an analysis of femicides, not restricting or prioritising intimate partner violence. I recognise that globally, killing by women's current or former male intimate partners is the most prevalent form of femicide, but accept the importance of being able to separate the different broad sets of relationships between the female victims of men's fatal violence and the men who killed them: particularly, current/former partners, mothers, other family members, associates and strangers. I then went on to look at some of the main themes in existing work addressing men's fatal violence against women.

## **Chapter Four – Research methods and methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This research set out to ask what could be learned from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women. This chapter sets out the research methods and the rationale behind some key decisions underpinning this thesis, which set out to ask what could be learned from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women. The research is built upon a radical feminist theoretical foundation, recognising the role of men's violence against women in maintaining public and private patriarchy and also reflecting the conducive context of the subjugation of women and the intersecting inequalities of socioeconomic class, race, and disability. A mixed method approach was undertaken threading case studies into findings from quantitative analysis of the killings of 515 women by 504 men over a three-year period between the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2012 and the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2014, with additional purposive sampling of women killed by strangers from 2015 to 2017 and the killings of women who had been involved in prostitution from 2009 to 2017.

The chapter begins by looking at feminist methodologies and the theoretical underpinning before moving on to research design and methods. The processes for data gathering and the research sample are described before looking at how the research sample was divided into five main groups, four according to the broad relationship between the victim and her killer and a fifth where this could not be ascertained from publicly available data. The variables selected for research were split into five subsets: victims, perpetrators, relationships, the fatal incident, and perpetrator outcomes are then identified.

The data protection rights of the surviving men who killed women are addressed and the ethical issues ensuring that women's whose lives were taken and their surviving loved ones are respected. Researcher positioning and well-being are also considered.

## 4.2 Feminist methodologies

As explored in the previous chapters, ending men's violence against women requires systemic change at individual, relational, institutional, economic, and cultural levels (Heise, 1998; Hagemann-White, 2010; Walby, 1990). The data collected for this research concerns variables located at individual, relational and institutional levels, and given the limitations of word count and scope, the analysis focuses on individuals and the fatal incident whilst recognising that change is also required at systemic structural and cultural levels to reduce or end men's violence against women.

Acker et al. (1983) identify three principles of feminist research:

1. research should contribute to women's liberation through producing knowledge that women can use themselves
2. should use methods of gaining knowledge that are not oppressive
3. should continually develop feminist critical perspective that questions dominant intellectual traditions and can reflect on its own development

My intention is that this research will satisfy these principles, that it will contribute to knowledge and understanding of the root causes and connections between all forms of men's violence against women and therefore has the potential to contribute to preventative steps.

With regards to the second principle, that methods should not be oppressive, the lack of the possibility of informed consent is clear with regards to the women killed, the work draws on publicly available information and in the thesis and database, all cases have been anonymised. Also, my work will develop feminist perspectives and not be part of intellectual traditions which de-centre the concept of patriarchy which addresses Acker's third principle.

### **4.3 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework underpinning this research is dual systems feminism, (Walby, 1990) in that the concept of patriarchy is central, as is the understanding that men's violence against women is both a product of patriarchal sex inequality but also an integral tool of male domination and the subjugation of women but also recognises the influence capitalist power relations. In addition, the intersection of national and global ethno-racial inequalities (Crenshaw, 1991) are recognised.

The concepts of sex and gender have long been contentious in feminism, increasingly so as queer theory swamps academia and proponents punish feminist scholars such as Professor Kathleen Stock (previously of University of Sussex) and Professor Selina Todd (Oxford University.) It is important therefore that I state my own position, recognising sex as a material reality and gender as a social construct reflecting and reinforcing the hierarchy of sex inequality.

The critique of the neo-liberal concept of agency, recognising that instead, choice and consent are socially produced, and that consent does not mean an absence of harm for the individual directly affected or society more broadly is also critical to the radical feminist understanding of sex-inequality and public and private patriarchy (Davies, 1991; Clegg, 2006).

Radical feminism, however, is most useful and relevant when it integrates socialism and critical race theory, it must recognise that all women are not currently equal though we share in common subordination due to our sex.

#### **4.4 Research aims and objectives**

The aim of this research is to explore what can be learned from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women, something that until my work has been absent in previous theoretical and empirical work in the UK.

I intend to achieve this aim through the following objective: to understand the 1) characteristics, 2) circumstances and 3) patterns of women who are killed by men and the men who kill them.

#### **4.5 Research design and methods**

A mixed methods approach was used to answer the research questions. Analysis of quantitative data on men's fatal violence against women and girls aged 13 years and over in the UK in the three-year period between 2012 and 2014 using SPSS software was built upon, incorporating exemplifying case details where they highlight patterns of association and add depth to the analysis of data.

Data was gathered in three ways

1. I had already identified most cases of women killed by men between 2012 and 2014 through my work on Counting Dead Women. This, I gathered from two main sources – electronic news, media searches and direct contact from people interested in the campaign via social media platforms including Twitter and my website.
2. This was checked against data gathered by the Femicide Census to identify any cases which had been missed. Data for the Femicide Census is gathered by Freedom of Information (FOI) request. The requests were sent to the 44 UK police force constabularies by Freshfields Solicitors acting on behalf of the Femicide Census. According to Bows (2017), FOIs have been little used in feminist research but provide a useful source of previously unknown information to contextualise feminist research. The Freedom of Information

Act, 2000 requires public authorities (including the National Health Service, educational institutions, police forces, and the armed forces) to respond to written requests for data. Authorities have 20 working days within which to respond with the requested information or with a refusal based on one of the exemptions contained within the acts. The return rate to Femicide Census FOIs was 97.7 per cent. Only the Metropolitan Police force did not provide a response, though because this covers the largest constabulary (by population) in the UK, the impact is wider. Further issues regarding the data requested and obtained from the FOIs is considered in the limitations section.

3. Once a final list of cases had been identified, case summaries were recorded in handwritten notebooks the details of which were used to populate the variable fields in the SPSS database

The data for this research is separate to that of the Femicide Census and has neither been used nor published elsewhere.

#### **4.6 Research sample**

The cases that made up the research sample were women and girls aged 14 years and over killed in the UK by a male or where a male was the principal suspect, or were UK national women that were killed abroad in the three-year period 2012–2014. Purposive sampling was then conducted to boost the sample sizes of women who had been killed by strangers between 2015 and 2017 and women who were known to have been involved in prostitution before their death and killed during the research period and extended between 2009 and 2018.

In total, there are 515 women, aged 14 and over, who were killed by men in the entire sample. They comprise of:

1. women killed by men between 2012 and 2014 (n=446)

2. an additional purposive sample of women killed by male strangers from 2015 to 2017 (n=62)
3. an additional purposive sample of women who were involved in prostitution and killed by men between 2009 and 2011, and 2015 and 2018, that is, between 2009 and 2018 excluding all those already included in the 2012 to 2014 sample (n=16 of which 10 included in purposive sample of women killed by strangers so an additional 6 women).

The 515 women were killed by 504 males:

1. 447 men killed the 446 women in (though this included 15 who were unidentified)
2. an additional 51 men killed the 63 women who comprised the purposive sample of women killed by strangers
3. 14 men comprised the men who killed women who have been involved in prostitution in the purposive samples (eight of these are also included in the purposive sample of men who killed strangers, therefore an additional 6 men, of whom four killed women who were current or former partners and two killed women who were known in another capacity, namely regular users of the woman through prostitution).

#### **4.7 Variables**

For each killing, 150 variables were identified and grouped into five variables clusters:

- victim variables – 15 variables
- perpetrator variables – 29 variables
- relationship variables – 6 variables

- incident variables – 88 variables (of which 38 are dichotomous (yes/no) variables for forms of violence used on the women and 38 are dichotomous variables relating to the context in which the femicide took place.)
- outcome variables – two variables.

The full list can be found at Appendix One. The variables code book is available on request.

There are 536 case entry lines, as the sample of 515 women killed by men included some women who were killed by two or more men, and each additional perpetrator required a line for their specific 'perpetrator variables'.

The following cases were excluded from the analysis:

- women killed by men in driving accidents where there was no suspicion of intent
- corporate manslaughter.

#### **4.7.1 Victim variables – 15 variables**

Fifteen victim variables were largely nominal variables, some of which were dichotomous though the responses 'yes/ever' and 'no/never'. Only positive indicators of presence meant inclusion in 'yes/ever', for variables including mental ill-health, physical ill-health, and substance use

Nominal variables were also recorded for ethnicity, using the Office of National Statistics' categories. Nominal dichotomous variables were used to record whether or not the victim was born in the UK and whether or not she was known to have been involved in prostitution or pornography and whether or not she was known to identify as transgender. No victims were known to be trans-identified females.

String variables were used to record details of mental and physical health issues and any further details of involvement in pornography and prostitution.

#### **4.7.2 Perpetrator variables – 29 variables**

All variables used to record characteristics of victims were repeated for perpetrators.

A number of additional variables were added, including: whether the perpetrator was known to have expressed suicidal ideation; whether he had a known history of intimate partner violence against the victim; of intimate partner violence against other females; of sexual violence against women or girls; history of other episodes of violence against women; a history of violence against males; or where the sex of the victims was not reported; and whether he had a history of non-violent criminality (nominal).

#### **4.7.3 Relationship variables – six variables – relationships between victims and perpetrators**

As introduced in the methodology section, the relationships between victims and perpetrators of men's fatal violence against women were split into four broad cohorts:

1. intimate partner (or former intimate partner)
2. relatives
3. those who were known to each other in any context outside intimate partners or relatives
4. strangers

In the research database these are composed of 36 different options as detailed in the table below. They are condensed into 32 relationships in the table below as a number of variables that could be classified as 'other related' and 'other known, non-related' were grouped together. In total there were 532 relationships. This is greater than the number of victims because of cases where one man killed more than one woman, or one woman was killed by more than one man. The table below shows relationships based on the victim and primary perpetrator (n = 515).

**Table 1 – Relationships between victims and perpetrators**

Relationship cohort	Detail of relationship category	No.	Total
Current/Former intimate partner	IPV – spouse	102	274
	IPV – ex-spouse	27	
	IPV – boyfriend/partner	79	
	IPV – ex-boyfriend/partner	57	
	IPV – love-rival/similar	0	
	Marriage – under Sharia/Islamic law	3	
	Casual sex	4	
	Sex buyer/targeted prostituted women and women in prostitution	1	
	Perpetrator employment role: Gardener/lover	1	
Relative	Mother – son	46	75
	Step-mother – stepson	1	
	Father – daughter	6	
	Step-father – stepdaughter	1	
	Mother-in-law/ex-M-i-l – Son-in-law/ex S-i-l	5	
	Grandmother – grandson	4	
	Step grandmother – step grandson	3	
	Sister – brother	4	
	Brother-in-law or brother of a family member (by marriage)	1	
	Other related	4	
Known	Friend/social acquaintance	14	50
	Work colleague	3	
	Associate	2	
	Neighbour	5	
	Woman has (employment) role in relationship to perp e.g., teacher, prison warden, hostel worker, doctor, nurse	4	
	Perpetrator has (employment) role in relationship to victims: taxi-driver	2	
	Flatmate, co-care-home resident	5	
	Other - known - non-related	10	
	Landlord/tenant	3	
	Sex buyer/ targeted prostituted woman and woman in prostitution	2	
Stranger	No relationship/stranger (These include 21 women and girls killed in terrorist attacks)	73	102
	Sex buyer/targeted prostituted woman and woman in prostitution	17	
	First date/meeting	10	
	Perpetrator has employment role which brought him in to contact with victims	1	
	Contract killer	1	
Unknown	Missing data	14	14

Two responses fell across more than one separate broad relationship categories:

1. 'Perpetrator has employment role which brought him in to contact with victims':

Four killers fell into this group. One, employed as a security guard bludgeoned a woman attending a conference to death with a fire extinguisher in the toilets at a conference she was attending. This was classified in the broad categories as a stranger killing.

One was a gardener who developed a relationship with a retired woman by whom he had initially been employed as gardener. The details of their relationship were not initially disclosed, and the case had initially been reported as woman's gardener charged but they had been in an intimate relationship for an undisclosed period of time.

One man who killed two elderly women (and attacked at least one other who survived) was a taxi-driver who regularly provided a service to them, so would have known about their vulnerability and also may have gained a degree of trust. These relationships were categorised as 'other known'.

2. 'Sex buyer/targeted prostituted woman and woman in prostitution'. Twenty killers fell into this group. In two cases, they bought regular access to the woman they killed, but there was no indication that the woman killed considered their association as anything other than prostitution. Indeed, one woman was allegedly killed after refusing to enter a relationship or 'sole-client' arrangement with the killer. In the other case, the woman and man had been seeing each other for a period of around three years, she lived in accommodation paid for by him and was paid a monthly fee. He believed that she was planning to leave him and also, he said, to defraud him. The first two cases were put in the 'other known' cohort, the third into 'current/former partner'. In 17 cases there was no evidence to suggest victim and killer were anything other than strangers.

This does not cover all women killed who were or had been involved in prostitution (n=34) as some were killed by partners or ex-partners, spouses or ex-spouses.

#### **4.7.4 Relationship Cohorts**

The number and percentage of relationships in each group was therefore:

1. Women killed between 2012 and 2014 only:
  - intimate partner/former intimate partner: 60.1 per cent (n=268)
  - other family member: 16.8 per cent (n=75)
  - known in some capacity (not family): 11 per cent (n=49)
  - stranger: 9 per cent (n=40)
  - unknown: 3 per cent (n=14)
  
2. Full sample with additional purposive sampling:
  - intimate partner/former intimate partner: 53.2 per cent (n=274)
  - other family member: 14.6 per cent (n=75)
  - known in some capacity (not family): 9.7 per cent (n=50)
  - stranger: 19.8 per cent (n=102)
  - unknown: 2.5 per cent (n=14).

#### **4.7.5 Incident variables – 88 variables**

The incident variables recorded details of the fatal event in which the woman's life was taken.

Thirty-eight dichotomous variables recorded the methods of violence that the woman was subjected to in the fatal attack.

The presence of reported overkill, defined as inflicting more harm than necessary to cause death (Beauregard and Martineau, 2013) or where additional injuries are inflicted post death was recorded as a dichotomous variable with an accompanying string

variable to record further details. For the purpose of multiple stabbings, overkill was recorded in cases where the victim was stabbed five or more times.

#### **4.7.6 Outcome variables – two variables**

A nominal variable for 15 recorded outcome possibilities including the perpetrator killing himself prior to detection, murder or manslaughter charges, acquittal, and suspected not charged. A conditional variable for length of sentence was used for manslaughter and murder charges.

### **4.8 Data protection**

A Privacy Impact Assessment was developed with the support of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP for data collected for the Femicide Census. Guidance was then sought and received from the Information Commissioner regarding the collection and use of data for the Femicide Census and to ensure that standards stipulated in the Data Protection Act 2000 were met. Primarily, advice was sought regarding:

1. Ownership of data. The Femicide Census Data was initially jointly owned by the research author and Women's Aid Federation England. The terms of this were set out in an Intellectual Property Agreement<sup>3</sup>.
2. Matters regarding identifiability, primarily regarding victims' families and perpetrators as the dead do not have rights under the Data Protection Act
3. Conditions for processing, including fairness and the need for a legitimate reason for processing personal data

The Information Commissioner provided a written response confirming that they did not have concerns and were reassured by access and the security measures regarding the data.

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<sup>3</sup> The data is now owned by The Femicide Census Community Interest Company under the Directorship of myself and Clarrie O'Callaghan.

Deceased persons are not protected by General Data Protection Regulations, (GDPR). However, this fact and that data collected and processed meets the conditions of the Data Protection Act does not mean that there are no further ethical considerations. In addition, the advice from the Information Commission applies to the data collected for the Femicide Census only, not for this research, and not to the collection and use of data in the Counting Dead Women awareness raising campaign. It was, and remains, important to me that high ethical standards are maintained, including respect to the deceased and the avoidance of causing further pain or anguish to their surviving loved ones. Thus, for the purposes of the SPSS database, each victim was assigned an individual code number to protect anonymity.

Each woman and details of the man who killed her, their relationship, the manner and context of her death and the outcome for the killer was researched and recorded individually from information available online. The primary source was media reports of deaths and trials. In 135 cases of domestic femicides (the majority of which were intimate partner femicides, though some were matricides and family femicides) Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), and/or NHS Death Reviews were publicly available and, where this was the case, these were also used. In a small number of cases, Coroners Reports and/or transcripts of judges' comments were publicly available and accessible online, or where a child or children had been killed in addition to an adult woman, a combined DHR/serious case review, where this was the case, these were also used.

#### **4.9 Ethical considerations**

Before embarking on the research, ethical approval was sought and obtained from Durham University School of Applied Social Science Research Ethics Committee (now Department of Sociology Research Ethics Committee).

One of the objectives of the Counting Dead Women Campaign, which formed the foundation of my interest in men's fatal violence against women and therefore this

research, was to raise awareness and consideration of women killed by men by naming them. In doing so, I wished to commemorate the women who had been killed, lifting them outside the merely statistical and highlighting the human reality of men's fatal violence against women. For that reason, recording the names of women killed was, and continues to be, necessary and integral to the campaign. All of the information taken from media sources is already in the public domain. Some information, regardless of it having been previously made public, retains the potential to cause distress to surviving family members and friends, who played no role in the death of a woman, and may also cast a woman victim of a man's fatal violence in a negative light. It is important that this research does not cause or add additional distress. Strong efforts will be made to ensure that victim blaming and judgmental attitudes will be avoided in this research and such practices where they are used in media coverage will be critiqued. However, on occasion, the research data processing may conflict with the perceptions of families of women who have been killed. For example, so-called 'mercy killings' present a challenge.

The nature of this research means that all the primary subjects are dead. Their deaths – as a result of men's actions – are a condition of inclusion, it would not be possible to obtain consent, let alone informed consent, regarding inclusion in the dataset. For this reason, in addition to the desire to minimise the potential to cause further suffering and distress to friends or family members of women who have been killed, outside the seven case studies, women's real names are not used in the research. However, it is noted that most cases, even with names removed, will be identifiable through internet searches if sufficient detail is discussed.

#### **4.10 Researcher positioning**

'As researchers we must not impose our definition of reality on to those researched for to do so would be to undermine our intention to work toward a sociology for women.' (Acker et al., 1983, p.63)

Researcher positioning rose to prominence in sociological research with Becker's 1967 work 'Whose Side Are We On?' and feminist research, in particular, places the female researcher in a particular context, that of a member of the subordinate sex class, in her research. As Saadawi (2011) states:

'The feminists who are aware of the effects of patriarchy realize that we are all in the same boat from the dangers of patriarchy, and that the oppression of women is universal.' (Saadawi, interviewed by Sussman in *The Nation*, 2011)

Feminists' critique of male bias in what was previously assumed to be neutral in the social sciences is well established (Sherman and Beck, 1979) and has included the questioning of whether male bias contributes to what is epistemologically valued and whether research itself, if not from a feminist perspective, contributes to maintaining patriarchal male supremacy (Blumer, 1967; Hughes, 2006). Dworkin takes this further, questioning the possibility of feminist research as free of male bias:

'All feminist arguments, however radical in intent or consequence, are with or against assertions or premises implicit in the male system, which is made credible or authentic by the power of men to name. No transcendence of the male system is possible as long as men have the power of naming' (Dworkin, 1976, p.11)

I cannot consider myself to hold an outside or objective position, nor do I see this as to my detriment as a scholar. As a feminist and as a campaigner with a specific interest in men's fatal violence against women, my thoughts and interpretations will reflect my feminist positioning as outlined when I addressed the theoretical perspective underpinning this research earlier in the chapter. As a practitioner and manager with more than 30 years' experience of providing services for and supporting women who have been subjected to men's violence, my experience informs and adds depth to my thinking.

#### **4.11 Researcher well-being**

The concept of 'vicarious trauma' has primarily been applied to therapists and others working directly with victims, including Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995, 1996) who looked at the impact of working with survivors of childhood sexual abuse on therapists, but the concept has also been used in relation to researchers (Stamm, 1995; Rager, 2005). Of her own research on breast cancer, Rager wrote

'I do not regret the experience, but I believe I would have benefitted from increased awareness and better preparations regarding the emotional toil of conducting research of this type.' (Rager, 2005)

When I began what was to become the Counting Dead Women project in January 2012, after looking for information regarding the killing of the young woman who had, a few weeks earlier, been referred to the organisation I work in, I was not setting out to begin either a campaign or research project that would involve the collection of data over (at this stage) ten years regarding the violent deaths of over 1,000 women at the hands of men and so did not build self-care strategies into my research plan. Reading about a violent death can be distressing. I have found reading report after report on over 1,000 violent deaths distressing and at times overwhelming. In particular, when I am collating information at the end of the month or for awareness raising events, such as for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, I am occasionally contacted by family members of women and girls who have been killed. Listening to their grief and expressions of gratitude for my work, which seems paltry in the face of what they have experienced, can be upsetting.

As an employee of an organisation working to support women and children who have been subjected to sexual and domestic violence, primarily from men, I have the opportunity to access group clinical support, one-to-one support via the 'Employee Assistance Programme' and on-going support from colleagues engaged in similar work. I have used the first two, very rarely but they are there should I feel the need to

access them. I use the latter frequently, though as my work role is Chief Executive I try to avoid adding to demands on colleagues by asking them to care for me. In addition, the emotional impact of this research is added to the stress of leading an under-resourced charity supporting women who could become subjects of this research, sitting on Domestic Homicide Reviews, and at times hearing woman-blaming and/or perpetrator-excusing opinions from other participants. However, with over 30 years' experience of working in the women's sector, I have developed resilience and coping skills which are relevant to this research and on-going work to address men's violence against women.

I have had regular contact with my research supervisors and on occasions when the demands of life – for example, very quickly adapting a frontline support organisation in the face of the global Covid-19 pandemic – I took a necessary break from this research.

Crucially I have a strong network of feminist friends, many of whom share an interest in working to address men's violence against women, and the team working on the Femicide Census. In addition, I have a strong relationship with a partner who has no interest in feminism, nor men's violence against women, and this provides a welcome and vital space away from my work and this research. I have found taking breaks essential and maintain firm boundaries.

#### **4.12 Limitations**

One of the most significant limitations of this research is the reliance upon third party data. This applies to all datasets used, those collected through media reports, those through FOI requests and those through publicly available official sources, such as DHRs, Judges' sentencing remarks, or serious case reviews. None of these datasets could be regarded as purely objective and will reflect the biases of the source. There are opportunities for biases to affect outcomes of femicides from detection of a suspicious death, identification of harms inflicted on the women, police investigations,

criminal justice procedures, and reporting. This is unavoidable in research of this nature, and whilst there is little that I can do, as the researcher, to mitigate against these biases, I can be aware of them and cognisant of their inevitable impact on my findings. For example, regarding media coverage, Gekoski et al.'s (2012) study of media coverage of homicides found that where victims did not meet the profile of the 'perfect victim' the volume of media coverage was reduced. Relying largely upon media coverage to identify the cohort of women killed by men may lead to replication of this bias and failing to identify all women killed by men, particularly those who may be deemed 'less worthy' by the media. Cross referencing cases identified through media searches for 'Counting Dead Women' with those identified through police, FOIs should address this limitation in terms of failure to identify femicides identified by the police through media searches. But, reduced news coverage means there are gaps in the data that I was able to collect unless the death was subject to a DHR. DHRs are not produced in Scotland or N. Ireland, nor in cases where a woman was killed outside an intimate partner or family context. Another example, this time occurring in investigations of deaths, is the failure to identify sexual violence. Dobash and Dobash (2015) noted that sexual violence in murders is highly likely to be underestimated due to: lack of training of police officers and pathologists to spot indicators of sexual violence; prosecutors only proceeding with the most serious charge; and deference to the memory of victims and their families. These were contributory factors in their own work which was based on privileged access to prison files and interviews with murderers. This will only be exacerbated through reliance upon publicly available information as is the case in this study. Their finding of low incidences of sexual violence in intimate partner femicides (16 per cent of cases of intimate partner femicide) perhaps needs to be treated with additional caution. Walby and Allen's analysis of the British Crime Survey (2004) found that 54 per cent of rapes had been committed by a partner or ex-partner, indicating high levels of sexual violence in intimate relationships. It is possible that the circumstances of shared lives (where this remains the case) means sexual violence is

less difficult to detect in intimate partner femicides and also, if sexual violence did not take place in a final fatal assault, this does not mean it was absent in the relationship. This will mean that the levels of sexual violence identified in the quantitative analysis is likely to be an undercount.

A further limitation reflecting data sources is the data on substance use. It cannot be assumed that where substance use was not reported it was not present. Nor was it possible to identify the extent to which substance use was problematic, managed, or occasional/recreational and non-problematic. The women were not on trial, this could affect whether prosecuting or defending legal representatives considered their substance use relevant. There is also media bias, with reporting media having a keener interest in negative portrayals of perpetrators. As a feminist researcher, I also have my own biases, I am keen to avoid victim blaming narratives and therefore may have been less rigorous in my search for indicators of substance use in victims, and/or less judgemental if I found ambiguous references. These concerns, regarding gaps in data echo those of Dawson and Carrigan (2021) regarding the prevalence of sex/gender-related motives and indicators in femicides in Canada, although some of the variables they were seeking went beyond the remit of this research. Nevertheless, their conclusion that data gaps have a negative impact on the possible prevention of understanding and ultimately reducing femicide and men's violence against women – and reflect the real value placed on femicide prevention by policy makers – unfortunately seem reasonable.

A critical limitation of this research occurs from the exclusive focus on the killings of women. To truly identify specificities and differences in women killing, it would be necessary to have data of the killings of men, whether by other men or in the context of heterosexual intimate relationships, by women. Collecting this data would have been beyond what is possible within the scope of doctoral research. According to ONS data, including males would have added another 941 victims (men aged 16 and over

killed between 2012 and 2014) and there is no Counting Dead Women or Femicide Census project identifying these males by name.

Data collected regarding race and ethnicity is poor. Initially, during collection of data for Counting Dead Women, which was from media reports on the internet, attempts were made to collect the data but the level of reporting of race/ethnicity was inconsistent, that is, sometimes it was noted and sometimes it was not. Secondly, as noted by Gekoski et al. (2012) and observed through data collection for this research, the homicides of women from Black and minority ethnic groups routinely receive less media coverage. This weakness has not been satisfactorily rectified in the data collected for the Femicide Census as information was only provided in 21 per cent of cases of police responses to FOI requests. In addition, where it was provided, ethnicity was inconsistently reported across police forces and in some cases, meaningless (e.g., 'dark European' or ethnophaulic (e.g., Oriental) (Femicide Census, 2020).

Given previous findings of research into racial inequalities in homicide rates, as far back as Brearley (1932) and Hoffman (1925) and in intimate partner violence specifically (Sabri, 2018), these will result in significant gaps in the analysis of the demographics of the women who are victim to and the men who killed. There is very little publicly available data, or to my knowledge data collected by the state but not made publicly available, of the killings of women who had no recourse to public funds. Therefore, we have no way of measuring whether these women are additionally vulnerable, though of course, our understanding of women's lives tells us that they must be. In addition, data regarding the social class of victims and perpetrators has not been collected. Media reports rarely report information which could be used as a valid and/or reliable identifier of class, neither is this information collected in routine police data. Therefore, important variables are missing from analysis in the research. It is not unreasonable to assume that this reflects lower value placed on lives that are statistically more likely to be lost.

The deaths of some woman have been identified as 'mercy killings' in press reports and in some cases this issue has been considered in trial proceedings. There is currently no law in the UK permitting such killings. In some cases, the methods used to kill the women have been brutal and far from anything that could be described as merciful. In addition, it is almost always left to her killer to make this case and it is often not possible to identify whether or not the woman was not subjected to coercive control, abuse and/or violence during her lifetime. On the other hand, the lack of legislation means that there is no legally sanctioned framework under which a woman could choose to end her life and it would be wrong to refuse to acknowledge that there may be cases where this happened in a non-abusive relationship and which a woman requested or indicated that she would prefer. Mercy-killings, where identified as such in press report or other reports, were identified as a dataset, but their inclusion does not indicate that this narrative is accepted as truthful. It should also be recognised that even where the circumstances suggest a genuine belief that a killing was motivated by the wish to alleviate suffering, sex role socialisation, for example men's lesser propensity to be caregivers, means there is a distinctly patriarchal context. Additionally, as Monckton-Smith (2020) identified, a 'mercy killing' could be prompted by the perpetrators' perceived or real loss of control. Further research looking at sex differences in familial and intimate partner homicides identified as 'mercy killings' would be of interest as this would identify whether there were differences in female and male rates of perpetration and victimisation.

Reflecting on my learning through the process of this piece of research, researching the detail of over 500 cases and transforming my findings into data in SPSS software took approximately three years' worth of one day per week. My own knowledge was obviously growing over this time and there were times when I questioned the consistency of my data processing. I attempted to remain conscious of this and on one or two occasions I went back and reviewed variables, which is no small feat with so many cases, but there are some variables that I would collect differently if I were

starting again. One example is suicidality and perpetrators. I ended up treating suicidal ideation as 'yes/ever' and so included preparators who killed themselves after killing a woman as a 'yes' regardless of whether they were recording as having expressed suicidal thoughts prior to committing homicide. In retrospect, I would have been better keeping 'prior expressions of suicidal ideation' and killing oneself as separate variables. That said, having only access to publicly available data and recognising that expressions of perpetrator suicidality may not reach coverage of homicides, even in domestic homicide reviews, perhaps this distinction would not have offered consistent enough data to be meaningful.

There were some areas that I was interested in, and remain interested in, that I had envisaged as being a part of this thesis, but I had to drop as the scale of my task and the limitations of PhD research became clear. Two examples include analysis of 1) media coverage of femicide; and 2) the woeful way in which the issue of inequalities (be they related to sex, class, race, religion, age, or any other factor) in domestic homicide reviews were considered, or in many cases not considered. Guidance on the requirement of DHRs changed in 2016 and although the new guidance made clear the need to address issues of equality or moreover, inequality – and indeed an improvement in practice is definitely visible – in many cases this means a cursory look at the protected characteristics and in too many cases belies a complete failure to try to understand how these inequalities had an impact on the lives of women victims and the men who killed them. The quality of DHRs produced by feminist authors stood out in terms of their genuine endeavour to reflect on the impact of inequality and indeed the life of the victim and the impact of abuse. DHR reports authored by women including, though not limited to, Davina James Hanman, Jane Monckton-Smith and Alethea Cribb were so much richer than most others. As a sociologist, this inability of DHRs to deal with inequality is something that frustrates me but addressing that issue as part of this research was, regrettably, not feasible.

Finally, this research carries the paradox of much feminist research, that the work itself may not contribute to the overthrow of patriarchy and at worst may contribute towards reforms which may increase patriarchal control of women, recently termed carceral feminism, or make it less obvious and identifiable but no less insidious.

#### **4.13 Summary**

This chapter has outlined the research aims, objectives, the methods used to gather and analyse data, ethics and researcher reflexivity and research positioning. The following five chapters look at the findings.

## **Chapter Five – Characteristics – women who are killed by men and the men who kill women**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter will focus on the demographic characteristics of women who were killed by men and the men who killed them, addressing research question one, the characteristics of women who are killed by men and the men who kill them. It will look for differences between the women and men who killed or were killed by current or former partners, family members, other people that they knew, or strangers. The following issues will be considered: ages, substance use, mental ill-health, physical ill-health, ethnicity, and country of birth.

### **5.2 Ages**

#### **5.2.1 All women killed by men 2012 – 2014**

The women killed were aged between 14 and 93 years, thus with an age range of 79 years. Fourteen was the minimum age for inclusion in the sample. The age of 14 was chosen in an attempt to exclude cases where fathers killed their children irrespective of their sex but not exclude girls/young women killed by partners or sexual predators targeting girls and young women. Unlike women victims, there was no minimum age set for perpetrator inclusion, inclusion was based on the woman's age. The men who killed were aged between 13 and 89 years, a range of 76 years. The ages of 12 men were unknown and are therefore excluded from this analysis.

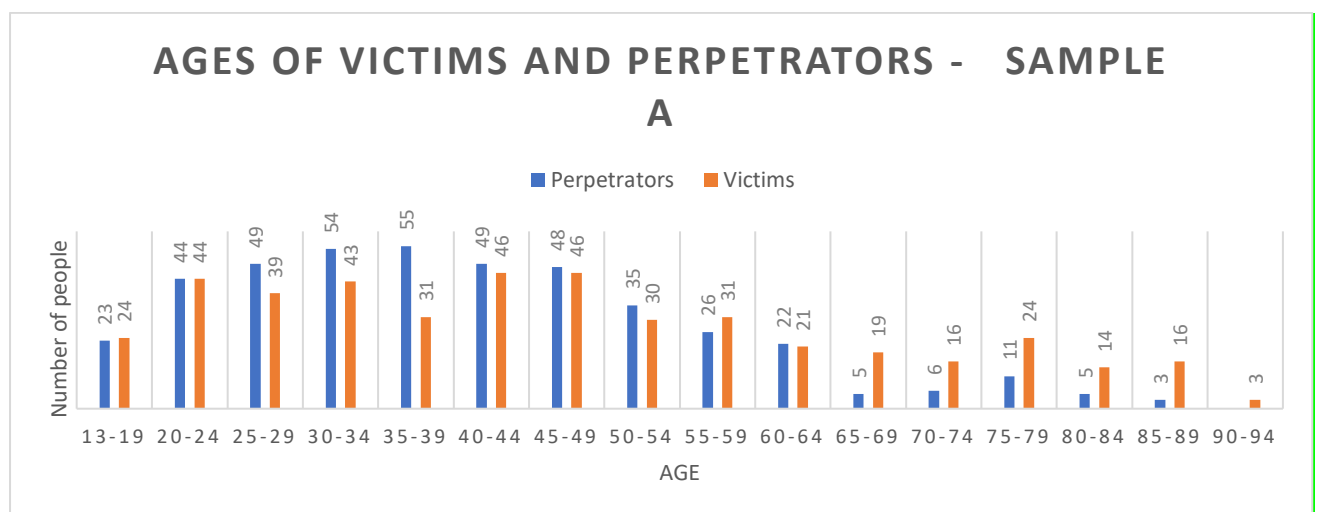
Women's mean age at the time of their death was 46 years old, for perpetrators, the mean age of killers was five years younger, 41 years.

The histogram for victims is negatively skewed and bimodal with two peak age-group clusters: 20–34 years and 40–49 years. A smaller third peak (relative to other close ages) can be seen at 75–79 years. The tapering with age reflects fewer killings of women of

the given age group, however, given that the number of women in an age group declines with age, the rate of killing of older women per head of population would produce a different picture. The histogram for perpetrators is also negatively skewed but peaks between 20 and 49 years of age.

