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INTER-AGENCY CO-OPERATION
AND
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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Katharine Elizabeth Ryan

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Arts in Anthropology

University of Durham

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1 - 4 MAR 1998

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DECLARATION

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INTER-AGENCY CO-OPERATION AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ABSTRACT

This thesis is based on research into inter-agency co-operation and domestic violence. The use of multi-agency working has been developing in recent years to tackle various social problems, and there is a growing response to Government initiatives regarding domestic violence. I have focused my attentions on the dynamics of the inter-agency groups of the Domestic Violence Forums of Durham, Liverpool and Lincolnshire whose meetings I regularly attended. The data was collected through the use of participant-observation and interviews with participating agencies. I carried out interviews with practitioners from the many agencies who work with domestic violence issues. I also had meetings with several victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. The aim of the thesis is to document and evaluate inter-agency co-operation in relation to its role in identifying and addressing the problems associated with domestic violence. The policy implications of my research are significant given the apparent lack of structured inter-agency co-operation highlighted in cases such as the Dunblane tragedy, as well as in the case of the Frederick and Rosemary West murders, each of which caused a public outcry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are very much due to my supervisors, Dr Robert Simpson and Dr Elisa Sobo, of the Anthropology Department, University of Durham, for their guidance, encouragement and invaluable advice.

When I embarked upon this research I promised myself that my thesis would not simply end up on some academic shelf but it would have a practical purpose. As I gained access to the three Forums their members requested, in return for their help, a copy of my finished thesis so they, along with other relevant people and agencies, could benefit from my research. They expressed their interest in my research, particularly my methodological approach. I am deeply indebted to the members of the three Domestic Violence Forums - Durham, Lincolnshire and Liverpool - who were kind enough to allow me to research them. The three chairpersons - Fiona, Val and Lily - helped me immensely, as did their fellow-members and I am particularly appreciative of their co-operation and tolerance.

I am extremely grateful to various people at Durham Prison. I received help from Governors, Training Department Officers, Probation Officers, staff and prisoners. I owe particular thanks to two senior officers Mr Jack Milbourne and Mr Keith Jackson, and also the prisoners I spoke with on a regular basis.

Several victims of domestic violence were kind enough to talk to me, for which I am most grateful, because I realize that it could be painful for them. I was helped in this way by

women and children and staff at the refuges, as well as by former victims from Durham, Lincolnshire and Liverpool.

I also acknowledge, with thanks, the help and support given by Stephen Byrne and Larry Redmond from the production team for Channel Four's 'Brookside', the researcher Craig Harris from Granada's 'Coronation Street', members from the Durham and the Lincolnshire local press, and various people at the Home Office and Durham Magistrates Court.

I should also like to express my thanks and appreciation to various University of Durham Departmental staff and fellow students who have contributed in any way to this thesis - particularly members of the Anthropology, Politics and Sociology Departments.

The O'Brien family in Liverpool not only helped me gain access to the 'Brookside' team, but were most helpful and supportive, particularly with the warm and generous hospitality they showed me during my research visits to Liverpool. Many thanks are due to them. I would also like to thank Ruth Siner for introducing me to the Chair of the Liverpool Forum. And finally, my thanks are due to members of my family and to my friends for their support during my research. Special thanks are due to both my parents and to a family friend, Miss Betty Robbins, who have helped me in numerous ways during my entire life and have made important and helpful contributions towards my research.

CONTENTS PAGE

	page
ABSTRACT	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	7
The Problems: The lack of Co-operation	7
An Emerging Solution: Inter-agency Co-operation	11
The Research Outline	12
Anthropology and Policy	14
What is Domestic Violence	16
Measurements and Costs of Domestic Violence	20
Methodology	23
Thesis Outline	31
CHAPTER TWO: FORUM AND THEIR AGENCIES	33
Domestic Violence Forums in the UK	33
Durham Domestic Violence Forum	36
Liverpool Domestic Violence Forum	49
Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum	62
The Meetings	77
Durham Domestic Violence Forum Meetings	80
Liverpool Domestic Violence Forum Meetings	85
Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum Meetings	91
CHAPTER THREE: THEMES AND ISSUES	99
Families and Forums	99
The Family: Ideals and Realities	102
Inter-Agency Co-operation: Ideals and Realities	105
Awareness	112
Membership	119
Public and Private in the Operation of Inter-Agency Domestic Violence Forums	124
Culture and Boundaries	126
CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION	134
Summary	134
BIBLIOGRAPHY	145
APPENDICES	147

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Violence and abuse within families is currently a major concern of the public and of social policy makers; practitioners and researchers. Within this overall context, domestic violence against women has entered public view as rarely before. New policies and practices have been implemented, due to the fact that the full extent of violence against women in the home has finally begun to be recognised. (Hague. et al. 1995. p.1).

THE PROBLEMS: THE LACK OF CO-OPERATION

Since embarking upon my research into inter-agency co-operation there has been considerable attention given to the issue, particularly within the public domain. The case of Fred and Rosemay West in Gloucestershire, and even more recently, the actions of Thomas Hamilton in Dunblane have highlighted the failure of agencies to co-operate and communicate with tragic consequences.

In the much publicized case of the West family of Gloucestershire clear signs of child abuse went undetected. In response to the extent of Fred and Rosemary West's crimes and the accusations of a serious lack of agency responses The Bridge Child Care Consultancy Service and Gloucestershire Area Child Protection Committee conducted an enquiry. In 'Part 8 Review Overview Report in respect of Charmaine and Heather West', several incidents were reported where various agencies, including educational, medical, social and legal services, had registered their contact with one or more of the West family, on more than one occasion. It is apparent from investigation that signs were noted but not followed up. The implication throughout these enquiries is that, had some of these agencies communicated with one

another, maybe the signs would have been given greater significance. Concerns that signs of child abuse were overlooked are supported by the Bridge Report on the West family. The report gives the following examples -

....when one isolates some of the conditions treated it is possible to see that there were worrying signs hidden in the mass of medical notes. For example: A number of family members being treated for thrush, including Frederick West, a child with scratches and bruises around her breast area with three explanations including the child saying the mother did it when she (the child) was naughty, and a minor with gonorrhoea..... (The Bridge Report. 17/11/95. p.8)

From the investigations into the West case there is plenty of evidence to show that the family had been in some way involved with a number of agencies such as the police, educational, medical, prison services, social services and local authorities. These investigations, particularly the Bridge Child Care Consultancy Service's Report, highlighted the need for agencies to work more closely together. The fact that agencies operated independently from one another, with little co-operation and communication between them, was seen to have allowed the crimes committed by the Wests to continue for so long. According to an article in the Northern Echo around the time of Rosemary West's conviction, regarding the details which various agencies had gathered about the family "Taken in isolation, the events do not seem particularly significant. But seen together there may have been cause for alarm,...". (The Northern Echo. 23/11/95. p.8). It is believed that, had the agencies who had contact with the West family shared their information, maybe some positive action could have been taken in the early days, thereby saving a lot of lives.

With regard to Dunblane, a profile of Thomas Hamilton, the gun-man, has been pieced together from comments made to the media. The picture of a man in a rage against his community seems to be a common factor in all the commentaries. People are claiming that if

the appropriate agencies had got together earlier in his life this most tragic incident might well have been prevented. According to an article in the Sunday Observer newspaper, “ Four councils and police forces had files of complaints and allegations - yet nobody put the warning signs together.” (Observer. 17/3/96. p.1). However, for different agencies to be able to work together in the way the media suggest is not simply a question of addressing possible bureaucratic inefficiency. The coming together of multiple agencies involves questions of institutional cultures and languages and the dynamics of the newly formed group.

The public response to the West and Hamilton cases demonstrates a mounting demand for agencies to mobilize their skills and resources in a structured and co-operative manner. There is a serious need for carefully thought-out action instead of crisis management. My own research into domestic violence and inter-agency co-operation is intended to be an ethnographic contribution to the debate in relation to the way that agencies charged with responsibility for welfare and protection might operate more effectively.

The apparent reluctance on the part of agencies, such as the Police, Probation Service, Social Services, Department of Social Security, Judiciary, Health Service, Education and the Voluntary Sector, to acknowledge the need for them to work together has been of particular interest. Agencies have, in the past, tended to operate in considerable isolation from one another. For example, there has been a tendency for agencies who work solely with victims of domestic violence to have had little direct contact with the agencies associated with the perpetrators. The primary concern of the former is with the welfare of female victims and their children. Organisations such as women’s refuges focus all their attentions and resources on the victims. Agencies, such as the probation service on the other hand work with the

perpetrators of domestic violence. With such conflicting loyalties, agencies who work with one or other type of client have subsequently viewed the issues associated with domestic violence purely from either the victims' or the perpetrators' perspective rather than taking on board the whole picture. Each agency / organisation has its own language, culture, tradition and skills. Whilst there is often agreement regarding ultimate objectives there has been only a limited amount of awareness and understanding amongst different agencies with regard to their respective philosophies and approaches to issues concerning domestic violence.

The public at large has tended to see domestic violence as a private concern and not one of great importance to society. According to Mullender, "Despite an upsurge of public attention in Britain ... [domestic violence] is still largely a hidden problem surrounded by myths and misconceptions". (Mullender et al. 1994. p.2). This "upsurge" appears only to have taken place in the last few years. Agencies have been influenced by the labels that have been given to each of them and also by the ways in which their philosophies and attitudes have been identified by people in our society. The police, for example, have tended to be viewed as having been reluctant to become involved in any incident which took place within the home. An incident involving domestic violence has often been referred to, by the police and also by the public, as 'only a domestic'. Public pressure appears to have brought about the police force's recent attempts to change this image. In two of the domestic violence forums in my study, the police force is one of the most active and committed participants. At the same time, the women associated with support groups, such as women's refuges, have been perceived as extreme left-wing feminists who are 'anti-men'. Such images as these have been reinforced by the tendency for agencies to operate in isolation rather than working together.

AN EMERGING SOLUTION: INTER-AGENCY CO-OPERATION

In 1993 a Ministerial Group on Domestic Violence was set up as a response to the Home Affairs Select Committee's report on domestic violence. The Ministerial Group now includes Ministers from several Government Departments and is chaired by a representative from the Home Office. The Home Office issued circulars and documents which specifically encouraged the police to set up local domestic violence forums. According to a document entitled "Inter-Agency Work and Domestic Violence", for example, "government support for multi-agency initiatives appears to have been broadly welcomed by women who have experienced domestic violence. and by practitioners, researchers and activists in the field." (Hague et al. 1995 p.3). However, the paper goes on to say that government support has produced some anxiety among practitioners. They fear that "amid the general enthusiasm for the approach, the real, 'felt' needs and views of women and children experiencing domestic violence might be overlooked." (Hague et al. 1995 p. 3).

Nonetheless, it was the apparent lack of a clear understanding amongst different agencies about their own role and that of other agencies in relation to issues concerning domestic violence that appears to have been the key factor in the development of the Government approved inter-agency initiative. The broad nature of the work of some agencies working with domestic violence, such as the police and local authorities, means that it is not easy for them to focus their attention on the range of issues raised by acts of domestic violence. This has led each of the Forums in this study to work hard towards encouraging and providing training as well as incorporating a wide range of perspectives and expertise. A central objective of inter-agency co-operation is to provide the participating agencies with a clearer

understanding and appreciation of one another's work. (see Appendix One for the Government's aims and objectives). All three forums in the study are clearly committed to providing more effective services and increasing public awareness. They are working towards counteracting the misconceptions of domestic violence that exist within the public arena as well as amongst the agencies. The inter-agency initiative is attempting to break down the boundaries between the different agencies, which have been constructed through their respective cultures. The boundaries are marked by barriers which often reinforce the differences between the agencies. The barriers are constructed by both society and the respective agencies, through their differences in use of language, approaches to how best to tackle particular concerns and attitudes towards either the victims or perpetrators of domestic violence. What is of particular interest to note at this stage is that, whereas responses to the West and Dunblane tragedies are about action over particular cases, from my research it appears that the agencies associated with inter-agency co-operation, particularly those in my study, are at this stage aiming towards something far more general. They are working towards a breakdown of the barriers which they see as restricting their ability to communicate freely with one another on a regular basis.

THE RESEARCH OUTLINE

The main objective of this research has been to investigate, by means of literature and field research, how the recent policy of inter-agency co-operation is working in practice, paying attention to particular ideologies and their interaction in the context of Domestic Violence Forums. The research reveals a clear discrepancy, a difference between the 'ideal' of inter-

agency co-operation and the 'reality' of such initiatives. The ideal is often seen by forum members in terms of harmony with the hope that the barriers separating agencies from one another would disappear and there would be full co-operation and communication between them. The inter-agency policy would thus be expected to lead to the development of full inter-agency co-operation throughout the country involving all the key agencies associated with domestic violence. Some might argue that the ideal would therefore be perfect harmony between the agencies within inter-agency forums. In reality, however, working and living in groups does not automatically bring harmony, but is often accompanied by various kinds of conflict, such as differences in priorities. Some of the agencies, such as Women's Aid, view issues associated with domestic violence as of utmost importance, while other agencies with additional commitments, such as the Samaritans, do not see it as their main concern. (I will be discussing the issue of prioritizing further in the following chapters, particularly in Chapter Two in relation to the Lincolnshire Forum). The present research provides an ethnographical description of how various agencies are attempting to bring about and sustain inter-agency co-operation.

Part of my research has involved an investigation into the fact that despite the recent outcries for inter-agency co-operation there is still no mandatory policy for appropriate agencies to work together in a structured manner - one which makes it compulsory for appropriate agencies to develop an inter-agency initiative within their geographical area. Existing developments are still of an ad hoc nature. I believe that possible effects from the absence of such a policy can be observed within my research. It is interesting to note that in the Lincolnshire and Liverpool Forums police authorities are active members while in the Durham Forum there is no such involvement.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND POLICY

According to Wright, “policy is a major institution of Western and international governance, on a par with ‘family’ and ‘society’, yet one which has received scant attention from anthropologists.” (Wright, S. et al. 1995. p.7.) I have explored how different agencies present and articulate their respective philosophies and how these are then negotiated within the Forums. Particular attention is given to the issues surrounding the fact that despite the recent outcries for inter-agency co-operation numerous agencies are still not taking an active role in such an initiative. My research reveals that anthropologists can “turn their professional gaze towards an analysis of the structures through which policy operates and the discourses and agencies through which it is articulated.” (Wright, et al. 1995. p.7.).

Research into domestic violence has been undertaken from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives, such as sociological, psychological, and legal. However, there does not appear to have been any anthropological approach to this problem. More generally, Wright and Shore comment upon the lack of anthropological input into the study of policies within the Western world. According to Wright and Shore

An anthropological approach to policy studies would treat the modes of decision-makers as ethnographic data rather than as frame-work for analysis. Instead of assisting in this vain attempt to present the ‘policy process’ in terms of systematic and tidy ideal-types, anthropological approaches would explore the characteristic cultural complexity and messiness of that process. (Wright, . et al. 1995. p. 27).

As Wright and Shore (1995) note “Anthropology is not simply a matter of studying other peoples’ moral systems, it also requires that we study our own. A focus on ‘policy’ provides

us with one way of doing this.” (Wright. et al. 1995. p. 28). My work represents an attempt to actualise this imperative.

Although the coming together of agencies will inevitably make enormous demands on all the people concerned, it provides them with an ideal opportunity to share their knowledge, expertise and resources with one another. My research shows that inter-agency co-operation is a process which is enabling numerous agencies to aspire towards a common ground in the struggle to respond more effectively to domestic violence. However, this research reveals that inter-agency initiatives do not always ensure automatic success. I demonstrate that although inter-agency co-operation is seen by many as a desirable approach to domestic violence it has, by its very nature, many pitfalls. An inter-agency initiative is, by definition, the coming together of various agency representatives with different outlooks, assumptions, philosophies and ideologies under a single umbrella. Using a case study of some inter-agency domestic violence forums, I see if in practice the forums are an arena for the articulation of organisational identities. This begins with each representative being an individual, with his or her own particular set of life’s experiences. It is then further compounded by their immersion in the distinctive cultures of their respective agencies. Each individual will be responding to others from within their own respective agency’s culture and in its language and terminology while at the same time being expected to behave in a way which complements other agencies. All the members of a forum therefore have to take into account a range of institutional cultures and the individual personalities of particular representatives and furthermore learn from and work with this diversity. In order for a forum to be established, these processes of adjustment and accommodation appear to be a crucial stage in its development.

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ?

From my research I have discovered that there is general uncertainty about what actually constitutes domestic violence. Mooney states that “In researching domestic violence, the first issue that needs to be confronted is that of definition” (Mooney 1996 p.204). There are several definitions for the term ‘domestic violence’. According to Mooney “There has been a lack of consistency between researchers, policy makers, members of the public and so on, over the relationship and types of behaviour that should be included under the rubric of ‘domestic violence’, and considerable debate over whether the term should be used at all...” (Mooney. et al. 1996. p.204). Agreeing upon a definition is one of the main problems faced by the forums in my study. This is mainly as a result of the different agencies associated with the forums having their own perspectives on the term which are in turn determined by legal, social, political or medical backgrounds of the forum participants. These numerous interpretations of the term domestic violence are often influenced by the people using them.

In the case of the police, for example, their interpretation of the term tends to lean more towards the legal implications of domestic violence, while women’s organisations focus on male oppression against women.

It appears that the fact that acts associated with domestic violence are usually kept within the privacy of the home, thus leading to a limited awareness within society, adds to the difficulty of reaching an agreed understanding of the term ‘domestic violence.’ To start with, the term ‘domestic violence’ does not define either who is carrying out the violence or who is receiving it. The term ‘domestic’ clearly refers to the home but because the home is seen as a sacred and private place people tend to be hesitant about getting involved with matters associated

with it. The word also has connotations of 'cosiness.' One of the definitions given to 'domestic' in 'The Oxford Reference Dictionary' is "fond of home life". This implies that the domestic sphere is always a happy and friendly place. The use of the word 'domestic' appears to weaken or lessen the seriousness of the offence. The word 'violence' tends to be associated purely with physical action. The term 'domestic violence' does not appear to express the serious nature of what is entailed, and nor does it acknowledge the different forms of 'domestic violence' involved. There is a tendency, for example, for domestic violence to be equated only with male violence against women. However, groups of people, such as those in the Domestic Violence Forums in my study, are acknowledging the fact that it does not remain within the boundaries of male to female violence. It is also beginning to be seen as including physical, emotional, psychological and sexual abuse against any individual within the domestic sphere. Domestic violence can also be seen within lesbian and homosexual relationships. However, violence by males against females is seen to be the largest group of reported cases of domestic violence. According to the Inter-Agency Circular,

Domestic violence includes any form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse between people in a close relationship. It can take a number of forms such as physical assault, sexual abuse, rape, threats and intimidation. It may also be accompanied by other kinds of intimidation such as degradation, mental and verbal abuse, humiliation and systematic criticism. (Home Office and Welsh Office, August, 1995).

Walker and McNicol point out that "Domestic violence is an emotional topic and terminology can be problematic. Violence within families takes many forms, but the term 'domestic violence' has been used as an umbrella label to describe spouse abuse, wife abuse, battered wives, battered women and domestic disputes. Critics of the term argue that it masks who is the victim and who is the perpetrator, and that it somehow trivialises the problem." (Walker, et al. 1994. p.ix). Nevertheless I, too, shall use the term 'domestic violence' throughout my

research for the same two reasons that they give - namely it is the language of my informants and the language of policy.

Agreeing upon a working definition of the term 'domestic violence' has appeared to prove problematic for the three forums in this study. Not only do the different agencies differ slightly in their interpretations but so do some of the individuals concerned. However, the Liverpool Domestic Violence Forum has, as a group, agreed to describe domestic violence as

...mental, physical, sexual, emotional, and/or economic abuse of one partner by another. This includes the threat of violence and mental cruelty as well as physical violence. In the vast majority of cases, domestic violence is caused by a man to a woman. The word woman is therefore used throughout this policy. The relationship of the parties may be one of marriage, de facto or cohabitation and includes relationships between the same sex couples. The parties may also be divorced, separated, never have or no longer cohabit. What characterises the relationship is actual threatened or attempted violence from one partner to another, whether that relationship is still underway or has ended. Domestic violence is not about disputes or arguments. (Liverpool Domestic Violence Forum Constitution).

At the time of my research into the Durham Domestic Violence Forum, they did not have an agreed definition of the term domestic violence. The forum did not appear to have reached the stage where agreed terms and definitions could be set out. According to a member of the forum, agreeing upon a definition of the term domestic violence will come at a later stage of the forum's development, for example, when other agencies are taking an active role in their inter-agency initiative. As the main aim of a forum is co-operation between agencies and the formation of a common ground, some of the members have said that the process of agreeing upon definitions and understanding terminology will be more effective at a later date. The Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum has, like the Liverpool Forum, agreed upon a working definition of the term domestic violence. According to a paper presented by the forum during a training day, the forum has described domestic violence as ".....behaviour which causes or

has the potential to cause physical, psychological, emotional or sexual harm and which makes it difficult for the victim to remain in their homes without fear.” (Lincolnshire Forum. 7 October 1995).

Unearthing exactly when domestic violence became part of public discourses about private family life appears to be as vague and problematic as agreeing upon a definition of the term domestic violence. The United Nations say that “Research on domestic violencehas been undertaken perhaps only in the last 25 years.” (United Nations. 1993. p.6). Because domestic violence has been, and still is, seen as a private issue available data associated with the subject is limited. The social stigma attached to being associated with domestic violence, either as a victim or a perpetrator, has kept issues and people concerned with it out of the public arena. Society has had a good deal invested in the idea of the family as a successful and harmonious institution, rather than facing a reality in which there is conflict, inequality and on occasion violence.

The finance company Allied Dunbar, who have selected to focus their latest charitable funds and support on the campaign against domestic violence financially and through publicity, have illustrated in an information leaflet that they have compiled, that the problem of domestic violence is part of our history. They report that a woman called Margaret Neffield of York, in 1395, in one of the earliest recorded cases of domestic violence in England, produced people in an ecclesiastical court to testify that they had witnessed her husband threatening her with a knife, wounding her and breaking a bone. The leaflet continues

Despite such evidence, the court held that the case for the equivalent of today’s legal separation had not been made and the woman was compelled to continue to live with her husband. .. Sadly, very little appears to have changed in six hundred years. (Allied Dunbar. 1/94).