There are more perpetrators than victims in age groups between 25 and 54 years of age. In the age groups below 25 and between 55 and 64, the numbers of victims and perpetrators are very similar. After the age of 55 however, the numbers of perpetrators in comparison to the number of victims declines, with at least twice the number of victims compared to perpetrators in each age band.

**Illustration 1 – Ages of all women killed by men 2012–2014**



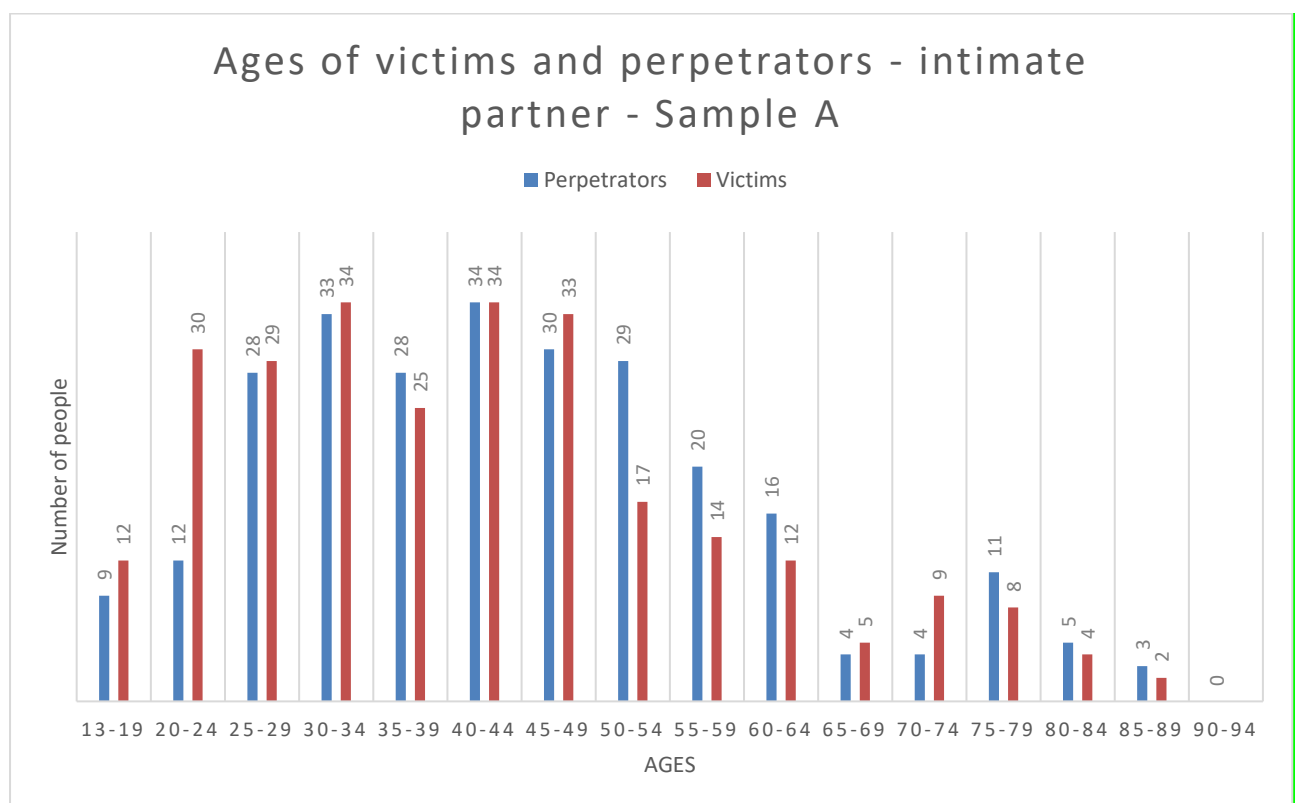
### 5.2.2 Women killed by current and former intimate partners between 2012 and 2014

The women killed by their current and former partners were aged between 15 and 88 years old (range 73 years). The age of one man who killed his partner was unknown therefore he is excluded from this analysis.

The men who killed them were aged 15–89 years old (range 74 years). Women’s mean age at the time of their death was 42 years old, four years younger than the mean age in the entire sample. Men’s mean age at the time they killed was 44 years, three years older than the mean age in the entire sample.

The histogram below again shows a negative skew for both victims and perpetrators. For victims, as with the full sample of women killed between 2012 and 2014, there are two peaks for the same age groups 20–34 years and 40–49 years of age but the third peak at 75–79 years is missing and the decline in the number of older women killed is steeper. This suggests that some older women are being killed by males who are not their current or former partner. Victims outnumber perpetrators in the under 25s after which there are similar numbers from 25 to 44 years of age, and perpetrators outnumbering victims from 45 to 64 years of age. The numbers of both victims and perpetrators in each age band begins to decline after the age of 50.

**Illustration 2 – Ages of women killed by current or former partners 2012–2014**



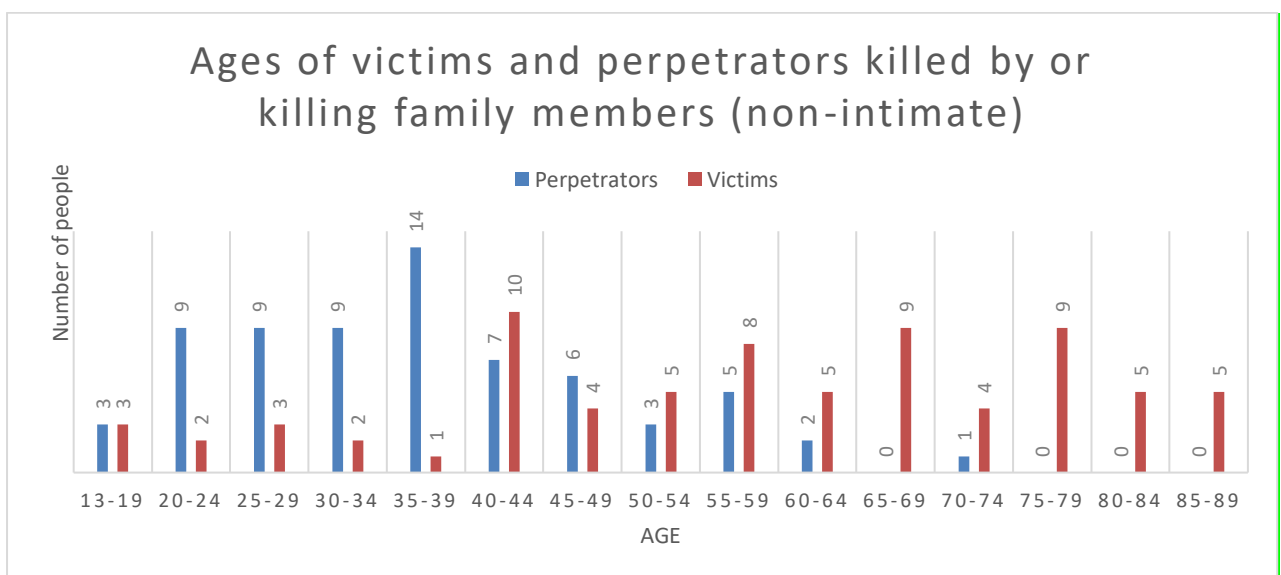
### 5.2.3 Women killed by other family members between 2012 and 2014

The women killed were aged 16–87 years old (range 71 years). The women’s mean age at the time of their death was 58 years old, the oldest mean age of the cohorts. There are very clear differences between the ages of those males who perpetrate and the

females who are victims of fatal family violence. The men who killed female family members were aged 15–64 years old (range 49 years). Men’s mean age at the time they killed was 37 years old, 21 years younger than the mean age for women. This reflects the number of men who killed their mothers and to a lesser extent, the smaller number of men who killed their grandmothers.

The histogram below does not follow the same pattern for victims as that for the full sample of women killed between 2012 and 2014, or those killed by current or former partners, it has a right, that is, a positive skew, showing increases in numbers with age. Here there is an absence of clear peaks, but an increase above the age of 40. The numbers of perpetrators significantly outnumber the number of victims up until the 35–39 age band. From the age of 50 onwards, the number of victims begins to exceed the number of perpetrators equally clearly.

**Illustration 3 – Ages of women killed by male family members 2012–2014**



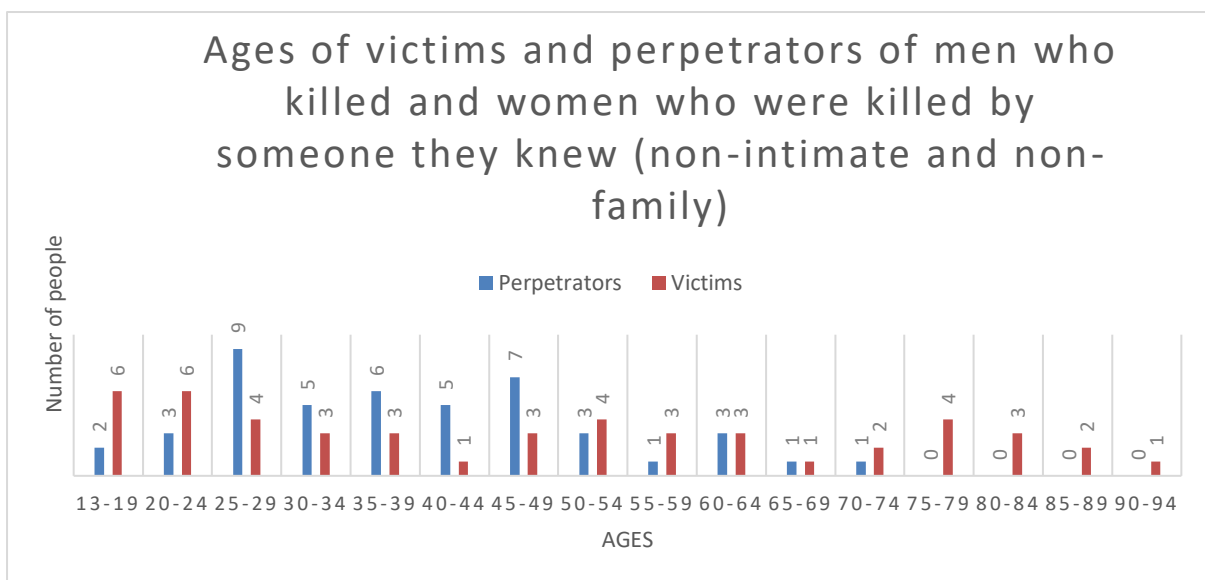
**5.2.4 Women killed by men they knew who had never been partners, and who were not family members between 2012–2014**

The women killed were aged 16–90 years old (range 74 years). The men who killed women that were known to them but were neither current/former intimate partners or

family members were aged 15–71 years old (range 56 years). The ages of three men who killed women, who were known to them but had never been intimate partners or family members, are unknown therefore they are excluded from this analysis. Women’s mean age at the time of their death was 47 years old. The mean age of their killers was 39.

The histogram below shows a slight negative skew for victims with peaks between 16 and 24 years, at 50–54 years and 75-79 years. Again, because of the smaller population of elderly women noted earlier, this represents increased vulnerability and/or targeting of older women. However, it should also be noted that this is a smaller cohort and so one or two cases will have a more significant impact on the distribution of variables than would be the case in larger cohorts, such as that of women killed by partners or former partners. The histogram for perpetrators shows a much more pronounced negative skew. This reflects two different tendencies which exist in men who kill women they know but with whom they have never been in intimate relationships and who are not family members, to select either victims who are younger than them, or ones who are older.

**Illustration 4 – Ages of women killed by men they knew 2012–2014**



### **5.2.5 All women killed by strangers – the inclusion of the purposive samples**

In the initial sample of women killed by men between 2012 and 2014, 40 women were killed by strangers, that is, men who they did not know in any capacity. With purposive sampling of women killed by strangers from 2015 to 2017, the sample was increased to 102 women. In both samples, the women killed were aged 14–90 years old (range 76 years). With the purposive sample, women's mean age at the time of their death was 42 years old.

The men who killed female strangers were aged 13–66 years old (range 53 years). Their mean age was 29. Theirs was the youngest mean age in all perpetrator cohorts. The ages of eight men were unknown therefore they are excluded from the analysis. Strikingly, 49 of 101 men (48.5 per cent) who killed women who were strangers were aged in a 10-year band between 19 and 28 years old. Although the greatest number of women killed compared to other age groups also fell into this age group, the numbers were not in such great contrast to those of other age groups.

Only one man above the age of 60 (he was 66) killed a woman who was a stranger. In contrast, 19.6 per cent of women killed by strangers were over 60 years old and 16.7 per cent over 66 years of age.

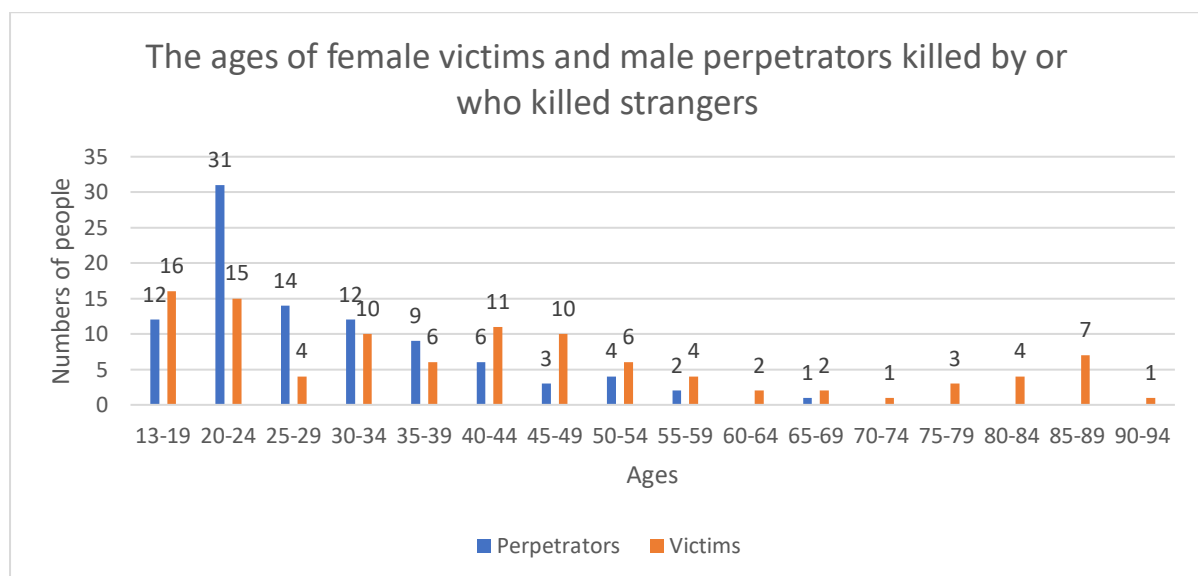
The histogram below shows the distribution of women's ages including the purposive sample and shows two peaks age-group clusters: 14–24 years, 40–49 years and also a third smaller cluster at 75–89 years. In other words, there are three clusters representing younger women, middle aged women, and elderly women. As with the other cohorts, the lower population of older women compounds the peak of those killed. The histogram for perpetrators shows a clear and sharp negative skew.

The mean age of victims is lower than that in the cohort of women killed between 2012 and 2014 by 10 years. This in part reflects the inclusion of 16 of 17 women who were killed in the Manchester bomb attack in 2017. The 16 who had a mean age of 29 years and 11 months are included in the purposive sample of women killed by strangers but

were not in the cohort of women killed between 2012 and 2014. The girl who was not included was eight years-old and below the minimum age for inclusion in the sample. Three were girls who were 14 years old, eight of them under 20 years of age. This distortion due to a thankfully unusual event was an unintended consequence of increasing the sample size to try to avoid the distortions that come with having small samples.

There are only four 14-year-olds in the entire sample, in addition to the three killed in Manchester, the other was also killed by a stranger, in a sexually motivated assault in 2014. Her badly decomposed body was found naked, tied into the foetal position, wrapped in bin bags weighed down with bricks in shallow water. She had been beaten with a pole and knifed. Her killer’s DNA was found on her vulva.

### Illustration 5 – Ages of women killed by strangers



### **5.2.6 Killings of women who had been involved in prostitution**

Amongst women killed by men between 2012 and 2014, there were 18 women who were involved in prostitution who were killed between 2012 and 2014. With the purposive sampling this was increased to 34 women.

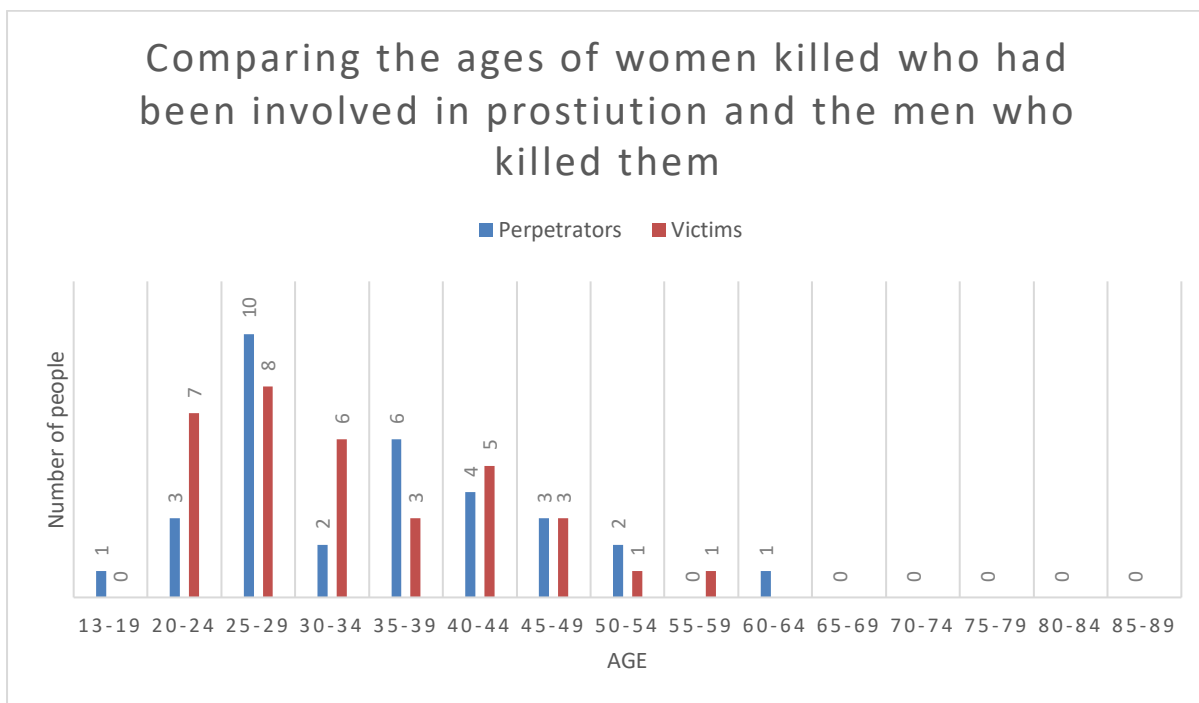
The minimum age at which a woman who was involved in prostitution, killed by a man, was 21 years old. This is higher than the minimum age in all other cohorts. Unfortunately, this does not mean that women and girls below this age are not exploited and abused in prostitution in the UK. A 2004 Home Office consultation suggested approximately 50 per cent of women in prostitution in the UK entered before they were 18 years old (Home Office, *Paying the Price*, 2004), though this suggestion has been disputed by sex-trade lobbyists (Brooke Magnanti, *Oral Evidence to Home Office Select Committee*, 2016) who suggested that this was more representative of women in on-street prostitution rather than the wider sex industry. The maximum age at which a woman involved in prostitution in the sample was killed by a man was 55. In contrast, 30 per cent of all women killed between 2012 and 2014 were killed when they were over 55 years old. This is likely to be illustrative of a decline in rates of involvement in prostitution with a woman's age and the preferences of men who pay for sex for access to younger women's bodies, rather than suggesting that men select younger women in prostitution for the purposes of fatal violence.

The mean age of death of a woman killed by a man, for a woman who had been involved in prostitution at some stage in her life, was 34 years old. In both the original and purposive sample, the highest rates of women killed occurred when the women were in their 20s. The oldest five women killed, who had been involved in prostitution, were killed by men with whom they were or had been in a relationship.

The men who killed women who were involved in prostitution were aged 18–60 years old (range 52 years). Their mean age was 35.

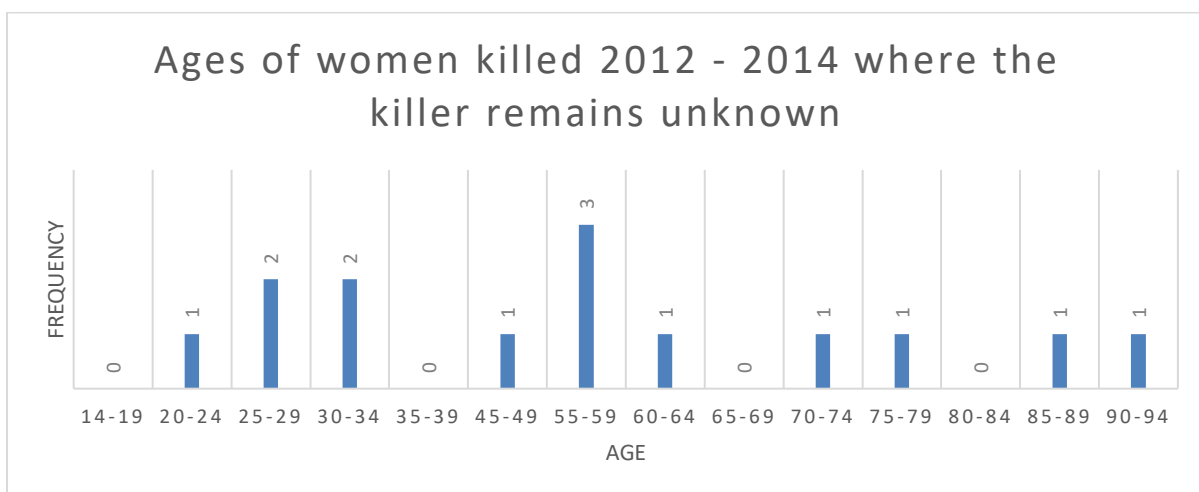
For this cohort, the ages of victims and perpetrators show the greatest symmetry. The age distribution of the women who were involved in prostitution and the men who killed them is very similar, in both cases peaking between the ages of 25 and 29 years, with no killer or victim aged above 60. The histogram below shows a peak at around 20–24 years of age for perpetrators and a rapid decline thereafter.

**Illustration 6 – Ages of women killed who had been involved in prostitution**



**5.2.7 Women killed 2012–2014 where the male suspect was unidentified**

**Illustration 7 – Women killed 2012–2014 where the perpetrator was unknown**



The killings of 14 women who were thought or known to have been killed by a man or men remain unsolved. They were aged between 24 and 93 years, a range of 69 years. Their mean age at the time of their death was 53 years old.

The murder case of the oldest woman in the entire sample remains unsolved. She was discovered screaming in bed by her carer who had put her to bed the previous evening. She had a fractured skull, broken arm and wrist and partially severed finger. Her head and pillow were soaked with blood. She said that someone had tried to kill her. She died in hospital from complications caused by her injuries. There was no sign of a break-in or theft from her home. Her killer has never been found.

### 5.2.8 Comparison of women’s ages at the time of death across cohorts

There are some clear differences in the mean age of death and distribution of the percentages by age for women killed in different cohorts.

**Table 2 – Comparison of women’s ages at the time of death, across relationship cohorts**

Cohort	Mean age at death	1 standard deviation from mean	Minimum age	Maximum age
1. Entire sample (n=515)	40 years	60–60 years	14	93
2. All women killed between 2012 and 2014 (n=446)	46 years	26–66 years	14	93
3. All women killed by current or former partners between 2012 and 2014 (n=268)	42 years	26–58 years	15	88
4. All women killed by family members between 2012 and 2014 (n=75)	59 years	39–78 years	16	87
5. All women killed by other known men between 2012 and 2014 (n=49)	47 years	24–70 years	16	90
6. Women killed by strangers without the purposive samples (n=40)	52 years	27–77 years	14	90
7. All women killed by strangers (n=102)	42 years	20–64 years	14	90
8. All women who were involved in prostitution (n=34)	34 years	24–44 years	21	55
9. Women killed 2012 – 2014 where the perpetrator remains unknown (n=14)	53 years	31–75 years	24	93

In women killed by men from 2012-2014, the mean age of death is 46 years. Even though they comprise the majority, 59.5 per cent of the sample, the mean age of women killed by partners or ex-partners is similar, it's slightly younger, by four years, reflecting the influence of the different circumstances in which older women are killed.

Women killed by other family members present the oldest mean age and women who were involved in prostitution the youngest, they are on average 12 years younger than women in the broader sample of women killed by men. This reflects an absence of older women more than it does an over-representation of younger women. Those killed by family members are the group with the widest standard deviation which represents a broader spread of age ranges of women killed.

Women whose murder remains unsolved have the second highest mean age. This may indicate that the elderly women whose cases remain unsolved may have been more likely to have been killed in semi-random attacks by strangers as, one would hope, police investigations would have ruled out family members; or that less resources are invested in bringing the killers of older women to justice. Such attacks cannot be described as purely random, as older women may be selected because of the vulnerability that comes with their age (more likely to live alone and physically less strong).

## 5.2.10 Comparison of men's ages at the time they killed across relationship cohorts

**Table 3 – Comparison of perpetrator's ages when they killed, across relationship cohorts**

Cohort	Mean age at time of killing	1 standard deviation from mean	Minimum age	Maximum age
1. All men who killed women between 2012 and 2014 (n=447, of which 15 unknown therefore data applies to 432)	41	15	13	89
		26–56		
2. All men who killed their female current or former partner between 2012 and 2014 (n=266 of which 1 unknown therefore data applies to 265)	44	16	15	89
		28–60		
3. All men who killed female family members between 2012 and 2014 (n=47)	37	13	15	70
		24–50		
4. All men who killed other known women between 2012 and 2014 (n=47 of which 2 unknown, therefore data applies to 45)	39	13	15	71
		26–52		
5. All men who killed female strangers (n=102 of which 8 unknown therefore data applies to 94)	29	11	13	66
		18– 40		
6. All men who killed women who were involved in prostitution (n=32)	35	11	18	60
		24–46		
7. All men who, acting singularly or in a group, killed more than one woman (excluding those where the killed was unidentified) (n=26 of which 3 unknown therefore data applies to 23)	38	18	18	82
		20–56		
8. All men who killed a woman or women and acted in a group of two or more (n=51 of which ages of 10 unknown therefore data applies to 41)	29	13	13	66
		16–42		

There are some clear differences in men's mean age at the time they killed a woman/women and the aged killed for women killed in different cohorts. Amongst women killed by men from 2012–2014), men's mean age when they killed was 41 years old. The mean age for the following cohorts is less than four years younger or older: men who killed their partners or ex-partners, men who killed female family members, and men who killed other women who were known to them. Men who killed women that they did not know were significantly younger, 12 years younger in the cohort that included the purposive sample, than those in the wider sample, as were men who acted in a group of two or more when they killed. The mean age of men who killed women who had been involved in prostitution was six years below that of men who killed any woman. Men who killed strangers was also the group with the narrowest standard deviation.

The oldest, in terms of mean age, were men who killed their current or former partner. This group also had a larger standard deviation than men who killed any woman, and given that it represents 60 per cent of all men who killed women between 2012 and 2014, has a significant impact on the mean age for the entire sample. It reflects that men kill the women with whom they are in or had been in a relationship with at all stages of their lives. The oldest killer in the cohort was 89. Twenty-one men aged over 72 who killed women were men who killed current or former partners, they comprised five per cent of the men who killed women between 2012 and 2014.

Eight men aged over 80 years old had killed their current or former partners, all had killed women they had been married to for several decades and were still married to, with the exception of one man (Case 1402008), aged 82, who killed a woman, aged 66, who had been his on and off partner for a number of years. This was the only case where it was reported that she had been in the process of leaving him. He was also the oldest double killer as he also killed her daughter, aged 40. He was the only killer over 80 years of age with a known history of domestic violence and abuse, there were a

further 156 incidents on record. He was the only killer aged over 80 who received a sentence for murder.

The oldest killer in the sample was aged 89 (Case 1411005). He slashed the wrists of his wife of 66 years and his own, killing them both. Two other killers aged over 80 killed themselves. The first, aged 82 (Case 1405009), shot his wife and himself, they had been married over 60 years. She was terminally ill with a prognosis of less than six months. After killing her, he called the police and told them what he had done, shooting himself before they arrived. The second, aged 80 (Case 1405011), killed his wife by drugging her with sleeping pills before suffocating her. He had attempted to have her placed in a care home, but she had been returned to their marital home because (it is reported) that the care home could not cope with her dementia. After killing her, he unsuccessfully attempted to kill himself, sitting in a car in the garage with the engine running. He was bailed and killed himself two days before he was due to stand trial.

One man, aged 86 (Case 1406005), died due to a heart condition whilst remanded in custody and awaiting trial for the murder of his wife. There are reports on the cause of his death but not hers in the media. Two other octogenarian killers had received manslaughter convictions and sentences of three years in prison, though one was released on appeal. One of them, aged 80 (Case 1202002), had killed his wife of over 50 years by hitting her with a hammer and strangling her with a dog lead. It was reported that he had said he wanted to die and could not imagine her coping without him. The second, aged 81 (Case 1311011), had stabbed his 80-year-old wife of over 60 years in the chest. She had diabetes, had suffered a heart attack and a stroke and her condition was deteriorating. The domestic homicide review found no evidence of prior abuse. Finally, one man (Case 1308011), aged 85, was not charged due to his advanced dementia. His wife had died of upper airway obstruction and pressure to the neck, with heart disease being a contributory cause. Her hands had been bound with cable from earphones and items of clothing had been tied round her neck. Again, the DHR stated that there was no evidence of prior domestic violence and abuse.

These cases raise important questions. In no case, where the possibility of 'mercy killing' as a motive was suggested, did I find reports of evidence to suggest that the woman had consented to her killing. In some cases, the method of killing was brutal, and it is inconceivable that the woman concerned did not die in great pain and terror. Other methods of killing may suggest that what may have been believed to be the 'least awful' way of ending someone's life was selected. In one case, there is clear evidence of state failure to care for someone whose partner clearly was elderly and struggling to cope physically and emotionally himself. Legal euthanasia, not currently available in the UK, may have offered a supportive and painless way for individuals or couples to terminate their lives with the additional support and understanding of their families, avoiding the need for a trial for someone who acted out of love, not hate, anger or jealousy. Doubtlessly too, this is open to abuse and coercion, though less so than the unregulated concept of 'mercy killing', which was the lens through which all but one of these cases, to a greater or lesser degree, had been viewed. The picture is incomplete without equivalent data on elderly women killing their deteriorating elderly male partners. If there are sex differences, once the variable of women's longer life expectancy is controlled, it would not be surprising if socially constructed gender roles, including the acceptance of caring responsibilities by women, played a part. This is in no way exonerating men who kill elderly partners. Meanwhile, the 82-year-old who shot his partner and her daughter as she tried to leave him demonstrates that there is no age limit for men's desire to control women and take vengeance upon those who do not submit.

### **5.3 Substance Use**

'Substance use' was used to describe where victims and perpetrators of men's fatal violence against women were noted as taking alcohol, prescription, or illegal drugs. Due to subjective and inconsistent reporting, it was not possible to differentiate between problematic and managed substance use, nor to create any similar grading

of use. However, references to drinking (for example on the night that she was killed) where there was no inference of problematic use, were not included.

Existing research has shown a strong correlation between perpetrators' rather than victims' substance use (Sharps and Kelly, 2016).

### **5.3.1 Prevalence of substance use indicators in victims**

There were references to 51 women using substances, 10 per cent of the total sample. This is a much lower prevalence than that recorded for perpetrators (156 men, 35 per cent of the sample). This could tell us that substance use was much lower in women killed than in the men who killed them, but it could also reflect issues with data collection. In addition, and as discussed in the methodology chapter regarding research limitations, the women were not on trial, this could affect whether prosecuting or defending legal representatives or the media, considered their substance use relevant. It could also reflect my own biases, I am keen to avoid victim blaming and therefore could be less rigorous in my search for indicators of substance use in victims, and/or less judgemental if I found ambiguous references.

Another difference between perpetrators and victims was the prevalence of substance use in groups according to the relationship between victim and perpetrator. For perpetrators, prevalence of substance use was highest in men who killed family members who were not partners or ex-partners. In female victims of men's fatal violence, substance use was highest in women killed by partners or ex-partners. This could suggest that substance use is a coping mechanism for intimate partner violence and abuse.

### **5.3.2 Prevalence of substance use indicators in perpetrators**

The same variables were used as for victims. A further variable was used in the 'incident' cluster to record whether substance use was recorded as taking place immediately before, during or after the fatal incident.

There were references to 156 men using substances, 35 per cent of the sample. An absence of a reference to drug use was recorded in 39 per cent men and data recorded as not known or missing in a further 26 per cent.

In all relationship groups with the exception of men who killed a family member, the proportion of those reported as using substances was slightly lower than that in the whole sample. For men who killed a family member, the prevalence was very different, almost 58 per cent of the group and at a rate 23 per cent higher than the rate across the sample.

Of men who used substances, 54 per cent killed partners or ex-partners, a slight underrepresentation for a group of perpetrators that comprised of 60 per cent of the sample. As would be expected, regarding the data on the proportion of men who killed other family members, they are shown to be overrepresented when the percentage of substance users is compared to the percentage of the relationship group as a proportion of the same, at 25 per cent of identified substance users, whilst 16.6 per cent of the entire sample. Of these 28 out of 39, or 72 per cent, were men who killed their mother. Other relationships, by victim and as a percentage of the men who had killed other family members, were: step mother (2.6 per cent), mother-in-law or ex-mother-in-law (2.6 per cent), grandmother (10.3 per cent), step-grandmother (5.1 per cent) and sister (7.7 per cent).

Where the purposive samples were used, 32 per cent of men who killed women who were strangers had been reported as having issues with substance use, which is very similar to the percentage identified in the main sample. Thirty-four per cent of men who killed women who had been involved in prostitution had been reported as having issues with substance use, as above, this is comparable to the rate of use across the sample.