The early nineteenth century saw what Deltufo called “the first social reform movement to take violence towards women seriously, naming the problem and attempting to address it.” (Deltufo. 1995. p.112). Right back in the 1830s the main aim of the women’s movement was, as it still is today, to introduce laws which would help protect women. Gaining the right for women to vote were also high on the agenda of such women’s movements. Their work did not help gain the vote for women until 1920. In 1962, “The first form of domestic violence was uncovered and recognized as a social problem”. (Gelles. p.203) Through the publication of his paper ‘The Battered Child Syndrome,’ the physician C. Henry Kempe brought the issue of child abuse into the public arena. Nine years later - 1971 - the first women’s refuge in the world was opened by Erin Pizzey in Chiswick, London. Today, this refuge is known as ‘The Refuge’. According to Allied Dunbar, “As a result of the publicity this received and the women’s movement that was active at the time, women in many other parts of the country formed groups to create refuges in their home towns.” (Allied Dunbar. 1/94 p.2)

MEASUREMENTS AND COSTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

When it comes to the frequency of domestic violence, it is virtually impossible to gain an accurate picture of the extent of its existence in statistical terms. This, I believe, is for a variety of reasons. There is, for example, the stigma attached to being a victim and the fact that it is seen as a private issue, which is likely to limit the number of cases reported. Another reason is that there are many adverse elements of domestic life that have been placed under the

umbrella label of domestic violence. Therefore defining the term domestic violence is so varied.

A probation officer at Durham Prison commented upon the lack of reliable statistics for domestic violence. She said that existing statistics overlook other issues, such as a number of victims not coming forward, male victims feeling that it is not socially acceptable to own up to being a victim, some incidents being placed into different categories, and the issue of provocation. She also pointed out that the preventative work and counselling work associated with such an issue as domestic violence is not measurable. According to this officer, the lack of reliable statistics has caused the government and various agencies to feel that they are unable to justify spending their time and money on issues associated with domestic violence. The tables and graphs in the appendix (appendix Four), which were collected from the Lincolnshire Police Force and the Lincoln and Boston women's refuges, show that although statistics are incomplete they do help to present some indication of the issues associated with domestic violence. Therefore, there does appear to be some striking evidence supporting a high level of domestic violence. According to the Labour Party, in their written consultation on domestic violence,

Men are most likely to experience and fear violence in public places, whereas for women and children the home is the most likely setting. While the popular perception of violent crime may be an assault by a stranger in the street, the 1992 British Crime Survey showed that domestic violence - overwhelmingly of men against women - is the most common form of assault. Of an estimated 990,000 assaults against women in 1991 almost half could be classified as domestic incidents, whilst a further 100,000 were classified as 'home based'. So whilst women's primary fear is of attacks by strangers, and most women take preventative action against this, it is far more common for the perpetrator to be a known man. Domestic violence accounts for four times as many violent assaults on women than does mugging. This violence is committed by men who the women have been encouraged to trust, taught to respect and whom they love. (Labour Party. 10/1995. p.4-5)

Existing statistics have helped in that they have enabled organisations such as women's refuges both to gauge and present an indication of the extent of domestic violence against women and children. According to a report made by a member of the Swindon women's refuge in conjunction with Allied Dunbar

More than 10,000 women and 20,000 children will stay in a refuge each year. Sadly, due to the lack of refuge places, in many areas only 40% of those requesting accommodation will be offered a place. These figures suggest, therefore, that possibly 25,000 families are likely to seek refuge accommodation each year and, perhaps, that up to 15,000 of these families will be unable to find space in a refuge when they need it. (Allied Dunbar. 1/94).

Dobash discusses how not only the victims and perpetrators suffer from personal and financial costs in relation to domestic violence, but as a result of the high levels of domestic violence it also forces both social and financial costs on to society at large. From my research it is clear that in addition to the physical, emotional and psychological effects upon the victims, there are also financial costs which tax payers, relevant agencies and the victims and perpetrators have to pay. According to a member of the Lincolnshire Forum the table in appendix Five shows how even one isolated case of domestic violence has the potential of causing society a great deal of expense. One of the main aims of the forums in this study has been for all the agencies involved to collectively assess their resources and the services they provide in their geographical areas in order to ensure that between them they can provide a full and highly effective service. They hope that this could be done without any overlap and any unnecessary repetition. They also predict that working together will enable agencies to save both time and money while at the same time reducing the level of domestic violence.

According to Dobash “Ignoring the violence does not make it go away nor does it reduce the human and financial costs incurred by its continuation.” (Dobash. 1995). She points out that the victims of domestic violence will still need costly help from various agencies, while the perpetrators will repeatedly turn up in court. Dobash admits that a positive policy which attempts to bring an end to violence in the home, instead of continuing to ignore it, will also use resources, but she argues that even if the same amount were spent on trying to eliminate domestic violence as on simply containing it, it would certainly be worth it, because of personal and social gains. Dobash clearly believes that the human and social costs, as well as the financial ones, of allowing domestic violence to continue unabated would be far too high.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this thesis was collected by means of written and verbal communication and with the use of participant and non-participant observation. The main sites for the research were three Domestic Violence Forums - Durham, Lincolnshire and Liverpool - where I was allowed to attend their meetings on a regular basis. My data also included minutes and other forms of written material from meetings, to which I had unlimited access in most cases. This data enabled me to focus on the ideologies and philosophies of the various agencies and how they interact with one another at the level of practice.

My methodology has brought me into contact with numerous voluntary and statutory agencies, such as members of the Home Office and Women’s Aid. I also undertook a range of subsidiary tasks as part of my strategy of immersing myself in the culture of domestic violence. I spoke with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence in order to gain a clearer

understanding of both the issues and agencies associated with domestic violence. I have also spoken with prisoners, prison staff, police officers, women's refuge workers, victim support staff, solicitors, magistrates, probation officers, members of social services, people from local governments and political organisations, campaign activists, members of the media, people from the medical professions, and fellow researchers.

I also gathered some of my data from books, journals, newspapers, media transcripts, leaflets, magazines, booklets and relevant letters. I also received copies of official reports on some of the prisoners I interviewed at Durham Prison, which were provided by the prisoners themselves. I obtained literature about conference proceedings, official reports - for example the Bridge Report Part 8, which is the case review in respect of Charmaine and Heather West, and was prepared by the Bridge Child Care Consultancy Service and published by Gloucestershire County Council Area Child Protection Committee (November 1995) - the very recent Parliamentary Family Bill 1996, and the Home Office 'Inter-Agency Circular; Inter-Agency Co-ordination to Tackle Domestic Violence'.

Bernard refers to the analysis of qualitative data as being "the search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain the existence of those patterns". (Bernard. 1994. p.360). I have looked for "patterns" in inter-agency co-operation using three 'field sites' - the three domestic violence forums of Liverpool, Durham and Lincolnshire. I tackled this by observing, taking field notes, making the occasional audio recording, taking photographs (see Appendix Two for examples), collecting relevant press cuttings, video recording appropriate television programmes, taking notes during interviews and forum meetings, saving appropriate letters I have received during my research, and gathering different forms of written material. Bernard

refers to “texts written by native people about their own lives”. (Bernard. 1994. p.360). In the context of my research, these include leaflets, posters, letters, books, reports, transcripts and documents about the forums and their respective agencies.

Three Domestic Violence Forums were chosen in order to compare and contrast the process of group formation in different contexts. After preliminary investigations, Durham, Liverpool and Lincolnshire were identified as the three key areas for in-depth studies. To have studied only one area, would have considerably limited my ability to gain sufficient insight into the dynamics of inter-agency processes. The study of two forums would not have provided me with an adequate foundation for a comparative study, while four or more might have proved unwieldy and practically very difficult. Basing the research on three forums was manageable, and provided a sound basis for comparative study.

Each one of the three forums selected has distinctive features in its development and evolution. Each represents a different stage of the development of the Government approved initiative of agencies coming together to form an inter-agency approach to tackling the problems which are associated with domestic violence. The Durham Forum is in its early stages of development, while the Liverpool and Lincolnshire Forums have been in existence since 1992. Although the Liverpool Forum has been operating for the same length of time as the Lincolnshire Forum, it does appear to be further on in its approach to inter-agency work, as a number of sub-groups and campaign strategies are well established, and a co-ordinator has been employed to liaise between agencies and the public.

Interviews were carried out with Forum participants. These were of a semi-structured nature (Bernard, 1994) as I wanted the people I interviewed to feel able to open up to me and trust me. More structured interviewing could have limited my findings as my informants might have felt restricted in what they could say. Some structure to the interviews, however, ensured that the data I gathered from one field site could be used in relation to the others. I had prepared “a written list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order” (Bernard 1994 p.209) while at the same time allowing myself and my informants some leeway in how the discussion could progress.

Throughout my research I used a variety of methods to communicate with my informants. With the three main field sites being some distance from one another I needed additional means of communicating with the people concerned. A number of my interviews were conducted over the telephone. This was mainly a consequence of timing and geographical distance between myself and the people from whom I wished to gain information. Telephone interviews and conversations enabled me to gain data from a number of agencies throughout the country and for me to keep in regular contact with my informants irrespective of which field site I might have been attending. While I was in Lincolnshire researching the Forum, for example, I was able to remain in contact with the Durham and Liverpool Forums and subsequently keep up-to-date on how all three groups were developing.

Regular, direct, face-to-face contact with informants helped develop their trust in me and confidence in my research. This was highlighted for me in the response of the Liverpool Forum. Before I met the forum members they appeared to be somewhat hesitant about me and my research. We met and discussed their reservations. Their main concern appeared to

be an understandable apprehension about a stranger entering their group and making judgements about them. I explained that my research was concerned with group dynamics rather than specific individuals. After this meeting they discussed the project without my presence and agreed to allow me to attend their forum meetings. I feel that as the other members saw that I had the trust of their Chair they gradually felt more comfortable about accepting and eventually trusting me. Their trust was highlighted when they expressed a sincere interest in the possibility of my conducting the type of research at a later date which would entail closer monitoring of their agencies.

In addition to verbal communication, I also exchanged various forms of written correspondence. For example, when I had first applied for access to the Liverpool Forum I wrote a letter outlining my research to the Chair of the forum. When the forum members eventually decided to allow me to attend, I received an agreement in writing. This specified certain conditions. One was that I was to leave the room if ever members requested it. The other was that a member of the forum, probably the Chair, should read the thesis prior to anyone else reading it. I was concerned that my tutor should be able to see it first because the other forums had not requested to see my work before it was assessed. I felt uneasy about allowing one particular group to read about the other two prior to their seeing it. Had I fully agreed to these conditions, my thesis might have been at risk of being biased by having the people in my research dictating what I submit. In order to try to counteract the risk, a compromise was reached in which my supervisor could read the work first and as long as their Chair could have access to any of my work specifically about them they agreed to my continuing access. However, the fact that this process caused a delay in their response to my research is, I believe, of significance in that it demonstrates a difference in the way statutory

and voluntary agencies operate. The Liverpool Forum's membership has been predominantly made up of statutory agencies, while the other two forums have much more input from the voluntary agencies. The difference in response might well be accounted for by the fact that voluntary agencies are generally accountable only to themselves, while the statutory agencies have a legal obligation to the State.

Research such as this presents a range of ethical problems. These include confidentiality and impartiality. The main way in which I have attempted to maintain research integrity is by ensuring that all my subjects were always aware of my purpose in talking with them and studying their practice. For example, when I attended each of my first forum meetings I officially introduced myself and my research. This ensured that I could conduct my research in a way which minimised the uncertainties and ambiguities of my presence as I had made it clear to the forum members who and what I was and why I was conducting this research.

Cognitive anthropology, according to Bernard, "is the study of how peoples of different cultures acquire information about the world (cultural transmission), how they process that information and reach decisions, and how they act on that information in ways that other members of their culture consider appropriate." (Bernard 1994 p.238). The insight of cognitive anthropology is useful in that I view each of the agencies and their forums as being a culture in its own right.

I used continuous monitoring in order to aid the build-up of a productive rapport with my subjects so that I could gather a more accurate record. Throughout the year I attended the majority of the Durham and Lincolnshire Forums' meetings. My visits to the Liverpool Forum

were fewer because it took longer for me to gain access into the Forum. I conducted more than one interview with some of the agency representatives, returned to the prison on several occasions, and generally remained in regular communication with my contacts for the duration of my research.

Throughout this research I have referenced some of the information I have received as having been given by, for example, Informant 1. The reason why I have not named the people concerned, in these cases, is because they did not want to be identified. They felt that the points which they made were valid, but they did not feel it necessary for them to be named.

Access to Forums was simply in terms of verbal and written exchanges and I also partook in a good deal of 'hanging out' (Bernard. 1994. p.152). In Lincolnshire, this entailed attending events which might not necessarily be seen as an essential part of my research. Participating in events such as the opening of the Lincoln Women's Centre is a case in point. I participated in this event for most of the day and stayed behind after formalities were over. Such participation enhanced the trust I had already gained and provided vital opportunities to observe institutional cultures in action.

The Durham Forum, at present consists solely of representatives from the county's five different Women's Refuges. With the absence of any other agencies, particularly from the statutory sector, their meetings are conducted in a semi-informal manner. The last official meeting which I attended, for example, took place over an informal lunch, in a public house on the outskirts of Durham City. Because I have been based in the same county as this forum, my access to the members has been less restricted and therefore often less formal.

Opportunities to 'hang out' with members after their meetings have been greater than with the Lincolnshire and Liverpool Forums.

As my research into inter-agency co-operation first began to unfold and I began to gain productive information from the various agencies associated with domestic violence, I felt that two key perspectives were missing - namely those of victims and perpetrators. It soon became clear that in order for me to learn about the work of the agencies, both individually and collectively, and to gain further insight into domestic violence, I also needed to hear from those who are or have been directly affected by domestic violence. This, I felt, would provide me with multiple perspectives, rather than a singular and possibly biased one. The addition of these perspectives - the victims' and perpetrators' - meant that I could gain insight from not only those who provide the services associated with domestic violence, particularly those agencies connected with the Forums in my study, but I could also hear from the people the agencies seek to help.

I gained some limited access to victims of domestic violence and to some members of their families. These contacts were mainly made with the help of representatives from some of the Women's Refuges in my study. I also acquired contact with a victim and her family through a journalist who had previously written an article on her story.

My contact with the perpetrators of domestic violence has taken place within Durham Prison. This small sample of perpetrators enabled me to see the picture from yet another perspective. Access to perpetrators was limited, mainly due to their reluctance to admit to their behaviour. However, through the prison I was eventually able to hear directly what some perpetrators

had to say. I carried out semi-structured interviews with a number of the male inmates at the prison. Some of the findings from my interviews with the prisoners were supported by analysis of written documents and from discussions that I have had with some of the Prison officers, members of the Probation team, and from one of the Governors. I gained access to the prison through first applying to the Governor for information regarding perpetrators of domestic violence. This resulted in my being invited by a member of the Prison Training Department to discuss my research and to see how they could help. After going through all the official channels I gained access to the prison, and with the help of some of the officers, particularly one senior officer, I was able to interview some perpetrators. These interviews took place on two of the prison wings.

THESIS OUTLINE

The following chapter, Chapter Two, is primarily concerned with inter-agency co-operation. Here I have presented the factual information gathered about the Forums and from the member agencies as well as individual members. This chapter offers a description of the three forums studied. Reference is made to the cultural, sociological and geographical contexts of the forums. Within Chapter Two I have also presented data gathered whilst attending the forum meetings and conducting interviews with individual members.

In Chapter Three, I concentrate upon the main themes and issues to have emerged from the data. I discuss in more detail the underlying disjunction in inter-agency practice, namely the mismatch between the ideal of harmony in relation to the reality of inter-agency conflict. Here, I reflect on the transition and differences between the 'ideal' of the policy of inter-

agency co-operation and the 'reality' of it in practice. In the final chapter, Chapter Four, I attempt an evaluation of the 'ideal' and the 'reality' of inter-agency initiatives which will pool the data together and will bring this research to a close.

CHAPTER TWO

FORUMS AND THEIR AGENCIES

Multi-agency initiatives, as a policy and practice response to violence against women in the home, are frequently also known as inter-agency initiatives (inter-agency in this context implying that more than two agencies are involved). What they aim to do is to bring together all the agencies with an interest in domestic violence in a local area in order to exchange ideas, to co-ordinate services and to improve local practice and policy in a way that is both consistent and well-informed (National Association of Local Government Women's Committee, 1990, pp 17-18). The result is frequently the formation of a domestic violence forum, consisting of some or all relevant organisations and agencies. Domestic violence forums usually attempt to meet regularly, and may have a smaller steering committee and/or various subgroups and working projects. (Hague, et al. 1995, p. 2).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUMS IN THE UK

For many years a variety of agencies have dealt with domestic violence. Police are called out to incidents of violence in the home, doctors have to treat victims of such violence, and the social services tackle the housing and financial implications resulting from domestic violence (see Appendix Three on 'Costs of Domestic Violence'). Until the introduction of the formal inter-agency approach in the early 1990s, both voluntary and statutory agencies had tended to work in isolation. However, prior to this, agencies claim to have been working together on an ad hoc basis but this strategy was felt to have too many gaps in it, mainly due to a lack of mutual understanding between organisations. A number of agencies concerned felt that a new approach was needed to tackle domestic violence and also the working relationship

between the agencies associated as a way of improving services. The Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum claims that

The Forum enables a better understanding between different agencies about the work they do in the area of domestic violence. It aims to improve communication, highlighting and encouraging good practice, and develop best practice policy. Through a partnership approach agencies are able to liaise closely on all matters affected by domestic violence, thus endeavouring to reduce the stress and trauma that such incidents generate for the people involved and to ensure that appropriate action is taken. (Lincolnshire Forum Leaflet. 1996)

The Home Office and the Welsh Office see the development of local domestic violence forums as one way for agencies to co-ordinate their resources and to improve the services and support they provide for both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. They also see this as an effective way to help men stop being violent towards their partners. (Home Office. August 1995). It was felt that “participation in a forum could lead to a better mutual understanding of a shared commitment and outlook on how best to respond to domestic violence.” (Home Office. August 1995, p.11).

As I illustrated in Chapter One (p. 11), The House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, produced a report in 1993 which gave recommendations for how the Government should approach the issues surrounding domestic violence. Later in 1993, the Government did respond. They began by setting up “inter-departmental working groups at both Official and Ministerial level to take forward the Government’s response” (Home Office Circular. 1995. p.5) to domestic violence. The Government encouraged all the appropriate agencies, both voluntary and statutory, to pool their resources, knowledge and expertise and to operate within local inter-agency co-operation systems. In the ‘Conclusion’ of The Home Office Circular 1995, they state that

Arrangements for inter-agency co-operation should be used as an opportunity to improve the response of single agencies and, where appropriate, to plan joint agency action. In the long term inter-agency working can be cost effective, as women secure safety for themselves and their children sooner. Although the structures and processes needed for effective inter-agency working can take considerable time to achieve, the benefits of well structured, clearly directed, inter-agency work can be wide ranging, including improvements in the integration and delivery of existing services; increased and improved access to protection and help for women and children who suffer domestic violence; improve local knowledge and awareness; increased awareness of strategies to reduce and prevent domestic violence; and increased understanding of the role of other agencies can prevent duplication of services and lead to greater efficiency. (Home Office Circular. 1995. p.16).

In August 1995 the Home Office and the Welsh Office came together and published an Inter-Departmental circular. This circular was directed at the agencies who were seen to have some level of contact with people who both directly and indirectly experience domestic violence. According to the circular, there is a need for the appropriate agencies to agree upon a definition of 'domestic violence' and to be aware of the level of this violence. With the different agencies working with their own respective models and paradigms of domestic violence this goes to the heart of the problem of inter-agency co-operation. The circular, however, outlines how the Government expects the agencies to tackle the issues associated with domestic violence. It provides them with the Government's aims and objectives (see Appendix One) of how they and their respective forums should respond to the problems. The circular claims that

The Government's approach is based on the premise that domestic violence is a serious crime which must not be tolerated. The priority must be to stop the violence occurring, and services should be provided on that basis. Effective action undoubtedly requires the commitment and involvement of local agencies, working together to provide help and support to those experiencing domestic violence, and to develop local preventative strategies. (Home Office Circular. 1995. p.9).

According to the University of Bristol's 'Working Paper 127' (Hague et al, 1995, p. 2), "This circular is the latest in a line of documents and reports produced in recent years that recommend the development of inter-agency domestic violence work." There were several earlier recommendations that agencies should work together. Examples of these are the 1992 Victim Support publication of the National Agency Working Party Report, called 'Domestic Violence', the Home Office's 1990 'Circular 60' and the Women's National Commission's recommendation which was made as long ago as 1985. This all highlights the difficulties in pinpointing exactly when and where the idea of this inter-agency approach to dealing with the problems associated with domestic violence originated. However, it is clear that although the idea of inter-agency co-operation has been around for a while it was not until 1993 that it received the Government's official stamp of approval, with their response to the Home Affairs Committee report.

The types of agencies that get involved with domestic violence forums include those from both voluntary and statutory sectors. All three forums in my study have encouraged the integration of both voluntary and statutory agencies into their group. The following sections of this chapter will provide insight into the three forums in my study - Durham, Liverpool and Lincolnshire - and their respective agencies.

DURHAM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

County Durham is part of the ancient Northern Kingdom of Northumbria, the border area between England and Scotland. For hundreds of years County Durham was ruled by its vice-regal Prince Bishops who made a major contribution to the area's industrial heritage, combined with some of England's most beautiful and unspoilt landscape, will surprise and delight the most discerning visitor. (Durham County Council Holiday Guide. 1996. p 2).

According to the 1991 census, the population of Durham County was 593,430, of which 287,888 are male and 305,542 female. For the city of Durham, the population size was reported to be 80,669, with 39,777 males and 41,192 females. Historically, the county and surrounding areas were proud of their successful and profitable coal-mines. The mines were the 'life blood' of the communities. All the people within those communities were economically - and socially - interdependent. Flourishing mining communities supported local businesses, such as shops, public houses, and clubs. Over recent years the mining industry has disappeared. People have worked hard at trying to keep their communities together, with the help of events such as the annual Durham Miners' Gala. The mines had provided an important focus of regional inity and identity.

Members of the Durham Domestic Violence Forum have been, and still are, working towards a county wide inter-agency initiative. This forum, unlike the other two in my study, is in its early stages of development, and is struggling to survive. The Women's Aid agency not only played a fundamental part in the birth of this Forum, but is, at present, the only active participant in the setting up of the formal Inter-Agency initiative for the county of Durham. This pattern has been seen elsewhere. Hague (et al.) found that

It is widely acknowledged on both a local and a national level that Women's Aid is the lead Agency in domestic violence work. ... The movement against domestic violence in general, and Women's Aid in particular, have played in the past, and continue to play now, a key role in terms both of providing services and of campaigning about domestic violence and raising public awareness. The relationship between the refuge movement and inter-agency work is of crucial importance but, as yet, little broad agreement exists as to how this relationship is to be managed and developed. (1995, p.3).

On the 26 July 1994 the Wear Valley and the Derwentside branches of Women's Aid had a Consultation Day to help launch the Durham Domestic Violence Forum. The main aim of this

day was to help promote Durham's inter-agency approach to tackling the problems associated with domestic violence, and thus encourage other agencies to become actively involved in this new strategy in a formal way. A member of the day's funding body - Allied Dunbar - referred to it as a "discussion day [which was to help highlight] the way forward for providing high quality services to women and children escaping violence from known men" (Informant 1).

The Consultation Day was attended by representatives of a number of agencies, such as Crook Housing Department, Low Newton Remand Centre, Wear Valley Women's Aid, Derwentside Women's Aid and Durham County Social Services Department. According to the representatives on the forum from the Derwentside and Wear Valley Women's Aid, this meeting appeared most promising. It looked as if Durham could soon have a productive inter-agency Forum. A representative from the main funding body, Allied Dunbar, has referred to this meeting as being "the first part of the process of taking forward the developments in the County." (Informant 1). The organizers of the launch, the county's womens' refuges, wanted Durham to follow a county-wide approach, in order to enhance the liaison between all the appropriate statutory and voluntary agencies throughout the whole of the County. Working together they would serve both the urban and rural areas. But, it was recognised early on that this would not be easy:

Co. Durham is a difficult area to deal with because it does not have a big city at its heart, it is not a particularly forward thinking County, it does have many services already in place such as Women's groups, Youth groups, or at least not in a co-ordinated easily accessible form. The only way to progress is to work with the structures in place, if we alienate the Statutory organisations they will remove themselves from the process and we do not have enough 'clout' to make them participate. On the other hand there are a lot of individuals who are very supportive of the Refuge system and who do want to see D.V. [domestic violence] taken onboard in a much more public, pro-active way. So although things are slow we do believe they are improving. (Informant 2).

The financial company Allied Dunbar, for example, has taken an active role in the forum behind the scenes. Every so often the company commits large sums of money to different charities. This time one of the causes was domestic violence towards women and children. They chose to focus their attentions on women's refuges. According to a report by Allied Dunbar,

In making [the financial]... commitment, the trustees, recognised the lack of resources for women and children in rural areas, acknowledged the particular needs of women and children from ethnic minority communities [and] accepted the need to support services that were appropriate to very varied communities. (Allied Dunbar. paper. p.1219vj).

The company subsequently selected certain areas in the country in order to give financial help. In 1994 they allocated two million pounds to be spent over a period throughout the key areas of England and Northern Ireland. Durham was one of the areas selected, and the refuges in the forum received support and information from Allied Dunbar. Part of the company's help has included supporting the development of the inter-agency initiative in Durham. Allied Dunbar has thus had a presence in the forum, through the refuges, right from the start. Indeed it paid for events such as the original open day.

The refuge members told me that they have regular contact with the Allied Dunbar representative and Domestic violence Programme manager. Having this personal contact makes it easier for them to liaise with the company and to develop a working relationship. The Programme manager is based in Swindon, but visits the refuges on a regular basis monitoring the developments, particularly with regard to his company's investments in the project. Many of the people who need to escape to a refuge will not be in a position to repay

the company in any way and therefore Allied Dunbar clearly must have other reasons for assisting. They are responding to public concerns - in this case domestic violence. It is obvious that this is purely not an altruistic act, as this assistance does help to place the company in a good light, in the eyes of the public, which is likely to help promote the company. However, it is agreed by the members of the forum that whatever the company's motive is it is admirable of them to recognise this great area of need and to respond to it in such a positive and practical manner.

Since the day of the launch, 26 June 1994, the level of formal inter-agency co-operation in County Durham's Domestic Violence Forum has become almost non-existent. On the surface, the membership of the forum appears to consist purely of the five women's refuges ((1) Darlington Women's Refuge, (2) Derwentside Women's Refuge, (3) Durham Women's Refuge, (4) Peterlee Women's Refuge, and (5) Wear Valley Women's Refuge) in the County of Durham, with only four actively involved. Some might argue that it is therefore not a forum, but I, like the participants of the group, do see it as a forum. Having looked into each of these refuges I discovered other agencies operating behind the scenes. Each refuge, for example, has a management body. This group includes individuals who have opted to invest both time and money into the cause. A number of these people are from other agencies, such as solicitors, council authorities, social services, and businesses. The management committees of each of the five refuges are made up of their own group of individuals. It appears that the management committees are open to any individual and the composition of the membership can change overnight. The refuges are subsequently managed by people with a variety of backgrounds, agency connections, approaches, philosophies and interests. The differences in the make-up of each of the five refuges' committees, staff and location lead to inevitable

differences in each of the refuge's structures, styles and approaches. All five refuges provide a safe haven, support and advice for women and children escaping from domestic violence. They all offer accommodation for the women and children and they help those who are unable to directly use the refuges. However, each of the refuges does have its own respective identity. This is mainly as a result of the differences in the make-up of their management committees and the fact that some operate completely independently from other refuges while others are affiliated to the National Women's Aid Federation. These differences affect their accountability and flexibility. The following accounts of each Women's Refuge illustrate both the differences between the refuges and the fact that the Durham Forum does not simply consist of one agency.

(1) Darlington Women's Refuge:

In 1977 the Darlington refuge was established in order to "provide Refuge accommodation for women and their children suffering physical violence, mental and sexual abuse from their partners". (Darlington. 1996). The refuge has facilities to offer twenty-three individuals and several babies with a bed.

The refuge is not associated with the Women's Aid Federation which was established in England and Scotland in 1974. It is independently registered as a charity called 'Family Help'. As it is not affiliated to Women's Aid the refuge does not have to adhere to a 'women only' policy. The management committee of the Darlington Women's Refuge is made up of eleven individuals, both men and women. They come from a variety of backgrounds, including solicitors, ex-residents, and local councillors.

The refuge does employ an all women staff because of the direct contact with the victims and the fact the women are escaping from men. At present they have six members of staff, two of whom are full time and four part time. Recently they received funding to employ an Out-Reach worker who provides a service for those women and children who are either unable to or choose not to use the refuge. The Out-Reach worker also gives “talks to a variety of groups and agencies about Family Help service.” (Darlington. 1996).

The refuge receives most of its funding from Darlington Borough Council. According to refuge literature “other sources of funding include donations from Children in Need and telethon appeals and personal donations from the wider community.” (Darlington. 1996),

(2) Derwentside Women’s Refuge:

The Derwentside refuge is affiliated to Women’s Aid and is officially referred to as Derwentside Women’s Aid. According to a representative from the Derwentside Refuge

At present we have five full management members and one support group member - support group members are not involved in employment issues. As far as background information about these members is concerned; two became involved through our contact with the union Unison (one of these is a teacher and one a Ph.D student), one did a student placement with us and now works with girls’ groups, one works in Personnel in a training agency and one is a Psychiatric nurse who did a counselling course with two of the staff. (Informant 2).

Since 1994 the Derwentside Refuge has employed an Out-Reach worker who provides help and support to women outside of the refuge. The role of this member of staff is also to raise

public awareness and liaise with other agencies. There are an additional three posts at the refuge. The refuge employs two support workers, one full time refuge officer and two who job-share the other post of refuge officer. Both voluntary and paid members of staff of the refuge are accountable to the management committee who ensure that things are done properly. At present the refuge has seven bed rooms.

(3) Durham Women's Refuge:

The management of the Durham Refuge is different from any of the other refuges on the forum. They have two independent managing bodies. They have a voluntary group of ten individuals whose sole responsibility is fundraising for the women and children. The money they raise helps with expenses such as trips, books and toys. This committee is affiliated to Women's Aid and, like the other refuges' overall management committees, they too come from a variety of social and employment backgrounds. The main managing body of the Durham Refuge, however, does not have any direct links with Women's Aid. The refuge is owned and managed by a local housing association -The Three Rivers Housing Association. The staff at the refuge are employed by, and subsequently accountable to, this body. According to the housing association's 1995 annual review "Three Rivers is controlled by the Management Committee whose members are elected from the membership of the Association at each Annual General Meeting." (Three Rivers Housing. 1995. p.1). At present the committee consists of local men and women from a variety of professional backgrounds, including retired head teachers, social workers, solicitors, business managers, accountants, and local councillors.

The refuge has two full time and one part time member of staff. They do not have an Out-Reach worker as they do not have the funding. They feel that they are already offering help and support to the women and children out in the local community. According to the refuge's 'Welcome' leaflet

“The Refuge has been open for over 12 years now, and thousands of women and children have stayed here. It is a safe house; the address and telephone number are confidential. If you need to give the postal address to anyone, please give: There are no visitors allowed, and the men must not be brought anywhere near the refuge. The accommodation that has been provided for you is temporary and with your co-operation we try to maintain high standards.” (Durham. 1996).

(4) Peterlee Women's Refuge:

On the 26th November 1996 the Peterlee Women's Refuge celebrated seventeen years of existence. They are affiliated to the national Women's Aid and are officially registered as East Durham Women's Aid. They have approximately eleven members on their management committee. The committee has, over the years, included probation officers, local councillors, social workers, ex-residents and students. The refuge receives most of its funding from Easington District Council despite the fact it is outside of the district. The council has supported the refuge financially since it first opened. The council is not, however, represented on the management committee. According to a member of staff at the refuge the council simply supports them with money because they believe in the cause. There are three full time members of staff at the refuge, who provide help and support to women and children who are suffering from domestic violence and who directly and indirectly use the refuge.

(5) Wear Valley Women's Refuge:

The Wear Valley Refuge, whose representatives tend to chair the forum meetings, were at the time of my fieldwork in process of moving premises. The main reason why this refuge tends to take the chair is due to the fact that they were the founders of this forum. There has been a women's refuge in Bishop Auckland for thirteen years (Wear Valley Women's Aid). The refuge is affiliated to Women's Aid and therefore follows the agency's 'women only' policy. The refuge employs three members of staff, including two full time refuge officers and a child care officer. The management committee of the refuge consisted of ten women. The members come from a variety of backgrounds, including ex-residents, business women, the unemployed and students.

When the refuge wrote to the planning department of their local council for permission for a change of use for their proposed new site, they claimed in their covering letter that

Wear Valley Women's Refuge has operated for some considerable time [ten years] from premises at offering a place of safety for women and children escaping Domestic Violence. We have been awarded a grant by the National Lottery Charity Board, which will enable us to expand the service we give. However, we do not envisage any fundamental changes of ethos within the 'new' project. (Wear Valley. 1/2/96).

A member of the refuge staff informed me that because both of the two full time refuge workers were previously members of the education profession their ethos leans heavily towards re-educating people, and if possible society at large. They believe that people can change, including the perpetrators, but that the only way to do this is through education and by changing attitudes.

As all five refuges are managed by their own management committees, and because of the fact that not all of the refuges are affiliated to Women's Aid, some being independent, there are differences between the five refuges, including how they operate, their priorities, and the layout of their premises. The forum members felt that because of these differences it can be hard to have common ground even within a forum made up of agencies which are as closely related as they are. The forum is seen by them to provide an opportunity to gain this common ground. According to a member of the forum

It is hard to quantify how successful we feel the progress towards creating a D.V. [domestic violence] forum in Co. Durham has been. I think that having regular but not too frequent meetings of all the refuges in the County has helped us to be more aware of the work each refuge is taking on and therefore to prevent duplication and also give us a strong voice at County level. Working on a District level, we feel a little frustrated at the length of time it takes to set anything up - we had been about to arrange a local D.V. forum day over a year ago when we were contacted by the Crime Strategy group through the Co-ordinator. At that point discussions with him led to the conclusion that this sort of day was probably a waste of time as everyone agreed on the importance of the subject, had similar understanding of what was meant by D.V. and in fact moving straight in to training, putting together a Directory of local services etc. would be much more suitable - people do not like to spend valuable time on unnecessary meetings. Lo and behold, once discussion started about training it turned out that in fact not everyone was thinking along the same lines when talking about D.V. and it would be very useful to have everyone together for the day to discuss the relevant issues and then develop better working patterns from these discussions. And so here we are one year later looking at a D.V. forum day hopefully taking place before the end of this financial year. (Informant 2).

During the November 1995 meeting the members of the Durham forum were of the opinion that in order for their forum to develop each of the five refuges should aim towards forming temporary inter-agency groups within each of their local areas. These groups were therefore to be regionally based. Although they were continuing to operate as a county-wide forum,

Durham County had now been divided into districts. This, they felt, would be more manageable. It was agreed that the representatives from each district, thus each refuge, would be responsible for inviting appropriate agencies from their area to become actively involved in the newly formed regional group. The aim of this approach was to give momentum to the development of Durham's county-wide forum. It was felt that these five new groups would prove to be the best way for members to encourage other agencies to become actively involved with the County of Durham inter-agency forum, particularly as starting at county level was proving to be problematic. Members of the forum felt that each of the five refuges could look within their own area with a view to persuading those agencies they are most in contact with to join at that level in the hope that this strategy would encourage them to get involved with the larger group, namely the Durham County Forum. These temporary groups would exist until a thriving county-wide inter-agency initiative was in place. In the meantime one or two delegated representatives from each of the five groups would report back to the existing county forum. The Durham County Forum would continue to meet on a regular basis. According to the minutes of their meeting in January 1996, "Each district initially to develop it's own Local Forum - it is understood that these may well be in place, perhaps under another name. If so, the idea of a county-wide initiative could be raised". (Durham Forum. 31/1/96). The members of the forum agreed that the main reason for developing the 'County Durham Multi-Agency Forum' is "To co-ordinate and develop consistent services for women and children who have experienced D.V., to have a greater input/ influence at County level on the policies of other agencies who work with this client group" (Durham Forum Minutes. 31/1/96) They felt that this type of initiative would be of great benefit for them. The members saw it as a way which could help limit the risk of duplication of work, and as a cost-effective way for agencies to co-operate and communicate with one another.

At the time of my writing this thesis (1996) the Durham Forum still consists solely of the same five women's refuges - the Durham Women's Refuge, Wear Valley Women's Refuge, Peterlee Women's Refuge, Darlington Women's Refuge, and Derwentside Women's Refuge. With the absence of other agencies, the main heading of the minutes of their meetings does not refer to them as being a Domestic Violence forum. This was a clear difference between the Durham group and the other two in my study. The other two forums clearly entitled their minutes with a reference to a forum. They both address themselves with their area, Liverpool / Lincolnshire, and then 'Domestic Violence Forum'. Although Durham members do see themselves as a forum they have, for example, headed a recent set of minutes with "Meeting of Durham Refuges" (2/5/96). Because a 'forum' tends to be seen as a collection of various agencies and the Durham Forum appears to consist of multiple representatives of a single agency the heading 'Forum' could be seen as somewhat misleading.

The issue of the venue was aired by some members of the Durham Forum. The need to appease both the voluntary and statutory agencies when selecting a venue and time for the meetings, while at the same time making it financially feasible, continued to be of concern to the Forum. However, the Durham Forum's concerns were a matter of geographical convenience. Their meetings were originally conducted in a conference room - a smaller version of the Liverpool and Lincolnshire Forum venues, - at Bishop Auckland Town Hall. Members of the forum began to feel that holding the meetings in the south of the County - Bishop Auckland - and not in a more central location, such as Durham City, had the potential of causing a number of agencies, including their own, to feel that they were unable to justify the travelling expense and time, particularly with regard to the voluntary sector, who have

very limited funds and with their agencies often being resourced by only a couple of people. For example, the women's refuges already involved with the forum tend to employ only a few full time members and often this means that there are only one or two people on duty at any given time. This brought about a change in venue. The meetings were moved to a quiet public house on the outskirts of Durham City. The first meeting at this venue took place in the area of the bar. It was later moved to the restaurant part of this public house because members felt that the bar did not allow people to speak openly. Although this meant that the meetings were still conducted within the public arena rather than 'behind closed doors' it has proved to be the most practical solution. They could not hold the meetings at any of the refuges because of the importance of encouraging other agencies to join the forum while at the same time respecting the privacy of the location of the refuges. Because of a lack of funds the forum needed a venue which would not have financial implications. They also had to select a place which would also resolve the problems relating to time, travel, availability, easy access and where the present and possible future members would feel comfortable. The public house - the present venue - appears to fulfill these requirements - at least until other agencies become actively involved.

LIVERPOOL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

From being a city with a past, the Liverpool of the 1990s is very much a city looking to the future, a vibrant exciting place in which to live and work. Considerable civic effort has gone into maintaining the city's cultural and architectural heritage while at the same time redeveloping areas no longer used for port activities. (McIlwain. 1995. p.26).

Unlike the Durham and Lincolnshire Forums which represent the whole of their counties, the Liverpool Forum is a city-based initiative. There are however other independent forums operating in the county of Merseyside. The population size of the city of Liverpool, according to the 1991 census, was 475,000. In 1994, it was estimated that the population would fall to 474,000. The 1991 census stated that there were 232,101 males and 248,648 females in the city. The population of Liverpool is only 100,000 less than each of the entire counties of Durham and Lincolnshire. It is therefore not surprising that the city has its own forum, rather than being part of a county-wide initiative.

Liverpool was one of the world's leading ports. This contributed greatly to the economic activity of the city. Most people's work was either directly or indirectly related to the docklands. The importance and success of the port gave the people of Liverpool something they could all be proud to be associated with. Azurdia, in the 'Foreward' to a book about Merseyside writes about his excitement as a child when he learned that he lived in "the biggest port in the world". He says "That was a long time ago but ever since I've felt a deep local and civic pride and interest." (Azurdia. 1991). Since the 1960s the success of the port has diminished. Goods are increasingly imported and exported by air and the introduction of containerization has led to a massive reduction in the work force. Liverpool is proud of its maritime past, but vigorously works towards the economic and cultural survival of the city for the future.

In 1992 the Liverpool City Council introduced Domestic Violence on to its agenda. The City's Social Services wanted representatives from appropriate agencies to come together and operate as an inter-agency initiative to discuss domestic violence. The Liverpool Forum is,

like the other forums, accountable to itself. Since 1992 the forum has expanded from being made up predominantly of members from various 'official' departments to include representatives from a number of other statutory and voluntary agencies. Over the years the Forum has developed its own strategies, formed sub-groups and in December 1995 a co-ordinator was employed with funding from Safer Merseyside Partnership to liaise between all the associated agencies, as well as between the forum and the general public. It has since December 1995 democratically elected its own chair and deputy, in an annual election.

In 1995, when the present chair took over, the structure of the forum changed. The chair strongly believed in the need for a democratic approach. She introduced, with the support and full agreement of the forum members, a constitution which was to result in all the members having equal power - including the chair, and which they were to follow and continue to refer to throughout the forum's existence. The constitution has been designed in a way which allows it to be updated as the forum develops. It includes definitions of terms such as domestic violence, the forum's aims and objectives and an outline of the forum's working structure. According to a member of the forum, prior to the introduction of the constitution a number of agencies left. There was said to be a great deal of apathy amongst the members. The forum member commented that the forum was referred to as simply a "talk shop". There was an absence of any aims or objectives. Members questioned the value and significance of the forum, and more importantly they questioned the need for them to be there. Agencies went to the meetings with their own policies and not those of the forum. There was, according to one member, a reluctance on the part of the agencies to listen to or co-operate with the other agencies on the forum.

Part of the restructuring of the forum included internal training of the agencies involved. This was carried out within the forum, by forum members and the Co-ordinator. The aim of this training was, according to the chair, to encourage the agencies, both individually and collectively, to listen to one another and for each of them to be aware and acknowledge the others policies, approaches and attitudes regarding domestic violence. As members of the forum, they are encouraged to work together.

Prior to my research the forum was made up of four organisational tiers, which included the forum itself, a strategy group, management group and the sub-groups. Through the constitution the forum added to their existing groups a Steering Group, which an informant predicted would be seen as the “driving force of the forum”. The forum was, at the time of this research, in the process of working towards achieving Charitable status. For example, they could become a ‘Company Limited. (see Appendix Four). This would give them their “own control, policy, choice, legal liability [and] legal responsibility limited to £XX.00.” (Liverpool Forum. June 1996). This will result in the forum being able to “raise funds, apply to Charitable Trust [and] receive donations” Discussions are ongoing.

According to the Chair, the Forum believes in keeping the official group to a manageable size. The membership of the forum, at the time of this research, is made up of nineteen agencies, one representative from each, and six members from the sub-groups. The nineteen agencies represented on the Liverpool Forum include

- (1) Community Health Council
- (2) Public Health

- (3) Local Health Authority
- (4) Campaign Against Domestic Violence
- (5) Victim Support
- (6) Amadudu Refuge
- (7) Black Women's Project
- (8) Parent School Partnership (PSP)
- (9) Social Services
- (10) National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)
- (11) Women's Aid Refuge
- (12) Home Link
- (13) Liverpool Education Authority
- (14) Welfare Organisations Committee (WOC)
- (15) Merseyside Probation
- (16) Merseyside Police
- (17) Family Service Unit (FSU)
- (18) Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)
- (19) Solicitors

In the following section relevant information is provided about the agencies listed above.

- (1) Community Health Council
- (2) Public Health
- (3) Local Health Authority

These three statutory agencies have interests in the health of women who are currently in or trying to escape from a violent relationship. According to the Chair of the Forum, these

agencies are “looking at the matter very seriously with a view to ensuring that the services they provide are responsive to women’s health needs.” (Informant 3).

(4) Campaign Against Domestic Violence

This voluntary agency not only campaigns against domestic violence but its members also visit women who have been sentenced to imprisonment for having killed their violent partners. Campaign Against Domestic Violence consists of a variety of individuals who share the goal of changing laws regarding domestic violence and attitudes towards such violent behaviour. The people are voluntary members from a variety of social and employment backgrounds, such as women’s refuge workers, victims/survivors, and social services employees.

(5) Victim Support

This voluntary agency, according to a representative from the headquarters of Victim Support, is “the national charity which helps crime victims. Trained volunteers in 378 local schemes [throughout the country] offer emotional support, practical help and information to people who have suffered crimes ranging from burglary to the murder of a relative.” He continues “We also work to increase understanding and awareness of the effects of crime and to ensure better recognition of victims’ rights.” (Informant 4) (see Appendix Five). The representative on the forum works for the Liverpool branch of the national Victim Support.