### 5.3.3 Nature of substance use – victims

**Table 4 – Victims – Nature of substance use – numbers and percentage**

		IPV - current or ex- partner	Other family member	Known in any other capacity	Stranger	Relationship unknown	
Further information re victim's alcohol/drug use	Alcohol %	12 32%	1 33%	2 50%	2 29%	0 0%	17 33%
	Prescription drugs %	2 5%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 4%
	Illegal/non-prescribed drugs %	13 35%	2 67%	1 25%	4 57%	0 0%	20 39%
	Alcohol and illegal drugs %	8 22%	0 0%	1 25%	1 14%	0 0%	10 20%
	Prescription & illegal drugs %	2 5%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 4%
	Total	37	3	4	7	0	51

The table above shows the type of substance use across the different relationship groups of victims and includes both the total number of women using the type of substance and their percentage as a group of total substance users of the relationship group. For example, of women killed by a current or former partner, a total of 37 were identified as using substances. Of these, 12 (32 per cent) used alcohol only, two (five per cent) used prescription drugs only, 13 (35 per cent) used illegal/non-prescribed drugs, eight (22 per cent) used alcohol and illegal drugs and two (five per cent) used prescription and illegal drugs.

### 5.3.4 Substance use and women in prostitution

Substance use was recorded in nine out of 34 women (26 per cent) who were killed by men and who were involved in prostitution. The prevalence rate was more than two and a half times higher than women in the entire study (10 per cent), indeed if women in prostitution are excluded from the entire sample of 515 women, the prevalence of substance use reduces from 10 per cent to eight per cent. If women in prostitution are removed entirely from the cohort of women killed between 2012 and 2014, substance

use is more than three times higher in women who had been involved in prostitution compared to those who had not.

Of these nine women, four (44 per cent) had been killed by a partner or ex-partner, one (12 per cent) was killed by a man she knew but who was not a relative, and four (44 per cent) were killed by a stranger.

Of the nine women in prostitution who used substances, one (11 per cent) was reported as using alcohol, five (56 per cent) were reported as using illegal drugs, and three (33 per cent) were reported as using both illegal drugs and alcohol.

### 5.3.5 Nature of substance use – perpetrators

**Table 5 – Nature of substance use – perpetrators**

	IPV - current or ex- partner	Other family member	Known in any other capacity	Stranger	Unknown relationship	All
Alcohol %	33 38%	6 15%	7 44%	1 6%	0 0%	47 27%
Prescription drugs %	1 1%	0 0%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	2 1%
Illegal/non-prescribed drugs %	26 32%	18 46%	5 31%	9 56%	1 100%	59 40%
Alcohol and prescription drugs %	1 1%	1 3%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	3 2%
Alcohol and illegal drugs %	24 28%	11 28%	1 13%	6 32%	0 0%	42 27%
Prescription and illegal drugs %	0 0%	1 3%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 0%
Alcohol, prescription, and illegal drugs %	0 0	2 5%	0 0%	0 6%	0 0%	2 2%
Total	85	39	15	16	1	157

The table above shows the type of substance use across the different relationship groups of perpetrators and includes both the total number of women using the type of substance and their percentage as a group of total substance users of the relationship group.

Of all men who used substances and across their different relationships with the woman or women they killed, 27 per cent used alcohol only. Men who killed partners or ex-partners and men who killed women they knew but with whom they had not been in a relationship and were not related, were more likely to be reported as using alcohol only, compared to the average rate for men across all relationship groups, (38 per cent and 44 per cent respectively, compared to 27 per cent).

Use of illegal drugs, alone, with alcohol or in a combination of alcohol/prescription drugs, was present in 104 men, 69 per cent of men who used substances. The rate of use of illegal drugs (either alone or in combination with other substances) was higher (82 per cent) in men who killed family members (excluding partners/ex-partners) and highest (94 per cent) in men who killed women who were strangers. Use of illegal drugs (alone, with alcohol, or in a combination of alcohol/prescription drugs) was present in 32 women, less than a third of the prevalence in the men who killed them.

Use of prescription drugs without additional substances (alcohol or illegal drugs) was rare, reported in only two men (one per cent) from the entire sample.

Of the women who used substances and across the different relationships they had with the men who killed them, 33 per cent used alcohol only. This is similar, but slightly higher than, for males where the prevalence for those who used alcohol only amongst those who used substances was 27 per cent. However, as a percentage of the total sample, problematic alcohol use was almost three times lower in women than it was in men, at three per cent (17 out of 515 = 3.3 per cent) rather than ten percent (48 out of 515 = 9.5 per cent) of the entire cohort.

Thirty-nine per cent of women who used substances, primarily or solely used illegal drugs, this was 20 women in total, or four per cent percent of the entire sample. For males this was 14 per cent of the entire sample, 71 men and 37 per cent of substance users.

The data suggests that only women killed by partners or ex-partners were using prescribed drugs (two women were identified as using prescription drugs only, two women were reported as using prescription drugs and illegal drugs) and this refers to four women only in an entire sample of 515. One might expect higher incidence of use of prescription drugs in women who were living with abusive men, but the low levels identified are likely to reflect lack of reported use in both official documents, such as domestic homicide review reports, and media.

## **5.4 Mental health**

### **5.4.1 Prevalence of reported mental health indicators**

There were references to victim mental health issues in 35 cases, seven per cent of the total sample. This is highly likely to be an undercount as data was recorded as missing in 60 cases, 12 per cent of the victim sample group. Additionally, the absence of a mental health problem, diagnosed or undiagnosed, cannot be assumed of the 421 women (82 per cent) recorded as never having been known as experiencing mental ill-health. As is the case throughout this thesis, the accuracy of findings reflects media reporting and inconsistent availability of publicly accessible official records, such as domestic homicide reviews.

The prevalence of indicators of mental ill-health were much lower in victims than in perpetrators, where there were positive indicators (for example references to mental health in media reports or official documents accessed) for 33.2 per cent of men (n=167). While it is possible that this is an accurate reflection of different recorded levels of mental ill-health in victims and perpetrators, there are other factors that may have contributed to this. Firstly, for there is an absence of an incentive to suggest mental ill-health as a factor contributing to reduced culpability, or a defence with the potential to turn a conviction for murder into one of manslaughter. Inconsistent media reporting is also likely to have had an additional influence, as would researcher bias, for example, in seeking to avoid victim blaming narratives.

#### **5.4.2 Prevalence of reported mental ill-health indicators in victims and relationship between perpetrator and victim**

Of the 35 women where reporting or statutory documents indicated mental health problems, 27 (77 per cent of those where mental ill-health was recorded) were women who had been killed by a partner or ex-partner. This was ten percent of the cohort of women who were killed by partners/ex-partners and the only relationship group where the prevalence of those where indicators of mental ill-health was recorded was above the seven percent average across the entire sample. This is likely to reflect the impact of living with an abusive male partner on women's mental health. A further four women (11 per cent of those where mental ill-health was recorded) had been killed by another family member, three (nine per cent) by someone who was known to them, excluding a partner, ex-partner, or family member and three (nine per cent) were killed by strangers.

Of the 156 men where media reporting or statutory documents indicated mental health problems, 86 (55 per cent) had killed a partner or ex-partner, 45 (29 per cent) had killed another family member, 15 (10 per cent) had killed a woman known to them outside family and partner/ex-partner and nine (six per cent) had killed a woman who was a stranger. Given the availability and benefits of a partial defence of diminished responsibility on mental health grounds, it would not be unreasonable to expect higher identification of mental health issues in the sample than in men in the general population. In addition, there is the possibility that perpetrators may fake or exaggerate symptoms in an attempt to secure a diagnosis and the possibility of a conviction for manslaughter, not murder, due to diminished responsibility, with a lower sentence.

Eighty-eight men (19.7 per cent of men who killed women between 2012 and 2014) were reported in media or available statutory reports to have spoken about or threatened suicide. Forty men (eight per cent) killed themselves before detection and a further eight (1.6 per cent) killed themselves in prison before their trials. There was

no reported prior identification of mental health issues in 19 of these men. In total, 48 men (9.6 per cent) killed themselves after killing a woman. Seventeen men (3.4 per cent) were sentenced to indefinite hospital orders on mental health grounds.

The pattern for prevalence of indicators of mental ill-health across relationship groups is different for victims and perpetrators. In perpetrators, those for whom an indication of mental ill-health was recorded were more than twice as likely to have killed a family member than have any other relationship or lack of it with the victim; with identified mental health issues in those who killed a family member at 67 per cent of the cohort compared to an average of 35 per cent. Conversely, indicators of mental ill-health were lowest in men who killed female strangers where the rate was almost half the cohort average. One hypothesis may be that the intimate relationships of men with mental ill-health may have broken down and they may have gone to live with their mothers as a result (the most frequent familial relationship where perpetrators killed non-intimate family members).

Similarly, the prevalence of those sentenced to an indefinite hospital order was highest in men who killed family members (excluding current or former partners) at 12 per cent of the cohort, compared to an average prevalence of four per cent and more than three times higher than the average or to any other relationship group.

The highest rates of indicators of mental health problems in men who killed family members (67 per cent) (excluding current or former partners) corresponds to the highest rate of problematic substance use (58 per cent) in the same group of killers.

The prevalence of men who had talked about suicide, attempted, or achieved it was highest in those who killed current or former partners, present in almost a third of cases (31 per cent), compared to a cohort average of 19 per cent. It was lowest in men who killed strangers. Across the whole sample of perpetrators, the prevalence of men who killed themselves either immediately or shortly after killing the woman and before charging was nine per cent, with a further two per cent killing themselves before trial.

Suicide rates of men who killed themselves immediately after killing the victim or victims as a proportion of relationship cohort were highest in men who killed current or former partners at 12 per cent, which was almost double that of any other group; the next being men who killed other family members at seven per cent, the lowest being men who killed strangers at two per cent of femicides. These rates, whilst consistent in that men who killed current or former partners were highest, are considerably lower than those identified by M. Dawson (2005) in her study of intimate partner femicides in Ontario, Canada, 1974–1994, in which she found that 28 per cent of men (194 out of 703) killed themselves either immediately or shortly after killing a current or former partner.

#### **5.4.3 Relationship between mental ill-health, suicide, and substance use**

Eleven women who were killed by men used substances and experienced mental health problems. Ten were women who were killed by a current or former partner and one was killed by a family member. This comprises only two per cent of victims. The equivalent illustration for perpetrators was much higher, 16 per cent. In perpetrators, the highest prevalence for both issues was in men who killed family members who were not and had never been intimate partners.

One woman who had been involved in prostitution was reported as having mental health problems and substance use problems. She was killed by her ex-husband. The domestic homicide review refers to her suffering from low mood, insomnia, and stress in relation to his forthcoming release from prison. She also suffered from epilepsy. He killed her within two days of being released. They had met when she was 14 years old, and he was 19. He killed her when she was 31 years old. He had a history of violence towards her and stabbed her 22 times when he killed her. There is a considerable body of research documenting mental ill-health amongst women involved in or with histories of involvement in prostitution, including post-traumatic stress disorder (Puri et al., 2017; Beattie et al., 2020).

As with prevalence measures for both variables, the co-existence of both issues was lower than the average for men who killed current or former partners, other known (non-related) women and strangers, and much higher, 207 per cent higher, for men who killed family members who had never been partners, than for the next highest relationship, where both occurred (14 per cent coexistence in men who killed women who were or had been intimate partners). Where both an indicator of mental ill-health and problematic substance use were present, 24 out of 29 men who killed a family member (non-intimate) had killed their mother.

The prevalence in perpetrators of men who had positive indicators of mental ill-health, used substances, and had either expressed suicidal intent or threats, or attempted, or succeeded in killing themselves was six per cent of perpetrators, or 28 men. The prevalence was lower than the average for men who killed current or former partners, other known (non-related women) and strangers, and much higher, almost double, in men who killed family members who had never been partners, seven of these eight men had killed their mothers. The other man had killed his sister as well as his mother in the same incident.

This suggests that risk assessments of men with substance use issues, mental ill-health or who express suicidal ideation or attempt to kill themselves (which may be undertaken in a treatment service for either mental health or substance use) should pay particular attention to whether those men have close relationships with, or live with, female (non-intimate) family members, particularly if those women are their mothers. This may be an indication that such men's relationships with intimate partners have broken down and that the mothers of such men are the last women to sever ties with them. This is consistent with Condry and Miles' research on parricide (2021).

## **5.5 Physical Health Issues**

In total, 64 (14 per cent) women killed by men between 2012 and 2014 had reported physical health issues. Prevalence of physical health issues was significantly higher,

double the mean prevalence in the sample, for women who were killed by family. This may reflect the greater proportion of older women amongst those who were killed by family members. It was perhaps surprising to see that the prevalence of physical health issues was slightly higher amongst women killed by strangers, unless these health issues increased women's vulnerability and exposure to perpetrators. This is likely to have been due to the higher proportion of elderly women in that cohort and include those killed in burglaries and muggings where older women may be specifically selected and targeted. Indeed, crosstabulation of age and prevalence of physical health issues (by percentage of age band), shows an increased prevalence from age 50 onward. The higher prevalence of health issues in the cohort of women killed by strangers may also, in part, reflect the small numbers in that cohort (39 women) as the presence of a small number of women would have a noticeable impact on the rate of prevalence. When the prevalence of a physical health issue was calculated in the cohort of women killed by strangers, rather than the prevalence of the number of women with health issues who were killed by strangers, the prevalence was seven per cent rather than 15 per cent. Six per cent of women killed who had known involvement in prostitution had reported physical health problems. This was lower than I expected for this group of women, even considering their lower age distribution. Whilst it may be accurate, it may also represent an undercount and reflect media's greater interest in reporting mental health and substance use issues in women with links to prostitution, which would be more consistent with the expected victim blaming narrative in the media for women in prostitution.

In total, 23 men (five per cent) who killed women between 2012 and 2014 had reported physical health issues, 24 once the purposive sample was added. Prevalence of physical health issues was higher for men who killed current/former intimate partners and family members who had never been partners/ex-partners. The prevalence was markedly lower than for women, where 14 per cent of women had been identified as having physical health issues. The slightly lower age profile of perpetrators may

contribute to the lower number of perpetrators with physical health issues than victims. It may also be the case that women's physical health issues were a motivating factor for perpetrators to end their lives; in doing so, the killer removed any responsibility to meet their needs. This of course reflects gendered socialisation and the acceptance of caring responsibilities. Victim or perpetrator declining health (physical or mental) was noted as a potential trigger for domestic homicide by Monckton-Smith (2020 and 2021) in her eight-stage domestic homicide timeline.

## **5.6 Ethnicity**

The 18 ethnic groups that were used for the 2011 Census were used with three additions: White: Eastern European; White: Other European; and British/South-East Asian. The additional categories were added as people from these groups had been noted when cases were being collected.

### **5.6.1 Victims**

The table below shows the percentage of women in each ethnic group, split according to the relationship between victim and perpetrator and also in the main sample as a whole. The penultimate column shows the representation of each ethnic group in the 2011 census data<sup>4</sup>, which was the closest national data set to the available time period being addressed in this thesis. The final column shows whether the group was under or overrepresented in women killed by men.

A table containing the numbers rather than percentages can be provided if required.

Women whose ethnicity could be described as 'UK white' comprised the significant majority of those the victims of men's fatal violence, at 67.3 per cent of all those killed from 2012–2014. However, they are under-represented in comparison to the percentage of the same demographic in the 2011 census, by -13.2 per cent. No other

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/population-of-england-and-wales/latest>

group was under-represented by more than one per cent, those that were under-represented by less than one per cent were (in order): Indian/British Indian women by 0.7 per cent; Mixed ethnicity white/Asian women by 0.6 per cent; Mixed/multiple/white and Black Caribbean by 0.4 per cent; White Irish Republican women by -0.2 per cent; and Mixed/multiple: white and Black African women and Mixed/multiple: other, each by 0.1 per cent.

The following ethnicities were over represented: White Eastern and non-British/Irish European and other white women by 1.6 per cent; Asian/Asian British: Pakistani women 1.8 per cent; other Asian women (including SE Asian) by 1.5 per cent; Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi women by 0.5 per cent; Asian/Asian British: Chinese women by 0.2 per cent; Black/Black British: African women by 0.9 per cent; Black/Black British: Caribbean women by 0.2 per cent; Black/Black British: other women by 1.3 per cent; Arabic women by 0.5 per cent; and women from other ethnic groups by 1.2 per cent.

In short, women from some Black, Asian and other minoritised ethnic groups are generally over-represented as victims of men's fatal violence. This concurs with Sabri et al.'s (2016) findings on the over-representation in intimate partner homicides of people of Asian heritage and those in the wider community in the USA.

**Table 6 – Victims’ ethnicity**

		Broader relationship category							
		IPV – current or ex-partner	Other family member	Known in any capacity	Stranger	Unknown relationship	Total	Representation in 2011 Census	Under or over-represented in women killed
Victim's ethnicity	White: UK	40.7	11.2	8.3	5.1	2.0	67.3	80.5	-13.2
	White: Irish (Rep)	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.9	-0.2
	White: gypsy/traveller	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1
	White – Eastern European	2.0	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.0	4.9	4.4	1.6
	White: Other European	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.0	1.3		
	Mixed/multiple: white and Black Caribbean	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.8	-0.4
	Mixed/multiple: white and Black African	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3	-0.1
	Mixed/multiple: other	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.5	-0.1
	Asian/Asian British: Indian	1.3	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	2.5	-0.7
	Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	3.4	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	3.8	2	1.8
	Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.8	0.5
	Asian/Asian British: Chinese	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.7	0.2
	Asian/Asian British: SE Asian	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	1.1		1.1
	Asian/Asian British: other	2.0	0.0	0.4	0.7	0.2	3.4	1.5	1.9
	Mixed white/Asian	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	-0.6
	Black/Black British: African	2.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	1.8	0.9
	Black/Black British: Caribbean	0.9	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	1.1	0.2
	Black/Black British: other	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	1.8	0.5	1.3
	Arabic	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.9	0.4	0.5
	Other	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.4	0.0	1.8	0.6	1.2
Missing data	2.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.9	3.6			
Total		60	17	11	9	3	100	100	

## 5.6.2 Women in prostitution

Women whose ethnicity could be described as white British were significantly underrepresented in the cohort of women who had been involved in prostitution, present at a rate 45 per cent lower than in the general population. Because of the relatively low numbers involved, the presence of just one woman from a particular ethnic group was sufficient to push the prevalence of killed women in prostitution above the prevalence of her ethnic group in the general population. However, it is clear that women from Eastern European (28 per cent overrepresented) and Asian ethnic backgrounds (eight per cent overrepresented) are significantly over-represented. This matches my experiences as a support services provider to women in prostitution.

**Table 7 – Ethnic origins of women in prostitution (numbers of women)**

		Broader relationship category			Total
		IPV - current or ex-partner	Known in any capacity other than 1 and 2 above	Stranger	
Victim's ethnicity	White: UK	7	2	6	15
	White - Eastern European	3	1	7	11
	Mixed/multiple: white and black Caribbean	1	0	0	1
	Asian/Asian British:Chinese	1	1	0	2
	Asian/Asian British: SE Asian	0	1	0	1
	Asian/Asian British: other	0	0	1	1
	Black/black British: African	0	0	1	1
	Other	0	0	2	2
Total		12	5	17	34

**Table 8 – Perpetrators’ ethnicity (percentages)**

		Broader relationship category					Total	Representation in 2011 Census	Under or over-represented in men who killed
		IPV – current or ex-partner	Other family member	Known in any capacity	Stranger	Unknown relationship			
Perpetrator's ethnicity	White: UK	32	9	6	8	0	55.95	80.5	-24.55
	White: Irish (Rep)	0	0	0	0	0	0.60	0.9	-0.30
	White: gypsy/traveller	0	0	0	1	0	0.79	0.1	0.69
	White – Eastern European	2	1	1	2	0	4.56	4.4	0.16 1.79
	White: Other European	1	0	1	0	0	1.79		
	Mixed/multiple: white and Black Caribbean	0	0	0	0	0	0.20	0.8	-0.60
	Mixed/multiple: white and Black African	0	0	0	0	0	0.60	0.3	0.30
	Mixed/multiple: other	0	0	0	0	0	0.20	0.5	-0.30
	Asian/Asian British: Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0.20	2.5	-2.30
	Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	1	0	0	1	0	2.18	2	0.18
	Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	1	0	0	0	0	1.59	0.8	0.79
	Asian/Asian British: Chinese	3	0	0	0	0	3.37	0.7	2.67
	Asian/Asian British: SE Asian	1	1	0	0	0	1.59	0	1.59
	Asian/Asian British: other	0	0	0	0	0	0.40	1.5	-1.10
	Mixed white/Asian	0	0	0	1	0	0.99	0.6	0.39
	Black/Black British: African	2	0	1	1	0	3.17	1.8	1.37
	Black/Black British: Caribbean	2	0	0	1	0	3.97	1.1	2.87
	Black/Black British: other	1	1	0	0	0	2.58	0.5	2.08
	Arabic	2	0	0	2	0	3.57	0.4	3.17
	Other	2	0	0	1	0	2.18	0.6	1.58
Missing data	3	1	0	2	2	8.13			
Total	54	13	10	20	3	100			

The numbers involved are unfortunately too small to carry out a useful analysis of the ethnicity of a woman who has been killed by a man with regards to the relationship between victim and perpetrator. This may be a piece of research worth considering with victims from a greater timespan.

### **5.6.3 Ethnicity – perpetrators**

Men whose ethnicity could be described as 'UK white' comprised the majority of those of the victims of men's fatal violence, at 56 per cent of all men who killed women. However, they are underrepresented in comparison to the percentage of the same demographic in the 2011 census, by -25 per cent. Women victims were also underrepresented to a lesser degree (13.2 per cent). The only other group underrepresented by more than one per cent were men who could be described as being of mixed/multiple ethnicities, who constituted 0.2 per cent of the perpetrators and were therefore underrepresented by two per cent. Groups underrepresented by one per cent were: white: mixed/multiple: white and Black Caribbean by 0.6 per cent; and Asian/Asian British: SE Asian by 1.1 per cent.

The following ethnicities were over represented by one per cent or more: White Eastern and non-British/Irish European and other white males by 2 per cent, Bangladeshi males by 2.7 per cent, Chinese males by 1.6 per cent, Black/Black British African men by 1.37 per cent, Black/Black British Caribbean men by 2.9 per cent, Black/Black British other men by 2.08 per cent, Arabic men by 3.2 per cent. It should be noted that there was missing data for 8.13 per cent of the sample and that data was collected according to references to men's ethnicity in the media. It is entirely possible, even likely, that racism in media reporting means that ethnicities of Black and minoritised males are less likely to be unremarked, and therefore more likely to have been collected and analysed in this research.

## **5.7 UK as place of birth**

### **5.7.1 Victims**

According to the Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford (2020), approximately 13 per cent of the UK's population between 2012 and 2014 had been born outside the UK. Sources analysed for this thesis suggested evidence that 22 women, five per cent of the main sample had not been born in the UK, which is significantly below the prevalence of non-UK born people in the population. There was evidence to suggest that 76 per cent of women killed were UK born. However, at 20 per cent there was a high level of missing data. Therefore, it was not possible to ascertain from the evidence available for analysis in this thesis, whether women who were not born in the UK were at greater risk of men's fatal violence. It would be reasonable to assume that they are at greater risk, given the additional barriers to accessing support and/or to establish independent life after leaving an abusive partner faced by women who were not born in the UK.

### **5.7.2 Women involved in prostitution and UK as their place of birth**

As with the wider sample, there was a high degree of unavailable information regarding the country of birth of women who had been involved in prostitution. However, not surprisingly, given the data on ethnicity above, it appears that a greater proportion of them were born outside the UK than in the wider sample, though the non-UK born numbers still remained just below the average in the UK population at 12 per cent. The rate of unknown places of birth was high at 41 per cent, therefore as above, it was not possible to ascertain from the evidence available for analysis in this thesis whether women involved in prostitution who were not born in the UK were at greater risk of men's fatal violence than those who were. That the illustration for those known to have been born in the UK is lower for women in prostitution, than for that in the main cohort in total, paints a picture of who is more vulnerable to this form of exploitation.

### 5.7.3 Perpetrators

The sources analysed for this thesis provided evidence that 86 men who killed women between 2012 and 2014, 19 per cent, had not been born in the UK, which is 6 per cent higher than prevalence in the general population and 14 per cent higher than the proportion of victims who were not UK born. When the purposive samples were included, 101 perpetrators were identified as not having been born in the UK.

This may reflect beliefs about gendered norms, masculinity, the roles of females and males, the acceptability of intimate partner violence and sex inequality having an impact on the behaviours of men who have moved to the UK. This would be consistent with Heise and Kotsadam's research (2015) on multi-level correlates to different cross-country rates of femicide. At 14 per cent there was a high level of missing data, though this was lower than the 20 per cent missing data recorded for victims with regards to their country of birth. This may reflect biases in reporting with a keenness to mark perpetrators as 'other' but also greater availability of data focusing on the perpetrator rather than the victim at trial.

The largest group is white men in the 'other European' categories, 28 men, (Gypsy/traveller, Other European and White other (excluding one Australian man), more than a quarter of those who were not born in the UK belonged in this group. Their countries of birth were: Poland (nine men), Lithuania (five men), Romania (two men), Latvia (two men), Turkey (two men), France (two men), and one each from Bulgaria, Kosovo, Greece, Spain and Denmark. The data for this breakdown is available should it be needed.

Other ethnic backgrounds of men not born in the UK included 17 men born in the Caribbean, 10 born in Bangladesh, six born in China, five men born in Africa and four men born in Pakistan.

Of the 16 men classified as other, five were Iranian, two from Kuwait, two Moroccan/Libyan and one each from Iraq, Qatar and Mexico. Two men were Brazilian

and had killed a woman in Brazil, acting as a group, with other men who were not identified.

It should be noted however that the Migration Observatory data is not disaggregated by sex and that sex differences in migratory patterns are likely to exist, therefore conclusions extrapolated should be treated with caution.

## **5.8 Perpetrator histories of violence against women**

In their murder study work, Dobash and Dobash found that when comparing men who murder men to men who murder women, men who murder men tended to specialise in (have histories of) violence against men, whilst men who murder women seemed to specialise in violence against women. Whilst this research does not have an equivalent sample of men who have killed men, the question of the histories of violence against women, in men who have killed women, remains interesting.

Across the entire sample of 504 men, there were 252, exactly half, where a history of violence against women, either the victim or another woman, was identified.

Where 'no/not known' was selected, there had usually been some expression in court proceedings, media comments, or documents such as DHRs, that there had been no known history of violence against women. Where there was simply no mention of a history of violence against women, 'missing data' was selected as the response. In reality however, much of men's abuse of women is unknown and certainly no police record of violence against women cannot be equated with no violence against women. It should be recognised therefore that the 'yes/ever' records are likely to be a serious undercount and that the 'no/none known' responses would be more accurately recorded as missing data in most cases.

The prevalence of a known prior history of violence could be identified at the highest level, 70 per cent of the sample, in men who killed current or former partners. This could in part be due to this being identified as a relevant issue and also because

domestic homicide reviews, a rich source of information, are by definition only commissioned for intimate partner homicides. There are also restrictions on including information that could be seen as prejudicial in the criminal justice process. In all other subgroups the percentage of men with a known history of violence against women was between eight and 12 per cent (known but not related/former partners and strangers respectively) with 10 per cent of men who killed women who were family members but had never been intimate partners at 10 per cent.

## **5.9 Relationships between victims and perpetrators**

Of women killed between 2012 and 2014, 59.5 per cent (n=268) of women were killed by a current/former partner, 16.8 per cent (n=75) by a family member (including 10 per cent (n=46) by their sons), 11 per cent (n=49) by men known in some other capacity and 9 per cent (n=40) by strangers. These are similar prevalence rates to those found by Cullen et al. (2019) in Australia (54 per cent intimate partners, 12 per cent matricides, seven per cent killed by strangers.)

### **5.9.1 Current or former partner**

268 women (60.1 per cent) of women killed between 2012 and 2014 were killed by current or former partners, making this the largest cohort and more than three times bigger than the next cohort, which was women killed by family members (16.8 per cent). This is consistent with findings on femicide data analysis over time and internationally, (Dobash and Dobash, 2015; UNODC, 2019; Dawson, 2021; Walklate, 2020).

Current or former partners included nine categories, shown below, with the number in the group:

1. IPV – spouse 102
2. IPV – ex-spouse 27
3. IPV – boyfriend/partner 79

4. IPV – ex-boyfriend/partner 57
5. IPV – love-rival/similar 0
6. Marriage – under Sharia/Islamic law 3
7. Perpetrator has employment role which brought him into contact with victims 1
8. Casual sex 4
9. Sex buyer/targeted prostituted women and women in prostitution 1

Current relationships included current spouse, boyfriend/partner, marriage under Sharia law, perpetrator with employment role which brought him into contact with the victim, casual sex, and sex buyer. Some of the couples in these relationships were in the process of separating, this will be addressed in the contexts chapter. In total these accounted for 190 (69 per cent) relationships of the current/ex-partner cohort. Ex-partners included ex-spouse and ex-partner/boyfriend and accounted for 84 (31 per cent) of the current/ex-partner cohort. This is consistent with the findings of the Femicide Census (2020) which found that 27 per cent of intimate partner femicides between 2009 and 2018 were committed by men who were separated from the women they killed after having been in an intimate relationship.

The difference in proportions of current/ex-relationships between those who had been married and those who had not is considerable. Of those who could be identified as being married or having been married 79 per cent (n=102) were reported as still being together when the man killed the women, with 21 per cent (n=27) reported as being separated. Of those who were not and had not been married 79 (58 per cent) were implied as still being together and 27 (42 per cent), almost double, as being separated. Unfortunately, it is not within data accessible for this thesis to know how much discrepancy is due to differences in rates of intimate partner femicide between couples who were or had been married and those who had never been. There are biased assumptions in reporting, and researching, for example, media reporters, or I, would

be more likely to assume that a couple were still together if they had the same surname. It also requires the assumption that it would be always or almost always be known by others whether a couple were still together, or recently separated or having decided to separate, and then reported accurately, and this is almost certainly not always known or correct.

Of those who were reported as still being together, 48 (36 married, 12 not married) were reported as considering separation, still legally married but estranged/separating (details available if needed). The same provisos about the problems of relying on media reporting apply. If these couples are added to those who were reported as separated this increased the proportion of those killed who were separated or separating from 31 per cent to 51 per cent.

### **5.9.2 Relatives**

Seventy-five women (16.8 per cent) were killed by men they were related to but who were not nor had been current or former partners. The majority 46 out of 75 (61 per cent of the cohort, 10 per cent) were women who were killed by their sons, additionally one woman was killed by her stepson. The next group was women killed by their fathers, this was the case for six women, (eight per cent of the cohort, or 1.3 per cent), followed by five women killed by their son-in-law. Four women were killed by their grandsons, with a further three killed by step-grandsons. Four women were killed by their brother.

Although this thesis splits the sample into four main cohorts according to the relationship between victim and perpetrator, the examination of different characteristics, particularly around mental health and substance use between men who killed their mothers and men who killed their daughters shows that even within these four groups, differences can be seen.

As I address below, there are numerous differences in the circumstances and characteristics of women killed by current/former intimate partners and family

members. Westmarland's (2015) warning of the disservice to theory and practice by subsuming intimate partner and family homicides or femicides under 'domestic homicides' is demonstrated.

## **1. Mothers**

Forty-six women were killed by their sons.

They were aged between 42 and 86, with an average age of 63 years old. Their sons, their killers, were aged between 15 and 63 years old, with a mean age of 36.

Two young men were still teenagers when they killed their mothers. The youngest killer, 15-year-old NR, had a prior conviction from when he was 13 years old for theft, assault and attempted robbery. He had been referred to specialist support for substance use. In the year before he killed his mother, he had threatened school staff and other pupils with a snooker cue and made sexually abusive remarks to staff (the DHR does not record their sex, missing an opportunity to identify or undermine a pattern of violence against women). Three months before he killed his mother, he committed a violent robbery of a female and a month later his sister called the police after being assaulted by him. He was referred for mental health support the month before he killed his mother, he was smoking cannabis and talking about black magic, hearing voices, and behaving aggressively. He killed his 43-year-old mother with a claw hammer and scissors, causing severe head injuries and inflicting stab wounds to her chest. He was found not guilty of murder by reason of insanity and given an indefinite hospital order. The other teenager was 16-year-old KS, who also had a history of violence and aggression and substance use. He had been temporarily excluded from school at the age of 11 after starting a fire in the toilets. He left education at the age of 14 after he assaulted a teacher. Again, the sex of the teacher is not noted in the DHR. He had also assaulted a male,

identified as a previous friend, and committed criminal damage. The DHR notes significant evidence of prior domestic abuse to his mother. He killed her by stabbing her 94 times, there were knife wounds across her head, back and front. and her spinal cord was severed. He was reported as having a low IQ of 74, placing him in the lowest four per cent of the population and described by his defending QC as having difficulty expressing emotions. On this occasion the young man was found guilty of murder and sentenced to serve a minimum of 15 years.

## **2. Sons – substance use, mental ill-health and histories of violence against women**

The prevalence of substance use in men who killed their mothers was high, identified in 30 cases, at 65 per cent this was almost double that of the general sample and higher than the 58 per cent recorded in the broader cohort of men who killed family members. Substance use was only excluded in two cases (4.3 per cent) as there were 14 cases where there was no record or mention of substance use, which is not the same as it not being present. Further details of substance use from a nominal variable identifying the combination of alcohol, illegal drugs and prescribed drugs used and a string variable recording further information are available for further analysis if required. The prevalence of mental ill-health was also high, identified in 37 cases, at 80 per cent this was more than double (128 per cent increase) the prevalence in men general. Again, further details are available.

Seven men who killed their mothers (15 per cent) had a known history of violence against ex-partners. Seventy-two per cent of the men who killed their mothers lived with her. This is a high prevalence, and with the high prevalence of substance use and mental ill-health, suggests men who were not functioning well. Indeed 20 men who killed their mothers, aged between 15 and 44, with a mean age of 33 years, lived with their mothers and had both a history of

troubled mental health and substance use. Five of these men (25 per cent) were amongst the seven known to have a history of intimate partner violence. One man had been cautioned for assault on a previous partner, in two cases the perpetrator was known to have been violent to at least two previous partners. One had a history of violence against, and harassment of previous partners (number unspecified) and one man's previous partner told the court that she had woken up to see him standing over her with a knife amongst a series of other episodes of threatening and abusive behaviour. The use of pornography was identified in one man. In a separate case, the court was informed that the perpetrator had been exchanging texts of a sexual nature with a male friend before he killed his mother and was likely to be in 'a state of sexual arousal.'<sup>5</sup>

The oldest man to kill his mother was 63, and his mother at 86, was the oldest woman killed by her son. He was found guilty of manslaughter due to diminished responsibility and detained in a secure hospital. In the year before her death, a carer had seen bruising on her arms and soreness and swelling on her face. She had intimated that her son had hurt her but refused to support this formally. After subjecting her to a series of assaults over several months, if not longer, he thumped her so hard that it broke her ribs and caused internal bleeding. She died in hospital, never recovering from the assault.