(6) Amadudu Refuge (7) Black Women's Project

These two agencies are run by a local voluntary organisation called the Liverpool Black Sisters. The Black Women's Project is a counselling service and the Amadudu Refuge is a refuge for women and children escaping domestic violence. Both of these services are open to women and children of any race. They are both managed and funded locally. The refuge is not affiliated to the National Women's Aid but does appear to follow a similar 'women only' policy. Both of these agencies are run by black women. One of the aims of the Liverpool Black Sisters organisation is to highlight the importance of providing specific help and support for people from non-white ethnic groups and it appears that they see the forum as a means of aiding them with this aim. According to the Home Office Inter-Agency Circular (1995)

The way in which different cultures and faiths respond to domestic violence should be taken account of when planning local initiatives. The availability of specialist voluntary support vary from area to area. Such groups normally provide advice, information and support services and will be aware of the needs of local ethnic minority communities. Generally, the issues for ethnic minority women are: racial discrimination; language difficulties and immigration problems/uncertainties. These difficulties compound the trauma of domestic violence. Women from the minority groups may also face losing their social and cultural networks: for example, extended families. Women's groups who focus on women from different ethnic groups will offer support which is sensitive to their background and requirements. Some groups also have domestic violence telephone helplines, support groups, interpreters and refuges. (Home Office. 1995. p.29).

(8) Parent School Partnership (PSP)

This is a voluntary agency which, as the name implies, works closely with parents, schools and children. It is seen by the forum as a channel that they can use to "raise public awareness by working with parents, schools and children to change attitudes to violence." (Informant 3).

(9) Social Services

This is a statutory agency. It is a department of the local City Council. Through the various services it provides, Social Services employees have regular contact with both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. The Forum Co-ordinator is managed by Social Services as well as directly by the forum. Her role is to liaise between the different agencies and between the forum and the general public.

(10) National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

This voluntary agency's main role is to protect children from anything that could cause them harm. The representative on the forum is from the Liverpool branch of this national organisation.

(11) Women's Aid Refuge

The Liverpool Women's Aid Refuge is affiliated to the National Women's Aid. This voluntary agency is managed and operates in a similar manner to the refuges in Durham. It provides direct and indirect help and support for women and children trying to escape domestic violence and has a management committee which is made up of a number of individuals with a variety of social and employment backgrounds.

(12) Home Link

Home Link is a voluntary agency. It provides information and advice to members of the public on issues such as those related to domestic violence. Like most of the agencies on the forum, Home Link provides them with an appropriate means of raising public awareness and an ideal channel for transmitting information about the forum to the public.

(13) Education Authority

The Education Department of the Liverpool local authority is currently seeking to raise awareness and to change attitudes towards domestic violence by working in schools with children using role play. This is part of the curriculum in a pilot area within Liverpool. According to the Inter-Agency Circular (1995)

Because of their daily contact with children, schools and teachers are well placed to observe signs of abuse. All schools should be aware of procedures, established by the Local Area Child Protection Committee, for referring cases of suspected abuse, including abuse arising from domestic violence, to the investigative authorities. (Home Office. 1995. p.23).

(14) Welfare Organisations Committee (WOC)

This agency is made up of various statutory and voluntary agencies. They are a pro-active organisation which make recommendations on issues related to drug abuse, mental health and domestic violence. As this agency is made up of a large number of different agencies they are

seen by the forum as “an ideal way of making use of the networking capacity. This intermingling of agencies who may not necessarily have a domestic violence remit, is a good way of raising awareness.” (Informant 3).

(15) Merseyside Probation (16) Merseyside Police (17) Family Service Unit (FSU)

These three statutory agencies on the forum come under the administrative umbrella of the Home Office. The Inter-Agency Circular (1995) states that

Apart from its role as the Government Department with lead responsibility for co-ordinating action by central Government in response to domestic violence, the Home Office is primarily concerned with the criminal aspects of domestic violence. A particular feature of the Home Office’s responsibility is the need to ensure that the courts have the powers they need to punish offenders. The Home Office reviews and prepares legislation in order to strengthen, amend or repeal the criminal law where this is considered necessary. The criminal justice agencies for which the Home Office has responsibility are primarily the police, the Probation Service and the Prison Service. Other areas related to domestic violence for which the Department is responsible include immigration, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, the funding of marriage guidance work in the voluntary sector, and the co-ordination of Government policy towards the voluntary sector.” (Home Office. 1995. p.17).

The Probation Service is associated with the Home Office. Probation Officers work closely with the perpetrators of domestic violence. According to the Inter-Agency Circular “Probation officers work with offenders at most stages of the criminal justice process. They contribute to decisions about bail and about sentence, by preparing reports and giving advice. They supervise offenders subject to community sentences, and also during and after prison.” (Home Office. 1995. p.19). The Police Force operates, of course, as a law enforcer. It is in contact with both victims and perpetrators. The Family Service Unit is part of the police force and is located at local police stations. This agency focuses on issues related to the ‘family’ group - such as the legal factors relating to domestic violence. The Home Office is

encouraging these agencies to recognise that “violent assaults, or brutal and threatening behaviour over a period of time by a person whom the victim is married to or with whom the victim lives, are no less serious than a violent assault by a stranger.” (Home Office. 1995. p.18).

(18) Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

This agency is an independent legal and statutory agency. The Crown Prosecution Service was established in 1986 as a result of ‘The Prosecution of Offences Act 1985’. The reason for this was to separate the investigations of crimes from the prosecution. Prior to the introduction of the Crown Prosecution Service the police used to carry out both the investigation and prosecution of a criminal offence. At present there are approximately one hundred branches to the Crown Prosecution Service with over two thousand lawyers and four thousand administrative members of staff. According to the Crown Prosecution Service, “Most cases are handled by local offices but, occasionally, a very complex or sensitive case may be dealt with at CPS Headquarters.” (CPS. 1993). This agency is accountable to the Government’s Chief Law Office Minister - the Attorney General - and is subsequently managed by the State.

(19) Solicitors

On the forum there is a representative from a local solicitors’ firm, and there are others on the Legal Working Group. Solicitors are categorised by the Home Office and the forums as a voluntary agency. The Home Office Inter-Agency Circular (1995) states that

When a woman decides to seek protection either through the criminal or the civil law, she will usually require the advice and help of a solicitor. It will be important to find a solicitor who specialises in: domestic violence/matrimonial work; emergency injunction work, and emergency legal aid work [and] children's work . (Home Office. 1995. p.31).

Representatives from these nineteen organisations became involved with the forum when their respective agencies were invited by social services to join the inter-agency initiative. It was then the responsibility of the agencies, if they wished to be involved, to send an individual to represent them. If, at any time, the person appointed leaves their job or is unable to attend the forum and the agency still wishes to be involved, that agency must then find a replacement. When the founders of the forum - Liverpool City Council - originally wrote to invite the agencies to join, back in 1992, they wanted decision makers such as the manager or the chairperson from the various agencies to join. However, this did not actually happen. This is possibly due to those individuals' existing commitments. By sending someone else, their agency is still represented, their workload is not affected and they can prepare their responses once they have received all the necessary information, including that from the representative. As a result of the shortage of people with decision making powers in their organisations, the Forum's aim in the future is to have a productive role in guiding policy makers, through campaigning, raising awareness, and getting the issues associated with domestic violence on to the agendas of as many agencies as possible. According to the chair, despite the difficulties they have faced in getting policy makers on to the forum, they are still working towards encouraging people in positions of power to join the forum. This, they believe, will ensure that the forum is kept up to date on issues and approaches associated with domestic violence at both a local and national level. According to the chair, it is felt by the forum that people of power have greater access to such information.

With regard to the selection of representatives for the forum, members have expressed concern about equal opportunities and the balance between statutory and voluntary agencies. They wish to ensure that as many people have a voice as possible, without adversely affecting the dynamics of the group. At the time of my research into the Liverpool Forum, over half its membership was from the voluntary sector. According to the chair, the forum is aiming towards a membership proportion leaning towards one third from the statutory sector and two thirds being from the voluntary sector. It has been suggested that this will bring about a more effective and productive balance between the two sectors, particularly as the statutory sector is seen as the more dominant one of the two.

The gender ratio on the forum, at the time of this research, was six men and sixteen women. Although this was not intentional, according to a member of the forum, it could make the discussions and decisions made seem somewhat biased in favour of the women's concerns. According to the chair, the forum members believe that it is in the interest of the forum for the chairperson to be a woman. They saw this as being the most effective way of gaining public confidence. They felt that the public, particularly female survivors of domestic violence, would be more comfortable with a woman than with a man. A change of leadership, according to the chair, would not change the work of the forum or its way forward because it is protected by its agreed written constitution. Through their democratic approach all of the members will, according to their chair, have an equal role to play on the forum, particularly in relation to the process of decision making within the Forum.

The forum has introduced sub-groups not only to focus attention on particular issues, but also to enable other people to get involved with the forum without disturbing its working. The sub-groups are made up of representatives of the Forum who then encourage other interested people to join them, such as victims/survivors, friends and relatives of victims/survivors and perpetrators and members of agencies not already associated with the forum. The sub-groups are not open to the public at this time, but the chair of the forum feels that doors should not be totally closed to the public. Without challenging the issue of confidentiality interested parties are given access and subsequently a voice through the sub-groups.

Each of the sub-groups sends a representative to the Forum meetings. This should be someone other than the original member. In order to avoid a potential conflict of interests, it is, according to the Chair, preferable for the groups to send a different person as the other individual is on the forum to represent his or her own agency. The representative from the Forum is accountable to their agency. The sub-groups are seen almost as groups in their own right, but operate under the watchful eye of the forum. Their representative must be named and as long as they continue to attend they will be given full membership rights which in effect means that the sub-groups will have its' own voice on the forum. If, however, a sub-group decides to send a different person to represent them each time the forum meets, then he or she will not be entitled to vote. Having other interested parties on the sub-groups only rather than on the main group and having only one representative from each sub-group on the forum ensures that the size of the main committee remains manageable. Through their sub-groups, the forum is attempting to cover as many issues associated with domestic violence as possible, particularly those relevant to the agencies involved with the forum. The members have identified the need for the forum not only to cover all issues connected with domestic

violence but also to ensure that no area of the City of Liverpool is neglected by the forum. According to the Chair, they are in the process of working towards counteracting such geographical problems. For example, they are establishing a sub-group which will focus on the northern area of the city of Liverpool, and, possibly in the near future, one for the south. There are, at present, nine sub-groups. They are:

- (1) Training Sub-group - focuses on encouraging and organising training of the agencies in and outside of the Forum;
- (2) Survivors (victims') Sub-group - gives survivors a chance to have a voice;
- (3) Victim Support Sub-group - discusses issues related to how to work with victims;
- (4) Children Sub-group - concentrates on issues related to the children;
- (5) Health Sub-group - focuses on the health and medical elements of domestic violence;
- (6) Education Sub-group - looking at the role that education can play in tackling domestic violence;
- (7) Black Womens Sub-group - deals with concerns associated with ethnic minorities;
- (8) Housing Sub-group - concerned with the housing problems related to domestic violence, including the recent Family Law Bill;
- (9) Perpetrators Sub-group - concentrates on issues associated with the perpetrators and how best to work with them.

Since the introduction of the above sub-groups and the last forum meeting I attended, these groups have become active in their own right. Subsequently, they have been renamed 'Working-Groups'. With the aid of these groups, every member has, according to the chair

and other members of the forum, an active role to play, and are not in doubt of the significance of their presence on the forum. The feeling of having a purpose appears to have proved effective in enhancing the development of Liverpool's inter-agency co-operation initiative.

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Lincolnshire is the fourth largest geographical county in England and Wales. It is, however, a relatively sparsely populated county with much of its population widely dispersed in relatively small settlements. ... Lincolnshire is also one of the country's fastest growing counties. Its population increased by 8.7% between 1981 and 1993, which was significantly higher than the average for England and Wales of 3.6%. The County is also part of one of the UK's more economically successful regions, the East Midlands; however, it generally performs below the regional average (Lincolnshire County Council. 1996. p.10).

The Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum is, as in the case of the Durham Forum, a county-wide initiative. It focuses its attention on both the urban and rural areas of the county. According to the 1991 census, the county of Lincolnshire has a population size of 584,536 who occupy a land mass of 1,463,057 acres. The census reported that there were 285,171 males in the county, 39,432 of which were in the city of Lincoln, and that there were 299,365 females county-wide, with 42,555 of them in Lincoln. The acreage of the city of Lincoln is 8819, with a population size of 81987.

Lincolnshire has an agriculture based economy. In the past there were associated industries such as Marshalls which were world famous for manufacturing large farm machinery. In the same way that containerization had an adverse affect on employment in Liverpool and the closure of the mines similarly affected Durham people in Lincolnshire suffered from the modernization of farm machinery. This change dramatically reduced the need for agricultural

workers on farms in Lincolnshire. Marshalls, for example, closed in 1979 after over a hundred years of being a productive concern, with its large work force and world famous machinery. For its last five years of trading Marshalls focused on the manufacture of large tractor shovels. As a result of the widespread modernization in farming Marshalls services were no longer in demand and the company has subsequently closed down. According to the Lincolnshire Structure Plans (1996)

Like many rural areas, the Lincolnshire economy is rooted in traditional occupations. Its economy is still based disproportionately on agriculture and many of the urban areas continue to have economies narrowly based on mechanical engineering. Large areas of the county experience higher than average unemployment, particularly in the towns along the Lincolnshire coast and in Gainsborough. In the coastal areas seasonal work becomes available in the summer, but this is short term, poorly paid and does not support a livelihood or a career. (Lincolnshire County Council. 1996. p.36).

1992 saw the start of the Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum which was formed jointly by the Lincolnshire County's Police Force and Lincoln's Women's Aid. According to the minutes of the first official meeting of the Lincolnshire Forum, then known as the Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Liaison Committee, "The Chairman (Chief Superintendent of Lincolnshire Police) welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that he had decided to convene the meeting following recent discussions with some of the members of Lincoln Women's Aid who felt that incidents of domestic violence are not always dealt with as sensitively as they ought to be. It seems therefore that there may be a need for a liaison committee with an inter agency approach to monitor existing practices and formulate strategies etc." (Lincolnshire Forum Meeting. 10/3/92). Over the years, the forum has grown from including just the Lincolnshire Police and Women's Aid to having a wide representation from both voluntary and statutory

agencies. The membership of the forum is continuing to expand, as more agencies are invited to send representatives. The agencies represented, at present, include:

- (1) Lincolnshire Police
- (2) Lincoln Women's Aid
- (3) Boston Women's Aid
- (4) Lincoln Women's Centre
- (5) Shelter
- (6) ASK
- (7) Solicitors
- (8) Probation Service
- (9) Magistrates
- (10) Crown Prosecution Service
- (11) Court Welfare
- (12) West Lindsey District Council (Housing)
- (13) Boston Borough Council (Housing)
- (14) Lincolnshire Social Services
- (15) Lincoln Safer Cities
- (16) Victim Support
- (17) Lincoln Counselling Centre
- (18) Army Housing and Welfare
- (19) SSAFA Social Work Advisor RAF Coningsby
- (20) Area Manager Education Welfare Service
- (21) Relate

(22) Benefits Agency

(23) Health Visitor

(24) Samaritans (recently withdrew)

The following deals with each of the agencies listed above.

(1) Lincolnshire Police

As I have already stated, The Lincolnshire Police Force, in partnership with Lincoln Women's Aid, started this inter-agency initiative in Lincolnshire. Police representation on the Forum has varied in numbers over the years. At present there are two representatives, including a male Inspector and male Deputy Chief Superintendent. The Inspector is the official secretary of the Forum. This agency plays a very active role on the forum. Not only does it conduct all the necessary secretarial tasks, such as minute taking, helping the chairperson, who is currently a woman, with her duties, sending, receiving and dealing with most written and verbal correspondence for the forum and keeping all forum members informed of forum news, but with the help of the Inspector's secretary it provides the forum with up to date information on domestic violence relating to their own agency and also a venue for all their meetings - including public and general meetings.

(2) Lincoln Women's Aid (3) Boston Women's Aid

These two voluntary agencies represent the only two women's refuges in the whole county of Lincolnshire. They, like the Liverpool and Durham refuges, provide emergency housing for

women and children escaping from domestic violence. They are both managed and staffed by their own respective management committees which are each made up of a variety of individuals with different careers and social backgrounds. Both Lincoln and Boston refuges are affiliated to the national Women's Aid Federation. Boston Women's Aid is based in the district of Boston, the southernmost part of the county of Lincolnshire and the Lincoln Women's Aid is in the city of Lincoln. The rest of the county is, at present, without a women's refuge. However, I do understand from these refuges that there are plans for an independent refuge to be introduced in another part of the county within the near future.

(4) Lincoln Women's Centre

The Lincoln Women's Centre was opened earlier in 1996. It is staffed and managed by members of Lincoln Women's Aid. The Centre provides Lincoln Women's Aid with a service that they can publicly advertise without risking the location of their refuge being revealed. At this centre the women and children who are either escaping from or living with domestic violence are provided with a place to go to for help, information, support and guidance.

(5) Shelter

This is a voluntary agency which was launched nationally in 1966. It provides help, support, information and guidance to people seeking housing, particularly the homeless and the potentially homeless people. The agency's work, in relation to domestic violence, is usually centred around the victims and their rehousing. The agency also acts as " a campaigning

organisation which promotes the creation of a housing system which meets need, is affordable, is fair to all sections of society and is socially and economically sustainable.” (Shelter, 1996).

(6) ASK

Ask is a voluntary agency which is based in Lincoln and works with young people. This agency has two projects in operation - they provide a help and information service for people under twenty-five and a drug information and support telephone help line. The representative feels that his role on the forum is to give the young people's perspective on issues associated with domestic violence.

(7) Solicitors

There are now two solicitors on the Forum. One has been on the forum since the start of this Lincolnshire inter-agency initiative. Both of these representatives believe strongly in the need for agencies to work closely together on issues such as domestic violence. Their agencies, as in the case of the Liverpool solicitors, are from the business sector. According to the Inter-Agency Circular 1995, solicitors have been categorised by the Home Office as a voluntary agency. They both work closely with victims and perpetrators. In cases of divorce and custody of children, members of this agency could be working on behalf of either the victim or perpetrator at any time.

(8) Probation Service

The representation from this statutory agency includes one member from the Lincoln Prison Probation team and a member from the Lincoln Head Office. Both of these representatives, as in the case of the Liverpool probation officers, work closely with the perpetrators of domestic violence.

(9) Magistrates

This statutory agency is represented by a local magistrate. The agency is part of the law enforcement system. In the context of domestic violence the work of magistrates involves the hearing of criminal cases and the sentencing of the perpetrators of crimes related to domestic violence.

(10) Crown Prosecution Service

As in the case of the Liverpool branch of this statutory agency, the bulk of their work involving domestic violence is prosecuting the perpetrators.

(11) Court Welfare Services

This statutory agency is part of the Probation Service. According to the Court Welfare Service representative, this agency investigates and reports disputes about children. They do not look into domestic violence from the couple's perspective but are concerned about how it

affects the children. The difference between the Court Welfare Service perspective and that of the Probation Service is the level of direct contact. Members of the Court Welfare Service do not have direct contact with domestic violence cases which involve the victims and perpetrators while probation officers do.

(12) West Lindsey District Council (Housing) (13) Boston Borough Council (Housing)

The Boston Borough Council agency is a new addition to the forum. West Lindsey District Council and Boston Borough Council are two out of the seven District Council Authorities in Lincolnshire. The representatives are both from the Housing Departments of their respective councils. Boston is the most southern district in the county of Lincolnshire, while West Lindsey District Council covers most of the northern region of the county. In relation to domestic violence, their work brings them in contact with both victims and perpetrators, but their concerns rest with the safe rehousing of the victims.

(14) Lincolnshire Social Services

There are two representatives from this statutory agency of the Lincolnshire County Council. The Lincolnshire Social Services operates in a similar manner to the Liverpool Social Services. Through their various departments, they work closely with victims and perpetrators. One of the representatives on this forum focuses her attentions on the well-being of children.

(15) Lincoln Safer Cities

This is a voluntary agency which has a small workforce. Two of its members are directly connected with the forum. One is the agency's representative and another is the agency's co-ordinator who is the retired Police Chief Inspector who started the inter-agency initiative back in 1992. This agency is

.... a major community safety initiative funded by the Department of the Environment. The programme is proactive and its purpose is to stimulate activity and to improve the quality and quantity of effective community safety work in areas where crime is concentrated. The 3 year programme aims to reduce crime, lessen fear of crime [and] create a safer environment where local economic and community life can flourish. Lincoln Safer Cities is managed by the Society of Voluntary Associates (SOVA): a leading national organisation for voluntary service work with offenders, ex-offenders and their families. All of SOVA's work is aimed at reducing crime through local community partnerships. The project is guided by a Steering Committee made up of key local representatives from the statutory, voluntary and business sectors. [They claim to] promote joint agency planning and implementation of community safety/crime prevention initiatives. (Lincoln Safer Cities. 1996).

In relation to domestic violence this agency plays an active role on the forum. The representative is on all of the sub-groups and is responsible for constructing the directory on the agencies associated with domestic violence.

(16) Victim Support

As in the case of the Liverpool Forum, Victim Support works solely with the victims of crime. Therefore their concerns rest with the victims of domestic violence. (see Appendix Five)

(17) Lincoln Counselling Centre

This is a voluntary agency which is based at the Lincoln Methodist Church. It provides confidential counselling for people in need of help and support.

(18) Army Housing and Welfare (19) SSAFA Social Work Advisor RAF Coningsby

These two organisations are both associated with the armed forces in Lincolnshire and are subsequently associated with the statutory sector. They both work with the families of members of the army and RAF in their respective regiments. Both of these agencies subsequently work with the victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

(20) Education Welfare Service

This is a new member to the forum. It is a statutory agency which works closely with families in relation to the children's welfare and educational needs. Its loyalties, and therefore its representation on the forum tend to rest with the victims of domestic violence.

(21) Relate

'Relate' was once known as 'Marriage Guidance Council'. There are two Relate representatives on the Forum - the chair and manager of the Lincolnshire branch. Relate is "a registered charity with centres at Lincoln, Boston and Grantham. It has over fifty years

experience of helping people with their relationship problems and this is done mainly through marital or relationship counselling which takes place over several sessions.” (Lincolnshire Chief Constable’s Policy Statement. 1990). According to the representatives on the forum, not only is the national organisation putting issues related to domestic violence high on its agenda but so is their branch. Since being on the Forum they are paying more attention to issues centred around domestic violence.

(22) Benefits Agency

This is a statutory agency which is concerned with people’s benefit entitlements. The representative works with both victims and perpetrators in relation to their financial entitlements.