Thirty-three men (72 per cent) of those who killed their mothers were identified as 'white British', three as 'white: other European' (6.5 per cent), one as other white and one as gypsy/traveller, in total therefore 82.6 per cent of men who killed their mother came from white ethnic groups. Two men who killed their mother were Black/Black British (4.3 per cent). Of the remaining men who killed their mother, one (2.2 per cent) was from each of the following ethnic groups: Asian/British, Chinese, Black Caribbean and two as 'other'.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-33140551>

### **3. Sons – Overkill and gratuitous violence**

Overkill was identified in 27 cases (59 per cent) and absent in 12 cases (26 per cent). There was an absence of information available to allow categorisation in seven cases (15 per cent). This is slightly higher than the average across all killings, which was 53 per cent. Sexual violence was identified in one case. The 52-year-old woman was strangled by her 27-year-old son using a power cable as she slept. He had been drinking and using cocaine. He stabbed her with a kitchen knife, scissors, and drove knitting needles into her neck, and raped her. He was found guilty of murder and sentenced to a minimum of 30 years in prison.

### **4. Sons and ‘Mercy killings’**

In five cases, defences were made that the killings were ‘mercy killings’, motivated by a desire to end suffering. The women killed were aged 55, 76, 83 and two were 86 years old. One woman was shot in the head and two were suffocated, in one of these cases her son set fire to her house afterwards. In two cases, the methods that the men chose to kill contradicted any claims of trying to end suffering. One woman was repeatedly stabbed in her neck and chest by her son and one man strangled his mother before hitting her over the head with pans and finally, whilst she was still alive, slit her throat.

Two men (6.5 per cent) who killed their mothers killed themselves afterwards and before detection.

### **5. Grandmothers/Step-Grandmothers**

Four women were killed by their grandsons and a further two by their step grandsons. The women were aged between 63 and 87, with four of them over 80 years of age. Their grandsons were aged between 17 and 41.

Two of the men (40 per cent of the cohort, therefore lower prevalence than that in men who killed their mothers) had diagnoses of mental health problems (one

schizophrenia and one paranoid schizophrenia). Two others tried to claim mental ill-health as part of their defence, but these were rejected. One further man was described as having a neurodevelopmental disorder. None had known histories of suicidal ideation or attempts. All six had identified problematic drug use. Further details of the drugs used are available if required. The drug use is higher than the high usage identified in the men who killed their mothers (100 per cent compared to 65 per cent). All victims and perpetrators were white, and UK born.

One man had a known history of violence against previous (male) partners and had also been violent and abusive toward his mother to the extent that she had called the police. This is 17 per cent of the cohort but caution must be exercised when comparing it to the 15 per cent known history of intimate partner violence recorded in men who killed their mothers, due to the small size of the cohort. The use of pornography was identified in two of the men, in one case specific pornography relating to younger men and older women.

One man, aged 17, had also attempted to kill his father and had previously been expelled from school for threatening staff (the sex of the victim/s was not reported). One man, aged 38, had previously threatened his brother with a knife. Five of the men lived in the home of the woman they killed. This arrangement may be indicative of a history of abusive behaviour towards those in their birth families.

Overkill was present in four of the six killings, that is 66 per cent of cases and again comparable to the 60 per cent identified in mother killings. One man inflicted 26 external injuries on his 87-year-old grandmother, including 15 blunt force trauma injuries to her head and neck. One man slit his 84-year-old grandmother's throat and stabbed her at least 50 times. Another also slit his grandmother's throat, punched her, and stabbed her with a knife and a nail file

in her head, neck, body, and limbs, at least 30 times and continuing after her death. One stabbed, slashed and mutilated the victim with a knife at least 28 times, raped her, and almost severed the fingers from her hand as she tried to defend herself. This man, aged 20, was the only one who killed his step-grandmother, aged 63, in an attack where sexual violence was identified, he was one of the two men identified as a pornography user. In the two remaining cases, one man stabbed his grandmother four times and the other smothered her with a pillow and kned her in the throat.

None of the men who killed their grandmother or step grandmother claimed to have committed a mercy killing and none killed themselves after doing so.

## **6. Sisters**

Four men killed their sisters. They were aged 23–39. Their sisters were aged between 20 and 42 years old. Three of the four men had identified mental health problems, one including a history of suicidal ideation. Three had a history of substance use. Two had both identified mental health and substance use issues. One man had been abusive to a female partner as well as his sister (over many years), one had possibly sexually abused his sister as a child (the girl had been sexually abused but the perpetrator had not been ultimately identified, though her brother, her eventual killer, was suspected), and in one case there was a reference to low level family conflict. Given the propensity of the media to describe women victims of men's fatal violence as having endured turbulent relationships, the possibility that this is an understatement and reference to something that was far from 'low level' cannot be ruled out.

Two other men lived with their sister when they killed her. In one of these cases, he also killed their mother and family dog. Three of the men were white and born in the UK, one was born in Somalia.

Overkill was present in two cases and sexual violence, rape, was used against one. This was the same case whether the brother was suspected of having sexually abused his sister when they were children. None of the killers killed themselves.

## **7. Daughters**

Six women/girls were killed by their fathers. In three cases, he also killed his wife/partner, including one case where he killed his two daughters. Two of these men also killed themselves. The daughters killed were aged between 16 and 33 years old. The fathers aged 49–70. This thesis looks at the killings of females aged over 14 only, which of course has an influence on the minimum possible age of killer fathers. It is incorrect to infer that killing of one's daughter is a phenomenon that is restricted to older men/daughters. Three of the killers were 'white British', (60 per cent), two of these men also killed their partner (her mother); one was born in India and one in Kuwait. Two of the victims were identified as having learning disabilities.

Three of the five men had or claimed to have mental health problems: one had depression, (another self-diagnosed himself with depression but the inquest into the killings did not support this) and one suffered paranoid psychosis and a significantly impaired IQ after a road traffic accident. At 40 per cent of the sample, this is half that seen in men who killed their mothers, although caution should be exercised with such a small cohort. Substance use was not identified in any of the killings. This is particularly striking because in the cohort of men who killed family members who have not been intimate partners, the prevalence of substance use was the highest across the sample, at almost 58 per cent of the group and at a rate 26 per cent higher than the average across the sample.

Overkill was present in the killings of five of the six females, the one where it was not, victim 1204009, was 31 years old when her father shot her in the back.

Her mother, his partner, had been found dead (reportedly by suicide, a note was found) some days before. She, the victim, and her mother had suffered with depression and the victim also had learning difficulties. The perpetrator also shot himself with a single gunshot to the head. The 49-year-old man who killed his wife and two daughters aged 16 and 19, had researched how to cut throats and executions online before stabbing his wife and their two daughters. One of the daughters suffered 33 wounds to her neck and chest, the other was subjected to 8 wounds. He hanged himself. A 58-year-old father, from Kuwait, stabbed his daughter 13 times, mainly in the neck, claiming that killing her had preserved his honour because she spoke to him disrespectfully. He was sentenced to an indefinite hospital order. Victim 1311015 was 29 years old when she and her 55-year-old mother were killed by her father, her mother's 55-year-old long-term partner, bludgeoning both to death with a heavy instrument, never recovered but thought to be a claw hammer. The injuries he inflicted upon his daughter were the most severe, including eight scalp lacerations inflicted with severe force. The killer was described as a devoted father, yet his relationship with his partner was described as stormy. This misnomer is frequently used by the media for a man who is abusive to his partner, indeed the DHR revealed that she had been in contact with a local domestic violence organisation although no records had been retained. He left his partner naked after killing her, having removed her clothing, and his daughter was found face down wearing only her knickers. This was the only case of a father killing his daughter that met the threshold of sexualised violence. The daughter's body was found in her bedroom and the killings happened early in the morning, so it is possible that her state of undress reflected the time of day. However, media reported remarked upon her removed and bloodied clothing included her jeans and top, which suggests that she had been dressed when attacked. The final man, also killed his partner (wife) as well as their daughter, the court accepted

his plea of diminished responsibility for killing his wife of 45 years due to an adverse reaction to cancer treatment drugs, though he was found guilty of the murder of his daughter. He claimed to have killed her because he didn't want her to see what had happened to her mother, so when she came home from school he put a plastic bag over her head, killed her by hitting her head with a hammer and then tied the bag over her head with an electric cable. Unusually, the DHR stated that the review panel did not accept that the drugs prescribed had significantly affected him and that there was sufficient evidence to conclude that the perpetrator had subjected his wife and daughter to coercive control.

Two men who killed their daughters also killed themselves.

#### **8. Differences between men who killed mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and daughters**

At 40 per cent of the cohort, killing themselves after killing their daughter is notably different from the proportion of men who killed themselves after killing their mothers (6.5 per cent), grandmothers (0) and sisters (0). Additional different patterns can be seen in the prevalence of identified mental health problems, at 78 per cent for men who killed their mothers, four per cent for those who killed their grandmother, and 75 per cent in those who killed their sister, compared to 40 per cent in those who killed their daughter. With regards to problematic substance use, daughter killers also do not follow the same pattern as men who killed other female relatives, with no men who killed their daughters being identified as having problematic substance use compared to 65 per cent of men who killed their mothers, 100 per cent of those who killed their grandmothers and 75 per cent of those who killed their sisters.

In all cohorts, white British born men and their female relatives predominated (72 per cent of men who killed their mothers, 100 per cent of men who killed their grandmothers, 75 per cent of men who killed their sisters and 60 per cent, the lowest prevalence) men who killed their daughters.

Caution must be exercised due to the small numbers involved; it would be interesting to repeat the calculation with a wider sample group to check for reliability of these findings.

### **5.9.3 Persons known who were or had not been either current/former partners or relatives**

Fifty women were killed by men they knew but to whom they were not related and with whom they had never (as far as it was possible to establish from media reports) had an intimate relationship. Sixty-two relationships are recorded because of women who were killed by more than one man or men who killed more than one woman.

Eighteen women were killed by men who could be considered friends or social acquaintances, though it should be noted that it is quite possible that they did not consider him in the former category or that their perception might have been quite different from that of their killer. There appear to be two main contexts for such femicides, sexual (10 femicides) and pecuniary (13 femicides involved either robbery or other intended financial gain). In both sets of circumstances it can be argued that male entitlement plays a role, the woman has something that the man wants, whether that is access to her body or her money. In all but one of these cases the victim was known to be younger than the perpetrator, though also in one case, where the victim was killed abroad, the age of the perpetrator has not been reported. In the single case where the victim was known to be older than the perpetrator, the perpetrator subjected the victim and another female, the latter an-ex-partner, to a nine-hour ordeal of violent and sexually degrading torture, survived by one of the women. In this case (where the predator found an excuse to visit the victim – who survived the ordeal – and entered through an unlocked door when not invited into the house) and seven others, summarised below, the perpetrators could be described as predatory:

1. Victim 1201016 was 35 years old and had become friends with a 61-year-old man who killed her after meeting him in hospital. His attention had become

unwelcome, and she had reported him to the police. He later broke into her flat, doused her in white spirit and set her alight. She suffered 80 per cent burns and died in hospital 15 hours after the attack. During his trial, in which he denied his actions, he claimed that he had loved her.

2. Victim 1210006 was 37 when she was killed by the ex-partner of her housemate who was away at the time. On the night she was killed, he had left another woman tied to a bed after she refused to do what he wanted her to and he broke into the victim's house as she slept, knowing that she was alone. He tied her to the bed and repeatedly raped her. The following day he bought a hacksaw, plastic bags, tape, bleach, and a petrol can. The entirety of her body has not been found. The 46-year-old killer had previous convictions for rape and assaults on at least three other women.
3. Sixteen-year-old victim 1301012 was lured by the 22-year-old man who killed her, the partner of a friend, on the pretext of a job interview. He stabbed her 58 times in the head, neck, and face and then 'sexually defiled' her. Before wrapping her in carpet lining and setting her body on fire. He regularly tried to meet women when his girlfriend was at work and had previously assaulted a young woman.
4. Victim 1305005 was 17 years old when her 22-year-old friend who was obsessed with violent pornography killed her, she'd gone to his home on the pretext of him taking photos for a project. When he was arrested, the police seized his computer and found 16,800 images and 72 videos of sexual violence. He had written 40 stories about fatal violence to young women he knew, and he had doctored Facebook photos to show nooses round their necks. He hanged the woman he killed and took before, during, and after photos.

5. Victim 1310005 was described as being casually acquainted with two men in Qatar who raped her in a property that allegedly one of the perpetrators regularly took women back to, to have sex with them, and burnt her body.
6. The 26-year-old killer of 16-year-old victim 1312010 was trying to develop a relationship with her before he stabbed her. She was partially clothed when found dead.
7. A 68-year-old convicted child sex abuser befriended (selected) a 20-year-old student six months before stabbing her when he became jealous of her friendships with people her own age. She allegedly said he gave her emotional and financial support and thought of him as a father figure.

A further two cases may have been sexually motivated or motivated by jealousy/possessiveness but as is the case elsewhere, because this research relies upon media sources where DHRs are not published, neither of these cases were domestic homicides so do not meet the criteria for such analysis. Victim 1308002, aged 32, was killed by her partner's friend, aged 36, who was accused in court of being jealous of their relationship and who referred to her as a 'cheating bitch'; and victim 1411006, aged 22, was killed by a friend of her partner's, aged 34, whom she had met whilst visiting the former in prison. They were said to have developed a close and 'flirty relationship' (by a friend of the perpetrator) in the 12 days between his release from prison and his extremely violent fatal assault on her. It is also the case that either of these could have currently or historically been an intimate relationship although this was not reflected in any trial reports that I was able to access.

Seven further cases where the victim and perpetrator were known to each other involved sexual violence. Two were reported as rape, in a third case the perpetrator was reported as intending to rape the dead victim but he was discovered before he was able to do so. And in the fourth case, details of the sexual assault were not given, but when arrested the perpetrator had the victim's knickers in his pocket. In two of

these four cases, the victim and perpetrator were house/flatmates and in two they were neighbours. In three cases, the perpetrator was older than the victim but not substantially so, or the same age, and in one case, the 26-year-old perpetrator who raped his 67-year-old neighbour, leaving her dead and naked, was 41 years younger than her. His internet history search was found to contain visits to sites involving rape of older women. The circumstances surrounding killings involving sexual violence will be looked at in more detail in the next chapter, on circumstances.

In four cases where the victim and perpetrator were friends/associates, and the femicide had a pecuniary context, in all of these cases, the victim was older than the perpetrator. None of the four killings involved sexual violence, though three involved overkill:

- 1.** Eighty-year-old victim 1202005 was hit over the head at least 11 times with such ferocity that her skull was fractured from one side to the other and bone splinters were embedded in her brain. Both her forearms were broken from trying to defend herself. The 46-year-old man who killed her had known her, as a friend of her wealthy son, for over 20 years and knew that the son kept considerable amounts of cash in her home.
- 2.** A 47-year-old man attacked a 57-year-old woman 1211010 whilst she was in bed, stabbing her to death with a garden pitchfork in the head, to the extent that her face caved in, then stole her cash card and bought take-away food. He was one of a small number of homeless people whom she would invite into her home and cook dinner for.
- 3.** A 51-year-old man killed a 71-year-old woman who he had met at a bridge club. He bound her with tape and rope that he had carried with him, beat her head and body, shoved a handkerchief in her mouth and stamped on her hands and chest. He claimed she owed him £30.00.

4. A 40-year-old man killed a 51-year-old woman with a number of medical conditions, for whom he had been a carer and had later become a friend. He strangled her and stole £300 cash (1405001).

Seven further cases where the victim and perpetrator were known to each other involved a pecuniary context (robbery/financial gain) and as with the four cases above, in all cases the victim was older than the perpetrator by 10–52 years. In two of the cases (three women, two killed by the same man) the perpetrator had an employment role which brought him into contact with the victims, another two were neighbours, one was a work colleague, and one was a friend of the victim's granddaughter.

The other relationships in the group of known, non-related victims, perpetrators included but were not limited to work colleague, associates, neighbours, flatmates or fellow care home residents, landlord/tenants, and sex buyers who killed women they had 'visited' on several occasions.

#### **5.9.4 Strangers**

One hundred and two women were killed by strangers, of these 40 were killed between 2012 and 2014 and thus purposive sampling was undertaken to increase the sample size, adding 62 women who were killed between 2015 and 2017. Of these, 10 women had been involved in prostitution and so are also included in the purposive sample of women killed in the context of prostitution. Half of all women who had been involved in prostitution and were killed between 2009 and 2017 were killed by strangers.

Of these 102 women, 17, including those in the purposive sample, had been involved in prostitution, one was killed by a man who had employment which brought him into contact with the victims, two were killed by contract killers and 22 were killed in the context of terrorism.

The 22 women who were killed in terrorist attacks were all killed between 2016 and 2017. Jo Cox, Member of Parliament (MP) for Batley and Spen from her election in May

2015 until her murder in June 2016, was targeted by a white supremacist. Twenty-one other women and girls were killed in three separate terrorist attacks in 2017; one incident, on 22 May 2017, killed 22 people, 17 of whom were women and 16 included in this data.

The year 2017, then, was an atypical year in the UK. It is important to note that without the 11 weeks in 2017 during which all the terrorist attacks took place, more women would have been killed by their sons between 2012 and 2014 than by strangers (i.e. 46 women had been killed by their sons and 40 women had been killed by strangers.) This work, however, is an act of commemoration of women who were killed by men, as well as a submission for a doctorate, it would be wrong to omit these 22 women because the context in which they were killed was unusual for the UK. The circumstances of murder have always varied over time and been located in the specific social context of the time. It is equally important to recognise the links between misogyny and terrorism, which lends weight to the inclusion of these women in studies of femicide, let alone that it is unarguable that they were killed by men. Daesh claimed responsibility for the Manchester and London attacks, they are rightly framed in the context of religious extremism, however the oppression of women by men is at the heart of this fundamentalist ideology. It is not to deny or denigrate the lives of the five men that were also taken in Manchester or those in any of the other attacks, but in Manchester in particular the attacker chose an event, an Ariana Grande concert, with a fan base in which girls – pre-teen and teenage – dominated. Though it is clear that 2017 was an unusual year in the prevalence of women's deaths in the UK linked to terrorism, Dhaliwal's (2019) warning of the threats to the bodily security of women and girls within the 'conducive contexts for fundamentalist and other right-wing mobilisations' (p.43) makes a clear case for their inclusion and also links what is happening in the UK at a given point in time to global politics, which in turn affects the conducive context for men's violence against women. In addition to that, author Joan Smith (2019) who researched the backgrounds of the six men who were the perpetrators of the terrorist

attacks in London and Manchester in 2017, found that all six men had histories of misogyny and abusing women.

One 47-year-old woman was killed by a contracted killer hired by her ex-partner's son. He believed that she was about to report him to the police for sexual assaults on girls, which he had allegedly committed years earlier. The killer was found guilty of murder and jailed for 32 years. The man who hired him was found guilty of conspiracy to murder and jailed for 30 years. Here we can see an example of Monckton-Smith's concept of trigger event linked to loss of control being applicable outside the context of intimate partner or family homicides.

## **5.10 Chapter Summary**

The chapter has addressed health and demographic characteristics of women who were killed by men and the men who killed them. I found that there were different age profiles for victims and perpetrators and that these also differed across relationship cohorts. My findings included men who killed women who had been involved in prostitution, men who killed more than one woman, and men who acted in groups, were on average younger than the mean age for a woman killer. Women who had been involved in prostitution were, on average, younger than other victims and were the youngest cohort of victims of men's fatal violence. The profile of the relationship between victims and killers also varied with the age of the victim and also the age of the perpetrator.

Reported substance use was three times higher in perpetrators than victims and also there were different patterns of usage. Women killed by partners were the most likely relationship cohort to use substances, while perpetrators who killed family members were most likely amongst the killers to use substances. The prevalence of substance use in women killed who had been involved in prostitution was more than three times higher than for women who had no known association with prostitution.

The prevalence of indicators of mental ill-health was much lower in victims than in perpetrators, where there were positive indicators for 33.2 per cent of men and seven per cent of victims.

Victims and perpetrators whose ethnicity could be described as 'UK white' comprised the significant majority of the victims and perpetrators but both were under-represented in comparison to the percentage of the same demographic in the 2011 census. Women whose ethnicity could be described as 'white British' were significantly underrepresented in the cohort of women who had been killed and had been involved in prostitution, present at a rate 45 per cent lower than in the general population.

The prevalence of substance use in men who killed their mothers was high, identified in 30 cases. At 65 per cent this was almost double that of the general sample and higher than the 58 per cent recorded in the broader cohort of men who killed family members. They were slightly more likely to use overkill. Men who killed their daughters were six times more likely to kill themselves after the killing than men who killed their mothers.

Male entitlement to women's bodies and money/resources was present as a factor in men who killed women that they knew but had never been in an intimate relationship with, nor were family members.

Matters relating to socially constructed male gender norms and expectations played across all relationship cohorts between victims and perpetrators.

## **Chapter Six – Circumstances – The Fatal Incident: Methods of Killing and Forms of Harm**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter looks at the forms of violence and harm that men choose to inflict on women they kill in the fatal incident. Although addressing a necessarily singular incident, the fatal and by definition almost always last time a man harms a given woman, it should never be forgotten that for the majority of women included in this research, this incident is one, the last of many. In addition, in addressing a particular incident, I am mindful of the importance of not reducing intimate partner or family violence and abuse to a series of incidents but a pattern of control, as discussed earlier in the thesis in relation to the work of Kelly and Westmarland (2015) and Monckton-Smith (2020, 2021).

### **6.2 Forms of violence and harm**

There were 33 variables identified for methods of violence/forms of harm used in the killings of women (later grouped into 17 sets of variables shown below, the breakdown into the 33 variables is available if needed).

The killing of each woman could involve a man using multiple methods, therefore the number of methods identified is greater than the number of women killed. It is also important to note that it is highly likely that some of the harms inflicted on women were lost through the steps between the action, the autopsy, police reports/statements, and media reports. Only where a form of violence was mentioned was a positive (yes) response recorded. So, it is highly likely that significant undercounts are present, especially in the harms that were not in themselves fatal as these are the most likely to be overlooked or disregarded in reporting. Tables summarising the number and forms of violence used on each victim according to their relationship with the perpetrator and the percentage of the relationship cohort

subjected to a given form of violence/harm can be found at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

### **6.3 Ranking forms of violence/harm according to relationship between victim and perpetrator**

#### **6.3.1 The five most common forms of violence used/harms inflicted**

The five most common forms of violence used/harms inflicted were:

1. Injuries inflicted with a sharp object, identified in 57 per cent of killings
2. Head injuries, identified in 38 per cent of killings
3. Hitting, kicking or other forms of violence using bodily force, used in 30 per cent of killings
4. Strangulation, used in 25 per cent of killings (though asphyxiation, combining strangulation and smothering was used in 34 per cent of killings), and
5. Injuries inflicted with a blunt object, used in 22 per cent of killings.

The next most common form of violence used was sexual, which was identified in 11 per cent of killings. All other forms of violence were chosen by less than 10 per cent of men who killed women. It is questionable to address some forms of violence above others in terms of brutality or perversity when all the forms being considered were used to cause death and when the process of being killed would have caused profound fear and suffering for almost all victims, but some forms do stand out in terms of their gratuitous nature of the violence, such as decapitation and dismemberment, each of which were used in two per cent of killings (10 women were decapitated and 11 women were dismembered) and were in themselves necessarily fatal or would have been unless the woman concerned was not already dead. There were differences in the rates that some forms of violence were used according to the relationship between the victim and the man who killed her. The top ten forms of violence used according to relationship cohort are illustrated in the table below.

In all cohorts, the most frequently inflicted harms were committed using a sharp object, in most cases a knife, but not always. Of 291 instances where a sharp object was used, the use was described as stabbing in 192 cases, slashing in 40 cases and slitting (the throat of) the victim in 31 cases.

**Table 9 – Rank order of forms of violence used according to relationship between victim and perpetrator**

Rank	IPV	Fam	Known	Stranger	Prostitution	Mother	All
1	Sharp Object	Sharp Object	Sharp Object	Sharp Object	Sharp Object	Sharp Object	Sharp Object
2	Head Injuries	Head Injuries	Head Injuries	Head Injuries	Head Injuries	Head Injuries	Head Injuries
3	Strangled	Hit/kick	Hit/kick	Sexual	Hit/kick & Strangled	Hit/kick	Hit/kick
4	Hit/kick	Strangled & Blunt Object	Blunt Object	Strangled	Strangled & Hit/kick	Strangled	Strangled
5	Blunt Object	Blunt Object & Strangled	Strangled	Hit/kick	Blunt Object and Sexual	Blunt Object	Blunt Object
6	Smothered	Blunt Object & Strangled	Sexual	Blunt Object	Sexual and Blunt Object	Shot	Sexual
7	Sexual & Fall from height	Fire & Shot & Smothered	Prolonged assault, tied up, torture, gagged	Explosion	Dismembered	Fire and Decapitated and Dismembered	Smothered
8	Fall/Pushed	Fire & Shot & Smothered	Fire	Fall/Pushed	Prolonged Attack	Fire and Decapitated and Dismembered	Fall/Pushed
9	Fire	Sexual	Fall/Pushed	Shot	Smothered & Shot & Decapitated (3 forms joint 9 <sup>th</sup> )	Fire and Decapitated and Dismembered	Fire
10	Shot	Prolonged attack	(unknown)	Dismembered	Smothered & Shot & Decapitated (3 forms joint 9 <sup>th</sup> )	Sexual and Fall/pushed	Prolonged assault

As stated above, across the entire group of victims the percentage of the cohort where a sharp object was used was 57 per cent. However, this varied from 77 per cent of women killed who had been involved in prostitution and 43 per cent of women who were killed by strangers. 60 per cent of men who killed a current or former partner used a sharp object on her, as did 67 per cent of men who killed a female family

member. The rate of use of sharp objects by sons who they killed their mothers was slightly lower, 59 per cent.

In all cohorts, the second most frequently inflicted harms were head injuries. These crossed categories, including those caused by sharp or blunt objects, hitting, kicking, and falling. Across the entire sample, head injuries were reported in 38 per cent of women. There was significant variation in the rate of prevalence between cohorts with head injuries present: in 57 per cent of women killed by their sons, 45 per cent of women killed by family members, but 33 per cent of women killed by strangers.

From the point of the third most common form of harm inflicted/violence used, there are differences in the rank orders of prevalence according to cohort. Hitting and kicking was the third most common form of violence used across the whole sample and was also the third most common form used by men who killed family members, including men who killed their mothers, men who killed women known to them and was jointly the third most common form, along with strangulation, used by men who killed women who had been involved in prostitution. Beating or kicking someone to death using nothing but the force of one's hands, fists, feet, requires a commitment to inflicting serious harm or death. It may also be a form used by men who have made less conscious planning decisions to kill, as use of any weapon surely increases lethality, which may explain why it is less prevalent in the choices made by men who kill women who are strangers. For men who killed women who were strangers, the third most common form of violence used was sexual. As stated above, over the entire sample, sexual violence was the sixth most frequently used form of violence. The prevalence of sexual violence ranked equally with the use of a blunt object, as the fourth most frequently used form of violence, for men who killed women who have been involved in prostitution, but was the ninth most common form (its lowest ranking in the cohorts) used by men who killed family members and tied equally with men causing women's deaths due to pushing or a fall from height in these who killed current or former

partners. However, for men who killed a current or former partner, the largest cohort, strangulation was the third most common form of violence used.

## **6.4 Other forms of violence/harms inflicted**

### **6.4.1 Shooting**

Across all women killed between 2012 and 2014, shooting was used in 5.5 per cent of killings of women. Most research on the use of guns in femicides has been conducted in countries with gun licensing laws which permit and therefore encourage higher levels of gun ownership, with higher rates of femicides in homes where a gun is owned (Rothman and Siegel, 2016; Langley, 2008). The UK's relatively restrictive gun licensing laws is likely to explain the relative absence of the use of guns in mass shootings, incel-related shootings and lower levels of use in intimate-partner femicides.

It is interesting that shooting is the 6<sup>th</sup> most common form of violence chosen by men who kill their mothers. In the USA, Fox and Levin (2021) had found that 89.9 per cent of mass shooters who killed family members were male, with 56.3 per cent of victims of mass family shootings and 47.1 per cent of all mass shootings being female. Shooting is the method of killing that requires least physical contact and force is followed, in terms of prevalence of methods used by men who kill their mothers, jointly by decapitation, dismemberment and fire (another form of violence that does not require physical contact), whereas dismemberment and decapitation, the former in particular requiring not only a high degree of physical contact but physical contact with a woman's internal organs. It would be interesting to look at whether there are differences, in circumstances and perpetrator characteristics, between the men who chose to kill their mothers using either of these two methods. For example, prevalence of mental ill-health or claiming mercy killing as a motive.

#### **6.4.2 Dismemberment**

Men who killed their mothers, men who killed women who had been involved in prostitution, and men who killed strangers were the only ones where dismemberment was one of the 10 most frequent forms of violence used. In the whole sample, 11 women were dismembered by nine men. One man, Stephen Griffiths is known to have killed three women who were involved in prostitution in Bradford in 2009 and 2010. There have been suggestions, unsubstantiated, that he may have killed more women who were involved in prostitution in and around Bradford and who disappeared in the years before he was arrested and charged for the murders of the three women included in this research. Of the other men who dismembered women, two killed their mother, one killed his sister, two killed women they had been dating but in both cases the relationships had been short (one of six months and one of three months) and a third killed a woman that he met in the pub on the day he killed her. The remaining man who was recorded as having dismembered a victim killed his partner's housemate. Five of the nine men were identified in the media as having problematic substance issues and three as having mental health problems. Stephen Griffiths, the man who killed at least three women was not identified as having drug or alcohol issues and although he was assessed once detained, he was deemed to not be suffering from a psychotic disorder. Three men, including Griffiths, were reported as having histories of violence against women with a fourth having served a prison sentence, but the nature of his crime was not disclosed. Only two of the nine men, Stephen Griffiths killing three women and the second who killed a woman on the day that he met her, killed women who were strangers.

In all cases in the sample, brief details (string variable) of the injuries inflicted by the perpetrators upon the victims were recorded but have not been analysed in this thesis, they are available for inspection or further research. The injuries inflicted on these 11 women are summarised in the table below.

**Table 10 – Injuries recorded for women who were dismembered. (Please note, this table contains descriptions of extreme violence)**

Woman 1	Skull depressed, dismembered, decapitated
Woman 2	80 separate injuries including multiple stab wounds, dismembered, cross carved in chest
Woman 3	Cause of death unknown, dismembered, she'd been raped and chopped up, parts of her body found in different places, not all parts of her body were found
Woman 4	Stabbed and slashed 40 times across breasts and stomach. When he (eventually) called the police he said 'her intestines are hanging out'.
Woman 5	Beheaded, dismembered, hacked off legs with knife and saw, injuries to head, smashed ribs, broken bones in neck, possible indication of strangulation
Woman 6	Stabbed in the back and head, knife inserted into her skull, dismembered, her legs and one arm removed and wrapped in clingfilm and placed in bin bags, used saws and tools from father's tree surgeon business
Woman 7	Strangled, slit throat, dismembered with 2 1/2-inch Stanley knife, slashes to hands and face (including defence lacerations) beaten with fists
Woman 8	Body has not been found; he has admitted killing her with a hammer and eating body parts
Woman 9	Her body was never found but human tissue identified as hers was found in a river, this was later identified as a small piece of her spine and it was stated that she could not have been alive if this part of her body was removed, he also claimed to have eaten some of her body
Woman 10	Shot in the head with a crossbow, also injured with a knife, parts of her body found in a river, he claimed to have eaten some body parts
Woman 11	Cause of death was cardiac arrest caused by pressure to neck, he chopped off her arms and legs and thumbs and fingers, torso chopped in two, decapitated, she'd said she wasn't that type when he propositioned her, court accepted sexual motivation, reports say sexually assaulted

The summary tables of the methods of violence/forms of harm perpetrated upon women seem insufficient to convey the horror of what men do to the women they kill. Similarly, if dismemberment could be argued to be one of the more horrific forms of fatal violence, it does not strike me as appropriate to overlook forms of violence that could seem to be the more mundane forms of violence used to kill women. It sits outside the remit of this thesis to address them in greater depth than has been done above but in order to present some of the information recorded, SPSS was used to select 25 random victims and the summaries of the injuries inflicted upon these 25 women are given in the table below.

## 6.5 Capturing what men do to the women they kill: A random sample of the violent deaths of 25 women

The table below summarises the injuries inflicted upon a random sample of victims (selected by SPSS from the string variable summarising injuries inflicted on women.) It is provided for illustrative purposes to give a sense of what men do to the women they kill.

**Table 11 – Random sample of causes of women’s deaths (Please note, this table contains descriptions of extreme violence)**

Woman 1	Stabbed 19 times around face, neck, and chest. Stab and axe wounds.
Woman 2	Judge said she was battered and strangled to death in a vicious and sustained attack. He then tried to cut her in half and put her body in a suitcase which he disposed of.
Woman 3	Severe head injuries.
Woman 4	Shot in back of head. He'd grabbed her arms and thrown her to the floor after shooting his father.
Woman 5	House fire.
Woman 6	Stabbed 4 times with fatal injuries to her abdomen and aorta.
Woman 7	Stabbed 58 times in head, neck, back, bruising to her body, bite mark on her cheek.
Woman 8	Punched her, threw her to the ground, kicked her, stabbed her.
Woman 9	Asphyxia and compression to neck, post-mortem said deep bruises, possible ligature. Elbow wound possibly could be hammer. He said he'd punched her (in the throat) anger.
Woman 10	270 injuries in an attack that lasted 105 minutes, attacked with a range of weapons including an electric drill, metal bars, a knife, and screwdriver. Stab wounds to head and neck as well as lacerations and bruises, she'd been kicked and stamped on. Described as sadistic. She died of blood loss, brain injury and inhaling blood.
Woman 11	Fracture to right side of skull. Bruising and bleeding to the brain. Black eye. Bruising to right ear, nose, lip, shoulder, and hand. Two loose teeth, small fractures to jaw.
Woman 12	Smothered and then house set on fire.
Woman 13	Stabbed 28 times. Stabbed, slashed, mutilated. he tried to impale her foot into the floor. Ripped off her tights. It was reported that penetrative sex had taken place but not whether or not this was with consent or not, i.e. whether it was rape. Fingers from her right hand were almost severed from where she'd tried to defend herself. She died from neck injuries.
Woman 14	32 knife wounds to neck, chest, and legs, 18 knife wounds to hands and arms.