(23) Health Visitor

The health visitor is a member of the statutory medical agency of a health surgery in a small town in Lincolnshire. She visits different homes during the early days of a newly born child. She works with the family and is therefore likely to come into contact with all concerned with domestic violence - victims, perpetrators, their children and other members of the family, but because their work is aimed at the interests of the children their concerns tend to be with the victims.

(24) Samaritans

According to the Samaritans

The Samaritans are volunteers who offer emotional support to people who are feeling desperate, lonely or suicidal. We are ordinary people from every background and are carefully selected and prepared for the support we offer. We are always available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, including Christmas day, and there are more than 180 branches throughout the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. The Samaritans provide sympathetic, caring and confidential support. We are not a religious organisation and we are there for everyone from any walk of life, whatever age, colour, faith or sex. You can share your innermost feelings with Samaritan volunteers without fear of criticism or judgement. You needn't even tell us your name. Every branch is listed in the local directory under 'S' and if you can't telephone or visit a branch then you can write. (Samaritans 519/93).

This voluntary agency has recently withdrawn its representation on the forum. I understand that being a voluntary agency in terms of both finance and staffing, they felt that, after prioritizing their obligations, they could not justify the time and expense attending the forum entailed. It has also been said by a member of the Forum that they were unclear about the role their agency could play on the Forum.

The Forum is in the process of forming its own sub-groups. Each one of the sub-groups focuses upon a particular issue that the forum wishes to address. At present the forum has four working sub-groups.

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| (1) Zero Tolerance | - This group deals with the development and running of the Zero Tolerance Campaign strategy which the forum plans to use as its main means of raising public |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

awareness throughout the whole county, just as the Cleveland Zero Tolerance Campaign has done.

(2) 'STOP' Project

- Here members are working towards “the development of a court mandated project which engages male perpetrators of domestic violence in a programme of sessions which aim to re-educate them to stop the violence against a female partner.” (Lincolnshire Forum 'Stop' Group. 1996).

(3) Training

- The Training sub-group is in charge of the training strategies of the forum. At present they are working on how best to enable all the agencies on the forum to learn about one another. They then plan to construct training packages for the Forum to train other agencies on issues associated with domestic violence.

(4) Review

-This newly formed group is responsible for monitoring the forum's development. Its duties also include reviewing the membership and structure of the forum. At present this group is in the process of restructuring the forum, including its aims, objectives, membership, the venue for the meetings and the structure of the forum as a whole.

As in the Liverpool Forum, the Lincolnshire Forum contacts agencies and invites them to join the forum. If an agency wishes to join the forum it is then the responsibility of that agency to ensure that it sends a representative. In some cases the agencies include the representation on the forum in the job description for certain posts. For example, in 1994 the post of Chief Superintendent of Lincolnshire Police ceased and the responsibilities of that position were divided between the inspectors. One of the inspectors took over the Chief's role on the Forum. Because it was agreed when the Forum started up in 1992 that a representative from the police would take on the role of the Forum's secretary, his replacement became the secretary. This transition meant that the secretary was then female. During the bulk of the time that I researched this group, the chair, also female, and the secretary, appeared to form a partnership in the running of the Forum. Recently the Police Inspector left her job and was subsequently replaced on the Forum by a male inspector. There is now a male and female input into the leadership of the forum. Unfortunately there has not been enough time to see how this will affect the dynamics of the group.

During the latter stage of my research the Review sub-group was formed. It was introduced because of problems that a number of the forum members felt were adversely affecting the development and even survival of the forum. According to members of the forum, the membership, structure and management needed to be reviewed. They also expressed feeling that areas of the forum might need to be changed and then monitored on a regular basis. The Review group has since compiled a proposal which they intend to put to the forum in due course. (see Appendix Six). They plan to change the structure and membership of the forum.

This will include introducing a steering group, making agencies put forward named representatives prior to joining the forum, making members accountable to both their agency and to the forum, ensuring that no area of the county of Lincolnshire is neglected by the forum and that all of the issues associated with domestic violence are covered. From my research, it appears that the Lincolnshire forum is progressing towards the stage of inter-agency co-operation that the Liverpool forum reached at the beginning of 1996. (I will be returning to this issue in more detail in Chapter Three).

Having provided background information on all three forums, I will now move on to present an ethnographic analysis of the forums' meetings in an ethnographical style in order to provide further insight into inter-agency co-operation. Firstly, however, I provide a description of the committee format in which meetings are generally conducted.

THE MEETINGS

All three of the forums in my study conduct their meetings in an official manner. The meetings are chaired, and the main points raised are minuted. Every member receives a copy of the minutes and an outline of the agenda of the forthcoming meeting. The members are sent these soon after each meeting so that each agency representative has an opportunity to read and assess the minutes for themselves and also to discuss issues with his/her respective agency. As both the Lincolnshire and Liverpool forums open their meetings a register is sent round for all present to sign - their name and the name of the agency they are representing. Apologies have

usually already been given to either the chair or secretary prior to the meetings. In the case of the Durham Forum, they register which agencies are present rather than the individuals. In Lincolnshire and Liverpool each agency will have officially registered with the forum the individual named representative(s) whom they wish to send to the forum. When an agency wishes to replace its representative then written notification is sent to the chair of the forum. In the case of all three forums, when a new member first attends a meeting, all the members present introduce themselves and states, the name of the agency which they are representing. This procedure ensures that both new and existing members know each agency representative.

The meetings of all three forums follow a written agenda. After everyone has settled in his/her place and the list of those present and absent has been gathered, the minutes of the previous meeting are put forward for approval. Issues raised from the minutes are then discussed and where necessary an agreed course of action is taken. How the agenda is structured thereafter varies somewhat from forum to forum. In the case of both Lincolnshire and Liverpool Forums their sub-groups update their forum members with regard to the developments of any work their group is undertaking. The representatives of the agencies associated with all three forums are also given the opportunity to keep the forum members informed and up to date on any developments relevant to domestic violence. Each of the agencies (the five refuges) in the Durham Forum, for example, report back to the meetings the progress that they have or have not made on tasks set by the forum. For example, at a recent forum meeting members wished to get other appropriate agencies actively involved. Each refuge was allocated a number of agencies to target.

All three forums encourage their members and respective agencies to share as much information about each other as possible - particularly in relation to their philosophies, approaches and attitudes towards domestic violence. This is seen by the members as a move forward. The forums are clearly at an early stage when it comes to learning about each other's culture and practice. The Lincolnshire Forum, for example, is in the process of gathering information from each agency in order to compile a directory. The forum is aiming towards having the directory made available to the public and appropriate agencies in the area. Each agency has been set the task of completing a questionnaire - outlining relevant information about their respective agency. This has been seen as the most productive way of enabling all the necessary information to be gathered. (see Appendix Seven). Until the forums have gathered what they believe to be sufficient information, individual agencies feel uncomfortable about working with others in an inter-agency forum on any specific cases. They claim that the objective of working on specific cases is therefore likely to be a long way off.

The Liverpool and Lincolnshire Forums have occasionally had guest speakers at their meetings. The Lincolnshire Forum, for example, has recently had a member from the Edinburgh Zero Tolerance Campaign. She was invited to inform the members of the forum about the campaign in order to help them progress with their plans for such a campaign in Lincolnshire, (see Appendix Eight). At one of their meetings in the summer of 1996 the Liverpool Forum had two representatives from the National Child Support Agency. The aim of this was to provide the Forum members with information about the agency and to provide an opportunity to ask questions.

At every meeting the Lincolnshire Forum members are provided with the latest police statistics relating to domestic violence. (see Appendix Nine). The purpose of this is to enable the members and their agencies to gain an appreciation of the extent of domestic violence in the county of Lincolnshire. From my research it appears that it also serves as a means by which the police can demonstrate that they are acknowledging domestic violence to be a criminal offence and that they are tackling the problems associated with such violence. Occasionally the women's refuges provide a copy of their statistics on referrals and the number of women and children who use their services. (see Appendix Ten). The other agencies are now being encouraged to provide the forum with similar statistics that relate to their involvement with the issues and the people associated with domestic violence. The forums thus become a means to scrutinize practice.

Before each of the three forums bring their meetings to a close the members are given the opportunity to express any concerns they might have or bring any particular issue to the attention of the other members. Following this the forums' members then arrange the date and time of the next meeting. In the case of Liverpool the date and time of next meeting has usually been mapped out well in advance, but just in case of any problems there does appear to be some leeway for this to be changed to accommodate all concerned. Both Lincolnshire and Durham arrange the date and time between those members present. All three forums tend to meet on a regular basis - approximately once every two to three months. The sub-groups meet at various times, usually as and when necessary. The venues for all three forums have recently been the same for each meeting.

The following three sections provide ethnographic accounts of aspects of the meetings of the three domestic violence forums in my study. The information comes from data I have gathered from my interviews with the people associated with the forums, from minutes of each of the forum's meetings and from my own personal observations.

DURHAM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM MEETINGS

As I have already stated, during the time of my research, the Durham Forum was in its early stages of developing its inter-agency initiative. The group consisted of the five women's refuges from the county of Durham. However, throughout my research, one of the refuges did not take an active role in the forum, but has continued to be a registered member. From my discussions with other forum members, I discovered that this particular refuge has a tendency to work in isolation from the others. The four remaining refuges varied in the number of representatives they sent to each meeting. On average, at least one or two members were sent. This variation depended upon the activities taking place back at the refuges and the number of staff each of the refuges could spare.

The agenda that the members used to structure their meetings was beginning to follow a pattern. The following is an example of one of the Durham Domestic Violence Forum meetings. It will provide further insight into this group's attempts to achieve the 'ideal' of inter-agency co-operation and their interpretations of it.

The meeting in question took place on the 2nd May 1996. Members gathered in the restaurant area of the public house, which tended to be fairly empty on a weekday at lunchtime. In addition to this being quiet and out of the way where the forum members could feel comfortable to discuss issues and not feel at risk of being overheard, it also proved convenient as it meant that the meeting could take place while members had their lunch. As the members arrived they individually purchased some food and drinks, which were consumed during the less formal stages of the meeting. This time was also spent by the members rediscovering and reinforcing a comfortable working environment. Informal discussions took place between both old and new members. Although the majority of people knew one another, this still enabled them to break down some of the barriers which separated them from one another. Once most of the members had finished eating, the informal discussions soon began to take on a more structured and orderly pattern. Subsequently the meeting officially began.

A list of those who were and were not present was made. All of the refuges, apart from Peterlee were represented. The meeting then moved on to the 'feedback' section of the agenda (item number three). Each refuge presented the forum with information about their refuge and about any progress they had made in relation to the tasks which had been allocated to them at the previous meeting. These presentations were interspersed with discussions.

In response to the forum's plans to form temporary inter-agency groups - as outlined earlier in this chapter (pp.44-45) - the Derwentside Refuge reported on their attempts in their area. They informed the forum about their liaison with another inter-agency initiative which was already being developed in their district - the Derwentside Crime Strategy Forum. This group

was made up of members of statutory agencies, particularly the local police force, and representatives from the private sector, such as local businesses. The staff at the Derwentside refuge were contacted by the co-ordinator of the Crime Strategy Forum. He informed them that the members had identified domestic violence as a crime, and that it was one which they felt required the involvement of people with better awareness of the issues. The Derwentside refuge subsequently became involved with this inter-agency group. The members of the refuge continued to liaise with the co-ordinator, they provided training for the agencies and attended relevant meetings. As a result of their involvement with the Derwentside Crime Strategy Forum they decided that “As this means of communication is now in place Derwentside no longer see the need for a local D.V. [Domestic Violence] forum” in their area. (minutes. 2 May 1996). The representatives from the refuge reported to the Durham Forum that they had decided to continue to work with the Derwentside Crime Strategy Forum but that they intend to focus their attentions on developing the county-wide domestic violence forum which the Durham Forum was originally designed to achieve. The members from the Derwentside refuge also reported that, as part of this strategy, they hope to encourage the agencies associated with the Derwentside Crime Strategy Forum to become directly involved with the Durham County Domestic Violence Forum.

The Durham Refuge reported on their work with numerous agencies, particularly in relation to issues of the health and general well-being of the victims of domestic violence. This included liaising with doctors, nurses, members from Social Services and Social Security. The Darlington Refuge informed the members that they had recently employed an Out-Reach worker who was going to become the representative on the forum for their refuge. Part of her job description was to liaise with various appropriate agencies. The member from the refuge

also commented on her uncertainties in relation to Darlington's future in the County of Durham. With the reorganisation of local authorities, Darlington was to become a Unitary Authority which was to result in its losing its ties with the County of Durham. However, it was agreed by the forum members and the Darlington Refuge representative that as long as they could they would continue to work on the forum.

The representatives from the Wear Valley Refuge discussed the problems they were experiencing in relation to their move. At the time of my research the Wear Valley Refuge were in the process of moving to a new site. They had received financial aid from the National Lottery which meant that they could move to larger premises. Having found the building, had plans drawn up to redesign the premises to suit their needs and applied for planning permission for 'change of use', they received adverse reactions from the local people. Various people from in and around the area to which the refuge was moving, including young families, the elderly, shop keepers and a local General Practitioner, were united in their objections to the refuge moving to the proposed site. I attended a public meeting which the council called in order to hear both sides before they made a decision. Some of the people spoke of their fears that they might be at risk of attack from the men who would be trying to find their partners and children. A number of the objectors expressed their concerns that there would not be any staff at the refuge during the night 'to keep order'. This part of my research highlighted for me why the forums in my study were so determined to increase public awareness and understanding of the people and issues associated with domestic violence. However, after defending their position the refuge was granted the permission.

One of the members from the Wear Valley Refuge commented that through the Internet they gained access to information about ways in which organisations in other countries, such as the United States, have attempted to tackle problems associated with domestic violence. They reported on the refuge's involvement with the Labour Party and its campaign against domestic violence. One of the members of the Derwentside Refuge worked with a number of other people to help the Labour Party compile their consultation paper on the "Elimination of Domestic and Sexual Violence Against Women" (Labour Party. October 1995).

As a result of the members having expressed the need for training in order for all agencies to have a clearer understanding of one another and of issues associated with domestic violence, the fourth section of the agenda entitled 'Direction of this Group' focused on training. From the discussions in this stage of the meeting the forum agreed to put together a training programme which would be used in the training of both their own and other agencies. However, some of the members were reluctant to work with the perpetrators of domestic violence. Members felt that their responsibilities were with the victims and that it was not within their framework to work with the perpetrators of domestic violence. This discussion was as a result of an idea which had been raised by one of the members during the 'Feedback' section of the meeting. She expressed what she saw to be a way forward. From her educational background, particularly her teacher training, she attempted to encourage them working with the perpetrators in the hope of re-educating them. She suggested the possibility of talking with the perpetrators about the victims' perspective of domestic violence and hearing from them about their perspective. However, she received some adverse reactions from the other members. According to the minutes for this meeting "A brief discussion on

working with perpetrators ensued - probably the start of an ongoing debate". (Durham Forum. 2/5/96).

Prior to the close of the meeting, members agreed upon what each refuge was to do in preparation for the next meeting. For example, every member agreed to bring along with them a list of the agencies with whom they are already working, and of those whom they do or could train. The date and time of the next meeting was set, following which the meeting was declared closed. Members then either went home or back to their respective refuge.

LIVERPOOL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM MEETINGS

On the third Thursday of every second month, with the exception of the summer vacation and the Christmas period, the forum would meet at the Conference room of the Probation Offices in Liverpool, on the fourth floor of the Cotton Exchange Building. On arrival the members had to ring a door bell and announce themselves and their reason for being there. Once it was clear that the members were entitled to enter the building, the receptionist would let them in. The members would make their own way to the Probation Offices where they would then be expected to officially report in. Having done so, the members would then head down the corridor to the conference room where they would be assembling. Gradually they would each find a seat and once everyone had settled the Chair would declare the meeting open. Tea and coffee were made available for the members during the meetings. Members often gathered around the drinks trolley and would use the break to help bridge gaps between the different agencies and their representatives. This appeared to work in a similar way to the informal discussion stages of the Durham meetings.

At the start of every meeting, the Chair firstly declared the meeting open and then welcomed both old and new members to the group. This was followed by everyone introducing themselves and stating which agency or sub-group they represented. During the introductions a list of those present and of those who had forwarded their apologies for absence was compiled by whoever was taking the minutes.

In the case of most meetings, before members could discuss any matters that might have arisen from the minutes, it had to be democratically agreed that the minutes were a true record. However, on the 13th June 1996, for example, the second item on the agenda was a presentation which was given by two representatives from a visiting agency. Two male members of the Liverpool branch of the Child Support Agency presented the forum members with updated information about their agency and the services that they provide. They only stayed to give their presentation and to answer any questions. There were clear signs of unease about the Child Support Agency and about both the Government's and the Opposition's attitudes to the family and relationships. At this meeting the dynamics of the group, particularly in relation to the 'ideal' of inter-agency co-operation and the 'reality' of it were very apparent. There was a clear division between the forum and the visiting agency. While the two representatives from the Child Support Agency were present the forum members appeared somewhat more united than they did after the visitors left. For example, while the representatives from the Child Support Agency were there all of the members expressed their concerns about the way that women were being forced to name the fathers of their children. Those women who were in receipt of financial support from the State, for instance, were at risk of losing some of their benefits if they refused to co-operate. The

members of the forum were particularly uncomfortable about how this might adversely affect women attempting to escape from domestic violence. It was felt that making fathers financially responsible in situations where domestic violence is involved and where the woman is wanting to get herself and her child(ren) away from the father / perpetrator has the potential of not only putting the woman's whereabouts at risk of disclosure but could make the man feel that because he was handing over money he was entitled to 'ownership' of both his child(ren) and the woman - his wife - just as if he were purchasing a car.

Soon after the Child Support Agency representatives left the room, a number of the members of the forum wanted to move on to the main points on the agenda, while others wished to continue debating the issues raised by the presentation. For example, a representative from one of the agencies voiced her concerns about the ways in which members of agencies, such as the Child Support Agency, treated victims of domestic violence and how the Government places so much emphasis on families staying together. She did not appear to want to let go of this opportunity. Some of the other members of the forum, including those who had previously been making similar comments, were saying that people such as the representatives from the Child Support Agency were 'simply doing their job' and that people should not be judged by the work they do. Before the discussions got too heated the Chair intervened in order to defuse the situation. She appeared to favour the option of moving on - so they did.

At every meeting following the discussions about the minutes of the previous meeting, the Chair would make her announcements to the forum. These tended to include activities with which she had been directly involved and ones about which other people had informed her. For example, on the 13 June she told the members that she had been misquoted in the local

newspaper in relation to a possible closure of a Liverpool Women's Hostel and that she had subsequently been in contact with the press to have the mistake rectified.

During that meeting a lengthy discussion took place regarding the monitoring and tracking of victims and perpetrators and subsequently of the agencies concerned with domestic violence. Monitoring and tracking would involve ongoing liaison between different agencies and the victims and perpetrators, often with individuals being watched and having reports made about them. This would not only mean that the agencies would have to continue working with one another within an inter-agency initiative, but it would also include agencies keeping track of the people with whom they have worked a long time after the initial case-work could be regarded as complete. For example, at present, once a man who has been imprisoned for an offence associated with domestic violence is released his whereabouts are likely to become unknown to police and social services. After the offender is released, the legal system is seen to have carried out all that was required of it. In the case of a woman escaping domestic violence, once she has left a refuge her whereabouts could also become unclear. The staff at the refuge can say that they have helped her to escape from a violent situation and have helped her to make a new start for herself and her child(ren). With the introduction of monitoring and tracking, agencies, through inter-agency co-operation, would be expected to remain in either direct or indirect contact with the victims and with the perpetrators of domestic violence. According to the minutes of the forum meeting on the 13 June 1996

“Some concerns have been expressed about the lack of communication between agencies, i.e. men /women moving from place to place, agency to agency. No monitoring exists and there is a possible need for this so it can be established if men are continuing to abuse and also if women are being re-abused or receiving services.” (minutes. 13/6/96)

The forum members were informed about work which was being carried out by a Senior Officer of the Liverpool Probation Research Team. He was conducting research into the tracking and monitoring of perpetrators, focusing on offenders he had worked with. From discussions with members of the forum and the Senior Officer, I learned that the monitoring and tracking of perpetrators and victims already takes place in some areas of the United States of America. Some of the members of the forum were interested to see how a similar strategy could be officially implemented into the British legal system.

According to members of the forum, a dilemma facing the introduction of such a strategy would be an ethical one. Monitoring and tracking of any individual could be seen as being in conflict with civil rights. It is generally accepted that once a person has served their prison sentence they have paid their debt to society and should therefore be treated as a 'normal' member of society and have the right to be free from being continuously watched and reported on. It could also be argued that the victims/survivors themselves may not wish to be checked upon indefinitely, even if the aim is to ensure their wellbeing. They may prefer to be allowed to put behind them an unhappy stage of their lives. This is clearly a philosophical problem which will need to be given serious consideration.

Some members strongly supported the idea of some form of monitoring and tracking, others, however, did feel uneasy about the idea. The discussions then turned to the monitoring of agencies, again members views were divided. They were particularly concerned that individuals might be monitored instead of each agency as a whole. Comments, such as 'if agencies are doing their jobs properly there should be no reason for any one to be concerned about their organisation being monitored' were made by some of the other members of the

forum. Such remarks appeared to cause those members who felt uncomfortable about monitoring and tracking to become restrained in how they were able to express their feelings without appearing to have something to hide, possibly because confidentiality was high on their agenda.

In relation to most of the forum's meetings the bulk of the time was spent on feedback and discussions associated with the different individuals and groups connected with the forum. For example, during the meeting on the 13th June 1996, the forum's co-ordinator reported on how one of the working groups was attempting to put a forum policy into practice. The forum had previously decided to enable victims of domestic violence to become more involved with the forum and not simply via their working-groups. The Forum tended to refer to the victims as 'survivors' because they felt that the term 'survivor' made the people concerned sound less passive and weak and gave them something to be proud about - that they had survived domestic violence. The new group, according to the forum's co-ordinator, was in the process of putting together an annual event where forum members and the survivors could get together and learn from one another. As in the case of all three forums in this study, the Liverpool Domestic Violence Forum ended their meeting with the Chair announcing the time and date of the next meeting.

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM MEETINGS

As I stated earlier in this chapter, the Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum meetings take place at the headquarters of the Lincolnshire Police Force. The headquarters is situated within its own large campus just outside the City of Lincoln. In addition to the facilities necessary for

the policing of the County of Lincolnshire they have conference and lecture rooms, amenities to aid handicapped people to get around the site, and plenty of parking places. However, there is limited public transport to this venue from the more remote areas of the County which is a problem for those people who rely upon public transport.

The forum meetings have all tended to take place around the third Wednesday of every third month. However, as in the case of the Liverpool Forum, summer vacations and the Christmas period often led to larger gaps between meetings. Members had discovered that during these times of year a number of people would either be unable to attend themselves or their respective agencies might be short staffed and it would therefore be harder for the members and the agencies to justify time spent at the forum meetings. During my research, the meetings have always been held in the afternoons. Members felt that this was to be the most productive option. This meant that members could report into their agencies in the morning and then have a break and some lunch before attending a forum meeting.

Prior to every meeting members would report in at the reception area. Each person would be issued with a visitors' pass, which they were to wear during their stay at the police station. They also had to sign-in. This was all done for both security and safety precautions. The members then gathered around the seated area of the foyer and waited until an appointed member of the police force arrived to escort them to one of the two rooms where the meetings were usually held. This usually involved the escort in having to make several trips as members did not all arrive at the same time. The journey from the reception to the room entailed going through several doors, up and down numerous stairs and along different corridors. It felt like

going through a maze and was somewhat of a disorientating experience. Only the police personnel knew the route to and from the meeting room.

The following is an example of one of the Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum meetings. The meeting in question took place on 1st May 1996. As in the case of other meetings, it took several minutes for members to find a seat and for the forum as a whole to settle. It appeared that this part of the meeting was used by members to attempt to reorient themselves in the group and to gauge the atmosphere. Tea and coffee was made available for members during the meeting. The Chair (a representative from Lincoln Women's Aid), secretary (the police inspector) and the secretary's assistant sat together at the head of the cluster of tables. The assistant was employed by the police force and was officially the police inspector's general secretary. The rest of the forum sat around the remaining tables.

The Chair would declare the meeting open. An attendance sheet was sent round for members to sign and state which agency they were representing. While this was being done a list of those who had forwarded their apologies for not being able to attend was compiled by the minutes secretary, (who again is the secretary's assistant). Following this, the forum then began to follow the set agenda for that meeting. A review of the minutes of the previous meeting and approval of them followed the registration of attendance. Despite the fact that members would have been sent their copies of the minutes well in advance of the meeting with the intention of enabling them to have plenty of time to study them and reflect over any of the issues which might arise in the meeting, time inevitably had to be given at the meeting for the members to read them. This allocation of time appears to have become an accepted part of the routine. The first part of the agenda consisted of several stages. Firstly the minutes were

read by the members, and then the members were asked to approve them as a true record. This would then be followed by a discussion of any matters arising from the minutes.

As a result of these discussions amendments were often made and recorded in the new minutes. During this 'Matters Arising' stage of the agenda, sub-groups provided the forum with an update on their progress. The length of time required for this section of the meeting depended upon the members' reactions to the minutes and upon any events that might have taken place since that particular meeting. In the case of the meeting in question, the bulk of this section was taken up by the Zero Tolerance sub-group informing the forum about their plans to launch Zero Tolerance later in the year. Members then discussed issues related to the campaign. The launch was due to - and did - take place in October 1996 in the conference room at the Police Headquarters.

At the time of this research, particularly during this meeting, the forum was focusing its attentions on raising public awareness through setting up campaign strategies such as Zero Tolerance. It had been suggested and encouraged by a few of the forum members that they should work in a general sense to ensure a united group while others have felt that having a specific focus, such as a public campaign, would help unite the agencies. In response to the discussions which followed the Zero Tolerance Sub-group's report, one of the legal agency representatives expressed her concerns about the direction she saw the forum heading - simply discussing definitions and different campaign strategies. She felt that the forum had been formed in order to encourage agencies to work together, providing them with the opportunity to share knowledge, resources and information. She acknowledge value in agreeing upon a shared definition of domestic violence, and she also recognised the

importance of campaigns in the attempt to change legislation. However, she appeared to feel that the forum should be moving beyond this. In her view the way forward would be for agencies on the forum to share their concerns about actual cases with one another. There was a mixed response to her comments. Some members appeared to be alarmed at the idea of discussing particular cases, because of the risk of breaching confidentiality, while others agreed that there was a serious need to re-assess the direction in which the forum was heading. This highlighted for me how divided the forum was in its approach to and interpretation of the ideal of inter-agency co-operation and how best to put it into practice. Some of the members felt that the aim of the forum was to unite the relevant agencies and break down the barriers which divided them; others saw it as a way for them to raise public awareness and still others wanted it to become a place where agencies could get together and work on specific cases.

The Training Sub-Group reported on their attempts to arrange an inter-agency training day for the forum members and their agencies. This led to the forum discussing where would be the best place to hold it and when. It was decided that the Police Headquarters Training Department had the most suitable facilities. This received a mixed response. Some members felt frustrated that everything appeared to take place on police grounds while others felt that it would be the most practical as the police had the space and could afford to spare the rooms and time necessary for such an event. As one member commented, "Well, we have the forum meetings here so why not hold the training sessions here. The rest of us haven't got the space and we all know how to get here. It will be too costly and complicated for us to hire somewhere." After the discussions members agreed to hold the training day at the Police Headquarters on the 22nd July 1996.

The Police Inspector then updated the members on his agency's involvement with the forum. In the past there was a large police presence on the forum, but during the period of my research the number of representatives fell from about five to one. I was informed that this was as a result of their priorities and financial constraints. From my observations and discussions with forum members, there appeared to be conflicting reactions to the police force's involvement. On the one hand the members of the forum were united in their concerns about the apparent lack of training of police officers in relation to domestic violence. They felt that it was important for members of the police force to be trained not only in issues associated with domestic violence but more importantly in how best to respond to an actual 'domestic' incident. The forum agreed that the training of police officers was of the utmost importance, particularly as it is the police who tend to be the first on the scene and that they are the ones who have the power to be of immediate assistance to the victim. Members of the forum were equally concerned about the unsatisfactory liaison and co-operation between the police and other agencies. However, despite these concerns, members were troubled by the the disproportionate level of police membership on the forum. Several members feared that this could result in the police having too much power and influence. Although not all of the members openly claimed to have such fears themselves, it was readily appreciated how these concerns had arisen. Members suggested that maybe the forum should review the membership. According to the minutes for this meeting, "The forum registered its concerns over multi-agency training, the availability of training for police officers and FSU officer (Family Support) input at forum meetings. The Police Inspector [the forum's secretary] informed the meeting that Area FSU officers would not in the future be represented on the Forum. Police representation would be provided by the Inspector who will cascade

information to and from FSU's." (Lincolnshire Forum Minutes. 1/5/96. p.3). It could be argued that this is a strategy for control on the part of the police, which might be seen as a way of enabling their power to remain intact.

The following stages of the agenda varied from one meeting to another. In relation to the meeting on the 1st May 1996, item five was concerned with the statistics associated with domestic violence. This part of the meeting was taken up by a general discussion. It included members expressing their concerns about the lack of statistics relating to domestic violence. However, both the Boston and Lincoln Women's Aid refuges distributed copies of their statistics relating to the number of victims using their services. (see Appendix Ten). The Police Inspector (the secretary of the forum) presented the members with the Lincolnshire Police Force's latest statistics. He informed the group that a copy of the statistics would be forwarded to the members with the minutes.

Various members stressed the need for more statistics. The forum agreed to work towards encouraging agencies to compile statistics relating to their involvement with domestic violence. Although all agreed with the importance of this, a number of members did say that they did not see how their agency could gather such statistics. This appeared to raise once again the question of definitions and of who has the power to control definitions. Some members stated that it would prove impossible for their agency to identify which of their cases could be categorised as domestic violence.

It was clear that agencies such as Women's Aid and the Lincoln Women's Centre focus their attentions on issues related to domestic violence and are therefore justified in their high level

of commitment to the forum. However, as a number of the other members stressed, 'this is not the case for all of the agencies.' With regard to the majority of the agencies, domestic violence is only a small part of their work. As stated earlier in this thesis, the police force, for example, deal with all criminal acts and not just ones of a 'domestic' nature. According to members of several agencies it is often left to an individual's interpretation of a particular situation as to how each case is categorised. This, they felt, could result in inaccurate statistics. As a number of the members stressed, this is even the case for agencies within the legal sector. As domestic violence is not an illegal act in its own right and with the absence of a generally accepted definition of what is meant by the term, it has proved difficult for the police, courts and the probation service to identify clearly which cases can be categorised as being domestic violence. Some of the agencies stated that their clients' association with domestic violence is not always of direct relevance to the agencies' attempts to help them. For example, a woman and her children escaping from domestic violence might, for the first time, turn to the Benefits Agency for financial help. The fact that she is a victim of domestic violence does not directly concern this agency. They claim that they concentrate upon the client's financial situation rather than what led to this particular predicament.

The meeting next dealt with the agenda item headed 'Any Other Business'. This included any issue that members wished to raise. In relation to the May meeting this section (number six on the agenda) included notification to the forum of the latest Body Shop campaign against domestic violence, a discussion relating to members' concerns regarding the 1996 Family Law Bill and members being informed and invited to the launch of the Lincoln Women's Centre.

The final item on the agenda was, as with the other two forums in this study, where the members agreed upon the date and time of the next meeting. In relation to the Lincolnshire forum's meeting in May, they decided to hold the following meeting on Thursday 19th September rather than on the Wednesday. This was agreed because the Wednesday in question was proving to be problematic for the majority of the members.

Throughout this chapter I have provided some factual information on domestic violence forums, particularly in relation to the three case studies upon which this study focuses. In the next chapter I will present a more detailed analysis of the theoretical themes highlighted by this research.

CHAPTER THREE

THEMES AND ISSUES

Multi-agency working is currently being promoted in many fields. For example, in very different ways, the multi-agency approach has been viewed in recent years as a policy response to child abuse, to drug use, to various types of crime prevention, and to community care. It is now developing rather quickly among organisations dealing with domestic violence. More than 150 multi-agency domestic violence projects or initiatives now exist, and more are being set up all the time. Some commentators and activists against violence in the home have greeted this development with some cynicism, describing it as 'the flavour of the month'. But does it work? Is it effective as a strategy for preventing domestic violence, and for protecting women and children from abuse and meeting their needs? (Hague. et al, p.1. 1995)

FAMILIES AND FORUMS

This research has focused on three communities made up of networks of statutory and voluntary agencies connected with domestic violence: these are the Durham, the Liverpool and the Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forums. It has focused on co-operation between the agencies that make up these networks, studying both their internal and external communications. The research highlights the importance of productive liaison in the ideology of these organisations and the role policy initiatives play in the development of such organisations. The nature of the forums in this study reveals great diversity of social, cultural and professional backgrounds resulting in a community of agencies with a hybrid identity made up of a blend of institutional cultures. The research explores how this diversity brings about differences between intended policy and actual practice and the implications that such diversity has in relation to policy implementation. I have endeavoured to study the policy



process in relation to Domestic Violence Forums by exploring its “characteristic cultural complexity and messiness ...” (Wright et al. 1995. p.27).

Domestic violence is a complex social problem. In tackling it, various agencies have roles to play: one agency alone cannot deal with this. Like modern family life, inter-agency domestic violence forums operate as a cluster of discrepant and contradictory individual interests held together with an ideology of co-operation. For example, some agencies represent one sector of the family - the perpetrators of domestic violence - while others act on behalf of other members - the victims.

In some senses the network of agencies in each forum parallels the view of family networks put forward by some social scientists. According to Ford

“Just as the individual is a part of the family, so the family is a part of society. Just as the individual is affected, both openly and covertly, by the interaction within the family and by the expectations of normal behaviour which develop within it, so is the family affected by the interaction of the various parts of society and by the general expectations held by that society about the behaviour of families.” (Ford. 1983. p. 106).

Adopting such a perspective on the family reveals important similarities between the group dynamics of the domestic violence forums and those found in a family group. The inter-group dynamics of both families and forums depend a great deal upon the level and standard of co-operation and communication between the components which make up the collectivity. Just as the family is made up of a variety of interests and power relations so the agencies within the forum appear to represent the opposing interests of different individual members of a family. For example, Women’s Aid representatives at the Forums tend to support mothers and children while the Probation Service tends to have offender’s interests at heart and these tend

to be men who have committed violence against their wives. The inter-agency forums can be seen as a grand metaphorical attempt to reconstruct the disintegrating nuclear family in the public sphere. It could be argued that despite recent 'back-to-basics' campaigns, a great deal of society's conflict and negativity is being internalised by the family. While the family becomes increasingly driven by these conflicting interests and needs the various agencies appear to reconstruct it at the agency level with the Forum representing differing factions and interests, thrashing out conflicts on behalf of their respective client group. Just as the family becomes the site of complex and often contradictory needs and aspirations so also the Inter-agency Domestic Violence Forum comes to reflect these in its operation. As my research has revealed, part of the problem is the mismatch which exists between rhetoric and reality in the operation of the modern family and in the mechanisms set up to deal with its most profound crises.

The ideal to which Inter-Agency Domestic Violence Forums aspire appears to be a co-operative and harmonious relationship between the members of the group. However, in reality there are often signs of conflict and disharmony in the way they function. In reality, the ideal would seem difficult to achieve between forum members. The main reasons for this division are the communication problems and the perceived imbalances of power which each newly formed Forum. In this chapter I set about analysing this problem in terms of a number of key concepts. These are: awareness, membership of the Forums, the notion of public and private, and the differences between members in relation to culture and subsequent boundaries.

THE FAMILY: IDEALS AND REALITIES

Domestic violence, by definition, takes place within a family group. It is therefore important to understand what is meant by the term 'family'. According to Deltufo "... the family is the most important unit of our society. The family is the transmitter of values and concepts that are important for the continuance of the society as a whole. Bottom line: [it teaches] people how to be acceptable members of society." (Deltufo, 1995. p.18). The family is also an economic unit, a key site of consumption in the Western economic system. However, as Giddens claims

Families today organize their respective individual domestic duties and their links with the wider social environment in a variety of ways. The contrasts between the 'orthodox' families - the woman as 'housewife', the husband as 'breadwinner' - and dual-career or one parent families illustrate this diversity. Culturally, there is greater diversity of family minorities (such as West Indian, Asian, Greek and Italian communities) and the influence of movements such as feminism have produced considerable cultural variety in family forms. Persistent class divisions, between the poor, skilled working class, and the various groupings within the middle and upper classes, sustain major variations in family structure. Variations in family experience during the life course are fairly obvious. For instance, one individual might come from a family in which both parents had stayed together, and herself or himself become married and then divorced. Another person might be brought up in a single-parent family, be multiply married and have children by each marriage. (Giddens. 1993. p.401)

These variations in family structure have led to wide-ranging differences in the way that 'family' is conceptualised within Western society. As with the term 'domestic violence', there are now multiple definitions of what 'family' is.

It is clear that the nuclear family has been crucial to the way that society is able to reinforce its traditions, culture, morals and acceptable forms of behaviour. Within classic family sociology,

the family is where children first learn about identity and role formation. Families are taken to be instrumental in constructing behaviour, and how individuals respond to and treat other members of society.

However, such views have been subjected to a thoroughgoing critique. According to Moore

The importance of recognizing the distinction between the 'ideal' or 'believed' way of organizing kinship/household relations and the actualities of the way in which those relationships are organized in practice has long been a central feature of anthropological analysis. (Moore. 1994. p.126).

The anthropologist Edmund Leach has referred to the images of the 'ideal family' to which we are regularly treated as " 'the cereal-packet norm family'. This he claims consists of the "husband as head of household and [the] children [being] cared for by smiling wife." (cited in Abbott et al. 1990. p.73). But as Abbott argues the 'cereal packet family' is "an ideal; an ideal happy family which does not often fit the reality and one which is not descriptively neutral but value laden." (Abbott et al. 1990. p.73). This mismatch between the 'ideal' and 'reality' of family life highlights the need for increased public awareness and recognition of the problem of domestic violence in order for it to be tackled by society as a whole. This is a task that has been embarked upon by a wide range of organisations and institutions concerned with improvement and quality of inter-personal and particularly marital relationships.

The American organisation, Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, for example, uses a model called the Equality Wheel (see Appendix Eleven) which outlines eight recommendations which they believe will bring about non-violent behaviour and equality within a relationship and hence the 'ideal' harmonious and egalitarian family relationship. They identify "non-threatening behaviour, respect, trust and support, honesty and accountability,

responsible parenting, shared responsibility, ... economic partnership, [and] negotiation and fairness” (Pence and Paymar. 1993. p.186) as characterising the ‘ideal’ relationship. This project aims towards bringing about an equal partnership between couples. It is an approach which has also been adopted here in Britain by people who are campaigning against domestic violence such as Women’s Aid and other agencies included in this study. From discussions I have had with several campaigners, it is clear that the points identified by this idealistic model of a relationship are ones to which they want people to be attracted. According to one of the victims with whom I spoke, ‘the Equality Wheel helps people like myself to have something positive to strive towards. It serves as a reminder that domestic violence is not and should not be the norm.’ (Informant 5).

In addition to the Equality Wheel, the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project designed a Power and Control Wheel (see appendix Twelve). This ‘Wheel’ appears to outline what could be seen as the ‘reality’. It is based on the organisation’s findings of common factors which best describe men’s violence against their partners. According to Pence and Paymer “many of the women [involved in their research] criticized theories that described battering as cyclical rather than as a constant force in their relationship; that attributed the violence to men’s inability to cope with stress; and that failed to acknowledge fully the intention of batterers to gain control over their partners’ action, thoughts and feelings”. (Pence and Paymar. 1993. p.2). The Power and Control Wheel was designed to show “that violence is a pattern of behaviours rather than isolated incidents of abuse or cyclical explosions of pent-up anger, frustration, or painful feelings.” (Pence and Paymar. 1993. p.2). As can be seen from appendix twelve, the Duluth project has labelled “using intimidation, using emotional abuse, using isolation, minimizing, denying and blaming, using children, using

male privilege, using economic abuse, [and] using coercion and threats” (Pence and Paymar. 1993. p. 3) as being the main factors associated with domestic violence. From discussions with the victims, perpetrators and representatives from the agencies associated with this study, it would appear that the eight issues which the Duluth project have identified do in fact encapsulate what is meant by the term ‘domestic violence’. The victims, for example, spoke not only of physical violence but also of being made to feel that they were useless and that problems in the home were their fault, of being cut off from friends and family, of either being forced to have sexual intercourse as and when their partners wished or being totally rejected sexually, and of threats which were made in relation to their children - particularly when the perpetrators feared that the women might leave or tell someone about their violent behaviour. It could therefore be argued that one ideal, in relation to the family, has been replaced with another which is reflected in the operations of Inter-Agency Domestic Violence Forums.

INTER-AGENCY CO-OPERATION: THE IDEALS AND REALITIES

As I have suggested earlier, the ‘ideal’ for Inter-Agency Domestic Violence Forums appears to be for agencies to come together and work in harmony with one another. However, the ‘reality’ would appear to be that different agencies have considerable difficulty working together in a co-operative manner. For example, Durham Domestic Violence Forum appears to have had a considerable struggle to survive and develop further, and other forums found that some of the agencies in their group stopped attending.

In the case of the Durham Forum, one might be excused for presuming that with all the representatives working with the same client group (women victims and their children) the ideal of inter- agency co-operation within this group would be met. However, Durham's reality is possibly further from the ideal than either of the other two forums in this study (Liverpool and Lincolnshire). To start with, while the Durham Forum's membership has remained low, the other two have grown. Both the Liverpool and Lincolnshire forums have, either directly or via their sub-groups, brought other key agencies successfully on board. The Durham Forum, however, has continued to consist solely of the county's five women's refuges. It has struggled in its attempts to bring other agencies on board. Even securing the attendance and active participation of existing members has, at times, appeared to have been problematic. For example, one of the five refuges has never been represented at the meetings. In the early days, this absence was noted by the members, but over time it became accepted as 'part of the norm.'

The availability of time and resources that all the members have been able to allocate to the Forum has been severely restricted. While all members have understood one another's predicament - on the one hand wishing that they could do more for the forum while on the other hand having limited resources - there has still been a great deal of apathy and division in the group. They have all been concerned about the lack of interest shown by other key agencies and the lack of productive input by some existing members. This has continued to lead to subtle but effective forms of underlying conflicts. For example, those members who saw themselves and their refuge as having put in the bulk of the work felt that the others should and could have pulled their weight more, which might have resulted in other agencies joining and the subsequent improved development of the forum .

There appears to be a general assumption that different agencies do co-operate with one another. However in the wake of the Hungerford, West and Dunblane tragedies there was public outcry at the reports of how little inter-agency communication and co-operation had actually taken place in dealing with the perpetrators of these crimes before they had committed them. As a result, there was a high profile demand for agencies to work together in keeping surveillance on families and individuals who present a risk. However, in addition to these external pressures, it is clear from this research that there are internal pressures driving the development of forums. The forums are seen by some of their members as a way for agencies to achieve status, power and a voice at a time when the power of welfare and support agencies is being drastically pruned.

Coinciding with the external demand is the fact that many of the agencies are themselves struggling to maintain a quality of service. For example, the agencies can no longer rely upon the availability of funding and as a result of this there is little job security for many in the welfare sector. A number of agencies are being forced to cut back staff working hours and in some cases they are having to reduce staff numbers. Members of staff as a result face either losing their jobs or having to cope with an increased work-load. Such dilemmas impact on the levels of commitment shown by various agencies and their representatives. Several members of the forums in this study commented that they often wished they were able to do more in relation to their local forum but due to other demands they felt unable to do so. These members felt that because of the lack of time and finances they were forced to limit their active involvement with their forum.

Forums have been developed in order to unite various agencies. The 'ideal' appears to be for the agencies to develop a new group working in a harmonious manner. The coming together of various people as representatives of institutions creates the possibility of conflicts. These tend to be heightened by the differences between the motives, attitudes, and backgrounds of the individual people and groups concerned. Forsyth, on the issue of groups, asks the question

.... what word adequately summarizes (1) the group's capacity to serve as an arena for social interaction, (2) the powerful impact of group structures on members' actions, (3) the diversity of groups in terms of size, (4) their usefulness as vehicles for accomplishing goals, (5) the way in which groups become cohesive, and (6) their ability to change over time? (Forsyth. 1983. p.12).

Forsyth goes on to state that Lewin answered this question. According to Forsyth "Lewin (1943, 1948, 1951) is generally given the credit for coining and popularising the term group dynamics." (Forsyth. 1983. p.13.) The issue of group dynamics is a fundamental part of this research, in regard to both inter-agency co-operation and domestic violence. It cannot be seen as an isolated theme or issue. "To Lewin group dynamics is both the powerful process that influences individuals when in group situations and the study of these processes." (Forsyth. 1983. p.13).