Woman 15	The medical evidence is that Mrs Barnett died due to the complications of blunt force head injuries. She had suffered multiple injuries to her head and face and to her body and arms. There was a deep laceration to the back of her head which could have been caused by her falling and striking a hard object. There was damage also to her brain and this led to her death. The evidence of the forensic pathologists was that the laceration to the back of Mrs Barnett's head was consistent with the result of her head striking against a hard surface. The remainder of her injuries could have been caused by repeated punching with a closed fist. The scale and nature of the injuries, even making allowance for the deceased's age, indicate that she was the victim of a sustained and forcible attack.
Woman 16	Stabbed once in the back and four times in the neck, evidence of throttling and smothering with pillow.
Woman 17	Stabbed four times.
Woman 18	Pushed her to ground, hit her and stamped on her face causing a major haemorrhage; her arms, face, jaw, and neck bore bruising suggesting she'd been forcefully gripped, her left cheek had a pattern resembling the sole of a shoe and blunt force trauma to her ear was so severe it left a tattoo impression on her skull.
Woman 19	Stabbed twice: chest and abdomen.
Woman 20	Bound her with tape and rope, beat her head and body, shoved handkerchief in upper airways and stamped on her hands and chest.
Woman 21	13 stab wounds mainly to neck and from behind.
Woman 22	She was dressed in pyjamas, lying on her back in the bathroom and apparently lifeless. She had a large cut to the side of her face and puncture wounds to her abdomen and chest, together with defence wounds to her hands. She had died from multiple injuries, including at least 17 hammer blows to her head, 15 lacerations to her head, face and hands caused by the machete and eight penetrative wounds to her body from the screwdriver.
Woman 23	Numerous stab wounds to the body and wounds to the head with a sledgehammer.
Woman 24	Kicked her repeatedly in the head, punched her, pulled out chunks of her hair, continued after she lost consciousness, police described it as a violent and sustained attack.
Woman 25	Multiple stab wounds.

## 6.6 Number of forms of violence used and how this varied by relationship between victim and perpetrator

The number of different forms of violence reported as having been used against each victim were recorded. Across the sample, the mean average number of forms of violence used on each woman was 2.4. It is to be expected that this is an undercount as injuries or forms of violence that could be deemed less serious may not have been recorded.

**Table 12 – Number of forms of violence used and relationship**

IPV	Family	Known	Stranger	Unknown	All	Prostitution	Mothers
2.2	2.6	2.5	2.4	3.8	2.4	2.6	2.4

It is notable that the average number of injuries recorded per women in the small group of 15 women where I was unable to find information about the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, is highest. Other than these, women who were killed by male family members, men known to them but with whom they had never had an intimate relationship or to whom they were not related, and women who have been involved in prostitution, all suffered a slightly higher average number of injuries, with women killed by current or former partners the only group where the average number of injuries recorded was lower. This could reflect the reality of men's fatal violence against women, but it may also reflect that intimate partner homicides of women are more likely to be treated as mundane and subjected to less detailed reporting in the media. Domestic homicide reviews, a source of rich detail about intimate partner homicides, frequently record little about the fatal attack itself, presumably because this was not deemed to be an issue from which lessons re prevention could be learned.

## **6.7 Age and Forms of violence used**

The prevalence of forms of violence used was compared according to the age of the victim. In most cases, there was not a clear pattern apparent (full data can be provided if required). However, there were some differences in the harms inflicted on the younger and older victims. Victims aged 14 to 19 were almost four times more likely to be subjected to sexual violence than the sample average (30.4 per cent of the cohort compared to 8.5 per cent of the entire sample), more likely to have a sharp object used upon them (82.6 per cent compared to 58.8 per cent), and more likely to be strangled (39.1 per cent compared to 24.4 per cent). They were less likely to suffer head injuries (26.1 per cent compared to 39.6 per cent) and less likely to be subjected to hitting, kicking, or assault without a weapon (8.7 per cent compared to 24.8 per cent). Conversely, women aged over 80 were far more likely to be subjected to head injuries than the overall sample (57 per cent compared to 39.6 of women aged over 80 were subjected to head injuries and 67 per cent of women aged over 90), and women aged over 90 were much more likely to have been subjected to hitting or kicking or assault without a weapon (67 per cent of women over 90 compared to 25 per cent of the general sample).

## **6.8 Overkill and gratuitous violence**

Overkill, as described earlier, is where the injuries inflicted by a man exceed those which would be necessary to cause death. For the purposes of this thesis I have included use of multiple forms of violence, gratuitous violence, or more than five instances of the same sort of violence (for example, multiple stabbings) as indicating overkill.

Overall, publicly available material suggested that 53.1 per cent of women had been subjected to overkill. This is consistent with the findings of the Femicide Census which found evidence of overkilling in 55 per cent of killings of women by men in the UK

between 2009 and 2018 and an annual variance between 42 per cent in 2013 and 61 per cent in 2015.

**Table 13 – Numbers and percentages of women subjected to overkill by relationship**

	IPV	Family	Known	Stranger	Unknown	All	Prostitution	Mothers
Numbers	147	43	34	44	6	274	26	27
Percentages	53.6	57.3	68	43.1	42.9	53.2	76.5	58.7

Given the predominance of intimate partner killings in the sample, it is not surprising that the proportion of women who were killed by a current or former partner and subjected to overkill is very similar to that of the sample average, though negligibly higher at 53.6 per cent compared to 53.2 per cent of all women killed by men. The proportion of women killed by family members was also similar, but slightly higher at 57.3 per cent of women subjected to overkill.

The known cohort where overkill was least prevalent was in women who were killed by strangers, with 43.1 per cent subjected to overkill, a rate 10.1 per cent lower than the sample average. This forms an interesting parallel to the low proportion of men who subjected their victims to dismemberment who killed strangers, though the sample size of this group of men (nine) is small. It would be interesting, though not possible without access to documents beyond those in the public domain, to know whether intentionality played a role in the difference between the application of overkill in men who killed women who were strangers.

The three groups of killers who subjected their victims to the highest levels of overkill were men who killed women who had been involved in prostitution (76.5 per cent), men who killed women known to them but with whom they had never been in an intimate relationship and were not related (68 per cent), and men who killed their mothers (58.7 per cent). This led me to ask whether there was anything different about

these perpetrators and the contexts in which they killed women. Is substance use higher? Is the prevalence of mental ill-health higher? Is intoxication at the time of the incident higher? Do rejected advances play a part in the killings of women known to men? What do the higher rates of overkill inflicted by men who killed women in prostitution, or their own mothers tell us?

The 27 men who killed their mothers and subjected her to overkill had a mean age of 35 years, the mean age of the perpetrators overall was 41 years. There was evidence in publicly available material that 22 of the 27 (81.5 per cent) currently or previously had recognised mental health problems. There was evidence of problematic substance use in 20 of the 27 men (74.1 per cent) and four (14.8 per cent) were known to be intoxicated when they killed. In comparison, the mean age of the general cohort of men who killed their mothers was 26 years. Sixty-five per cent had recognised problematic substance use and 80 per cent had recognised mental health problems. Twenty-one per cent were reported as being intoxicated when they killed her. So, men who subjected their mothers to overkill were on average nine years older than the broader cohort of men who killed their mothers, a very similar proportion (81.5 per cent compared to 80 per cent) had recognised mental health problems, they were nine per cent more likely to have problematic substance use and six per cent less likely to be intoxicated when they killed her. Of the variables considered, only age appears to be significantly different.

The 24 men (who killed 26 women) who killed women who had been involved in prostitution and subjected them to overkill, had a mean age of 34 years. Eleven (46 per cent) were reported as having problematic substance use, three (12.5 per cent) had mental health problems and eight (33 per cent) were intoxicated when they killed. In comparison, the mean age of the general cohort of men who killed women who were known to have been involved in prostitution was 34.5 years, four (12.5 per cent) had recognised mental health problems, 14 (44 per cent) had problematic substance use and nine (28 per cent) were intoxicated when they killed. These variables therefore do

not appear to correlate to whether or not men who killed women who had been involved in prostitution subjected her to overkill or not.

## **6.9 Defence wounds**

Defence wounds are injuries inflicted upon a victim, usually to the hands and arms as they are trying to defend themselves during an assault. They tell us that the woman knew that she was being attacked, (it wasn't an attack from behind which was over quickly and that she didn't know was coming), she probably knew how seriously she was being attacked, and in many cases may well have known that she was fighting for her life and, at some point, that she was losing that fight.

As with many of the variables in this research, I was only able to count what was reported in the public domain and it is highly likely that there was evidence of defence wounds on the bodies of many women but that this did not reach the information that I was able to access and also that reporting biases may have had an impact.

Defence wounds were reported in 86 women, 16.7 per cent of the sample. The highest prevalence was reported in the cases where I was not able to ascertain the relationship between victim and perpetrator, in four of 16 women, 25 per cent. Following this, prevalence was highest in women who had been involved in prostitution at 22 per cent of victims, which contradicts the myth of a predator striking unexpectedly, swiftly, and efficiently from behind, closely followed by women killed by known men who hadn't been partners and were not related. Reported defence wounds were lower than the mean in women killed by family members (15.6 per cent) and lowest in women killed by strangers.

## **6.10 Sexualised Violence**

### **6.10.1 Use of Sexualised Violence**

Ressler et al. (1988) characterised homicides as sexually motivated if one or more of the following criteria are evident at the crime scene:

- victim is found totally or partially naked
- genitals are exposed
- body is found in sexually explicit position
- an object has been inserted into a bodily cavity (vagina, mouth or anus)
- evidence of sexual contact (e.g., masturbation and/or ejaculation at the scene)
- evidence of sexual fantasies, (e.g., genital mutilation)

It is not within the scope of this thesis to judge the motivation of the men who perpetrated murders, but the definition was used to identify sexualised violence in the fatal assault.

The analysis of 59 killings suggested sexualised violence in 11.5 per cent of the total number of women killed. This is significantly lower than the 40 per cent of the sample of murders in the Dobashes' murder study which were categorised as sexual murders, though higher than Soothill et al.'s (2000) finding of four per cent of homicides in England and Wales containing a sexualised element. The reasons for this are likely to be sample differences and level of access to information. Soothill et al. looked at all homicides, not just those of women, and the Office of National Statistics' sexual violence victimisation data shows that 80 per cent of victims of reported sexual assault and 90 per cent of victims of rape are female, again illustrating the risks (re Soothill) of not disaggregating homicide victimisation data by sex. With regards to the high prevalence in the Dobashes' sample were victims of men who had been convicted of murder whereas this sample includes manslaughter and findings of no criminal responsibility and the Dobashes had access to official prison and sentencing records where I have relied upon publicly available information. The Dobashes posited that sexual violence was likely to be under-reported in their own analysis, this is exacerbated when only publicly-available material is used and therefore reflects the interests and aversions of the media. Despite the low sample and assumed under-counting for the reasons above, there are some interesting findings.

Where sexualised violence was used in the killing of a woman, she was more than three times likely to be a non-related known person than she was a current or former partner (19.2 per cent compared to 5.9 per cent) and four and a half times more likely to be a stranger (28 per cent compared to 5.9 per cent).

Sexualised violence occurred roughly half as frequently in the killings of/by current and former partners (5.9 per cent) and family members (6.8 per cent) as it did in the sample in general.

The cases where sexualised violence was used in the killing of a female family member include one of each of the following: a son killing his mother, a father killing his daughter, a former son-in-law killing his former mother-in-law, a step grandson killing his step grandmother, and a brother killing his sister.

Forty-seven per cent of killings which involved sexualised violence were committed by strangers, though with the purposive sampling it is seen that killings committed by strangers were only 19.3 per cent of the sample (99 out of 515). Current and former partners on the other hand were represented in 27 per cent of killings which involved sexualised violence (16 out of 59) but were 53 per cent (274 out of 515) of the sample.

### **6.10.2 Age of victims and perpetrators and use of sexual violence in their killings**

Women under the age of 39 years old were overrepresented where sexual violence had been used in their killing, representing 62.6 per cent of those killed where sexual violence was used but 43 per cent of all victims. Young women and girls aged between 14 and 19 years were most overrepresented, representing 18.6 per cent of victims where sexual violence was used but only 7.2 per cent of the sample. Sexual violence was used in the killings of three women aged over 70 years, all three were killed by strangers.

### **6.10.3 Women in Prostitution – use of sexualised violence**

The prevalence of the use of sexual or sexualised violence in the killings of women who were or had been involved in prostitution was significantly higher than the prevalence across the sample. Twenty-six per cent of reports of the killings of women in prostitution included sexualised violence, compared to 12 per cent in the general sample. Sexualised violence in the killings of women who were or had been involved in prostitution was even higher where they had been killed by strangers, with 47 per cent of the killings featuring sexualised violence, this compares to a prevalence of 29 per cent of women killed by strangers in the entire sample, an illustration which itself will have been pushed up as it includes the women who had been involved in prostitution.

The prevalence of rape was also higher, identified in nine per cent of the killings, compared to four per cent in the entire sample, and again, highest in women who were killed by strangers – rape was identified in 18 per cent of cases of women who had been involved in prostitution who were killed by strangers. In fact, where sexual violence was identified in the killings of women who had been involved in prostitution, eight out of nine of these women were killed by strangers and only one by a man who had been a current or former partner.

## **6.11 Chapter summary**

This chapter addressed the forms of violence and harm that men chose to inflict on women they kill in the fatal incident.

I began grouping 33 variables for methods of violence/forms of harm used into 17 sets of variables and looked at their different prevalence in the killings of women by relationship with perpetrator and also the percentages of each relationship cohort subjected to a particular form of harm. I ranked the forms of violence and identified the top five most common forms used.

I addressed dismemberment as a particularly extreme form of violence and noted that this was used only by men who killed strangers, women in prostitution and their own mothers. I provided a summary of the injuries of a random sample of 25 victims to illustrate the horrific reality of what some men do to women.

I addressed the number of forms of violence used and compared this across relationship cohorts. I looked at whether the age of a victim made a difference to what was done to her and whether the use of overkill varied across relationship cohorts, it did. Women known to men were the most likely to be subject to overkill compared to current/former partners or family members, but it was women who had been involved in prostitution that were subjected to the highest levels of overkill.

I ended by looking at men's use of sexualised violence when they kill women. Across relationship cohorts, men were most likely to use sexual violence when they killed a woman who was a stranger, they did this more than four times more frequently than when they killed current or former partners. Sexual violence was most likely to be inflicted upon women killed aged between 20 and 49. Sexual violence was used in the killings of three women aged over 70 years, all three were killed by strangers. Similarly, perpetrators aged between 20 and 49 were most likely to use sexual violence when they killed. The prevalence of the use of sexual violence against women killed who had been involved in prostitution was more than double of that across the sample as a whole.

## **Chapter Seven – The Circumstances and Contexts of Men’s Fatal Violence Against Women**

### **7.1 Introducing Contexts and summary of findings**

The context variables were selected as issues that I had noticed during the collection of cases of women who had been killed by men and which seemed to reappear with some regularity, leading me to ask myself questions about their frequency and relevance.

The volume of data generated is too great to address all variables within this thesis, so the following are looked at in some detail: first dates, mother killing, robberies and muggings, rejected advances, perpetrator intoxication, some circumstances specific to intimate partner and ex-intimate partner killings, and intimate partners. The rest are summarised in the table addressing the different contexts present according to relationship between victim and perpetrator by number and percentage of cohort, and can be found at Appendix Four, and Appendix Five.

### **7.2 First date or first meeting**

The category of ‘first date/meeting’ was placed in the broader relationship of ‘stranger’ rather than current or former intimate partner, or other known. This was because the two individuals would not be described as being in a relationship, nor would most of the power dynamics associated with domestic abuse have developed. Though, of course, some of the dynamics of socially constructed gender would have been present, for example male entitlement (Bouffard, 2010), socialisation to appease males in women, (Cantor and Price, 2007), or as is argued by Hoffman (1972) for young females in particular, relationships (platonic and non) are paramount and the desire to please in those relationships is a key motivation. Arguably though, where an internet ‘relationship’ existed, sometimes over several months before the first face-to-face meeting, there may have been some (shared or not) belief that a relationship existed.

In addition, whilst there are some differences between an arranged first date and a chance meeting, the stages of grooming (targeting the victim, building trust, meeting a need, isolating the victim, breaching boundaries, sexualising the relationship, developing, or instigating control) feature in both, merely in an expediated version in chance meetings.

The deaths of 10 women at the hands of 12 men were classed as 'first date/meeting'. Four victims were teenagers, aged between 15 and 17 years (one was 15 years old, two were 16, one was 17); one was 20, and another was 23 years old, four were aged between 44 and 55 years old. The five younger women were all killed by men who were somewhat older than they were. A man of 23, the youngest to kill someone he had just met, killed a 16-year-old young woman, the oldest man to kill someone he had just met was 50, in keeping with the stranger killing sample perpetrator mean age, considerably younger on average than the mean age in the entire sample. The 20-year-old victim was killed by a man of 32. The youngest five of the 10 women killed in first date/meeting circumstances were all killed by a male who could be said to be more sexually mature, and by implication took advantage of their victims' immaturity.

### **7.2.1 Meeting**

In four of the cases, the victim and perpetrator(s) had initially met online before their first physical meeting during which the perpetrator killed the victim; one pair had met through an advertisement for friends placed by the victim; two had met in a pub; one pair had met at a bus stop after the victim had been separated from her friends in a nightclub; one killer was a friend of the victim's partner; and in one case, the way that the perpetrator and victim met was unclear but the perpetrator had only been out of prison (for assault, sex of victim unknown) for three days. The four cases (four victims) involving online meetings included the two cases with two perpetrators (therefore six perpetrators in total). The six men who used the internet to meet/groom women were aged between 26 and 34 years old. The two oldest killers in this group, aged 48 and

50 (14 and 16 years older than the next killer by age) had met the women they killed through a small advertisement and in the pub. Predatory men who seek women and girls have extended their hunting ground and tools to include the internet, including those who kill women either with or without prior intent and planning. However, as these findings show, it is a mistake to assume that chance or face-to-face meetings offer infallible safety. Judge Rebecca Poulet QC, who heard the case where a 44-year-old woman was killed by a 34-year-old man on their first meeting, after they had been conversing online for some time, said:

‘In my assessment, this case is a stark warning to anyone who plans to meet someone following limited internet contact.

That meeting must take place in a public place until one person feels they know something of the other.’

The use of this warning, however well intended, is questionable. Firstly, the judge has failed to acknowledge sex differences between those who are most likely to be predators and those most likely to be victims. In addition, this research and much research on men’s fatal and non-fatal violence against women before it, shows that the circumstances under which men kill women are broad. It is far rarer for a man to kill a woman that he has just met than one who has been his partner for a long time.

### **7.2.2 Prevalence of Sexual Violence in First Date/Meetings**

One of the most striking aspects of this group of killings is the prevalence of sexual violence. Across women killed by men between 2012 and 2014, the identified prevalence of sexual violence was 8.7 per cent (39 cases). In first date/meeting killings nine out of ten of the killings involved sexual violence or violence during sex. In the only case where this was not clear, the perpetrator claimed that he had gone to the victim’s caravan and the pair intended to have sex, but he could not get an erection, at which point, he claimed, the victim squeezed his testicles and that ‘caused’ him to attack her. Of course, we will never hear the victim’s side of this story and one must

ask whether a perpetrator would publicly claim lack of sexual prowess if he did not perceive that this would be advantageous to him. In addition, it is far from unusual for men who commit rape and other sexual assaults to claim consent, so his description of them aiming to have sex is potentially one-sided, or even outright dishonest.

Five of the cases involved choking or strangulation during sex, it will come as no surprise that where strangulation was the cause of death, perpetrators used the defence of a 'sex-game gone wrong' in three cases. In one case, the 26-year-old perpetrator raped the 23-year-old woman he had killed – this was described in the press as intercourse with her corpse – and took photos before dumping her body. He had long term engagement with mental health services and had told staff about his rape and murder fantasies. The perpetrator and victim had met online.

### **7.2.3 Intoxication and Consent**

In six cases the victim was seriously intoxicated, and questions of capacity to consent must arise. In two cases, where the victims were aged 15 and 16 years old, both involved two adult perpetrators acting together who plied the victim with alcohol and/or drugs. Victim 1705002 was 16 years old; she had been given alcohol and had 10 times the amount of MDMA in her blood as the two adult men (both 28 years old) who had given it to her and claimed to have ingested the same amount. They filmed her having fits and shared them on snapchat before driving round for several hours with the dead or dying girl in their car, searching on the internet for and calling prostitution sites, until crashing. The post-mortem showed unexplained bruises on her neck and shoulders and a pathologist concluded the potential causes of her death were either 'strangulation or a drug overdose', but were unable to ascertain which. The post-mortem also found the semen of one of the men inside and outside of the victim's body and also under the fingernails of the man he was with. Incredibly, both men were cleared of manslaughter, though were jailed for drugs related offences.

Victim 1511001 was 15 years old. She had been groomed online by a 28-year-old man who, after two weeks of contact during which 2,600 messages were exchanged, persuaded her to meet him. He had been in touch with several girls, the youngest 13 years old in the months before the victim was killed. There was sexual activity, by definition assault because of the age of the victim, before he invited a 27-year-old friend to join them. In the early hours of the following morning, (a neighbour later told the court) bangs and screams were heard from the property before a young woman fled, with neither shoes nor clothes on her bottom half. She was pursued by the friend who had joined the instigating perpetrator. He raped her in a nearby field and then took her to rough ground a mile and a half away before battering her to death with a brick. She was found three days later, hidden in a hedge. Her facial injuries were so severe that she had to be identified by dental records. One perpetrator, the killer, was found guilty of rape and murder. The second, who had groomed her was found guilty of sexually touching a minor, false imprisonment, and grooming her and two other teenagers. The sentencing judge said that the man who killed her had searched for a 'lime pit' after murdering her. The court was told that she had suffered a six-hour ordeal.

In a third case, a 32-year-old man met a 20-year-old woman at a bus stop after she had been thrown out of a nightclub because she was so drunk. His defence claimed that she had an interest in sexual asphyxiation. This was questioned in sentencing comments and his defence is reported to have acknowledged that the perpetrator admitted that he did not have consent to use strangulation during sex; in the same report, a reference was made to a previous partner of his saying that he had choked her during sex. Again, the question of the victim's ability to consent to any sexual activity, let alone strangulation, due to her level of intoxication, if she had been ejected from a nightclub for the same reason, must surely be relevant.

#### **7.2.4 Overkill and gratuitous violence**

It was stated earlier that in five of the 10 first date/meeting killings, the method of killing was strangulation. The five other cases involved overkill, at 50 per cent this is consistent with the main sample where the prevalence of reported overkill was 54 per cent. Other than the killing of Victim 1511001 described above, in the other cases where force above that which was necessary to end life was inflicted, the victims were the four oldest women in the group:

1. Victim 1205006 was 55 years old. The perpetrator, aged 28, had inflicted blunt force trauma to her head and stabbed her. When her body was found, a knife was embedded in her head. He had battered her with a light fitting and a baseball bat and tried to cut off one of her hands. Her murder was described by the judge as being sadistic and her killer had told the police that he had enjoyed what he was doing and was trying to cause as much damage as possible. The victim had to be identified by her fingertips. This was the case where the perpetrator had claimed that he had failed to get an erection.
2. Victim 1301007 was 49 years old and was meeting a 48-year-old man who had responded to a 'lonely hearts' advertisement she had placed. He was found guilty of two counts of rape, vaginally and anally, and manslaughter. The judge described 'shocking wounds to the intimate parts of her body', including significant injuries to her vagina and the removal of the mucosa of her rectum to a depth of 8cm. The prosecutor said the evidence suggested that the assault continued after her death. Both the victim and perpetrator were intoxicated. She died of asphyxiation and alcohol poisoning.
3. Victim 1505002 was 47 years old; the man who killed her, a butcher, was 50. They met in a pub, she had been drinking elsewhere and was so intoxicated that staff would only serve her a soft drink. Police investigating missing person reports about the victim went to the perpetrators house as the last sighting of her was with him. They found her arms and legs in his shower. Her upper torso

and tools were found in the flat, and a thumb and four fingers in a bag. Her head and lower torso were found where the killer told police to look, in storm drains of a local sports field. His semen was on her body, though it could not be ascertained whether this had happened before or after her death. However, if it was before she died, the question of her capacity to consent due to intoxication remains. The perpetrators laptop was examined, on the night he killed her he had been visiting pornographic sites. He claimed to have killed her accidentally before panicking. The defending QC said there was 'no evidence of sadistic conduct'.

4. Victim 1510001 was 44 years old; the man who killed her was 34. He killed her on their first meeting after several months of online contact. Whilst they were naked he strangled her and then stabbed her 16 times in the stomach. There was bruising to her face, neck, and mouth. The defending QC claimed that there was no sexual or sadistic context, but this was rejected by the judge who said that the sexual context could not be in doubt. The killer attacked another woman whilst trying to evade police detection, hitting her with a piece of wood with a nail sticking out.

### **7.2.5 Perpetrator Histories of Violence, Criminality and Use of Pornography**

Nine of the 12 men had identifiable histories of violence. There was evidence of prior violence and abuse against women for seven men, including grooming, assault, violence against ex-partners (three men), which included choking during sex and harassment. Six men had identifiable histories of violence against men, or where the sex of the person they had subjected to physical harm was not clear in media reporting, two of the five also had identifiable histories of violence against women. Four had histories of non-violent criminality, including use of drugs. In only one case non-violent criminality was identifiable without accompanying violence. There were references to use of pornography for seven of the 12 men (58 per cent) which is considerably higher than the identified use of pornography in the entire sample (22 men, 4.4 per cent). This

is likely to be because of differences in police investigations, particularly between cases where men kill partners or ex-partners and where they kill strangers, where a different form of motive is likely to be assured, and more so if sexual violence is used in the killing.

As a feminist whose analysis broadly fits a radical feminist perspective, I am interested in the influence of pornography on men's attitudes and behaviours to women. From this position I would be interested in an examination of the level of viewing of pornography and its influences on their choices in all men who commit forms of violence, abuse against, or harassment of women and children. Sadly, civil liberties activists, including liberal feminists, would probably find this suggestion abhorrent, no matter that there might be something useful in the outcome.

#### **7.2.6 Men's attitudes to women**

It is outside the scope of this thesis, relying as it does on media reporting, to examine the role of men's attitudes to women, to masculinity and to sex-role stereotypes. They are rarely addressed in the media reporting of men's violence against women. One media piece covering these killings stands out not only in the context of the reporting of these cases but also in relation to reporting on men's fatal violence against women in general as it does look at the killer's attitude to women. A man who is identified as an ex-drinking friend of the killer shares his thoughts and recollections:

'Chris would sit down and talk to them, and they would get up and walk off – I saw that a few times. He would take notice of any woman who would pay him attention. He never really spoke about his likes or dislikes – it was all about women. He would talk about football, about boxing, whatever was on TV and other men stuff. But it was mainly women. He was a bit of a liar in some ways because sometimes I would see him in the street and he'd say he had a date that night. But I would see him later on and he wouldn't be with anyone. He would make up stories just to be normal, I suppose.

He was a nice enough person when you spoke to him, with his bottle of Newcastle Brown Ale. [But] It was the inappropriate things to women which gave me and would give anyone concern. I remember one time he had just finished a game of pool. There was a girl who was wearing a short dress and he said something like 'She could have it'. I told him he couldn't say stuff like that. But he said 'It doesn't matter. She's gagging for it.' One time there was an 18th birthday party upstairs (in a pub) and girls were coming through to go upstairs. He was saying 'We are going to have a good night here', and I told him he couldn't say that.'

Reported by Huw Silk, Wales Online, 2015

The piece is unusual as it raises questions about the perpetrator's wider attitude to women, it places responsibility with the perpetrator and avoids victim blaming, which is rarely seen in mainstream media. The point of feminist research, as I noted earlier, is not only to be able to name and quantify men's violence against women but to understand its roots, so that we have the potential to eradicate it.

### **7.3 Burglaries and Muggings**

In both contexts, perpetrators were on average younger than those in the general sample, with men who killed women in the context of muggings younger than those who killed women in the context of burglaries. In both cases, victims were on average older than those in the general sample with women killed in the context of burglaries older than those killed in the context of muggings. The prevalence of mental health problems and problematic substance use was lower in men who killed women in the context of muggings compared to burglaries as was their use of sexual violence.

#### **7.3.1 Burglaries**

At least 35 men killed 31 women in the context of burglaries. In two cases, the perpetrators remain undetected.

Seven percent of women killed by men were killed in the context of a burglary. Twenty per cent of women killed by strangers and 18 per cent of women killed by someone they knew, were killed in the context of a robbery. Of the men who committed these killings 59 per cent killed women that they didn't know; 23 per cent killed women that they knew but hadn't been in an intimate relationship with and weren't related to; and three per cent (one man) killed a family member. In two cases, the homicides were not solved so the relationship between the victim and the man who killed her remains unknown, and presumably, the killers remain at liberty; the third case, in which a 64-year-old woman died in hospital of a heart attack 11 days after becoming unwell whilst she was giving a statement to the police. A group of men posing as cold callers had forced themselves into her home, pushed her to the floor and threatened her with an ice pick. An inquest found that the attack and robbery probably played a role in her death.

Of the two cases where the relationship between the victim and perpetrators remains unknown, one was a 76-year-old woman who had lived alone for two years since her husband's death. She was tied up at the wrists and ankles, tortured (to reveal a safe combination lock) and suffocated to death. She was found with a head injury and injuries on her arms indicating that she had struggled during the attack. The other was a 45-year-old woman who, along with her five children, died in a house fire believed to have been started during a burglary in which a laptop was stolen.

All the (known) men who killed women during the course of a robbery were aged 48 or under. Their mean age was 28, 13 years younger than the mean age of the perpetrators in general. In contrast, only four of the victims (13 per cent) were aged under 48 and their mean age was 69. The mean age of victims in the whole sample is 46. Sixty-six per cent of the women killed in the context of a burglary were aged over 60 years. Fifty-six per cent were aged 70 and over. Thirty-four per cent were 80 years old or older. Killing women during the context of a burglary is a double crime committed by men who are on average 13 years younger than the mean age of UK

women killed by men, in contrast to the women who are on average 23 years older than the mean age of women killed by men.

There were four women killed during burglaries that were 48 years old or under (48 being the age of the oldest man who killed women during robberies): one, described above (aged 45) was the theft of the laptop and subsequent multiple homicide; a 48-year old woman, involved in prostitution, was murdered and robbed by a man who had robbed a 27-year-old woman who was also involved in prostitution some days prior; a 43-year-old woman was attacked and robbed whilst travelling alone abroad; and a 32-year-old woman was killed in an attack primarily directed towards her friend, by a man with whom she (the friend) had been in a relationship. He tortured both women and stole their bank cards. One woman survived the attack.

Twenty-five per cent of women killed in robberies were also sexually assaulted, of which 44 per cent (four out of nine) were reported as having been raped. Media reports included that of a 26-year-old man who killed a 67-year-old woman, inflicting 20 fractures to her ribs, multiple scratches and bruises, strangled her, raped her, left her naked and had used pornography involving rape, violence, and older women. Another man, aged 30, searched for 'granny porn' after killing his 55-year-old victim, she was found naked, bound, and gagged and had been stabbed in the back, neck, and stomach. An 80-year-old woman suffered at least 80 injuries, including 27 to her head and face, she had been beaten with two hammers and also slashed/stabbed with a kitchen knife, her 23-year-old killer sexually abused her as she died in an act of desecration. A 23-year-old man stripped an 81-year-old woman naked, inflicted severe injuries to her head, arms, and ribs, using a machete, wooden stake, and sticks, he drove a wooden stake in to her head and mouth, chopped off her ring finger and set her body alight.

The relationship between rape and robbery has previously been addressed by Scully (1990) in a study which included interviews with 114 convicted rapists. She found that

39 per cent of the convicted rapists had also been found guilty of robbery or burglary in relation to the rapes that they had committed. Her research found that in the majority of cases, the men's original intention was rape and robbery was an afterthought, but that 'a surprising number of the men indicated that the reverse pattern was true' (p.141), that their original intent had been robbery or burglary and that rape was 'an added bonus', an opportunity availed of because it presented itself. Unfortunately, it was outside the capacity of my research to ascertain whether rape, robbery or killing a woman was the original intent of the perpetrator.

Nine men (23 per cent) had known mental health problems, 15 (43 per cent) had problems with substance use and six (17 per cent) had a known history of violence against women.

### **7.3.2 Muggings**

Nine men (or men/boys, since three of the killers were aged 13, 14 and 15) killed seven women in the context of muggings. In all cases, the men did not know the women they killed and two of the women were involved in prostitution.

In one case two teenage boys (aged 14 and 15) pushed over an 85-year-old woman who was partially sighted and registered blind, causing 'horrific' head and facial injuries. Both had histories of attacking their parents or foster parents and were in secure accommodation as a result of their violent crimes. The following day they mugged a 75-year-old woman. The other case involving more than one perpetrator involved four men in an incident in which a 65-year-old woman was shoved into a shop basement causing severe chest and head injuries and left for hours to slowly die. Her decomposed body was found 12 days later. Two of the four men aged 30 and 39 were jailed for murder.

None of the men had known mental ill-health issues, one was a cannabis user. Five of the nine men had histories of mugging elderly women. This suggested a calculated decision to benefit from the relative vulnerability of older women. All the perpetrators

were aged 39 or under; excluding two who were involved in the woman in the shop basement incident, only one was aged over 30 years old. The killers' mean age was 23, conversely, 71 per cent of the victims were aged over 39 and their mean age was 59. The mean age of the killers was therefore 18 years younger than the mean perpetrator age and the mean age of victims was 13 years above the mean age of all victims.

One woman was sexually assaulted, she was involved in prostitution. the man who mugged her, attempted to rape her, and killed her, had a history of violence against women in prostitution.

#### **7.4 Rejected Advances (or saying no to harassment)**

There were only reports of rejected advances in the contexts of the killings of nine women and in six cases the men chose to utilise overkill. Four of these six killings were committed by men upon women they knew but to whom they were not related and had not been in an intimate relationship with. In one case it was unclear from the reporting whether or not the victim and perpetrator had ever been in a relationship, but it was clear that they knew one another and that he was pursuing her and she was not interested. And in the remaining case, discussed above, the victim and perpetrator had met in the pub that day. It was reported that she told him that 'she was not that kind of girl' when he made advances in the pub and that when she went back to his flat and continued to decline sex he, a butcher by trade, raped her, slashed her from the breast to the groin, cut off her head, arms and legs, and flushed some of her internal organs down the toilet.

One of the difficulties of researching men's fatal violence against women is that we very rarely have victim testimonies, for this reason it's reasonable to assume that the count of rejected advances is an undercount. Nevertheless, in two thirds of the cases where a rejected advance was recorded, there was evidence of overkill and in four out of five of these cases the perpetrator and victim were friends or associates. The numbers are too small to extrapolate meaningful conclusions but suggest that rejected

advances and the corollaries that are male pride or sexual entitlement play a part in enraging some men to the point that they not only kill women but inflict overkill in retribution.