Research conducted by Hague and colleagues on inter-agency forums, stated that "...it is better to openly acknowledge and perhaps accept differences in philosophy, rather than pretend they do not exist." (Hague, et al. 1995. p.23). I have found that the differences and the manner in which they are or are not addressed do have a fundamental bearing on the dynamics of a group. It is how the differences are brought to a group and then allowed to exist within the group that is of particular significance to this study.

Through training and the meetings themselves, it appears that the forums are attempting to weaken the barriers and enable the agencies to gain an understanding and appreciation of one another. This is not to say that they have to accept each other's philosophies, but without the awareness and understanding I feel that not only will the dynamics of the group be adversely affected but the decisions which they make might be unfounded.

Each individual - as well as the group as a whole - needs to have what Pym has referred to as "a vision" (Pym. 1996. p.44) of the direction and purpose of the group. From discussions with members of the forums it would appear that those members who know that they have an important role to play in the development of the forum contribute in a much more constructive and active manner. There is a risk that those who are uncertain about what part they have to play in the forum become passive members. Although 'active versus passive' might oversimplify some of the complexities of inter-agency co-operation that I have described, not knowing where one is heading is certainly likely to induce passivity. All three forums in this study are attempting to rectify this problem. Liverpool, for example, has addressed it by ensuring that every member is on at least one of the working-groups. This, they feel, gives them a reason for being on the forum. The Lincolnshire forum is in the process of addressing the issue of every member taking on an active role so that the same few people are not left with the running of the forum. Through their Review sub-group they are re-evaluating the structure and membership of the forum. The Durham Forum ensures that each refuge is reminded of the importance of their involvement with the forum by allocating tasks for each of them to carry out in preparation for the following meeting and by enabling them to feed back the information at each meeting.

As I have illustrated in the previous chapter, the dynamics of the groups in my study have been affected by the different attitudes of the members of each group towards the issues of particular cases being discussed during forum meetings. Some members of the forums feel that they should be discussing cases and finding the best way for all the agencies concerned to deal with the respective cases, while others feel that this would be unethical. Confidentiality, in particular, has appeared as an ethical dilemma for agencies. This issue has often been raised by the forums involved with my research. In 'reality', although virtually all, if not all, of the agencies concerned do follow the client confidentiality code of practice, there are members who are anxious about other agencies knowing certain issues about their clients. They are concerned about losing the trust and respect of their clients. A probation officer, for example, who works with perpetrators of domestic violence has commented that she is conscious that her clients will not feel comfortable about speaking freely with her if they feel that information which they give will be discussed openly in the presence of representatives from a local Police Force, the Crown Prosecution Service or Women's Aid. Furthermore, she believed that her clients might fear that such information could be used against them by the victim and her legal representative at a later date or during a pending trial. There is a fear that this could result in the perpetrator of domestic violence, for example, withholding information which could have helped the Probation Officer in his or her work with a client. For reasons such as these individual cases are never discussed in the formal context of Inter-Agency Co-operation.

Some might argue that confidentiality will be waived by those who control information as and when it suits them. As a result of the public outcries in relation to violent crimes, agencies are struggling with the conflicting situation they find themselves in - needing to share information

while at the same time understanding the issue of confidentiality. For example, from research into the workings of the agencies I have discovered that there is already an informal 'hotline' between selected agencies and in particular those who have been allowed to sign the Data Protection Act. This selected group of agencies include those from the statutory sector and exclude the voluntary sector. In effect, this means that specific cases cannot be discussed within the forum meetings. However, despite this, the inter-agency approach outlined here does appear to have enabled agencies to co-operate and communicate with one another far more freely than before, although it stops short at the discussion of specific cases. It also has the potential to raise agencies' mutual awareness and it can aid communication between agencies to such an extent that when necessary they could turn to one another for help and information without challenging the confidentiality or the Data Protection Act. Similarly the Forums have been seen as advancing the work of numerous agencies. When a representative from Women's Aid, for example, needs information about a victim's legal rights, her membership of the Forum means that she will know a member of each of the appropriate agencies by name and sight. This member would now have gained a clearer understanding of each of the agency's philosophies in relation to domestic violence.

None of the forums in this study have, to my knowledge, had any contact with one another, and neither have they had much contact with other forums in the rest of the country. However, despite their independence the forums still appear to have followed a similar process of development to one another. It is apparent that the forums studied have had, and will have, to go through certain stages of development in order to put the policy of inter-agency co-operation into practice. For example, they all started off with only one or two agencies aiming to develop an inter-agency initiative in their local area. This appears to have been followed by

them all experiencing problems in their attempts to encourage other appropriate agencies to become actively involved. Agencies have been hesitant, almost reluctant, in taking on board an inter-agency way of working. One reason for this reticence is that inter-agency co-operation appears to have created a threat to the identity of certain agencies. Participation in the forum takes agencies away from their other commitments and has the potential to cause friction within. One of the key areas of conflict in the approaches of agencies and their representatives is to be seen in prioritizing how best to tackle issues associated with domestic violence. After years of agencies working in isolation from one another, with their individual ideologies and different objectives, it is not surprising that this new approach is causing a few problems and fears.

The following sections of this chapter focus upon selected issues and themes which provide insight into how the objectives of inter-agency co-operation are put into practice in the particular contexts I have described.

AWARENESS

The general image that tends to be conjured up when the term 'domestic violence' is mentioned is that of a husband physically attacking his wife. There is also an image of domestic violence simply being a working-class problem. Whilst research has shown that it is true that domestic violence is predominantly a male against female act, it is not one which is constrained by class boundaries. This is supported by Connors, who says

Violence against women, in all its manifestations, has emerged over the last decade as a matter requiring priority attention, with evidence from all over the world revealing that violence in the home, sexual assault and sexual harassment are risks common to all women, irrespective of

colour, social class, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, religion and culture. (Connors, 1994. p.182).

Through my discussions with perpetrators, who all admitted to having committed violent acts associated with domestic violence, I discovered that they themselves had all experienced some form of instability and abuse in their earlier lives. They were all physically punished as children, some severely and frequently. Some of them also mentioned that they had witnessed their fathers hitting their mothers.

Mykitiuk claims that “We know that private abuse is largely a form of learned behaviour. There can be no excuse for teaching it.” (Mykitiuk et al. 1994. p.376). I was intrigued to note that not only had all of the perpetrators I have spoken with both experienced and witnessed some form of domestic violence as children but so had many of the victims. For example, Elizabeth, one of the victims in my study, informed me that her father has always hit her mother. Last year (1996) her parents celebrated forty years of marriage. Elizabeth told me that she grew up thinking that what she now knows to be domestic violence was part of married life. Her sister was also married to a man who beat her. Like Elizabeth her sister has since re-married and is living a happily married life apparently without any domestic violence. Elizabeth’s violent ex-husband grew up with his grandparents. His grandfather used to beat his grandmother. According to Elizabeth he was brought up by an old-fashioned couple whose attitude was that it is important for a man to be ‘manly’, particularly in the way he treats his wife - thus hitting was felt to be an acceptable way to maintain and express gender relations and the division of labour within the family. Elizabeth, like other victims, feared that her children, particularly her son, would grow up to be violent like his male forebears. She

noted that his behaviour was noticeably more 'macho' during the first few days after his return from being with his father.

Numerous organisations have been attempting to inform the public about domestic violence and that being the recipient of violence and threats should not be the 'norm' for anyone. The campaign strategy that a number of Domestic Violence Forums throughout the country have turned to in order to increase public awareness of domestic violence in their area is known as The Zero Tolerance Campaign. The main aim of this campaign has been to raise public and official awareness of issues associated with violence, particularly domestic violence and to show people that they should not tolerate such treatment. The campaign has been attempting to indicate to all members of society, particularly the victims and perpetrators, that if violence is committed it will not be tolerated. The police will be informed and the perpetrator may be charged. The campaign has also been designed to encourage the rest of society to condemn the perpetrators for their behaviour and to be more supportive and understanding towards the victims. People who get involved with this campaign talk of bringing issues associated with domestic violence into 'the political and public arena.' The Zero Tolerance Campaign also works towards improving support and protection for victims. Its goal is to change legislation, by mobilising public opinion and influencing concerned agencies and the government. According to the Lincolnshire Forum,

The campaign was originally carried out by Edinburgh District Council in 1992. The National Association of Local Government Women's Committees has since co-ordinated a national campaign which has received support from many organisations. To date the campaign has been carried out in Central Region, Fife, Aberdeen, Strathclyde, Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland and North Tyneside, Cleveland, Kirklees, Carlisle and Newcastle in England. (Lincolnshire Forum. 12/8/96. p.1).

In Cleveland, in the North East of England, Zero Tolerance campaigners put posters around the streets, the Zero Tolerance logo appeared on the local authority vehicles and leaflets were placed in public places such as libraries and colleges. (see appendix Eight). This led to the letter 'Z', which has been used as a symbol for the campaign, being associated in these areas with domestic violence. From discussions I have had with people associated with the Zero Tolerance Campaign, in particular the co-ordinator for the Cleveland Campaign, it appears that although it is still in its early stages the campaign is believed to have helped free people to discuss issues associated with domestic violence.

Approximately seventy eight per cent of Scottish authorities have used the Zero Tolerance Campaign strategy to help in their attempts to tackle domestic violence and other forms of violent behaviour (Informant 6). Organisations in England who have adopted this approach are striving towards encouraging a nation-wide appeal similar to the national anti drink-driving campaign. A generation ago drinking and driving was a widely accepted form of behaviour. Now this has changed and drink-driving is not only frowned upon but technology makes detection of alcohol in the blood very easy. The Cleveland Co-ordinator and Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum Chair both spoke of hoping that this type of campaign would have a similar effect upon domestic violence: promoting public opprobrium and the means to detect and prosecute perpetrators of domestic violence.

In bringing domestic violence to the fore of public consciousness the media has played a crucial role. Several members from the forums in this study commented to me that they see the media as a powerful means of communication, and that it has the ability to influence how the public perceive issues associated with domestic violence. All three forums in this study

have been using the media to aid their means of communication with the public in order to increase public awareness. According to one member "The media is an ideal means for us to get our message of 'no to domestic violence' across to the public. Through its various sources - such as newspapers, films, television, speech and posters - the media has the capability of communicating to a vast audience at any given time." (informant 7)

Although the media generally claims only to reflect the attitudes of society, it does appear to be capable of influencing how members of society think and react to issues and events. During an interview with a member of the prison service I was confronted with the possible level of power that the media has over influencing real life situations. I was told by a member of the prison staff, that in her view, had it not been for the persistent press coverage of Myra Hindley, she may well have been released from prison by now. Media influence over the public appears to have caused the Home Office to be hesitant about how the public would react to any decision to release her.

Programmes such as Brookside and Coronation Street have triggered off public reactions and public debates on issues associated with domestic violence prompted by their recent coverage of disharmony within the family. Brookside featured a woman and her daughters, the Jordaches, who were victims of domestic violence. The mother and her elder daughter killed the father. They were eventually imprisoned for murder. Dissatisfaction with this resolution led to a public campaign to 'free the Jordaches'. The phenomenon of public response to a fictional story highlights the effectiveness of the media in raising public awareness. Coronation Street, which has generally tended in the past not to focus upon provocative current issues, introduced the issue of domestic violence to its story-line in 1996. The recently

growing interest in the issue that different areas of the media are demonstrating is of significant importance to my research because of the great potential for influencing public opinion and perception.

The production team of Brookside was not only contacted by members of the public who were expressing personal alliance with the victims and the perpetrator, but also by such agencies as the Metropolitan Police, Prison Probation Service and women's support groups. The police wished to use clippings from the Jordache case to help them with the training of their officers in relation to issues associated with domestic violence, while "a senior Prison Probation Officer obtained permission from the Home office to use clips in discussion with male offenders" (Informant 8). The women's groups requested permission to include some of the domestic violence associated scenes within their discussion groups. Because such agencies are involved in the development and running of Domestic Violence Forums, particularly those in my study, the media is inevitably going to have further influence upon the treatment and responses to this aspect of our culture.

Both Brookside and Coronation Street have attracted other forms of media coverage through their presentations of domestic violence. Television and radio 'chat shows' have included public discussions and phone-ins for both victims and perpetrators of such violence, and newspapers and magazines have documented issues from both programmes and have even used relevant images to help sell a particular story or publication. An example of such use has been the presence of Coronation Street's victim and perpetrator of domestic violence, Liz and Jim McDonald, on the cover of some television guides when the domestic violence story-line was at its peak.

The mismatch between ideal and reality in relation to awareness can be seen within the forums themselves. As I stated in Chapter 1 “Whilst there is often agreement regarding ultimate objectives there has been only a limited amount of awareness and understanding amongst different agencies with regard to their respective philosophies and approaches to issues concerning domestic violence.” (p.10) In reality the forums have been struggling in their attempts to gain and maintain this awareness.

As I pointed out in Chapter 1 (p.11), the Government approved inter-agency initiative came about mainly to address the apparent lack of the agencies’ understanding of what their own roles and those of other agencies should be in relation to domestic violence. In spite of this, this research has shown that there is still a clear discrepancy between the ideal and the reality of inter-agency co-operation. For example, in relation to the ideal, all three forums have designed meetings and training sessions in order for the agencies to develop their awareness of one another both individually and collectively. However, in reality, the Lincolnshire Forum, for example, has been unsuccessful in getting its members together in order to hold a training day. At its last attempt to hold such an event only three individuals turned up. This resulted in it being cancelled. As one of the members who did attend said, ‘This low attendance was surprising, particularly as the training day - in relation to date, time, venue and agenda - was discussed at length at the previous meeting and all the members agreed.’

MEMBERSHIP

According to Lukes “the socially-conscious Bishop of Durham, Brooke Foss Westcott argued in 1890 that ‘individualism regards humanity as made up of disconnected or warring atoms: socialism regards it as an organic whole, a vital unity formed by the combination of contributing members mutually interdependent.’ ” (Lukes. 1973. p.33). The issues of being ‘disconnected’ and of being a ‘whole’ are both of equal significance to this study. There has been a tendency for agencies to be ‘disconnected’ from one another, while inter-agency forums, such as those in my research, demonstrate how individual agencies strive to become part of a whole.

During the 1980s, in Britain, there was a big swing towards individualism which over the years has led to individual people and groups operating less with each other, and becoming more like “disconnected or warring atoms”. (Lukes. 1973. p.33). Mrs Thatcher, as she was at the time, is reported to have said that “there is no such thing as society, there are families and there are individuals.....” (Thatcher. 1987) I wish to argue that ideological constructions such as this, having been placed on society and individuals, must have had, over a period of time, an adverse effect upon how individual groups and individual people - in this case the agencies and their representatives - come and work together in their respective Forum. The emphasis placed on the ‘individual’ rather than the co-operation appears to have exacerbated the difficulties which agencies face in attempting to work with one another. For example, for a long time agencies have been operating independently from one another as ‘disconnected’

individual groups. This is particularly relevant in relation to the difficulties which the statutory and voluntary sectors are now facing in attempting to work together. In the case of Domestic Violence Forums, the types of agencies that get involved with domestic violence forums include those from both the voluntary and the statutory sectors. All three of the forums in my study have encouraged the integration of both voluntary and statutory agencies into their group. However, in 'reality', despite the members' wishes for both sectors to be represented, I found that there were signs of conflict between the statutory and voluntary agencies.

Domestic Violence Forums aim towards bringing both voluntary and statutory agencies together. In relation to the forums in this study, with the exception of the Durham Forum, this 'ideal' could be said to be taking place. However, in 'reality', most of the members of both the Liverpool and Lincolnshire Forums expressed concerns regarding an imbalance of membership on their respective forums between the statutory and voluntary agencies. Numerous individuals, particularly voluntary agency representatives, saw the statutory sector as having a different agenda from their own. The voluntary agencies, for example, tend to have the task of increasing awareness and campaigning high on their agenda. They have also been advocating that the more powerful agencies place domestic violence higher on their respective agendas. The statutory agencies, on the other hand, seem to see the forums as providing them with the ideal opportunity to demonstrate that they are concerned about domestic violence. The police forces connected with the Lincolnshire and the Liverpool Forums have, for example, shown that they are placing domestic violence higher on their agendas, particularly in the way that they have improved the manner in which they collect statistics relating to domestic violence (see appendix Nine for an example of how the Lincolnshire Police are now compiling their statistics). Forums also appear to enable

statutory agencies to keep their power intact while at the same time enabling them to work alongside the voluntary sector. This division appears to have been having adverse effects upon the dynamics of the groups. It affected some members' involvement to the extent that unofficially they stopped attending the meetings. Attempts have continued to be made by the forums in this study to address this problem which is seen as an unfair balance of power. For example, the Liverpool Forum members are endeavouring to have more voluntary representatives on the Forum as they feel that this will even up the balance and thus counteract the dominance of the statutory members. Although the imbalance is not always a problem in either of the forums, it does appear to remain constantly in the background.

In Chapter 1, I stated that "The coming together of multiple agencies involves questions of institutional cultures and the dynamics of the newly formed group." (p.9). This research has shown that addressing such questions plays an important part in bridging the gap between the ideal and the reality of inter-agency co-operation. The forums in this study do not appear to have questioned these factors. Consequently, the member agencies have acquired only limited awareness of one another. This absence of questioning and awareness has subsequently added to conflicts within the newly formed groups. The members had a tendency to form unofficial sub-groups. This appeared to have been influenced by such factors as the sector under which their agency came - voluntary or statutory - by the work that their respective agency did and by whether or not their agency's client group were victims or perpetrators. This grouping pattern was apparent at the meetings because of where the members positioned themselves during the coffee breaks and at events which the agencies held outside of the forums meetings. For example, during a coffee break at a Lincolnshire Forum meeting members from the voluntary sector - including Lincoln Women's Aid, Boston Women's Aid, Lincoln Women's

Centre, local solicitors and Lincoln Safer Cities - had all congregated at one end of the room while representatives from the statutory sector - including members from Social Services, the police and two local District Councils - had grouped themselves in another part of the room.

Voluntary agencies tend to work with particular client groups and generally have a restricted agenda. Their work is often campaign led. The organisations which have developed in relation to domestic violence are an example of the way voluntary sector activity is mobilised. The statutory sector is seen by some members of the three forums as being made up of the dominant agencies. Agencies from the statutory sector are seen as coming from positions of power, because they are part of the State. Voluntary agencies, however, have very limited power. They do not have direct legal or official authority to bring about any changes or to enforce existing policies. They are also financially restricted in carrying out their plans. However, in spite of this, voluntary agencies have increasingly demonstrated their effectiveness by bringing about change through their campaigning and efforts to raise public awareness. A clear example of this is how the campaigns of women's voluntary groups on behalf of women abused by their partners have succeeded in bringing this issue into the public arena.

According to the University of Bristol's 'Working Paper 127' "The agencies involved in domestic violence inter-agency work include those that specialise in the issue, eg, Women's Aid, and others, eg, the police, for which domestic violence work forms only a small percentage of their duties." (Hague et al. 1995. p.6). In the case of most of the agencies associated with the Lincolnshire and Liverpool forums, not all of their work is associated with domestic violence. The day to day work of agencies such as the Women's Refuges tends to

be predominantly centred around issues associated with domestic violence. This is most obvious in Durham as the Forum consists solely of local Women's Refuges. Other agencies, however, such as the Police, Social Services, Samaritans, Relate and hospitals have to deal with other issues on a daily basis. This factor appears to influence the different representatives and their respective agencies' level of commitment to the local forum.

Each branch of any individual national agency operates, to some degree, independently from the other branches of that same agency. For example Lincoln Women's Aid is the branch of the National Women's Aid Federation in Lincoln while other parts of the country have their own, each operating independently but with their national body connecting them. While all are employed by the national section of their agency, and are accountable to them and report back to them on a regular basis, they still continue to operate at a local level. Each branch of any given agency appears to adopt its own version of the national agency's philosophy and approach. The police, for example, operate in different ways at different levels. Local divisions and whole police authorities appear to vary in the emphasis they place on crimes such as violence within the home. Police Authorities also differ in their approaches to tackling domestic violence. In Lincolnshire and Liverpool, for example, the police are very active in the Domestic Violence Forums, while in Durham the Forum is working hard at trying to get their Police Authority involved. Although all three Police Authorities are employed and accountable to the Home Office - not one of the three knew whether or not the others were involved with any inter-agency initiative.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE IN THE OPERATION OF INTER-AGENCY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUMS

The sociologist Erving Goffman argues that we all change the presentation of ourselves according to the situation in which we find ourselves at any given time. He refers to 'frontstage' and 'backstage' performance as mirroring public and private behaviour - frontstage being public and backstage being private. He uses the term 'performance' "to refer to all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (Goffman, 1990, p. 32). Goffman presents 'frontstage' as being the place where we define ourselves to others, while 'backstage' is where we relax and construct our 'frontstage' role. Therefore, how individuals react and display emotions can greatly influence group dynamics. While we are studying others and assessing how best to act in their presence we must not overlook the fact they too are likely to be attempting to gain similar information from how we are presenting ourselves. Goffman claims that

When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed. They will be interested in his general socio-economic status, his conception of self, his attitude towards them, his competence, his trustworthiness, etc. Although some of this information seems to be sought almost as an end in itself, there are usually quite practical reasons for acquiring it. Information about the individual helps to define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he will expect of them and what they may expect of him. Informed in these ways, the others will know how best to act in order to call forth a desired response from him. (Goffman. 1990. p.13).

Goffman's model is useful when it comes to understanding the operation of the forums. Each of the forum's meetings functions as a 'frontstage' arena of performance, while the views of the individual agency representatives elicited during this research take us 'backstage'. The role that each of the agency members 'plays' while attending the meetings is often different from how they are when back at their respective agencies. For example, when the representatives of each agency are at the forum meetings they appear more co-operative with one another than when they are when backstage. Having spoken with the members away from the forums it is apparent that there is still a problematic gap between the agencies.

In relation to the agencies, 'backstage' is where the particular philosophy and culture of the agency is woven into a more or less coherent organisational identity which can meet other such identities. This process takes place within the privacy of the agency's premises and amongst its own members. Each agency presents this identity 'frontstage' in the context of the inter-agency forums.

The public and private dichotomy in relation to domestic violence is one of the key issues driving the agencies and their representatives forward. All three of the forums in this study are working towards raising public awareness of domestic violence. They are wanting to move issues associated with domestic violence into the public arena as a public concern in the hope of bringing about a reduction in the incidence of domestic violence. According to Schneider

As work on battered women has evolved, social meanings of what is private and public, and the relationship between them, have become more complex. Traditionally, battering has been viewed as within the private sphere of the family, and therefore unprotected by law. ... this social failure to intervene in male battering of women on the grounds of privacy should not be seen as separate from the violence, but as part of the violence, .. failures to respond to domestic violence are public, not private, actions. (Schneider 1994, pp. 43-44).