## **7.5 Perpetrator intoxication when killing**

### **7.5.1 Intoxication summary**

The number of perpetrators identified as being intoxicated when they killed a woman is 119. Of these, 66 killed a partner/former partner, 15 killed another family member, 15 killed a woman known to them in some other capacity, 23 killed a stranger.

Across the entire group, 24 per cent of men were known to be intoxicated when they killed. Only amongst men who killed women known to them outside intimate or family relationships was the prevalence of intoxication higher than the mean across the sample. This is consistent with the Dobashes' murder study findings which found that men who killed current or former partners were least likely to be intoxicated at the time of the murder.

### **7.5.2 Type of substances used by the perpetrator and relationship between perpetrator and primary victim**

Alcohol was the most commonly used intoxicant in incidents of men's fatal violence against women. Across the entire cohort of men who were known to be intoxicated when they killed, 59 per cent were reported to be intoxicated on alcohol only, a further 22 per cent used alcohol in combination with other substances, three per cent with prescription drugs, 18 per cent with illegal drugs and one per cent with both illegal and prescription drugs. The use of alcohol was highest amongst men who killed current or former partners (at 71 per cent of the relationship cohort), in all other relationships the percentage of men using alcohol at the time that they killed was lower than the mean across the entire sample.

Across the entire group of men who were intoxicated when they killed, 19 per cent were reported as having used illegal drugs only. It should be noted that this may reflect reporting bias where use of illegal drugs was seen as a greater transgression and therefore worthy of mention, where use of alcohol was not. As is the case across this thesis, my findings rely on publicly available information, it is not impartial, and it is not consistent. Use of illegal drugs alone was highest amongst men who killed a non-intimate family member, at 53 per cent of men in this relationship group, the rate of use was more than twice that of the average across the group. If the use of illegal drugs in combination with alcohol and/or prescription drugs is considered, then whilst use amongst men who killed non-intimate family members is still highest (67 per cent compared to an average of 38 per cent) but the incidence of illegal drug use amongst men who kill strangers becomes more apparent, at 57 per cent of the relationship cohort. The use of illegal drugs including in combination with alcohol and/or prescription drugs was lowest in men who killed current or former partners.

## **7.6 Intimate Partner Contexts**

### **7.6.1 Summary**

One of my main interests in this research and in my work on men's violence against women – fatal as well as non-fatal – are the connections and overlaps between different forms of abuse and what we can learn from this. Intimate partner violence, including fatal violence, receives most attention to the detriment of understanding other forms of men's fatal violence against women and this research shows that over one third of women were killed by someone other than a current or former partner.

Nevertheless, there are variables that are relevant to intimate partner violence and abuse which is not relevant or found in men's violence against women and girls that takes place outside the context of current or former intimate relationships. It is not my intention to diminish the importance of intimate partner violence as a manifestation of men's violence against women, a form of private patriarchy (Walby, 1990, p.24). My

intention is more to argue that this specific manifestation should not overshadow other contexts. In my research there were variables in the relationships cluster of variables: length of relations, status of relationship, and separation, that applied to intimate partner relationships only; and also in the incident variables there were five dichotomous context variables which applied to intimate partner relationships only, including: separation, separation proceedings, new relationship (perpetrator), new relationship (victim), and accusations of affairs/controlling behaviour/jealousy in the perpetrator. This section will address some of the findings regarding intimate partner femicide.

Of the 446 women killed by men between 2012 and 2014, 268 (59.5 per cent) were women killed by a current or former partner. This is consistent with the finding of the Femicide Census (2020) that between 2009 and 2018, 62 per cent of UK women killed by men were killed by a current or former partner and that the rate varied between 44 per cent in 2017 when a greater proportion of women were killed by strangers because of the murders related to terrorism that year, and 67 per cent in 2016.

### **7.6.2 Legal status of relationship between victim and perpetrator at the time of killing**

Of those men who killed a current/former partner, 48 per cent (n=128) of them killed a woman to who they were or had been married (including Sharia Law marriages) and 52 per cent killed a woman to who they had not been married. Sixty-seven per cent (n=178) killed a woman with whom reports indicated that they were in a current relationship and 31 per cent (n=83) killed a former partner. Two per cent were reported as being in on-and-off or casual relationships.

The proportion of those killing a current or former partner varied according to whether or not the couple had been married, with a smaller proportion of those who had been married (22 per cent) and were now separated than those who had not been married (41 per cent).

As the age of the intimate partner killer increased, so did the likelihood that the woman he killed would be legally married to him.

### 7.6.3 Length of relationship

**Table 14 – Length of relationship for couples in intimate relationship**

	Frequency	Percent
No/not applicable	1	0.4
Not known/recorded	4	1.5
2–6 months	4	1.5
Over 1 month, up to 6 months	12	4.5
7–12 months	20	7.5
1–2 years	29	10.9
3–5 years	21	7.9
6–10 years	30	11.3
Over 10 years	110	41.5
Missing data	37	12.8
Total	268	100.0

Whilst 13.4 per cent (n=36) of victims and their killer had been in a relationship for less than a year, 41 per cent (n=110) had been together for over 10 years.

### 7.6.4 Current status (informal) of relationship

Victim narratives with regards to relationship status are frequently absent from court proceedings and media reports thereof. When they are there, they almost always rely on third-party interpretations, which may or may not be accurate and/or up to date. In contrast, where perpetrators stand trial, their narratives are heard and can be given a status with regards to truthfulness that is not correct or would not accord with the perspective of the victim.

In addition to its veracity compared to what the victim understood to be the status of the relationship when she was killed, the above data is, in many cases, based on my personal and subjective interpretation of information available. This suggests that

- 84 couples (32 per cent) could be regarded as still together
- 148 couples (56 per cent) were separated or considering separation
- for 33 couples (12 per cent) there was as lack of clear data

A table detailing the numbers and percentages of the relationship status between couples can be found on Table 19 at Appendix 7.

### **7.6.5 Separation**

#### **1. Length of time since separation**

Publicly available data gave an indication of the length of time since separation in the case of 104 ex-couples, 69 per cent of those for whom reports suggested had separated or were considering it.

Thirty-one per cent had been separated for less than one month, 64 per cent of men who killed women after separation was considered or happened did so within a year but six per cent (n=7) killed after more than three years of separation. Each of these cases indicated men who were known to be a danger; six of the seven involved overkill, with the remaining perpetrator killing the victim with his bare hands. It doesn't seem to be a coincidence that men who remained violent after a long period of time utilised extreme levels of violence, even in the context of fatal violence. Five of the seven men and women had been together between 20 and 35 years, and in all cases he had been violent and abusive to her for a long time/most of the relationship. Men who killed after longer periods of separation tended to be older, five of the seven men were aged over 50 and their mean age was 55.

The seven cases where men killed a former partner after more than three years of separation are detailed below:

- i. The couple had been married for over 30 years and separated for three. He had been diagnosed with PTSD and was prone to violent and angry outbursts. She had been unable to extricate herself from caring responsibilities for him and was taking food to him when he killed her. He struck her repeatedly about the head with a heavy dumbbell and dragged her into the kitchen by her headscarf and strangled her. He then stabbed her with such ferocity that the knife broke, so he used a second knife. He was 62 years old.
- ii. The couple had been married for 35 years and separated for 10 years but still lived together. He had been violent and abusive throughout their marriage with violence first noted on medical records in 1987. He was delusional and thought his family were plotting to kill him. His mental health was deteriorating, had recently had a cancer diagnosis and was a heavy drinker. He stabbed her in the neck, caused blunt force trauma to her head, wrapped her body in a blanket and set the blanket alight. He was 69 years old.
- iii. The couple had been in a relationship for three years and it had ended three years prior to when he killed her. He continued to want to be in a relationship with her. He had a conviction for violence against a previous partner in 2007, his previous partner had called the police 13 times between 2005 and 2009 due to his abuse of her. She had told her mother that she believed he had a drink problem. He stabbed her 20 times in the face, neck, and chest. He was 35 years old.
- iv. The couple had married in 2003 and separated in 2009. He had been violent to a subsequent partner. He had been out of prison for 10 weeks

following previous attacks on her. He stabbed her 42 times in the chest, neck and head, her jugular vein was cut and both lungs were punctured. He was 42 years old.

- v. The couple had been married 30 years, during which she had reported him to the police twice, though there was a 40-year record of him being violent and abusive, including beatings, rape, and death threats. They had divorced in 2005 because of his violence to her and their children. She had spent time in refuges and had move frequently to try to escape him. She was in a supported home with a terminal health condition when he killed her. Strangled with her with his bare hands, beat her and caused her a head injury. He was 59 years old. He had been violent to a subsequent partner.
- vi. The couple had been married over 20 years and had been separated just over three years Their divorce had recently been finalised. He had a previous conviction for assaulting her and had been making baseless accusations that she was in a new relationship. Their daughters said that he had been mentally abusive from the start of their relationship. He doused her in petrol and set her alight. He was 61 years old.
- vii. The couple had divorced in 1987 but continued to live together. She had been his carer for more than 25 years. He had a number of convictions for assaults and other criminal activities, including arson, stretching back to when he was 12 years old. He had disclosed that he had enjoyed shooting animals and watching them die She had told a counsellor that he had threatened to kill her if she left him. She had moved into a refuge in 1997 and had tried to leave him a number of times, but after the death of their 15-year-old daughter she had stopped trying to leave him, though she had continued to be fearful of

him and had sought support, which included completion of two risk assessments in the year before he killed her. He strangled her with his bare hands. He was 54.

#### **7.6.6 Age gaps between victim and perpetrator**

According to Ní Bhrolcháin (2005), the age gap between females and males at marriage in England and Wales has fluctuated in the range of two to three years, but that more recently a one-year gap is the most common. There is a lack of reliable data on age gaps between dating and cohabitating heterosexual couples in the UK. The data from this research below does not differentiate between different legal marital statuses.

In 13 per cent of cases the victim was one to five years older than the perpetrator and in 40 per cent of cases the perpetrator was one to five years older than the victim. Seven per cent of victims were 11 or more years older than the perpetrator and 32 per cent of perpetrators were 11 or more years older than the victim. In total, 68 per cent of perpetrators were older than the victim, nine per cent of couples where men killed a female partner or ex-partner were the same age and in 23 per cent of cases the victim was older. Without comparable population data for the UK, it is not possible to make meaningful observations about whether age gaps in either direction occur more in relationships in which a male kills a current or former female partner than in the population in general.

Age gaps were also compared in relationships where separation had been identified in the context of fatal violence. Fifteen per cent of those where the victim was 11 years or older than the perpetrator had separation as a factor; and 40 per cent of those where the perpetrator was 11 years or older than the victim had separation as a factor; 20 per cent had an older victim, 71 per cent had an older perpetrator. So, the differences were more pronounced than in couples where separation had not been identified.

### **7.6.7 Cohabitation**

Publicly available information suggested that 57 per cent of victims and perpetrators were living together when he killed her and 39 per cent were not living together. Information was unclear or missing in four per cent of cases.

Shackelford's (2001) found different trends in intimate partner femicide among currently/formerly married and cohabiting couples. Though theorised, this may not be a directly causal relationship but a correlate of factors such as age, poverty, and the presence of stepchildren.

### **7.6.8 New relationships and jealousy**

In 22 cases (8.3 per cent, or one in 12), evidence was found to suggest that the perpetrator was or had been in a new relationship when he killed his current/former partner. Cases where the victim was or had been in a new relationship when she was killed were more than twice as frequent, with 49 cases, (18.2 per cent, or almost one in five cases). In addition, there were references to perpetrators being jealous, possessive or making accusations/sharing suspicions that his current or former partner was in a new relationship (regardless of whether or not that was the case) in 54 cases, (19.4 per cent). In 68 per cent of cases where the perpetrator was described as jealous/suspicious or accused the victim of an affair, no reports of infidelity were found on publicly available sources.

Of course, it is not surprising that a perpetrator is jealous and possessive, in cases of intimate partner homicide, when a woman has a new partner, though this research shows that perpetrators also kill current or former partners when they are the ones who have entered a new relationship. It indicates that for a significant minority of men, the desire to control a woman does not vanish even if he has 'moved on'. Conversely, it could be the case that a perpetrator sought to do just that, 'move on', but he lacked the emotional intelligence to be able to conceive of doing that whilst his current/former partner was still alive. It could also be the case that issues like control

of assets, including children, remain a factor for men who have entered a new relationship and that this could play a role in their decision to kill. But it was beyond the capacity of this research to look at these factors, which would require questions asked directly of men convicted of intimate partner homicide about their motivations.

In 77 per cent of cases where it was identified that the perpetrator was in a new relationship, he was aged 49 or under. This is slightly above the percentage of perpetrators of intimate partner homicide aged 49 years and under in general, which was 66 per cent. The oldest man to kill his partner after he entered a new relationship was 78 years old. He shot dead his 77-year-old wife and their dog before also shooting himself. Eighty-two per cent of victims of perpetrators who were killed by their partner in the context of him entering into or having entered a new relationship were aged 49 years or younger, they were 72 per cent of the sample of all women killed by current or former intimate partners.

A very similar proportion of men (aged 49 years or younger) who killed their current/former partner in the context of her being in or entering a new relationship was 78 per cent, 12 per cent above their prevalence in the cohort of men who killed current or former partners. Eighty-one per cent of the women killed in this context were aged 49 or under, nine per cent above their prevalence in the wider cohort. None of the victims who were in a new relationship or having an affair were older than the perpetrator.

Eight women, 16.3 per cent, of women killed in the context of the perpetrator being in a new relationship were 10 or more years younger, compared to 11 per cent of the broader cohort; 24 women (49 per cent) were five or more years younger compared to 28 per cent of the broader cohort.

So, both victims and perpetrators, the killed and the killers, in the context of either party being in or entering a new relationship have a slight tendency to be younger than the broader cohort of those who killed or who were killed in intimate partner

homicides. Where a perpetrator has a partner who is five years or more younger than him, those killings in the context of him entering a new relationship are over-represented. I did not collect data on the age of a perpetrators' new partners, it would have been interesting to know whether they had entered into a new relationship with someone younger than the woman they eventually killed.

In 57 per cent of cases where the victim was killed after entering or during a new relationship, she and the man who killed her were already separated. In a further 26 per cent of cases, there was evidence available suggesting that they were considering separation (and may well have decided to from her perspective). As I have stated elsewhere, this may well be an undercount due to loss of accurate information between the actual situation between the couple, what the perpetrator believes, admits or says, and what information is shared and lost between the death of the woman and what is reported in publicly available documents. Even so, in 83 per cent of cases where a man killed his current or former partner and she was or had been involved with someone else, they had already or were considering separating. Many men's demands of sexual exclusivity and sense of ownership of women, that they are or have been involved with, do not end when the relationship ends. Relating intimate partner femicides to infidelity and new relationships is consistent with Monckton-Smith's stage four (trigger event challenging control) of the eight-stage homicide timeline (2020, 2021).

There was some evidence that there were differences in perpetrator ethnicity in the cohort of men who killed current or former partners and those who killed women after entering a new relationship. Men of a Pakistani ethnic origin represented 2.5 per cent of men who killed current or former partners but four per cent of those who killed in the context of women who had entered into a new relationship. Men with a Bangladeshi ethnic origin represented three per cent of men who killed current or former partners but 10 per cent of those who killed in the context of women who had entered into a new relationship. Men who available evidence suggested were not born in the UK were 19 per cent of the cohort of men who killed current or former partners

but 26.5 per cent of those who killed in the context of their victim being involved with someone else. These are small numbers, and it would require further research to draw any conclusions, but this suggests that further research regarding different cultural beliefs about men's ownership and fidelity may be valuable. It is also important to recognise that the killings of women by their current or former partners after they enter new relationships/have sex with men outside their relationship occurs across couples of all ethnic groups. Gill et al. (2014) and Siddiqui's (2014) assertion that analysis should be capable both of acknowledging differences and consistencies in heteropatriarchy should not be lost, and the pitfalls of ethnocentrism must be avoided in feminist research and theory.

#### **7.6.9 Domestic homicide reviews: Poor practice and unfulfilled potential**

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) were established on a statutory basis under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act, 2004. Over recent years, analysis of the opportunities they offer for learning about and preventing domestic homicide has begun to emerge. (Sharp-Jeffs and Kelly, 2016; Bridger et al., 2017; Chantler et al., 2019; Bracewell et al., 2021).

I read 136 domestic homicide review reports in the process of compiling data around the deaths of women. I read each review that I could find for the women who were killed by current or former partners or family members, and I went to considerable efforts to locate reviews. Had I been able to read a review for every eligible woman, I would have read 334. Acknowledging that some are not published for good reason, for example the privacy and safety of surviving family members, this is in itself a state failing and I understand that one of the duties of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner is to develop a central repository of reviews, which I welcome.

Reading these reviews, whilst not formally assessing them as a structured part of this research, I believe I have learned something about patterns of poor practice.

In Chapter Four, the methodology chapter, I talked about how poorly many DHR reports deal with inequality, despite tangible improvements after the 2016 'new guidance' and in Chapter Seven I addressed examples of where report authors and panels agreed there was no evidence of prior abuse despite my own reading that abuse was glaringly obvious. The objectives of DHRs are admirable: to learn lessons from the past to safeguard victims in the future, but as a practitioner I have found encountered resistance from commissioning local authorities and report authors, particularly from men who have retired from policing. The following examples did not fall into issues addressed in this research, but from my experience as a practitioner reflect some of the problems with the current process. I was disinvited from a strategic panel of a local authority domestic violence board after strongly resisting the chair's recommendation that a DHR was not commissioned because (I paraphrase) 'it's another murder where an immigrant victim hadn't had any contact with statutory bodies', my own position being that this illustrates systemic failure in a borough with a high population of people who are immigrants and to whom support services are inaccessible. In a different local authority, I was told that a voluntary/specialist violence against women sector representative was not needed (prior to guidance change); and also by a chair that reflections on the domestic abuse perpetrated upon the victim's mother by her father were an unwelcome distraction from the purpose; and in a third borough I had to point out to the local authority (a central London borough with a population which the local authority describes as including 65.3 per cent non-white-British ethnic groups) and chair that an all-white panel considering the murder of a Black woman by a white man was not satisfactory. In three out of four of these examples, where I felt the victim was not being fully considered, she was from a minoritised ethnic group. DHRs must accurately capture data about women with no recourse to social funds. It is an intentional devaluing of the lives of women without access to social funds that this is not already collected.

The understanding of coercive control and its central role in intimate partner abuse has increased significantly since Evan Starks' Coercive Control was released in 2007, but a lack of understanding or acknowledgement that coercive control has been identified as the most effective predictor for intimate partner femicide (Monckton-Smith, 2020) is visible in several domestic homicide reviews.

One review (victim reference 1301005) stated that there was no evidence of physical abuse prior to the fatal stabbing, whilst acknowledging that was evidence of emotional and coercive domestic abuse. The executive summary of the review described the perpetrator, a gun owner, as holding the victim and her son in the house against their will and that she had told work colleagues what they should do in case she didn't turn up at work, should it happen again, also that he constantly followed her and was frequently bad tempered and suspicious. Nevertheless, the review found that the victim was always perceived as the stronger partner, who 'did everything for him' and was known to stand up to him and that the homicide related more to the perpetrators mental health than it did to abuse.

Another domestic homicide review (victim 1311009) states that the panel sought to establish evidence of domestic abuse in the form of a controlling relationship or coercive control but found that the perpetrator's obsessive behaviour 'was a personality trait rather than evidence of an abusive relationship'. The perpetrator had control of finances to the extent that the purchase of newspapers was recorded. Friends told the panel that she was forever compromising with him and going along with his wishes to avoid upsetting him, that he was not sympathetic to their age difference of 12 years and that they had completed a 100-mile cycle ride a week before she was hospitalised with a stroke. They lived in London but he was trying to place her in a care home in Scotland, he had offered to take her to Switzerland to end her life, and that he would not let her have a mobile phone in hospital and discouraged visitors. A third review (victim ref 1410001) found no outward signs of recent domestic abuse or behaviours which might indicate coercive control, despite the victim's brother

describing how he had been prevented from speaking to her alone only six months before she was killed and that his sister was prevented from using the computer that her (the brother) had bought for her and all online communications had had to go via the perpetrator.

The sample in this research predates the criminalisation of coercive control in the UK, which came into force on 29 December 2015. John Gardner, aged 33 years, was the first person to be convicted for coercive control as a standalone offence in February 2018. He had subjected his partner to abuse over the course of their two-year relationship: he insisted on knowing her whereabouts at all times, redirected her money into his accounts and had access to her emails and social media accounts, controlling who she was permitted to be in contact with. He was sentenced to and given 20 months in custody, given an indefinite restraining order not to contact his former partner and also handed a criminal behaviour order which mandated that he must disclose any future relationships to the police.<sup>6</sup> By March 2020 there had been 24,856<sup>7</sup> offences of coercive control recorded by the police in England and Wales (excluding Greater Manchester Police) in the preceding year. It is outside the remit of this thesis to look at whether this has been reflected in the findings of domestic homicide review panels.

Forty of 447 (nine per cent) perpetrators who killed women between 2012 and 2014 killed themselves before they were arrested and charged. ONS data for the outcomes relating to 3,484 homicide suspects for homicides, between April 2015 and March 2020, reported that 131 suspects died by suicide or died before the criminal justice process concluded. This is not broken down by the sex of the suspect or victim, nor does it differentiate between suicides and deaths by other causes, or deaths after detection/charge but before trial. Nevertheless, at 3.7 per cent of suspects, it is

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.herts.police.uk/news-and-appeals/Man-jailed-for-first-ever-coercive-control-offence-1645>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/domesticabuseprevalenceandvictimcharacteristicsappendixtables>

significantly lower than the proportion found in this research. Applying the ONS criteria to include all suspects who died before trial increases the number to 57, which would increase the percentage of men who died before the criminal justice response concluded to 12.7 per cent of men who killed women between 2012 and 2014. This is not as high however, as the findings of Dawson (2005) who found a suicide rate of 28 per cent immediately or shortly after homicide when analysing 703 cases of homicides of women aged 15 and over in Ontario, Canada, between 1974 and 1994.

There are however, significant differences in the proportion of suspected perpetrators who killed themselves according to the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. The data below includes perpetrators in the selective samples, therefore the number of perpetrators is 41 and relates only to those who killed themselves before detection.

Twelve per cent of men killed themselves after killing a current or former partner, compared to nine per cent of all men identified as killed women between 2012 and 2014 (the only cohort above the mean rate for the entire sample), and compared to 7.5 per cent of men who killed other family members, 2.1 per cent of those who killed women known to them who weren't family members and had never been intimate partners, and four per cent of men who killed strangers. Dawson's research was looking at the roles of jealousy and premeditation in intimate partner femicide and therefore the possibility of preventative interventions. She found that offenders motivated by jealousy are almost twice as likely to kill themselves and three times more likely to have consciously planned the homicide. Although not directly comparable to my own research and with access to data including police files, which was not accessible to me, nevertheless her work reinforces a higher finding of suicide in men who kill current or former partners.

The men who killed themselves after killing a woman/women were aged between 22 and 89 years, with a mean age of 54, 13 years older than the mean age of all men who

killed women between 2012 and 2014. The mean ages of the three men who killed women known to them or strangers bring down the mean age, the man who killed a known woman was 27, the mean age of the two who killed strangers was 31.5. The mean age of those killing current or former partners was 57 years.

There was publicly available evidence that 21 (51 per cent) men who killed themselves had a recognised mental health issue, a 16 per cent higher prevalence than the general sample; and there was evidence of problematic substance use in 44 per cent of the men (nine per cent higher prevalence than the general sample). There was evidence of prior abuse of the victim in 16 cases (39 per cent) and of previous violence against women more broadly in 18 cases (44 per cent).

## **7.7 Prostitution**

Throughout this thesis I have addressed the killings of women who were known to be involved in or to have previously been involved in prostitution. Prostitution is a form of abuse of women, (Raymond, 1998) a manifestation of sex inequality and a context of violence, including death (Bindel, 2017; Moran and Farley, 2019). Thirty-four women with known links to prostitution were killed by men between 2009 and 2017. This is likely to be an undercount as women's involvement in prostitution is not always made clear in the media or (in my professional experience as a service provider) in domestic homicide reports. In some cases, the motivation behind this may be a misguided attempt to avoid victim blaming or to cause difficulties for surviving family members, but the effect of this is that the harms of prostitution are hidden and, with respect to DHRs, the possibility of addressing barriers to support is missed. Half (n=17) of all women who had been involved in prostitution and were killed between 2009 and 2017 were killed by strangers, compared to 8.9 per cent of all women killed between 2012 and 2014. Twelve were killed by a current or former partner and five by a man who they knew in some other capacity (for example a regular punter (sex-buyer)). Twenty of the 34 women (59 per cent) were killed by men who were identifiable as men who

paid for sex, of these, one man killed a current or former partner, two men killed women known to them and 17 men killed strangers.

Those that frame prostitution as 'sex-work' and claim that 'sex-work is work' (Alexander, 1998; Williams, 2012), should acknowledge that no cohort of women can be identified in the data by virtue of employment, let alone their deaths be linked to this 'employment'.

## **7.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter looked at the fatal incident in which a man or men killed a woman or women. Ten variables looked at the contexts of the incident, due to the restricted scope of this research I was only able to look at a selection in detail, but the results were presented summarised in data form.

I looked at the deaths of 10 women at the hands of 12 men which were first date/meeting killings. These were characterised by high levels of sexual violence and questions raised regarding lack of consent due to the victim's capacity, quite aside from the fact that the victim obviously did not consent to being killed. Nine of the 12 men had identifiable histories of violence and there were references to use of pornography for seven of the 12 men (58 per cent), which is considerably higher than the identified use of pornography in the entire sample (22 men, 4.4 per cent).

Another context and one which I noticed in the early months of Counting Dead Women was the killings of older women in the context of robberies and muggings. In both these contexts, perpetrators were on average younger than those in the general sample and victims were older. Twenty-five per cent of women killed in robberies were also sexually assaulted, of which 44 per cent (four out of nine) were reported as having been raped.

I looked for evidence of men being motivated to kill because of their anger at rejected advances. I was only able to find nine examples of this happening and suspect this was an undercount due to reporting limitations. In six of these cases men inflicted overkill.

Twenty-four per cent of killers were reported as being intoxicated at the time they killed a woman. Only amongst men who killed women known to them outside intimate or family relationships was the prevalence of intoxication higher than the mean across the sample. The most common intoxicant used was alcohol.

I also looked at some of the contexts specific only to killings by current and former partners, at whether the legal status of a relationship made any difference, and whether age also made a difference to this.

I summarised a selection of cases where domestic homicide review reports had found no evidence of prior abuse despite the content of the report giving what I considered to be clear descriptions of abusive and controlling behaviours.

Finally, I looked at the contexts in which men killed themselves after killing a woman. Nine per cent of men who killed women between 2012 and 2014 also killed themselves. Men who killed a current or former partner were the cohort most likely to also kill themselves. Those who killed strangers were least likely.

## **Chapter Eight - What can we learn from understanding the characteristics, circumstances and patterns of women killed by men and the men who kill them?**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The chapters so far have used data to support the notion that there is something useful we can learn by looking at men's fatal violence against women as an entirety. Looking at it as a whole rather than compartmentalising (at best) or just looking at domestic homicides (at worst) and in most cases doing so without properly addressing sex differences, be they sex differences between victims, perpetrators or both. The field contends with approaches to violence against women in policy, practice, and academia that have become siloed into different forms of violence, disregarding the common contexts and approaching issues such as domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and even intimate partner violence from a position described as being 'gender neutral'. The 'gender neutral' position with regards to fatal violence minimises sex differences in victimisation and perpetration rates and forms of fatal violence, creating false symmetries across contexts such as intimate partner or adult family homicide which ignore the context of the patriarchal subjugation of women and fail to recognise that gender itself can never be neutral, instead it is a tool for normalising and justifying sex inequality.

### **8.2 Consistent and repeated patterns**

I have shown that there are consistent and repeated patterns in variables that cross the circumstances within which men kill women and the relationships between victims and perpetrators. When men kill other men, they have different patterns in their relationships with the victim, kill them in different locations<sup>8</sup> and make different

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<sup>8</sup> According to ONS homicide data for the 11 years ending March 2021, 43 per cent of male victims were killed in houses or dwellings compared to 76 per cent of female victims, 6 per cent of male victims were killed in licensed premises compared to less than 0.5 per cent of female victims and 28 per cent of male victims were

choices of methods used to kill, compared to when they kill women. Moreover, whilst there are some differences in the choices that men make according to their relationship with the woman they have chosen to kill, and other demographic or situational variables, these differences are less significant than the differences between when women kill men or when men kill other men.

The data contained in the previous chapters has shown that when we look at what men do to women, there are patterns. They have shown that when we look at the relationship between victim and perpetrator, there are consistent patterns and these vary from those of male on male homicide. When we divide victims or perpetrators according to their ages, rather than the relationships between victims and perpetrators, there are observable patterns. When we group incidents of men's fatal violence against women into contexts, for example first date/meetings, burglaries, there are observable patterns. If we look at the personal circumstances of the perpetrators, their mental health or problematic substance use, there are observable patterns. If we look at failures of state agencies to deal with violent and abusive men, there are patterns. The same mistakes are being made, the same lessons are claimed as having been learned and then the same failures of implementation are repeated. The patterns reflect individual, relational, structural and cultural factors but the critical variable is the sex of the victim.

### **8.3 Relationship between victim and perpetrator**

One of the consistent patterns in men's fatal violence against women is which women men select to kill. My research found that in a three-year period, 88 per cent of women who were killed by a man were killed by a man that they knew<sup>9</sup>. According to the ONS, 73 per cent of women murder victims are killed by someone they know, for men it is 48 per cent. Approximately 10 per cent of women killed are killed by a stranger, for

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killed in the street, footpaths or alleyways, compared to 6 per cent of female victims. (Worksheet 17, ONS, 2022)

<sup>9</sup> The differences between the ONS data and my own are largely because the ONS data also includes women killed by women.

men that figure is 27 per cent. In the 11 year period ending March 2020, ONS data tells us that of 4,172 male homicide victims, 47.5 per cent were killed by someone they knew, of which 8.4 per cent were current or former partners and 5.1 per cent were other family members.

I have used ONS data to illustrate this point, rather than my own for consistency of methodology, as my own data does not include male victims. In fact, one of the most striking things about the pattern of men's fatal violence against women and against men in the UK is the consistency of patterns in the relationships between victim and perpetrator and their differences according to the sex of the victim. This is relatively consistent year upon year outside easily identifiable and unique circumstances. For example, the estimated 250 murders committed by Harold Shipman committed between 1975 and 1998 and of which 80 per cent were elderly women (ONS, 2022); the murders due to terrorism in 2017 of which 61 per cent (22 out of 36 victims) were female (ONS, 2022); and 39 migrants suffocated in a trailer in 2019, of which eight were female (ONS, 2022). These occurrences affect annual data and their impact is easily identifiable because they are outside the norm.

For the women killed by men between 2012 and 2014, 60.2 per cent were killed by a current/former partner, 16.6 per cent by another family member, 11.2 per cent by a man known in other circumstances and 8.7 per cent of women were killed by a stranger. The findings of the Femicide Census have also been consistent with this. Moreover, as far back as 1951, Veli Verkko observed that fluctuations in male homicide rates within a country were not reflected in corresponding femicide rates. In other words, the higher the overall rate of homicide, the lower the percentage of femicide. Though this theory has been contested (Wilbanks, 1981), it can be seen in homicide trends in the UK over the last three decades.

## 8.4 Methods used to harm and kill

ONS data on methods of killing in homicides in the 11-year period ending March 2021<sup>10</sup> shows that for male victims, irrespective of the sex of the killer (although ONS data tells us that 91.5 per cent of men are killed by other men, conversely 91.2 per cent of women are killed by males), 41 per cent are killed with a sharp instrument. The second most common method of killing is kicking and hitting without a weapon identified as the method of killing in 21 per cent of homicides with male victims. The third and fourth most common method of killing male victims in the UK are shooting and use of a blunt instrument (each seven per cent), followed by strangulation/asphyxiation (six per cent). All other methods were used to kill men in less than four per cent of homicides. My research found that men make different choices when they kill women, and that although there are differences in patterns of what men do to women and their bodies, according to the age of the victims and of the perpetrators and the relationship between them, there are also huge overlaps. With the exception of men who killed strangers, the top five forms of harm that men perpetrate upon the women they kill were the same, regardless of the relationship between the victim and the man or men who killed her. These were: using a sharp object, usually but not always a knife to stab or slash, inflicting head injuries, hitting and kicking or other use of the body without a weapon, strangulation, and use of a blunt object. The difference for men who killed strangers was the prevalence of sexual violence, the third most common form of harm utilised by them, demoting the use of a blunt object to the sixth most common form amongst stranger killers. Men are much more likely to asphyxiate female victims (smothering and strangling was identified in 34 per cent of cases). Shooting was identified in 5 per cent of cases but did not rank in

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/appendixtableshomicideinenglandandwales>

the top ten most common forms of violence used. Kicking and hitting without a weapon was used in 30 percent of cases when men killed women.

### **8.5 The use of sexual violence**

Sexual violence, the third most prevalent form of harm used by men who killed strangers (reported in 26.5 per cent of killings of strangers), was ranked the sixth most prevalent form of violence across the whole sample (reported in 8.5 per cent of all killings of women); joint fifth used against women who had been involved in prostitution (reported in 21 per cent of killings); sixth in women killed by known men (22 per cent of killings); and joint seventh in men who killed women who had been current or former partners (4.9 per cent of killings). Within these cohorts there were some circumstances where the use of sexual violence was higher. For example sexual violence was reported in 25 per cent of killings of women which took place in the context of a burglary, that is four percentage points higher in prevalence than in women killed who had been involved in prostitution. This supports Scully's (1990) finding that 39 per cent of convicted rapists had also been found guilty of robbery or burglary in relation to the rapes that they had committed, and that rape was regarded by some men as 'an added bonus' of robbery. Yet for me, Scully's perspective leaves something unaddressed. If sexual violence in the course of robbery is simply 'an added bonus' what about high levels of overkill, of brutal gratuitous violence? Eight out of 36 cases, almost a quarter of killings (22 per cent) of women, in the context of burglaries, involved sexual violence and overkill. This is more than 'an added bonus'. Age (real or perceived) and perceived attractiveness are negatively correlated (Korthase, 1982; Maestriperieri et al., 2014), so is a woman being past her patriarchal sell-by date linked to an intersection of ageism and misogyny? Hate is recognised as a motivating factor for many sexually violent offenders (Walters and Tumath, 2014; Rothschild, 1993), is this exacerbated by a woman's age? The concept of rape as an added extra does not consider age, gratuitous violence, or hate.

There was a higher prevalence of the use of sexual violence in the killings of women who had been involved in prostitution. However, it was in the context of first date/meeting murders where the prevalence of sexual violence was highest, present in the killings of nine of the 10 women killed by 12 men on the first occasion that they had physically met. Cultural values such as male entitlement to access women's bodies, be that via commodification (prostitution) or a belief in the right to sexual access to women outside prostitution, and the stigmatisation of prostituted women provide an explanation for this difference.

There is limited research in women's use of sexual violence in homicides of either women or men, or indeed of men's use of sexual violence in homicides of other men. Between 1991 and 2001, in Canada, 98 per cent of those accused of sexual homicides were male and 82 per cent of the victims were female, with half of all victims aged under 25 years. More than half of non-serial sexual murderers reported never having had sexual intercourse (54.6 per cent) and almost half the sexual murderers had had a homosexual experience (49 per cent in serial sexual murderers and 43 per cent in non-serial sexual murderers), (James and Proulx, 2014). The differential use of sexual violence in femicides and male on male homicides is another area which shows that femicides are qualitatively different to male on male homicides.

## **8.6 Overkill**

Bell and Vila (1996) compared overkill rates in male-on-male homicides between those with homosexual and those with heterosexual victims. They found the percentage of cases with multiple causes was 12 per cent in homosexual victims and 5 per cent in heterosexual victims. The mean number of different body sites with injuries was also higher in homosexual victims. My research found far higher rates of overkill (in 53 per cent of cases) in women killed by men. Although there were differences in the prevalence of overkill according to the relationship between the victim and perpetrator. For example, it was highest for women in prostitution and women killed

by known men and lowest for women killed by strangers. As with the prevalence of sexual violence, the different rates of overkill between the different relationship groups in female victims and male perpetrators are far less than the differences between female and male victims.

In this research, women who had been involved in prostitution were five times more likely to be killed by a stranger. They were younger, they were subjected to great numbers of forms of violence, WERE almost 50 per cent more likely to be subjected to overkill and more than twice as likely to have been subjected to any form of violence, including rape. They were more likely to have come from a minoritised ethnic group and less likely to have been born in the UK and were three times more likely to use substances. The demographic characteristics as well as the context of their exploitation made them more vulnerable to violent men, including those who set out to kill women. These provide an example of how structural sex inequality and intersecting racial and socioeconomic inequalities mean that femicide is different from homicide of males.

Men are aware of their relative increased physical power compared to women and the different patterns in their relationships with male and female homicide victims demonstrates that femicide, or men's fatal violence against women, is not simply a version of male-on-male homicide but with female victims, it is qualitatively different. That the patterns are repeated and consistent over time tells us that men's fatal violence against women is systemic, and that the notion of an isolated incident is a construct, which I argue, serves to hide the extent of, and patriarchal underpinning of, men's violence against women.

## **8.7 Relating my findings to existing theories**

In my second chapter I looked at what I believe are some of the most useful models, concepts, and ideas in theories about men's violence against women and patriarchy: Heise's (1998) ecological model, Hagemann-White's (2010) four-level model, Kelly's (1987) continuum of sexual violence and conducive context, Walby's (1990) public and

private property, dual systems theory integrating radical feminism and socialist feminism, and Crenshaw's (1991) intersectionality. I also addressed some of the gaps, such as the absence of recent work satisfactorily addressing socioeconomic class and men's violence against women and DeKeseredy's (2021) plea for a return to theorising centring patriarchal domination and subordination.

The variables I have explored in my research relate mainly to individual and contextual levels, as identified in the work of Heise (1998) and Hagemann-White (2010), though they remain located within and affected by institutional, structural and cultural factors, or to borrow from Walby, the variables are measures of private patriarchy which reflect, shape and are shaped by public patriarchy. The findings of this research offer the opportunity to add empirical evidence to a model of the factors at play in men's violence against women. We would not expect to see bigger differences between the killings of females by men and the killings of men (almost always by men) if structural and cultural factors were not at play.

## **8.8 A New Model to Theorise Men's Violence against Women**

Having considered these existing models, and the data from my research, I propose that if we were to set out to end, rather than respond to men's violence against women, our efforts would have to be multi-dimensional and address:

- i) Individual/ontogenetic factors: The things that make each of us who we are and create the basis of how we react, behave, and what we think and believe, including emotional and cognitive responses.
- ii) Situational/relational/micro-level factors: These include group and peer dynamics, how we, as social beings are influenced by other people and how we influence them. Issues like socialisation and non-abusive relationships are located here.

- iii) Institutional/meso level factors: These include formal state responses and institutions, policing, the courts, the educational system, health and welfare responses and the media. The things which process individuals, but also informal institutions, such as organised crime, the sex trade (prostitution (including trafficking) and pornography)
- iv) Structural/exosystem factors: Structural inequalities based on sex difference, class and race, which reflect the interplay of factors at all different levels of social organisations and the way that inequality is embedded in the fabric of society – sex difference and patriarchy, race and imperialism, socio-economic class and capitalist exploitation.
- v) Cultural/macrosystem factors: This includes the norms, values and ideals that we hold and understand as societies. Gendered concepts like sex role stereotypes, femininity and masculinity, which even when we personally reject them, we can identify.

The impact on individuals, institutions and culturally of intersecting inequalities relating to socio-economic class, race, disability, age and sexuality must be fully integrated at all levels, as must situational variables such as, but not limited to, conflict and the prevalence of organised crime. These are not optional extras but profoundly affect women's individual and collective experiences, and the conducive context (Kelly, 2016) of men's violence against women.

This model, integrating learning from my research with the work of Heise (1998), Hagemann-White (2010), Kelly (1987, 2016), Crenshaw (1991) and Walby (1990), amongst others, to contextualise men's fatal violence against women, works equally well with non-fatal violence and abuse. These factors are interdependent, they feed off and feed each other and the concept of private and public patriarchy stretches from the individual through to the cultural level.

Interventions addressed at one level only, or part of one or two levels, will have limited impact because the others continue to operate. A society with an operationally perfect policing and criminal justice response to men who are violent and abusive to women would not bring about an end to men's violence against women if factors at all other levels were left unchecked. This is why existing policy endeavours, such as the Government's Strategy to Tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (2021) are doomed to fail. They are not ambitious enough and address mainly meso/institutional factors.

Most variables which are measures of institutional, structural and cultural factors (levels three to five in the model I proposed), with the exception of known criminal histories and criminal justice outcomes, were outside the scope of my research. Though it is outside the scope of this research, it is well established that policing and the criminal justice system are institutionally sexist (HMICFRS, 2022; Wistrich, 2022.) as are other key institutions including the media (Haraldsson and Wängnerud, 2019), education (Gil-Glazer, 2022; Ubillos-Landa et al. 2021) and social services (Cawson, 1987). These are all located at level three of the model.

Variables considered in existing research looking at international geographical differences and temporal variations in rates of femicide and reported sexual and domestic violence and abuse discussed in chapter three, such as Nowak (2012) on the impact of gun licensing laws, Sabri (2016) on ethno-cultural variations, Heise and Kotsadam, on women's status and norms around violence against women, and Corradi and Stöckl (2014) on government policy and feminist activism, provide support for the model I have proposed. And they also show the importance of conducive contexts (Kelly, 2016). The concept of public and private patriarchy (Walby, 1990) runs from the individual/ ontogenetic level to the cultural but is not linear and often the interfaces between the levels are not distinct. The factors create and are themselves influenced by men's violence against women and socio-political circumstances can act to mitigate, influence, or compound them.

As I noted in Chapter Three, Dobash and Dobash (2015); Lee and Reid (2018); Brookman and Maguire (2003); O’Kane (2002); and Ward et al. (1999) have all found that women in prostitution are at increased risk of murder. Women victims of serial killers are increasingly likely to be women involved in prostitution, (Quinet, 2011). Furthermore, amongst serial killers, men who kill women in prostitution kill a greater average number of victims than those who do not target prostituted women; and those who kill women in prostitution tend to have a longer period of actively killing women before detection (ibid). These and other findings of the high prevalence of the use of violence against women in prostitution and consequently lasting physical and mental health damage to women have been used to argue for state sanctioned regulation of prostitution. Yet Schon and Hodeida (2021) looking at murders of women in the German sex trade since the ‘liberalisation’ of prostitution in Germany in 2002, found that although the numbers of women killed appeared to decline, the numbers of women reporting attempted murder increased dramatically. They concluded that the liberalisation of prostitution does not eliminate serious violence against women in prostitution.

Prostitution then, is a conducive context for men’s fatal violence against women. Prostitution is a manifestation of sex inequality, it endures because of the objectification of women, feeds male demand, and because it itself is fed by demand. Critically, the abolitionist movement foregrounds the voices of, and is necessarily led by, women who have survived prostitution, a matter obfuscated by the sex trade lobby.

My data supports the identification of women with fewer choices and facing higher levels of disadvantage as being those most likely to be exploited in prostitution. If prostitution were the epitome of choice and liberation that protagonists claim, surely it would be dominated by wealthy, white males. It is not. It is not possible to have sex equality, let alone the liberation of women from subjugation by men, in a society where prostitution exists. Those that argue for state sanctioned prostitution are the epitome

of those identified by DeKeseredy as having no interest in the liberation of women from patriarchal oppression.

Structural, cultural and instructional factors provide an explanation for why femicide is not the equivalent of homicide or abuse in intimate relationships is not the same when it is perpetrated by females upon males as it is when perpetrated by males upon females. It is quantitatively and qualitatively different. It is much less likely to happen, has a different impact and either conforms to or contradicts societal norms and values. Male perpetrated intimate partner homicide is relatively normative and is consistent with prevalent sex role stereotypes, female perpetrated intimate partner homicide is not and does not.

This also provides an example of why models such as Monkton Smith's (2020, 2021) eight-stage domestic homicide model can be applied to intimate partner homicides regardless of the sex of victim and perpetrator without undermining a model of male violence against women, such as that which I have proposed, where sex-differences are critical.

## **8.9 An integrated approach to addressing men's fatal violence**

My findings support an integrated approach to addressing men's fatal violence against women. Every human's biology and life experiences have an impact on their likelihood of being subjected to or inflicting fatal violence. Our physical bodies may affect the choices we make and the choices that others make about us or regarding what they do to us. The immediate context of a potential homicide also makes a difference as does the relationship between potential victim and perpetrator. Patriarchal norms and values, including the social constructs of gender, be they relating to the ownership and control of women, the disposability of women, the role of motherhood, the expectation of sexual access to women, and misogyny, are relevant factors when considering men's fatal violence against women. They show that men who kill frequently have histories of abuse of women, improperly supported problematic

substance use and mental ill-health. These are factors located in stages one and two of the model. Further, my findings show that intersecting inequalities affect femicide rates and cannot be overlooked when we consider men's violence against women. The patterns across men's use of fatal violence against women support my call for a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women and therefore for a connected response. The overlaps that occur according to different relationships between victims and perpetrators are more important than the differences. We need to be able to work across those commonalities without losing sight of specificities. These overlaps and commonalities and differences offer fundamental opportunities for interventions at a causal level, in a way that similarities between women and men who kill simply do not. Placing the concept of patriarchy central to our analysis of men's fatal violence against women allows us to address those overlaps, commonalities, and differences; placing the concept of patriarchy central to our efforts to reduce or end men's violence against women is essential.

An integrated approach to addressing men's violence against women does not mean that different forms of violence may require different responses for the women who have been subjected to them, for example: for civil, criminal, or the absence of justice responses. Responses to men's violence must become victim focused, rather than target focused. For example, in a system where government responses and strategies driving social change are tied to political parties, there is a desire for tangible outcomes (statistics), that can be used to lever votes as a barrier to meaningful change. Of course, we need to see a criminal justice system that is fit for purpose, one which holds killers and rapists to account, but rape conviction rates in particular and the accounts of survivors who use the system show how badly the law is failing women. This, however, is not the same as addressing the causes of men's violence against women. If we want to end violence against women, we need responses that acknowledge that whilst either sex can be victim or perpetrator in most crimes, in patriarchal society violent crimes reflect sex inequality and patriarchal cultural values. Different forms of men's violence

against women share root causes and contextual factors, creating silos which underplay the role of sex differences and sex inequality moves us away from those root causes. It is women who become invisible when sex differences are overlooked, and it is women who lose out. This in itself is symptomatic of a patriarchal society.

### **8.10 Chapter summary**

This chapter has reflected upon the primary research question of this thesis: what can we learn from the characteristics, circumstances and patterns of women killed by men and the men who kill them? In doing so, it has answered a second question, is the sex of the victim (and perpetrator) more important than the existing silos, such as intimate partner homicides or adult family homicides, if we are seeking to end or tackle men's violence against women? By integrating my research findings and existing theories to explain men's violence against women, I have developed and provided evidence to support a new five-level framework (individual/ontogenic, situational/relational/micro, institutional/meso, structural/exosystem and cultural/macrosystem) from which we can understand how the patriarchal conducive context for men's violence against women is reproduced and maintained. This in turn identifies the multiple levels which interventions to tackle, or if we wish to be more ambitious, to end, men's violence against women must be approached.

## **Chapter Nine – Contribution to Knowledge and Conclusions**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This research set out to ask what could be learned from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women. Research included analysis of the killings of 515 women by 504 men, the majority killed between 2012 and 2014 with additional purposive sampling of women killed by strangers and women who had been involved in prostitution.

The research contends with approaches to violence against women in policy, practice, and academia that have become siloed into different forms of violence, disregarding the common contexts and approaching issues such as domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and even intimate partner violence from a position described as 'gender neutral'. The 'gender neutral' position with regards to fatal violence minimises sex differences in victimisation and perpetration rates and forms of fatal violence, creating false symmetries which ignore the context of the patriarchal subjugation of women and fail to recognise that gender itself can never be neutral, instead it is a tool for normalising and justifying sex inequality.

My starting point was the murder of Kirsty Treloar on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2012 and seven further murders of women in the first three days of that year. I began recording the names of women killed by men simply to allow me to count them and that counting grew into something more. In a phrase that I would like to see retired from police parlance, one of the early killings was described by police responding to the death as an 'isolated incident'. This immediately incensed me. The killings of women by men are not a series of isolated incidents, they are systemic and connected.

### **9.2 Research Reflections**

The motivation to undertake this research was personal. I have worked with women subjected to men's violence for over thirty years and focused on men's fatal violence

against women as a feminist activist for 10 years. This has shaped my worldview. I hope that it is impossible to see what men do to women and children, to work directly with the impact of that harm, to see the faces of women and children who arrive at a refuge, the pain, dignity, and drive to create change in those who love someone who was killed by a man and to be unchanged. Though many of the lessons are not pleasant, I do not wish to unsee, nor do I wish to lose an emotional connection and commitment to addressing men's violence against women.

The acquisition and identification of what constitutes knowledge does not escape structural inequalities of sex, class, and race. I am female, from a working-class background and entering academia as a middle-aged woman with a strong regional accent. There is a hierarchy of knowledge, and grassroots experience-based knowledge has less status than academic knowledge. Dr Maddy Coy has called for the recognition of practice-based evidence, for example from specialist women's organisations, to be considered as worthy as that of academic: 'It's "participant observation" when it's by an academic, it's "anecdotal" when it's from a women's services provider.' Academic research has given me valuable space to contextualise my thoughts within the body of existing theory, which I hope has not only informed my thinking but will add credibility to my voice and enable it to be heard in places where it would otherwise have been dismissed. That said, finding 'A' Level Sociology as a 16-year-old in 1984 was a hugely positive formative experience for me and presented an exciting framework to articulate many of my life experiences. One of my very first reactions when embarking upon Counting Dead Women was 'What do you mean, "isolated incidents"? Can't you see the connections?' and this is a clearly sociological response. Despite leaving academia, sociology stayed with me, and it has been a joy to bring together my feminist activism, my career as a practitioner, and immersion in sociological thinking in producing this thesis.

Both Counting Dead Women and the Femicide Census continue to have an impact on how femicide is understood in the UK in ways that I would not have dared to imagine

when I first demanded that the murder of Kirsty Treloar and other women in early 2012 were not treated as isolated incidents but connected in the fibre of patriarchal society.

In 2021, the abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard brought men's fatal violence against women to the forefront of public consciousness. Many saw her death and the public reaction as a watershed moment, but I am less convinced. We have seen watershed moments before, and misogyny and patriarchy are barely better addressed than they were half a century ago. That change has happened is undeniable but as the Femicide Census 10-year report on the killings of women by men between 2009 and 2018 and ONS data on the rates of female homicide show, rates of femicide remain depressingly consistent. Unless patriarchy is named and consciously addressed, it will continue to adapt.

I continue my work supporting women and addressing men's violence against women with an internal dialogue spinning between disillusionment, cynicism, anger, celebration, hope, and back. Disillusionment because steps forward identified are so often neither learned nor implemented. Cynicism because I have not yet seen a convincing attempt to end men's violence against women or engage fully with the broad level of changes necessary by those in power. Anger at men who harm women and those who discount feminist voices who have long called for fundamental change. Celebration of each woman who breaks free. Hope is the most recent addition to this collection of emotional responses to men's violence against women and possibly the only one that I have consciously had to try to learn. Aiming for the impossible, is the best hope we have of achieving the greatest change. 'Hope is essential to any political struggle for radical change when the overall social climate promotes disillusionment and despair.' (bell hooks in Zinn, Ed, 2008). Is it possible to end men's violence against women in a patriarchal society? I hope so. Is it likely that that will happen? I doubt it. And so the cycle returns to disillusionment. But this is driven by a determination to not stop trying and to make a difference in whatever way I can.

### **9.3 Contributions to knowledge**

Through *Counting Dead women*, mine was the first voice in many years in the UK to call for a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women. Early feminist scholarship had identified the continuum of sexual violence (Kelly 1988) and the ground-breaking 'Femicide' by Radford and Russell (1992) had provided an analysis and call for action that had become largely unheeded.

My work is a return to a connected analysis focusing on the connections across forms and contexts of men's fatal violence against women, a move away from siloed thinking and therefore one which creates space for responses which look at the root causes of men's violence against women in the patriarchal social structure. Radford and Russell offered a truly ground-breaking theoretically based manifesto. Mine brings with it empirical evidence, providing a deeper and more tangible picture. Furthermore, Adrian Howe (2014) said that 'naming all of the victims of contemporary femicide cases certainly does make the horror feel more real, even for a researcher acquainted with hundreds of such cases' (p.291). When the women are named together and made real together, the connections across their lives and their deaths are hard to ignore.

This thesis has made the following contributions to knowledge of men's fatal violence against women:

#### **9.3.1 We need to connect all forms of men's fatal violence against women**

Through *Counting Dead women*, mine was the first voice in many years in the UK to call for a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women. Early feminist scholarship had identified the continuum of sexual violence (Kelly 1988) and the ground-breaking 'Femicide' by Radford and Russell (1992) had provided an analysis and call for action that had become largely unheeded. My work asks us to connect the killings of women by men, regardless of whether the killing was committed by a current or former partner, a son, another family member, a man whose employment role

brings him into contact with women, committed by a predatory stranger or in the context of prostitution.

My work is a return to a connected analysis focusing on the connections across forms and contexts of men's fatal violence against women, a move away from siloed thinking and therefore one which creates space for responses which look at the root causes of men's violence against women in the patriarchal social structure. Radford and Russell offered a truly ground-breaking theoretically based manifesto. Mine brings with it empirical evidence, providing a deeper and more tangible picture. Furthermore, Adrian Howe (2014) said that 'naming all of the victims of contemporary femicide cases certainly does make the horror feel more real, even for a researcher acquainted with hundreds of such cases' (p.291). When the women are named together and made real together, the connections across their lives and their deaths are hard to ignore.

### **9.3.2 Ignoring sex in homicide means ignoring the specificities of femicide**

Criminological epistemology was man made and this continues to be reflected in policy and the law. Femicide, or men's fatal violence against women, is not homicide of women by men. Disaggregating woman-killing by men from homicide data allows us to identify that the ratio of relationships between victim and perpetrator are different according to the sex of victims and perpetrators.

The findings of my research show that sex is a material reality in homicide. It is already established that when men kill women, their relationship with the victim follows different patterns to relationships between victim and perpetrator in male on male homicide. There is a high prevalence of overkill and men choose different methods when they kill women compared to when they kill men.

The use of sexual violence is different than when men kill women compared to when they kill men. The prevalence of the use of sexual or sexualised violence in the killings

of women who were or had been involved in prostitution was significantly higher than the prevalence across the sample.

The reported prevalence of sexual violence was far higher in women killed by men on a first date or first meeting, present in 90 per cent of killings compared to 9 per cent across the whole cohort, however the presence of overkill is consistent with that across the broader sample. The use of strangulation as method of killing was 50 per cent. Seventy-five per cent of men who killed in this cohort had identifiable histories of violence.

Perpetrators who killed women in the context of mugging and burglaries were younger than those in the general sample, but their victims were older. Twenty-five per cent of women killed in robberies were also sexually assaulted, this is more than double the prevalence across the whole sample.

Prostitution must be recognised as a context for men's fatal violence against women. Half (n=17) of all women who had been involved in prostitution and were killed between 2009 and 2017 were killed by strangers, compared to 8.9 per cent of all women killed between 2012 and 2014.

I also looked at separation and the length of relationships. Fifty-six per cent of couples could be regarded as separated or in the process of separating, almost a third had been separated for less than a month, 61 per cent had been separated for a year or less. Men who killed after longer periods of separation tended to be older.

Nine per cent of men who killed women between 2012 and 2014 also killed themselves. Men who killed a current or former partner were the cohort most likely to also kill themselves. Those who killed strangers were least likely. The men who killed themselves after killing a woman/women were aged between 22 and 89 years, with a mean age of 54, 13 years older than the mean age of all men who killed women between 2012 and 2014.

Moreover, reducing these differences to ratios of intimate partner killings in homicides in general ignores the connections across different forms and contexts of men's fatal violence against women. For example, women are much less likely to use strangulation or hitting and kicking as means of killing someone. The continued invisibility of women means that policy responses such as knife crime strategies fail to recognise that most women victims of men's fatal violence are killed with knives and thus those strategies ignore a significant victim demographic. Through attending the London Mayor's Violence Against Women and Girls Board, I was able to ensure that the use of knives in domestic homicides was at least addressed in the London Knife Crime Strategy.

Man-made law reflecting men's crime is reflected in numerous ways in the criminal justice system. One such example is that use of a weapon is an aggravating factor in homicides, as is transporting a weapon to the location of a homicide. Women, because of our average smaller size and physical strength compared to men, are less likely to kill without a weapon, so the sentencing guidelines have stronger penalties for women built into them. Two mothers, Carole Gould and Julie Devey, campaigning after the murders of their daughters, Ellie Gould and Poppy Devey Waterhouse, have used data from the Femicide Census to support their campaign for stronger sentencing regarding use of knives to kill in the home (which is not currently viewed as taking a weapon to the location of a murder, even if the knife is taken from the kitchen to another room). This could be seen as an unintended consequence of my work. However, defence cases should be able to address this in cases where a woman kills as a result of enduring abuse and violence. Regardless of the outcome, data which allows the identification of sex differences in homicides makes possible an inequalities impact assessment to help ensure that discrimination against women is not built into the application of the law.

Femicide Census data was used in the case of *Stocker v. Stocker* helping build the picture of the extent of men's use of strangulation in a woman's attempt to defend herself against a libel accusation from her former husband, when she wrote on social

media that he had tried to strangle her. My research from Counting Dead Women has been used by Professor Jane Monckton-Smith and professor Adrian Howe as a data source for their own research.

My work has thus already been used in a number of ways which illustrate the importance of sex disaggregated data.

### **9.3.2 Transforming the way we talk about men's fatal violence against women**

Perhaps my biggest contribution lies outside academia. The media has long been recognised as the biggest influencer on adults' attitudes (Croteau and Hoynes, 2005). Richards et al. (2011) found that the majority of articles on intimate partner femicides (86.4 per cent of their sample) failed to present an intimate partner femicide within the broader contexts of intimate partner violence. They further noted that it is more often law enforcers, not 'male violence specialists' who are called to make an expert comment in media articles. Similarly, Wozniak and McCloskey, 2010, looked at sex differences in newspaper reporting of intimate partner homicide. They found that almost three-quarters of articles on incidents of intimate partner homicide did not make references to the wider context of domestic violence, and that most cases did not contain the perspective of experts outside the police or criminal justice system.

I am now regularly asked to comment on news stories about femicides. This year (2021), the Observer, The Sunday Times, The Metro, and The Scotsman have all run features where photos of every woman killed by a man have featured. There have been frequent articles referring to the number of women killed by men this year, or the number of women killed by men since the abduction, rape, and murder of Sarah Everard. The Femicide Census was able to identify that Sarah Everard was one of 16 women killed by serving or former police officers (13 of whom were killers of current or former partners) in the UK since 2009. This story was covered in numerous national press pieces. The names of all women killed by men are read out in parliament once a year and this is picked up by a number of media outlets. The Femicide Census has run

a joint campaign, End Femicide, in partnership with the Observer. To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, artists and activists used my work in exhibitions in London, Wales, Manchester, Coventry, and Plymouth, mostly were some ways of acknowledging the number of women killed where there was a male suspect this year. I have been told by parliamentarians and journalists that my work has changed the reporting and understanding of men's fatal violence against women, and I have contributed to a broader use and understanding of the meaning of the word 'femicide'. The MP Jess Phillips, said of my work "Without Karen there would have been none of the progress in highlighting and dealing with femicide It has been an honour to work with her over the years," (Jess Phillips, Twitter. 27 November 2022). The journalist Sarah Ditum said "Karen's work has been, bluntly, heroic. It takes incredible steel to look at men's violence day after day. She helps so many women, and her campaigning work has been invaluable in making femicide visible," (Sarah Ditum, Twitter. 27 November 2022).

My work has had an undeniable impact and made a contribution to shifting the dominant media narrative on men's fatal violence against women in four main ways: firstly, the killings of women are increasingly viewed in the context of men's fatal violence, therefore a social problem not simply one of men's individual pathology; secondly, promoting the understanding that men's fatal violence is broader than intimate partner femicide; thirdly, that all forms of men's fatal violence against women are connected and should be viewed as such; and fourthly, even use of the term 'men's fatal violence against women', naming the agent as a matter of course comes from my work. Adding a piece of academic standard research to this body of work can only serve to bolster the credibility of Counting Dead Women and the Femicide Census and drive the changes further forward.

### **9.3.3 Defining Femicide**

I have explored issues regarding defining feminicide and explained why, for the purposes of this research, I have described the subject matter of this thesis as men's fatal violence against women. Femicide is a useful conceptual tool but men's fatal violence against women, the victims and perpetrators, can be researched outside that tool and doing so means that women victims of female perpetrated patriarchally motivated femicides do not need to be included, and likewise, the matter of looking at men's motivations is avoided.

In the opening chapters I explored the importance of theories of men's violence and the necessity to return, not only to a connected analysis of men's violence but one which centres the concept of patriarchy. It is with that background that I offered a new definition of femicide:

'The killing of women, girls, and female infants and foetuses, predominantly but not always committed by men, functioning to maintain individual and/or collective male dominant status, or reflecting the lower status of females in patriarchal societies.'

I posed the question as to whether it was necessary for the definition of femicide to address its impact or function in reinforcing or reproducing public or private patriarchy. If this is not required, then the definition of femicide could be:

'The killing of women, girls and female infants and foetuses, predominantly but not always committed by men, in patriarchal societies.'

### **9.3.4 What can we learn from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women?**

My overarching research question was 'What can we learn from understanding the characteristics, circumstances, and patterns of women killed by men and the men who kill them?' Could we learn how to end men's violence against women?

In my second chapter I looked at what I believe are some of the most useful models, concepts, and ideas in theories about men's violence against women and patriarchy: Heise's ecological model (1998), Hagemann-White's (2010) four level model, Kelly's continuum of sexual violence (1977) and conducive context (2016), Walby's public and private property, dual systems theory integrating radical feminism and socialist feminism (1990), and Crenshaw's intersectionality (1991). I also addressed some of the gaps, the absence, or recent work satisfactorily addressing socioeconomic class and men's violence against women and DeKeseredy's (2021) plea for a return to theorising centring patriarchal domination and subordination.

In chapter eight I showed how my findings support an integrated approach to addressing men's fatal violence against women. They show that intersecting inequalities affect femicide rates and cannot be overlooked when we consider men's violence against women. They show that patriarchal norms and values, including the social constructs of gender, be they relating to the ownership and control of women, the disposability of women, the role of motherhood, the expectation of sexual access to women, and misogyny, are a factor in men's fatal violence against women. They show that men who kill frequently have histories of abuse of women, improperly supported problematic substance use and mental ill-health. Though it is outside the scope of this research, it is well established that policing and the criminal justice system are institutionally sexist. Also, outside the scope of this research, are the deaths of women at the hands of men internationally, though comparing UK and international illustrations provides a compelling case for recognising the importance of conducive contexts, (Kelly, 2016). I used my findings combined with existing theory on men's violence against women to propose a new five-level framework for conceptualising how the patriarchal conducive context for men's violence against women is reproduced and maintained and therefore the multiple levels at which interventions to tackle men's violence against women must be made.

Different forms of violence may require different responses for the women who have been subjected to them, for example: for civil, criminal, or the absence of justice responses. Responses to men's violence must become victim focused, rather than target focused. In a system where government responses and strategies driving social change are tied to political parties, there is a desire for tangible outcomes (statistics), that can be used to lever votes as a barrier to meaningful change. Of course, we need to see a criminal justice system that is fit for purpose, one which holds killers and rapists to account, but rape conviction rates in particular and the accounts of survivors who use the system, show how badly the law is failing women. This, however, is not the same as addressing the causes of men's violence against women. If we want to end violence against women, we need responses that acknowledge that whilst either sex can be victim or perpetrator in most crimes, in patriarchal society violent crimes reflect sex inequality and patriarchal cultural values. Different forms of violence share root causes, creating silos which disregard sex and moves us away from those root causes. If we were to set out to end, rather than respond to men's violence against women, it is clear that our efforts must be multi-dimensional and address:

- i. Individual/ontogenetic factors: The things that make each of us who we are and create the basis of how we react, behave, and what we think and believe, including emotional and cognitive responses.
- ii. Situational/relational/micro-level factors: These include group and peer dynamics, how we, as social beings are influenced by other people and how we influence them. Issues like socialisation and non-abusive relationships are located here.
- iii. Institutional/meso level factors: These include formal state responses and institutions, policing, the courts, the educational system, health and welfare responses and the media. The things which process individuals, but also

informal institutions, such as organised crime, the sex trade (prostitution (including trafficking) and pornography)

- iv. Structural/exosystem factors: Structural inequalities based on sex difference, class, and race, which reflect the interplay of factors at all different levels of social organisations and the way that inequality is embedded in the fabric of society – sex difference and patriarchy, race and imperialism, socio-economic class and capitalist exploitation.
- v. Cultural/macrosystem factors: This includes the norms, values and ideals that we hold and understand as societies. Gendered concepts like sex role stereotypes, femininity and masculinity, which even when we personally reject them, we can identify.

This model, integrating learning from Heise (1998), Hagemann-White (2010), Kelly (1987, 2016), Crenshaw (1991) and Walby (1990), to contextualise men's fatal violence against women, works equally well with non-fatal violence and abuse. These factors are interdependent, they feed off and feed each other and the concept of private and public patriarchy stretches from the individual through to the cultural level.

The concept of public and private patriarchy runs from the individual/ ontogenetic level to the cultural but is not linear and often the interfaces between the levels are not distinct. The factors create and are themselves influenced by men's violence against women and socio-political circumstances can act to mitigate, influence, or compound them.

#### **9.4 Summary of contribution to knowledge**

In short, my work has made a significant contribution to pushing the concept of femicide into public awareness. I have offered a new definition of femicide, and a new model of men's violence against women upon which interventions to end such violence can be built, integrating theory and empirical evidence. I have made a

convincing case for recognising femicide as qualitatively distinct from homicide. I have illustrated that a connected analysis of all forms of men's fatal violence against women is more conceptually useful than separating homicides according to the relationship between victim and perpetrator regardless of their sex. Thus, I have shown that killings of older women in burglaries, by male sexual predators killing strangers, by sons of their mothers, and of women killed in the context of prostitution, share more in common with killings of women by current or former intimate partners than of men killed by current or former female, or male partners. Grounded in a radical feminist framework, recognising the impacts of intersecting inequalities and conducive contexts, my work locates socially constructed gender as a system of oppression and a product of iniquitous patriarchal society.

#### **9.4 Thoughts on future research**

When Heise presented her ecological model in 1998, she included only factors which had been empirically tested and shown to affect rates of men's violence against women. There has been almost two and a half decades of additional research on correlates with men's violence against women since then, and as I have discussed throughout this thesis, increasingly siloed thinking and worse still 'gender neutral' research. Again, as I have addressed throughout, 'gender neutral' not only erases that which is specific about men's violence against women, fatal or otherwise, it erases gender as a powerful tool of patriarchal society in maintaining the domination of men and the subjugation of women. I would like to see the model I outlined above developed to include comprehensive existing research and the associated policy and legislative developments that would lead to change.

As I outlined when I looked at the limitations of this research, I would like to see methods such as those I used in this research, or such as we have used in the Femicide Census, applied across the four different possibilities of victim and perpetrator according to sex, that is, like this research: female victim and male perpetrator, but

also, female victim and female perpetrator, male victim and female perpetrator and male victim and male perpetrator. This would allow clearer comparison and identification of sex differences.

I would like the opportunity to repeat this research, or a version which includes my learning from having undertaken it not only with a bigger sample but with access to data help by statutory bodies so that information could be more comprehensive and accurate.

I would like to see more research on areas that remain under researched in women's use of violence and abuse, woman's comparative lack of use of sexual violence, including in homicides, but also women's comparative lack of use of prostitution. I have to admit to my bias, I would want this to be looked at from a perspective of looking for differences, both between women who use and who do not engage in these forms of abuse, but also in how women's use differs from that of men.

In addition, further exploration of why histories of abuse during childhood produce different outcomes in adulthood for women and men would be valuable. I struggle to see how this could be explained without taking into account unequal power relations between women and men, the objectification including sexual objectification of women, and socially constructed gendered norms enforced from birth but even apparent before it. We are not lacking research on 'why men can be victims too' but we do lack research of how, why, and in what numbers women perpetrate abuse.

As a feminist sociologist with a working-class heritage, for whom sociology created social class awareness before it created sex class awareness, I am longing to see more research on the intersection of class and sex and violence against women. Social class is becoming increasingly difficult to measure and yet its impact on women's lives and life chances remains transparent, and for those on the bottom, brutal. Nevertheless, men's violence against women cuts across boundaries of class. Social class appears to me to be the forgotten sister of femininity scholarship.

Finally, I would like to answer the question, 'Despite almost half a century of scholastic attention paid to men's violence against women and over three decades of increased service provision, why have we not seen a reduction in men's fatal violence against women?'

## **9.5 Thoughts on policy development and service provision**

I discussed my positioning as a researcher in the introduction and the methodology chapter: feminist, services provider, activist, campaigner. The conclusions I draw from the findings of my research reflect this, and as a result, will be different from the conclusions and recommendations that another woman may have reached, had she undertaken the same research. This should be recognised as an enhancement, bringing valuable depth compared to decontextualised conclusions, which do not benefit from the researcher's background knowledge, including experienced-based learning.

The siloed approach to men's violence against women does not reflect the reality of many women's lives and 'gender neutral' approaches to sexual and domestic violence and abuse, which means that the extent and impact of men's violence against women is hidden in plain sight. We need more specialist woman-only provision for women who have been subjected to men's violence and this provision must reflect the challenging realities of women's lives. It cannot exclude women who don't fit into its neat boxes. This provision must be led for women, by women, and shaped by the needs of women. It should be funded by government but must operate independently of government. The move to competitive tendering has been failing women.

Too many specialist service providers, considering themselves as specialists in sexual and domestic violence and abuse, exclude women who are or have been involved in prostitution from their services. In many cases, this also reflects failures in commissioning. Women who have been exploited and abused through prostitution deserve access to specialist services. Whether this reflects a failure to recognise and respond to prostitution as a form of men's violence against women or an association

with women in prostitution and problematic substance use that providers do not have the capacity to address, is unclear. The needs of women involved in prostitution and women with problematic substance use are too often being ignored. There is an unacceptable hierarchy of victims and these women are amongst those at the bottom. If local authorities will not commission specialist services targeting those in prostitution, then domestic and sexual violence services must meet women's needs. My preference would be to see both specialist services for women in prostitution and also existing domestic and sexual violence and abuse services better meeting the needs of all women.

Outside this thesis I am concerned to hear policing, criminal justice, and other statutory bodies considering the replacement of data recording people's sex with that recording preferred gender identities. I looked at one piece of recent research for this thesis where a male killer had been recorded as someone's daughter. The implications for the spread of this practice are serious and have the potential to render meaningless any future research of sex differences and rates of perpetrations of and victimisation in violent crime.

I noticed, through researching cases, a number of occasions where men who killed women had met them at services addressing health and welfare needs: drug and alcohol treatment, mental health, homelessness services, to name a few. I would like to see more single sex service provision so that women can access support without being prey. Equally, risk assessment should be more perpetrator focused, given the prevalence of men who had problematic substance use and engagement or failed engagement with mental health support. I would like to see the potential risks that men pose to women properly considered and this should include known histories of violence against women.

Use of pornography was addressed in the investigations and trials of some men who killed women, but it was not routinely done or reported. I would like to see routine

examination of men's use of violent and/or degrading pornography when they have abused women and for this to be taken into account as an aggravating factor when sentencing, I would also like to see action against pornography producers for inciting men's violence against women.

Finally, I would like to see the police retire the phrases 'isolated incident' and 'no risk to the wider community' retired from use. We know what they mean but men's fatal violence against women is never isolated, it is always connected; and women are perpetually at risk of men's violence. Language shapes perception. I long for the day when there is no risk to the community of women from the community of men and when the patriarchal underbelly connecting woman killing is no more. Until then, I'll settle for the language that the police use reflecting reality.

## **9.6 A critical time for research and policy and data collection**

It feels remis of me not to address, amongst my concluding thoughts, the issue of the conflation of or differences between sex and gender. Whether or not one accepts the notion that gender identities exist outside socially produced ideas projected onto sex, and I do not, we should all be able to agree that this does not negate research addressing differences or similarities regarding biological sex. It is critical to me that future research and policy and data collection continue to measure sex differences. It has been a central theme of this research that when sex is overlooked, women become invisible and women lose out. We cannot allow beliefs about gender identifies to erase what we know about sex differences, nor can we allow it to prevent future research because much of what is knowable remains under-researched.

## **9.7 Concluding thoughts**

Men's fatal violence against women has become – or remains – accepted as normal in contemporary British society. It is hidden in plain sight. Abstract statistics, whether they are accurate or not, fail to engage most people. It remains that outside my work, or

projects related to my work, there is no national cumulative illustration produced for all women killed by men. When one woman's death ignites national interest, such as the murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021, the sense of outrage that (at the point of writing) 105 women have been killed by men since Sarah's murder, which is tangible to them, remains. Hearing or reading the names, or seeing the photos of all women killed by men, similarly provokes engagement with the issue of the terrible extent of men's fatal violence against women and the immediately obvious diversity of women affected confounds widely held stereotypes.

Academic research in most cases has lost its feminist bite, or allowed itself to be tamed, and public policy never had it. Silos have developed which allow sex differences to be hidden. As a result, women lose out and that loss will also be suffered by future generations of women and girls.

I have outlined a framework for seriously tackling men's violence against women, not just responding to it but offering the opportunity to reduce, or even end it. Responses to men's violence against women need to be embedded in national strategy and must be long term and wide-ranging, addressing individual, relational, institutional, structural, and cultural factors or they will continue to fail to have an impact on the number of women killed by men. Actions need to be detached from the political electioneering process, in that the focus on short term gains needs to be discarded and replaced by a serious long-term well-resourced commitment based on women's needs and producing lasting social change. But politicians need to hear the message that we, as a society, will no longer accept men's violence against women to continue unchecked. We will not accept failure.

Contributing to change for women remains a cornerstone of feminist research and I hope that my work is relevant within that context. A connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women, grounded in a feminist analysis of sex inequality and patriarchal culture, which builds in responses to intersecting inequalities, not only

allows us to identify the steps needed to create the changes we need, it also offers the potential for increased public engagement to bolster the demand to end men's violence against women.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – List of Variables

### Victim variables:

1. Victim code
2. Victim's age
3. Mental Health Issues
4. Mental Health Issues - Description
5. Physical Health Issues
6. Physical Health Issues- Description
7. Physical Health Issues - Severity
8. Substance use
9. Substance use type
10. Substance use notes
11. Ethnicity
12. Born in UK
13. Sexuality
14. Involved in prostitution
15. Involved in pornography
16. Notes re pornography/prostitution involvement
17. Transgender

### Perpetrator Variables

18. Perpetrator age
19. Perpetrator code
20. Mental Health Issues
21. Mental Health Issues - Description
22. Physical Health Issues
23. Suicidal ideation
24. Physical Health Issues - Description
25. Physical Health Issues - Severity
26. Substance use
27. Substance use type
28. Substance use notes
29. Ethnicity
30. Born in UK
31. History of IPV
32. IPV against victim
33. IPV other females
34. History of SV
35. Details of SV history
36. History of other VAWG
37. Details of other VAWG history
38. Any VAWG at all
39. Perp had history of violence - not specified as VAW

40. Perp had history of violence - not specified as VAW-details
41. Perp had history of non-violent criminality
42. Perp use of pornography
43. User of prostitution
44. Details of prostitution/pornography USE
45. Single/Multiple perpetrator
46. Transgender
47. Number of perpetrators
48. Composition of perpetrators

#### Relationship Variables

49. Relationship
50. Age gap between victim and perpetrator
51. Victim and perpetrator lived together at time of killing
52. Length of time of relationship
53. If IPF relationship status
54. If IPF separation - length

#### Incident Variables

55. No\_victims\_this\_incident
56. No\_female\_victims\_this\_incident
57. No\_murder\_victims\_all\_incidents
58. No\_female\_Victims\_all\_incidents
59. Date\_of\_death
60. Method smothered\_suffocated
61. Method asphyx\_strangulation\_hands
62. Method asphyx\_strang\_ligature
63. Method asphx\_strang\_unknown\_means
64. Method asphyx\_unknown\_method
65. Method hanging
66. Method Blunt\_Object
67. Method Blunt\_trauma\_not\_object
68. Method Blunt\_Not\_Specified
69. Method hitting\_hammer
70. Method Burning\_fire\_direct\_alive
71. Method burning\_fire\_direct\_dead
72. Method burn\_fire\_indirect\_alive
73. Method burn\_fire\_indirect\_dead
74. Method drowning
75. Method explosion
76. Method fall\_pushed
77. Method fall\_pushed\_height
78. Method Head\_Injuries
79. Method kicking\_hitting\_without\_weapon
80. Method neglect
81. Method poisoning
82. Method poisoning\_drugs\_alcohol\_overdose
83. Method prolonged\_assault\_turture\_sadism

84. Method Scalding\_water
85. Method Scalding\_burn\_chemical
86. Method Sexual\_assault\_rape
87. Method sexual\_assault\_activity\_abuse\_other
88. Method sharp\_stabbed
89. Method sharp\_slashed
90. Method throat\_slit
91. Method shooting
92. Method Tiedup\_bound\_gagged
93. Method vehicle
94. Decapitated
95. Dismembered
96. Method other\_known
97. Method unknown
98. Method unknown\_body\_not\_found
99. No. Forms\_violence
100. Overkill
101. Overkill\_explanation
102. Defence\_wounds
103. sexual\_violence\_yes\_no
104. details\_sexual\_violence
105. Injuries\_sustained
106. Perp\_intoxicated
107. On\_what\_perp\_intox
108. Context:not\_known
109. Context:Argument\_quarrel
110. Bins
111. Context:Arson
112. Context:arson\_intent
113. Context:suicidepact
114. Context:authority\_Illustration\_known
115. Context:authority\_Illustration\_unknown
116. Context:mugging
117. Context:burglary
118. Context:financial\_gain
119. Context:criminal\_act\_other
120. Context:extended\_family
121. Context:father\_child
122. Context:IPV
123. Context:IPV\_separation
124. Context:IPV\_sep\_proceedings
125. Sep\_Proceedings\_detail
126. Context:IPV\_Affair\_NewRelp\_Perp
127. Context:IPV\_Affair\_NewReln\_Victim
128. Accusation\_suspicion\_affair\_jealousy
129. Context:One\_night\_stand\_or\_casual

- 130. Context:sibling
  - 131. Context:son\_mother\_stepmother
  - 132. Context:mother\_in\_law
  - 133. Context:grandon\_grandmother\_incl\_step
  - 134. Context:honour
  - 135. Context:IPV\_collateral
  - 136. Context:mental\_health\_perp
  - 137. Context:mercy\_evidence\_consent
  - 138. Context:mercy\_no\_evidence\_consent
  - 139. Context:mercy\_missingdata
  - 140. Context:prostitution
  - 141. Context:pornography
  - 142. Context:recklessact
  - 143. Context:reckless\_act\_vehicle
  - 144. Context:rejected\_advance
  - 145. Context:sexual\_violence
  - 146. Context:symbolic\_woman
  - 147. Context:predator\_misogyny
  - 148. Context:racially\_aggravated
  - 149. Context:frail\_elderly
  - 150. Context:terrorism\_political
  - 151. Methods of violence used (series of nominal values)
  - 152. Multiple forms of violence
  - 153. Overkill
  - 154. Injuries sustained (series of nominal values)
  - 155. Context of violence (series of nominal values)
- Outcome variables
- 156. Outcome
  - 157. Sentence (where applicable)
  - 158. Notes

## Appendix 2

**Table 15 – Methods of violence used (numbers)**

	IPV	Family	Known	Stranger	Unknown	All women killed 2012 - 2014	With purposive samples	Prostitution	Mothers
Drowned	0	1	0	1	2	3	4	0	
Explosion	0	1	2	16	0	3	19	0	
Fall/pushed	15	3	2	11	1	30	32	0	1
Head Injuries	102	34	18	34	4	177	192	12	26
Hitting, kicking or other without weapon	66	21	14	18	33	111	152	8	17
Fire	12	8	4	5	2	29	31	0	2
Strangulation	78	19	10	19	1	109	127	8	13
Smothering	19	8	3	4	1	32	35	1	
Strangulation/smothering unknown	3	2	1	4	1	7	11	1	1
Prolonged assault, tied up, torture, gagged	11	3	5	10	1	24	30	2	1
Sharp Object	159	51	33	44	4	263	291	26	27
Blunt object	62	19	12	17	4	105	114	7	11
Other	19	6	4	18	1	36	48	4	3
Sexual	15	5	11	27	0	38	58	7	1
Shot	10	8	3	5	2	24	28	1	3
Decapitated	5	3	0	2	0	8	10	1	2
Dismembered	2	3	1	5	0	7	11	4	2
Unknown	12	0	2	7	0	15	21	5	
Total forms	590	195	125	247	57	1021	1214	87	110
No. women	267	76	50	102	15	446	515	34	46
Average number of forms of violence used upon each woman	2.2	2.6	2.5	2.4	3.8	2.3	2.4	2.56	2.4

Across the whole sample, 1,601 forms of violence were recorded as being used by the 504 perpetrators upon the bodies of the 515 victims.

## Appendix 3

**Table 16 – Methods of violence used (percentages of group according to relationship between victim and perpetrator)**

	IPV	Family	Known	Stranger	Unknown	All Women Killed 2012 – 2014	With purposive samples	Prostitution	Mothers
Drowned	0.0	1.3	0	1.0	13	0.7	0.8	0.0	
Explosion	0.0	1.3	4	15.7	0	0.7	3.7	0.0	
Fall/pushed	5.6	3.9	4	10.8	7	6.7	6.3	0.0	1
Head Injuries	38.2	44.7	36	33.3	27	39.6	37.6	35.3	26
Hitting, kicking or other without weapon	24.7	27.6	28	17.6	220	24.8	29.8	23.5	17
Fire	4.5	10.5	8	4.9	13	6.5	6.1	0.0	2
Strangulation	29.2	25.0	20	18.6	7	24.4	24.9	23.5	13
Smothering	7.1	10.5	6	3.9	7	7.2	6.9	2.9	
Strangulation/smothering unknown	1.1	2.6	2	3.9	7	1.6	2.2	2.9	1
Prolonged assault, tied up, torture, gagged	4.1	3.9	10	9.8	7	5.4	5.9	5.9	1
Sharp Object	59.6	67.1	66	43.1	27	58.8	57.1	76.5	27
Blunt object	23.2	25.0	24	16.7	27	23.5	22.4	20.6	11
Other	7.1	7.9	8	17.6	7	8.1	9.4	11.8	3
Sexual	5.6	6.6	22	26.5	0	8.5	11.4	20.6	1
Shot	3.7	10.5	6	4.9	13	5.4	5.5	2.9	3
Decapitated	1.9	3.9	0	2.0	0	1.8	2.0	2.9	2
Dismembered	0.7	3.9	2	4.9	0	1.6	2.2	11.8	2
Unknown	4.5	0.0	4	6.9	0	3.4	4.1	14.7	
Total forms	590	195	125	247	57	1024	1214	87	110
No. women	267	76	50	102	15	446	536	34	46

## Appendix 4

**Table 17 – Frequency of Different Contexts according to relationship between Victims and Perpetrator**

	IPV	Fa m	Other known	Stranger	Unclear	Total	All women killed 2012 - 2014	Prostitutio n
Cohort size	269	77	51	103	16	515	446	32
Context: Perpetrator intoxicated at time of incident	67	19	16	22	0	124	108	9
Context: Not known/recorded	0	0	2	2	8	12	11	0
Context: Argument/quarrel/ conflict (excluding IPV/domestic)	40	16	8	1	0	65		3
Context: Arson	3	2	1	3	1	10	10	0
Context: Arson with intent	2	1	1	2	1	7	7	0
Context: Assisted suicide/suicide pact	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Context: Authority Illustration – known	0	0	3	1	0	4	3	1
Context: Authority Illustration – unknown	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Context: Crime - Mugging	0	0	0	7	0	7	6	2
Context: Crime -Burglary/robbery	0	1	10	19	2	32	25	1
Context: financial gain	8	4	9	5	3	29	28	2
Context: Crime/criminal act - other	4	3	3	11	2	23	16	2
Context: Domestic - extended family	1	12	0	1		14	14	0
Context: Domestic - Father to child	5	7	0	0	0	12	12	0
Context: Domestic – IPV	269	8	6	1	0	284	277	13
Context_ IPV Separation	156	1	2	1		160	157	0
Context: Domestic – IPV separation - proceedings	19	1	0	0	0	20	0	0
Context: Domestic – IPV separation - proceedings - details	String variable with details behind response above							
Context - IPV - Affair/New Relationship - Perp	22	0	1	0	0	23	23	1
Context - IPV - Affair/New Relationship - Victim	49	0	0	0	0	49	48	4
Context - IPV - suspicion or accusation of affair, controlling/extreme jealousy	62	0	4	1	1	68	65	7
Context - One-night stand or casual	3	0	0	3	0	6	5	0
Context: Domestic - sibling	0	4	0	0	0	4	4	0
Context: Domestic - son to mother	0	47	0	0	0	47	47	0
Context - mother-in-law	0	4	0	0	0	4	4	0
Context: Domestic - grandson to grandmother	0	8	0	0	0	8	8	0
Context: 'Honour' killing	9	1	0	0	0	10	10	0
Context: IPV – collateral	3	10	5	0	0	18	18	0
Context: Mental health of perpetrator	54	39	9	13	1	116	107	2
Context: 'Mercy' killing (evidence of consent)	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Context: 'Mercy' killing (no evidence of consent)	7	7	0	0	0	14	14	0
Context: Mercy killing' missing data	4	0	0	0	0	4	4	0
Context: Prostitution	8	0	4	17	0	29	13	29

Context: pornography	1	2	2	5	0	10	6	2
Context: reckless act - other	1	0	0	2	0	3	2	1
Context: Reckless act – vehicle	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Context: Rejected advance	1	0	6	1	1	9	7	1
Context: Sexual violence	13	4	11	29	0	57	36	0
Context: Symbolic woman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Context: Predator: Misogyny	6	5	11	30	0	52	35	9
Context_ Racially aggravated	2	0	1	18	0	21	3	1
Context: Political/terrorism	0	0	0	22	0	22	0	0

## Appendix 5

**Table 18 – Prevalence of contexts as a percentage of the cohort**

	Intimate Partner	Fam	Other known	Stranger	Unclear	Total	All women killed 2012 - 2014	Prostitution
Cohort size								
Context: Perpetrator intoxicated at time of incident	24.9	24.7	31.4	21.4	0.0	24.0	24.2	28.1
Context: Not known/recorded	0.0	0.0	3.9	1.9	50.0	2.3	2.5	0.0
Context: Argument/quarrel/conflict (excluding IPV/domestic)	14.9	20.8	15.7	1.0	0.0	12.6	0.0	9.4
Context: Arson	1.1	2.6	2.0	2.9	6.3	1.9	2.2	0.0
Context: Arson with intent	0.7	1.3	2.0	1.9	6.3	1.4	1.6	0.0
Context: Assisted suicide/suicide pact	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0
Context: Authority Illustration – known	0.0	0.0	5.9	1.0	0.0	0.8	0.7	3.1
Context: Authority Illustration – unknown	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0
Context: Crime - Mugging	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.8	0.0	1.4	1.3	6.3
Context: Crime -Burglary/robbery	0.0	1.3	19.6	18.4	12.5	6.2	5.6	3.1
Context: financial gain	3.0	5.2	17.6	4.9	18.8	5.6	6.3	6.3
Context: Crime/criminal act - other	1.5	3.9	5.9	10.7	12.5	4.5	3.6	6.3
Context: Domestic - extended family	0.4	15.6	0.0	1.0	0.0	2.7	3.1	0.0
Context: Domestic - Father to child	1.9	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3	2.7	0.0
Context: Domestic – IPV	100.0	10.4	11.8	1.0	0.0	55.0	62.0	40.6
Context_ IPV Separation	58.0	1.3	3.9	1.0	0.0	31.0	35.1	0.0
Context: Domestic – IPV separation - proceedings	7.1	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0
Context: Domestic – IPV separation - proceedings - details	String variable with details behind response above							
Context - IPV - Affair/New Relationship - Perp	8.2	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	5.1	3.1
Context - IPV - Affair/New Relationship - Victim	18.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.5	10.7	4.0
Context - IPV - suspicion or accusation of affair, controlling/extreme jealousy	23.0	0.0	7.8	1.0	6.3	13.2	14.5	7.0
Context - One-night stand or casual	1.1	0.0	0.0	2.9	0.0	1.2	1.1	0.0
Context: Domestic - sibling	0.0	5.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.9	0.0
Context: Domestic - son to mother	0.0	61.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.1	10.5	0.0
Context – mother-in-law	0.0	5.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.9	0.0
Context: Domestic - grandson to grandmother	0.0	10.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6	1.8	0.0
Context: 'Honour' killing	3.3	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	2.2	0.0
Context: IPV – collateral	1.1	13.0	9.8	0.0	0.0	3.5	4.0	0.0
Context: Mental health of perpetrator	20.1	50.6	17.6	12.6	6.3	22.5	23.9	2.0
Context: 'Mercy' killing (evidence of consent)	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0
Context: 'Mercy' killing (no evidence of consent)	2.6	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	3.1	0.0

Context: 'Mercy' killing missing data	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.9	0.0
Context: Prostitution	3.0	0.0	7.8	16.5	0.0	5.6	2.9	29.0
Context: pornography	0.4	2.6	3.9	4.9	0.0	1.9	1.3	2.0
Context: reckless act - other	0.4	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.6	0.4	1.0
Context: Reckless act – vehicle	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0
Context: Rejected advance	0.4	0.0	11.8	1.0	6.3	1.7	1.6	1.0
Context: Sexual violence	4.8	5.2	21.6	28.2	0.0	11.0	8.1	0.0
Context: Symbolic woman	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Context: Predator: Misogyny	2.2	6.5	21.6	29.1	0.0	10.1	7.8	9.0
Context_ Racially aggravated	0.7	0.0	2.0	17.5	0.0	4.1	0.7	1.0
Context: Political/terrorism	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.4	0.0	4.3	0.0	0.0

## Appendix 6

**Table 19 – Status of relationships**

These relationships were further broken down into their current status as below and are presented for information:

	Number	Percent
Still together: married, cohabitating	55	20.8
Still together: cohabitating	27	10.2
Still together: relationship legal status unclear, cohabitating	2	0.8
Still together, not living together	9	3.4
Considering process of separation/divorce, married	27	10.2
Considering separation, cohabitating	13	4.9
Considering separation, relationship status unclear	4	1.5
Considering separation, didn't live together	8	3.0
Separated. Formerly married, divorced, or legally married but no longer together	30	11.3
Separated, formerly cohabitating, unmarried	25	9.4
Separated, current/prior legal status of relationship unknown	13	4.9
Estranged, formerly married/divorced	8	3.0
Estranged. Formerly living together, unmarried.	6	2.3
Estranged, prior relationship legal status unknown	2	0.8
Estranged, former status unknown	1	0.4
Separated or separating - Sharia marriage	2	0.8
Casual/on-off	18	6.8
Missing data	15	5.7
Total	265	100.0

## Appendix 7 – Ethics Approval



### **REVISED RESEARCH ETHICS AND RISK ASSESSMENT FORM, MAY 2015**

#### **SECTION A: INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION**

<b>A.1. Name of researcher(s):</b>	Karen Ingala Smith
<b>A.2. Email Address(es) of researcher(s):</b>	Redacted
<b>A.3. Project Title:</b>	What can be learned from a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women?
<b>A.4. Project Funder (where appropriate):</b>	Self
<b>A.5. When do you intend to start data collection?</b>	May 2017
<b>A.6. When will the project finish?</b>	2021
<b>A.7. For students only:</b> ID: Degree, year and module: Supervisor:	Student Pcqt63 PhD Applied Social Sciences Nicole Westmarland
<b>A.8. Brief summary of the research questions:</b>  The aim of this research is 'to develop a connected analysis of men's fatal violence against women'. I intend to achieve this aim through the following objectives:  To understand the a) characteristics, b) circumstances and c) patterns of women who are killed by men  1. To understand the a) characteristics, b) circumstances and c) patterns of men who kill women  2. To consider how men's fatal violence against women is portrayed in the media	

**A.9. What data collection method/s are you intending you use, and why?**

Secondary analysis of existing femicide database: The Femicide Census

1. New data collection for case studies and media analysis of 7 cases of men's fatal violence against women in different circumstances will be gathered from The Guardian, The Daily Mail, The Daily Mirror and a newspaper local to each woman killed.
2. Existing femicide database: The Femicide Census
3. 7 cases studies of women killed by men from media of women using purposive

## **SECTION B: ETHICS CHECKLIST**

While all subsequent sections of this form should be completed for all studies, this checklist is designed to identify those areas where more detailed information should be given. Please note: It is better to identify an area where ethical or safety issues may arise and then explain how these will be dealt with, than to ignore potential risks to participants and/or the researchers.

	Yes	No
a). Does the study involve participants who are <i>potentially vulnerable</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
b). Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge/consent (e.g., covert observation of people in non-public places)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
c). Could the study cause harm, discomfort, stress, anxiety or any other negative consequence beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
d) Does the research address a <i>potentially sensitive topic</i> ?	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
e). Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
f). Are steps being taken to protect anonymity and confidentiality?	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
g). Are there potential risks to the researchers' health, safety and wellbeing in conducting this research beyond those experienced in the researchers' everyday life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓

## **SECTION C: METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION**

C.2. How will you recruit your participants and how will they be selected or sampled?

Media reports will be gathered from The Guardian, The Daily Mail, The Daily Mirror and a newspaper local to each woman killed.

C.3. How will you explain the research to the participants and gain their consent? (If consent will not be obtained, please explain why.)

There is no active engagement with participants

C.4. What procedures are in place to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of your participants and their responses?

The Femicide Census database is a body of data that already exists.

A Privacy Impact Assessment for the Femicide Census was developed with the support of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer for data collected for the Femicide Census. Guidance was then sought and received from the Information Commissioner regarding the collection and use of data for the Femicide Census and to ensure that standards stipulated in the Data Protection Act 2000 were met. Advice was sought regarding:

- Matters regarding identifiability, primarily regarding victims' families and perpetrators as the dead do not have rights under the Data Protection Act, and
- Conditions for processing, including fairness and the need for a legitimate reason for processing personal data.

The Information Commissioner provided a written response confirming that they did not have concerns and were reassured by access and the security measures regarding the data.

Cases used in the research will be anonymised and data presented will be amalgamated and therefore individuals will not be identifiable.

C.5. Are there any circumstances in which there would be a limit or exclusion to the anonymity/confidentiality offered to participants? If so, please explain further.

7 cases studies will be selected as exemplifying cases and as source material for analysis of the media's role in shaping narratives. Due to the detail that will be included it will be easily possible to identify the individuals concerned. All information used will already be in the public domain. It should be noted that the Data Protection Act does not apply to identifiable data that relate to deceased persons. However, it is important to consider the potential impacts on family members and/or friends of women killed by men; therefore steps will be taken to ensure that the engagement with the case studies will be carefully approached to try to avoid the possibility of causing upset or distress.

C.6. You must attach a **participant information sheet or summary explanation** that will be given to potential participants in your research.

Not applicable

C.5. Are there any circumstances in which there would be a limit or exclusion to the anonymity/confidentiality offered to participants? If so, please explain further.

7 cases studies will be selected as exemplifying cases and as source material for analysis of the media's role in shaping narratives. Due to the detail that will be included it will be easily possible to identify the individuals concerned. All information used will already be in the public domain. It should be noted that the Data Protection Act does not apply to identifiable data that relate to deceased persons. However, it is important to consider the potential impacts on family members and/or friends of women killed by men; therefore steps will be taken to ensure that the engagement with the case studies will be carefully approached to try to avoid the possibility of causing upset or distress.

C.6. You must attach a **participant information sheet or summary explanation** that will be given to potential participants in your research.

Not applicable.

<b>Within this, have you explained (in a way that is accessible to the participants):</b>	Yes	No
a). What the research is about?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b). Why the participants have been chosen to take part and what they will be asked to do?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c). Any potential benefits and/or risks involved in their participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) What levels of anonymity and confidentiality will apply to the information that they share, and if there are any exceptions to these?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e). What the data will be used for?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f). How the data will be stored securely?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g). How they can withdraw from the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h). Who the researchers are, and how they can be contacted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **SECTION D: POTENTIAL RISKS TO PARTICIPANTS**

You should think carefully about the risks that participating in your research poses to participants. Be aware that some subjects can be sensitive for participants even if they are not dealing explicitly with a 'sensitive' topic. Please complete this section as fully as possible and continue on additional pages if necessary.

What risks to participants may arise from participating in your research?	How likely is it that these risks will actually happen?	How much harm would be caused if this risk did occur?	What measures are you putting in place to ensure this does not happen (or that if it does, the impact on participants is reduced)?
1. Whilst not directly participants, it is important to consider the potential impacts on family members and/or friends of women killed by men	Possible	Distress/impact on emotional wellbeing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Anonymity: Cases used in the research will be anonymised and data presented will be amalgamated and therefor individuals will not be identifiable.</li><li>2. Engagement with case studies will be carefully approached to try to avoid the possibility of causing upset or distress to surviving family members/friends of victims.</li></ol>

**SECTION E: POTENTIAL RISKS TO RESEARCHERS**

You should think carefully about any hazards or risks to you as a researcher that will be present because of you conducting this research. Please complete this section as fully as possible and continue on additional pages if necessary. Please include an assessment of any health conditions, injuries, allergies or intolerances that may present a risk to you taking part in the proposed research activities (including any related medication used to control these), or any reasonable adjustments that may be required where a disability might otherwise prevent you from participating fully within the research.

1. Where will the research be conducted/what will be the research site? Not applicable - desktop research via a secure database.

What hazards or risks to you as a researcher may arise from conducting this research?	How likely is it that these risks will actually happen?	How much harm would be caused if this risk did happen?	What measures are being put in place to ensure this does not happen (or that if it does, the impact on researchers is reduced)?
1. Online abuse for running feminist project focusing on men’s violence against women	Very	• All levels: low to severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from supervisors and colleagues</li> <li>• Resilience of researcher (this will not be a new experience).</li> <li>• Use of tools in social media to reduce negative interactions (e.g. mute button on twitter)</li> </ul>

2. Threats and actions from perpetrators	Unlikely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly severe</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Address kept confidential</li> <li>2. Not releasing information that is not in public domain.</li> <li>3. Not selecting case studies where the alleged perpetrator was not found guilty of murder or manslaughter</li> <li>4. All cases except the 7 case studies referred to will be anonymised</li> <li>5. Professional advice will be sought from specialist agencies (e.g. police, paladin) if reasons for concern arise. The police will be contacted immediately should any serious concern arise.</li> <li>6. Research has pro bono support from international law firm</li> </ol>
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<p>3. Negative impact on emotional well being</p>			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Researcher has extensive contacts in violence against women field, including those dealing with femicide, support is sought as needed</li> <li>2. Support from supervisors is available as needed, both have long histories of working in subject area of men's violence against women</li> <li>3. Researcher's workplace (a charity supporting women who have experienced sexual/domestic violence) has clinical supervision and counselling available.</li> <li>4. University has counselling available</li> </ol>
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## **SECTION F: OTHER APPROVALS**

	Yes, document attached	Yes, documents to follow	No
a). Does the research require ethical approval from the NHS or a Social Services Authority? If so, please attach a copy of the draft form that you intend to submit, together with any accompanying documentation.	<input type="checkbox"/>		✓
b). Might the proposed research meet the definition of a <i>clinical trial</i> ? (If yes, a copy of this form must be sent to the University's Insurance Officer, Tel. 0191 334 9266, for approval, and evidence of approval must be attached before the project can start).	<input type="checkbox"/>		✓
c). Does the research involve working data, staff or offenders connected with the National Offender Management Service? If so, please see the guidance at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/nationaloffender-management-service/about/research">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/nationaloffender-management-service/about/research</a> and submit a copy of your proposed application to the NOMS Integrated Application System with your form.	<input type="checkbox"/>		✓
d). Does the project involve activities that may take place within Colleges of Durham University, including recruitment of participants via associated networks (e.g. social media)? (If so, approval from the Head of the College/s concerned will be required after SASS approval has been granted – see guidance notes for further details)		<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
e). Will you be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (criminal records) check to undertake the research?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
f) I confirm that travel approval has or will be sought via the online approval system at <a href="http://apps.dur.ac.uk/travel.forms">http://apps.dur.ac.uk/travel.forms</a> for all trips during this research which meet the following criteria:  For Students travelling away from the University, this applies where travel is not to their home and involves an overnight stay.  For Staff travelling away from the University, this applies only when travelling to an overseas destination.	Yes  <input type="checkbox"/>		No  ✓

## **SECTION G: SUBMISSION CHECKLIST AND SIGNATURES**

When submitting your ethics application, you should also submit supporting documentation as follows:

<b>Supporting Documents</b>	<b>Included (tick)</b>
Fully Completed Research Ethics and Risk Assessment Form	✓
Interview Guide (if using interviews)	Not applicable
Focus Group Topic Guide (if using focus groups)	Not applicable
Questionnaire (if using questionnaires)	Not applicable
Participant Information Sheet or Equivalent	Not applicable
Consent Form (if appropriate)	Not applicable
<i>For students only:</i> Written/email confirmation from all agencies involved that they agree to participate, also stating whether they require a DBS check. If confirmation is not yet available, please attach a copy of the letter that you propose to send to request this; proof of organisational consent must be forwarded to your Programme Secretary before any data is collected.	Not applicable

Please indicate the reason if any documents cannot be included at this stage:

(Please note that any ethics applications submitted without sufficient supporting documentation will not be able to be assessed.)

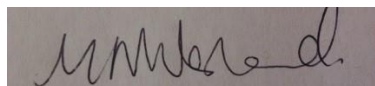
### **Signatures**

Researcher's Signature:



Date: 27 March 2017

Supervisor's Signature (PGR students only):



Date: 27.3.17

**Please keep a copy of your approved ethics application for your records.**

**If you decide to change your research significantly after receiving ethics approval, you must submit a revised ethics form along with updated supporting documentation before you can implement these changes.**

**PART F: OUTCOME OF THE APPLICATION**

<p><u>Reject</u></p> <p>The application is incomplete and/or cannot be assessed in its current format. Please complete the application fully.</p>	
<p><u>Revise and Resubmit</u></p> <p>The application cannot be approved in its current format. Please revise the application as per the comments below. Please complete the application fully.</p>	
<p><u>Approved, with Set Date for Review</u></p> <p>The application is approved and you may begin data collection.</p> <p>A date for further review of the project as it develops has been set to take place on: _____</p> <p>The anticipated nominated reviewer will be: _____</p>	
<p><u>Approved</u></p> <p>The application is approved and you may begin data collection.</p>	

Comments:

I approve this Ethics and Risk Assessment application and I have no conflict of interest to declare.



First Reviewer's Signature:

First Reviewer's Name: Will Craige

First Reviewer's Role: Ethics Committee Member

Date: 12/07/2017

If applicable:

I approve this Ethics and Risk Assessment application and I have no conflict of interest to declare.

Second Reviewer's Signature: 

Second Reviewer's Name: Martin Roderick

Second Reviewer's Role: PGR Director

Date: 21/07/2017

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