Attendance at the meetings of the forums in my study tends to be restricted to just their members. Other people wishing to attend have either to be invited or to have official authorization to be there. Some meetings take place where the public may attend. In the case of the Liverpool Forum, for example, they have opened their sub-group meetings to the public. A member of the Liverpool Forum informed me that before the individual members of the public outside of the forum were able to gain a voice on the forum through the sub-groups the forum had not been accessible to them. Despite this integration of non-members, the actual forum meetings are still open to non-members only through written requests to attend. Otherwise business continues to be conducted behind 'closed doors'.

The reference to 'closed doors' could be seen as ironic in light of the fact that groups such as the forums in this study were formed in order to bring the issue of domestic violence into the public arena. Acts of domestic violence are often said to be conducted behind 'closed doors', and away from the public eye. Despite the irony, there is a serious need to protect confidentiality, while at the same time enabling the members to discuss important issues more productively as they reach a common ground with one another. Both the Liverpool and Lincolnshire Forums conduct their meetings in an orthodox committee-like fashion. This orthodox style operates as an effective means for the Chairperson to control the meeting and the agenda.

CULTURE AND BOUNDARIES

We [as social anthropologists] study different cultures and the communities that produce them, placing our primary emphasis on social relations and treating culture as a vehicle or medium for social interaction rather than an end in itself. (Lewis. 1985. p.19).

A Liverpool Domestic Violence Forum member told me that she saw the different agencies associated with her forum as 'being from 'different cultures' each with their own language, attitudes, expectations and desires'. It is her belief that this is what hinders effective inter-agency initiatives from taking place. She sees the cultural differences as contributing greatly towards the 'reality' of inter-agency co-operation.

The different agencies associated with the Forums are separated from one another by their respective cultural ideologies. These produce boundaries which in turn appear to be used as barriers. For example, the agencies are separated from one another by such factors as their different client groups, different objectives, variations in the language and terminology they use and how each of them are managed and financed. However fine the boundary line is, it seems to have a powerful affect in practice. The boundaries which separate the different agencies from one another are a result of their respective institutional identities. When one looks beyond the agencies' 'frontstage' appearance it becomes apparent that the ones associated with the forums in this study each have their own cultural identities. Subtle differences in ideology both produce and are being produced by boundaries which encapsulate the identity of each agency and subsequently separate the agencies from one another. According to Gellner "A culture is a system of constraints, limiting an endlessly labile set of possibilities, within bounds which are themselves also very complex, and which apply to a very wide range of situations". (Gellner. 19. p.50).

The cultural differences are firstly influenced by the client group of each agency and the way the agencies represent these groups. This inevitably influences each agency's outlook on issues relating to domestic violence and on one another. For example, those agencies who

operate on behalf of the victims, such as Women's Aid, have the women's welfare at heart. This tends to result in their perception of domestic violence being centred around women as the victims and men as the perpetrators. This subsequently influences the manner in which they view the other agencies - particularly as they will have had their own views reinforced by victims' perceptions of the various agencies they encounter. In addition to how the client group factor plays a part in the construction of each agency's cultural ideologies so does the membership of each agency. From my research it would appear that certain types of people appear to get attracted to a particular sort of group. For example, a number of the women who are connected with the women's refuges have themselves been victims of domestic violence. This can be seen to result in the individuals concerned reinforcing the group's cultural ideologies while at the same time the group influences the individuals. The cultural differences then tend to be determined by the sector to which the agency belongs. For example, an agency within the voluntary sector is likely to have different priorities from those in the statutory sector. Its power would also be far less.

In conjunction with these influential factors, the cultural identities of the agencies concerned are constructed with the aid of the language and terminology they use. In Chapter 1, I stated that "the inter-agency initiative is attempting to break down the boundaries between the different agencies, which have been constructed through their respective cultures. The boundaries are marked by barriers which often reinforce the differences between agencies." (p.12). This research has identified differences between agencies in their "use of language" (p.12) as being one of the key ways in which the "barriers are constructed by both society and the respective agencies". (p.12) The relationship between the language of agencies and their culture can be seen in this study. For example, the police force, a law enforcement agency,

use legal terms which are often understood only by its own members and not by people from outside. In the same way, the language of agencies such as Women's Aid can be seen as being specific to them. For example, there is a tendency for them to refer to the victims of domestic violence as 'survivors'. They see the term 'victim' as having negative connotations. According to a member of Women's Aid, 'the term 'survivor' has much more positive and promising implications than the term 'victim' which makes her sound like the weak little woman and somewhat at fault.'

A division between the use and acceptance of the term 'survivor' compared with that of 'victim' was made particularly clear during the forums' meetings. The division highlighted differences that exist between the statutory and the voluntary sectors as well as differences in how the agencies construct their cultural identities. For example, while those agencies who belong to the statutory sector tend to use the term 'victim,' the majority of the voluntary agencies emphasize the need for people and agencies to refer to them as 'survivors' rather than victims. This difference in use of language appeared to be as a result of the differences in how each agency's work relates to the people concerned - be it 'victim' or 'survivor'. An explanation given by a member of the Liverpool Forum for this division was 'while the work of agencies such as Women's Aid is solely to help these people in a compassionate way - by campaigning for them, providing comfort and support, re-housing them and giving them a range of advice - the statutory agencies, such as the police, are restricted by tradition, state legislation, legal terms and by the emphasis that is placed on a nationally standardised use of language.'

The issues to which each agency and representative give priority, the emphasis they place on campaigning and, above all, how they perceive their own respective culture compared to that of other agencies also greatly contribute to the construction of each agency's cultural identity.

Fiske elaborates on this process.

The social models are important elements of culture. That is, they take on culture-specific but recognizable symbolic relational values, and enter into the construction of shared systems of social meaning. A culture is a system of symbols and meanings, in which the meaning of any symbol derives from its links to other symbols on various planes together with its referential functions (if any). Generally, all of the fundamental models for the construction of social relationships are adopted, applied, modified in detail and substance, phenomenologically transformed, and incorporated into the matrix of symbols and meanings constituting culture, the models assume unfamiliar shapes and take on idiosyncratic accretions the way hermit crabs distinguish the shells they appropriate. (Fiske. 1993. p.177).

The differences between the agencies on the forums in this study are reinforced by the nature of their work. Agencies such as Women's Aid and Victim Support, for example, work closely with the victims of domestic violence and become extremely loyal to their clients, while the work of other agencies, such as the Probation Service, causes them to focus on the perpetrators to whom they too will be loyal. An incident reported in the previous chapter in relation to the Durham Forum illustrates this well. On the occasion that a member of Women's Aid expressed her feelings about looking at domestic violence from the perpetrator's perspective, she appeared to be made to feel uncomfortable for having done so. She was regarded by the group as challenging the orthodoxy of the agency. It was pointed out that there are other agencies who work with the perpetrators, and Women's Aid ought to work exclusively with the victims. If an individual works with the victims she is usually regarded by both her own agency and other agencies as being unable to work with the perpetrators - and vice versa. Here we can see how members can actively reinforce their agency's culture.

When one group is challenged by another the boundary line becomes reinforced. In my research, the boundaries and identities of the agencies appear to be strengthened by the fear of ending up in what one informant described as a 'melting-pot'. This creates something of a paradox given that one of the main motives of an inter-agency initiative is to weaken the barriers so that agencies can work together effectively. This can, for example, be illustrated by the fact that the forums are working towards all the agencies agreeing upon the definition of the terms associated with domestic violence - thus producing a unified language and shared priorities for the Forum. As a result there was a fear expressed by some agencies of their boundaries being broken down to such an extent that they might lose their distinctive identities and objectives. Some members expressed their concern that there might be agencies who were seeking to control others and subsequently change them. Despite the fact that they all saw a need for the public to change its attitudes and approaches towards domestic violence, there was still resistance amongst the agencies themselves to do so. To some extent a fear of change was evident. It appeared that some members feared what might happen as a result of working too closely with other agencies, particularly after having been conditioned for such a long time to question and distance themselves from some of the other agencies involved.

Issues of identity, boundaries and control also emerged over the matter of where meetings should be located. Some members of the Liverpool and Lincolnshire forums have, as I illustrated in the previous chapter, pointed out that the fact that their meetings take place on the premises of a statutory agency makes a number of the voluntary agency representatives feel uneasy about openly contributing to the discussions. It appears that because of differences in cultural ideologies between the different agencies, the venue for Forum meetings

affects the group process. This appears to be a problem for some of the members of the voluntary sector. One of the Lincolnshire voluntary sector representatives reported that she, along with others, felt uncomfortable having to speak openly on the 'home territory' of the Police Force, particularly as meetings were held in their headquarters. One or two of the Liverpool Forum's meetings, after their original venue was closed and they were looking for an alternative, were conducted in a local police club. It was appreciated by the Forum because it was provided free of charge and it was spacious, but people were wary because it was a club owned by the Police and occupied by police officers. The environment was full of smoke and people were drinking a great deal of alcohol. This atmosphere did not fit in with the business style preferred by the forum members. The female members were also concerned by the fact that such places are predominantly occupied by men. Discussing matters of domestic violence in a male environment appeared to cause the members, particularly the women's groups to feel uncomfortable. The forum was subsequently provided with the use of a large room in the offices of the local Probation Services. This move helped with the Forum's development as the new venue was more acceptable to the members despite its still being on the premises of a statutory sector agency.

Both the Liverpool and Lincolnshire Forums use rooms which clearly provide an official style of setting for meetings of this nature. Each room is a long business conference room, with neutral colours, large and high windows, upright chairs, and long tables. During a discussion I had with some of the Liverpool statutory sector representative members, they indicated that some of the voluntary agency members of the forum seemed unhappy with the meetings taking place within the offices of the Probation Service. It was said by at least three of the members that a possible reason for this feeling was that conducting the meetings on the 'home territory'

of one of the statutory agencies might give that agency additional power over the others. It would appear that the voluntary agencies already had a tendency to feel somewhat uncomfortable - like second class citizens in relation to the statutory agencies - whom they saw as having greater resources, prestige and status.

As a result of the members 'frontstage' presentation at the meetings they have tended to restrict the development of their awareness and appreciation of one another. The agencies have had a tendency to keep their cultural identities somewhat private, despite the fact that even at the meetings the agency which a member represents can usually be identified by their presentation and by the way others respond to them. For example, the problems agencies have with one another, particularly as a result of what their respective clients have had with the other agencies, tend not to be addressed within the 'frontstage' arena of the forum meetings. However, according to a number of the members of the Forums in this study, if the agencies were to present too much of how they are backstage the probability of them keeping their identity intact might be reduced. This was particularly related to their increased fear of ending up in the 'melting-pot.'

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

.... groups are an inescapable part of human existence. Like them or not, they simply are not going away. People grow up in groups, sometimes called families; they work in groups, as engine crews, design teams or hunting parties; they play in groups, in a multitude of team games; they make decisions in groups, whether these be government committees, village councils or courtroom juries; and of course, they also fight in groups, as street gangs, revolutionary cadres and national armies. In short, human beings are 'groups beings'. (Brown. 1988. pp vii-viii).

SUMMARY

This study has not presented “the ‘policy-process’ in terms of systematic and tidy ideal-types” but it has explored “the characteristic cultural [complexities] and messiness of [the] process” (Wright et al .1995. p.27). As I stated at the outset “The main objective of this research has been to investigate, by means of literature and field research, how the recent policy of inter-agency co-operation is working in practice, paying attention to particular ideologies and their interaction in the context of Domestic Violence Forums.” (p.13). It has emerged that the ‘ideal’ and the ‘reality’ of inter-group co-operation in relation to domestic violence are somewhat different.

I entered three different communities made up of interacting agencies concerned with domestic violence and focused my research on them: the Durham Domestic Violence Forum, the Liverpool Domestic Violence Forum and the Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forum.

These had two things in common - inter-agency co-operation and domestic violence. In the Introduction to this thesis I stated that these three Forums were to serve as the case study for this research. They were to see if “the Forums are an arena for the articulation of organisations.” (p.15)

Inter-agency co-operation is presented by those involved as an effective and important approach to tackling the problem of domestic violence. It has developed as a result of agencies having worked in isolation from one another. A number of agencies have commented that while operating alone they felt that they were not making sufficient progress in their work in tackling the issues related to domestic violence. However, factors such as awareness about domestic violence, membership of the Forums, and issues relating to the culture and boundaries of the agencies within the Forum reveal that there is a need for more time in order for such initiatives to develop fully. Nonetheless, inter-agency co-operation is already proving to aid the work of the agencies and is moving towards helping to bridge the gaps between the relevant agencies.

This study has shown there to be fundamental differences between the ideal and reality of the initiative of inter-agency co-operation. On the surface, it could be argued that the ideal is taking place. It is clearly bringing numerous agencies together with the intention to share knowledge, expertise and resources. It has also enabled the members to work towards forming a common ground from which to work. The fact that there are such initiatives developing across the country could also be seen as an ideal. This national spread could even be regarded as a positive, almost idealistic response to the recent public outcries for agencies to work together. Some might argue that this development is as a result of the Home Office

Circular which promotes the Government's approval of this approach to tackling domestic violence. This might also be seen as an explanation for the fact that forums across the country are following a similar development process of putting their policy into practice. I however, wish to argue that it is not so straightforward.

As this research has shown, in view of the fact that the reality does not match the ideal, there are clearly pitfalls in putting the policy of inter-agency co-operation into practice. As the purpose of inter-agency co-operation is to bring together various agencies there are inevitably going to be differences within this newly formed group. As can be seen from this study, each of the agencies concerned have their own ideology, which is further reinforced by each of the representatives. As the agencies come together through their representatives and form a new group - the Forum - both the individuals' and their agencies' differences lead to conflicts. This research has shown how these conflicts result from the manner in which the cultural differences which form boundaries around the individual agencies and separate them from one another are addressed.

Some of the issues identified in this research are similar to those which emerged from the study conducted by Hague, Malos and Dear. In both cases, power and conflict have been identified as having grave implications for the development of inter-agency co-operation. However, this study goes further. It shows that the manner in which such influential factors as power and conflict are addressed influences the transition of an initiative from policy to practice and how these factors therefore have the potential either to aid or hinder the reality from even getting close to the ideal.

According to Bristol University 's Working Paper 127, "Groups may mask conflicts and mixed feelings." (Hague. et al. 1995. p.23) But as the paper goes on to suggest, it would be better if these conflicts and concerns were to be openly acknowledged, rather than that they should be simply ignored. In further discussing the areas for possible disagreement, the paper says

Inter-agency initiatives with different briefs may have corresponding differences in philosophy. For example, variations of this type may exist between groups that see their role primarily as being for discussion and networking, those that attempt to coordinate services to improve practice, and those that have more of a pressure group or advocacy role. Groups of the latter type may have quite definite views about the importance of inter-agency work in terms of campaigning and lobbying. (Hague et al 1995. p.23)

From researching the Durham, Liverpool and Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Forums, it is clear that there is a need for the agencies concerned to confront and subsequently address their differences in order for inter-agency co-operation to be productive.

The current process of putting the policy of inter-agency co-operation into practice in relation to domestic violence forums appears to have been the formation of a common ground from which agencies can work. This sounds ideal. However, in reality it is proving to have dangerous connotations. In their enthusiasm Forums are attempting 'to run before they can walk'. Subsequently they are struggling to maintain the campaign strategies and projects they have established in order to increase public awareness of issues concerning domestic violence, including providing themselves with a public profile. I wish to argue that they are attempting to do all of this before they have learnt about one another's cultures. They are therefore not addressing what I see to be fundamental to the process of inter-agency co-operation.

All three forums place a great deal of emphasis upon the need for raised public awareness. They advocate that in order for there to be progress in counteracting domestic violence people need to have a better understanding of all the issues associated with domestic violence. I wish to argue that alongside the need for increased public and official awareness regarding domestic violence there is the need for each agency concerned to be better informed about other agencies associated with domestic violence. They should attempt to develop an insight and understanding of one another's ideologies. Without this shared awareness, the boundaries and the different cultural identities which separate them would continue to hinder the development of inter-agency co-operation, particularly as it would restrict the agencies' ability to communicate with each other.

The absence of the agencies full awareness and understanding of one another's cultural ideologies hinders the process of inter-agency co-operation. From this research, this can be seen to explain why forums struggle to develop further, to establish and run their projects together as a team, why only a selected few members are active in the forums, why there is often apathy amongst members, why there are conflict and struggles for power between members, and why there are high levels of non-attendance and agencies leaving the groups. If each agency had fuller awareness and understanding of the others and felt that they too were understood by the others the policy-process of inter-agency co-operation would be far smoother. This awareness would prevent people from fearing that if they and their agency were to become actively involved with their local forum they might end up in a 'melting-pot' and subsequently lose their individual identity. The awareness and understanding of one another would enable each agency to be better valued by others and see for themselves that they have something to contribute. This process will make it possible, even acceptable for the

agencies to re-assess and be prepared to adapt both their own and one another's ideologies if and where necessary in order to further their own work in tackling domestic violence.

The image of the Forums at which I have arrived resembles a jigsaw with each agency as one of the pieces. As the pieces are put together the closer one gets to seeing the whole picture. However, without all of the pieces one is unable to get a complete picture. Where the appropriate agencies do not actively participate in their local forum, the role of the forums in counteracting domestic violence is likely to be limited and their ability to tackle issues relating to domestic violence will be restricted. The development and survival of inter-agency co-operation will also be at risk. This has been recognized by all three of the Forums in this study. In the case of the Durham Forum (see Chapter Two), members are working hard to advance from their present situation of only having women's refuges as active members on their forum to having other appropriate agencies involved. With regard to the other two forums - Liverpool and Lincolnshire - they are at different stages of the process of re-assessing the membership, aims and objectives of their initiative.

To return to the analogy of the jigsaw, each piece has its own individual part of the picture and its own unique shape, whilst still remaining vital to the whole. With regard to the Forums, the agencies seem to overlook the implications of not gaining a productive awareness of one another's cultural ideologies, particularly in relation to domestic violence. This in turn hinders the policy-process of putting the pieces of the jigsaw together - and keeping them together - in a successful way which will bring about a productive team. I wish to argue that it is important to view each of the Forums as a jigsaw and not attempt to turn them into 'melting pots'. As I stated from the outset "All the members of a forum therefore have to take into account a

range of institutional cultures and the individual personalities of particular representatives and furthermore learn from and work with this diversity. In order for a forum to be established, these processes of adjustment and accommodation appear to be a crucial stage in its development.” (p.16).

I would therefore argue that there are three key stages involved in establishing the foundation of this policy-process before the newly formed group can successfully embark upon the task of tackling domestic violence and raising public awareness. Firstly, the need for an inter-agency approach has to be established within the local area. From this, appropriate agencies need to be brought together. This forms the second stage of the process. Having begun this, the agencies can then begin learning about one another. This, the third stage, is fundamental to building inter-agency co-operation. The forums in this study are in the process of attempting to address this issue. They have asked the members of their respective forum to provide written material concerning their policies relating to domestic violence. (see appendix 7) As this study has illustrated, all three forums are working towards holding training days and allocating sections of their meetings for the agencies to take it in turn to give a presentation updating the forum on their work. I would argue that this stage of the policy-process, particularly in relation to the implications it has on the discrepancy between the ideal and the reality of inter-agency co-operation, requires a great deal of time and effort. It clearly needs to be given priority. The members need to be given ample opportunities to discuss with one another their cultures so that questions can be asked and information can be directly received and exchanged. Once sufficient awareness and understanding has been achieved, the agencies will no longer be working with only their preconceptions of one another. The task of tackling

domestic violence and raising public awareness can then and only then be productively embarked upon.

This part of the process could be considered by some members as not being the most effective use of their time. It might even be regarded as preventing the agencies from getting on with the task of directly tackling domestic violence. However, I wish to argue that this process will in the long term save time, energy and resources by avoiding unnecessary conflict and misunderstandings. Gaining a full and productive awareness and understanding of one another's philosophies and ideologies will firstly enable the agencies to evaluate their relationship with the other member agencies and secondly take into account cultural differences and similarities as they work together tackling the issues concerning domestic violence. Subsequently, this will further the policy-process of putting together the jigsaw of inter-agency co-operation.

In future it could be advantageous for research to be carried out on the wider effects of inter-agency initiatives in areas such as Lincolnshire, Liverpool and Durham compared to areas without any formal inter-agency initiatives. It would be particularly interesting to note any differences in the levels of reported crimes relating to domestic violence, the number of women registered with women's refuges, and the various financial implications of domestic violence for the different agencies, as well as for the public. Finally, it would prove interesting to see if any time is saved by the agencies where there is structured inter-agency co-operation - particularly in relation to their work with clients.

I would therefore wish to conclude that, if agency members have a clear understanding of the possible implications of agencies coming together and have the motivation to tackle the kind of difficulties I have highlighted, inter-agency co-operation would prove to be an effective way of responding to the problem of domestic violence.

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Zero Tolerance Literature

INFORMANTS

- 1 > member of finance company - Allied Dunbar
- 2 > Durham Domestic Violence Forum Representative
- 3 > Liverpool Domestic Violence Forum Chair
- 4 > member of Victim Support
- 5 > a victim of domestic violence
- 6 > member of Zero Tolerance
- 7 > a Forum representative
- 8 > a member of the television programme Brookside's production team

APPENDICES

The following are the aims and objectives set by the Government. These aims and objectives are the 'ideals' which the various agencies and their respective forums are signing up for and ones which they hope to achieve.

AIMS

5.10 The overall aims of the forum should be to:

- * develop a joint strategic approach;
 - * help agencies provide a comprehensive range of services for victims based on conscient good practice and taking account of social, cultural, religious and ethnic make up of the area;
 - * encourage agencies to initiate early intervention to reduce the level of domestic violence;
- and
- * seek to change public attitudes to domestic violence and encourage initiatives aimed at prevention.

OBJECTIVES

5.11 Suggested objectives included, to;

- * identify the services and facilities offered by local agencies, in both rural and urban areas, for women and children in situations of domestic violence;
- * promote the establishment of the full range of necessary services, and the rationalisation of

xisting services to make effective resources to meet a range of identified needs;

- * promote inter-agency co-operation and training and awareness of others active in the field;
- * encourage agencies to develop or revise policies and codes of working practice to improve service delivery;
- * raise public and professional awareness of the needs of women and children experiencing domestic violence, including the specific needs of black and ethnic women, including those temporary in this country, and women with disabilities;
- * encourage initiatives aimed at the prevention of domestic violence;
- * encourage greater use of local statistics about domestic violence to monitor the extent of the problem and to record changing patterns of violence and responses.”

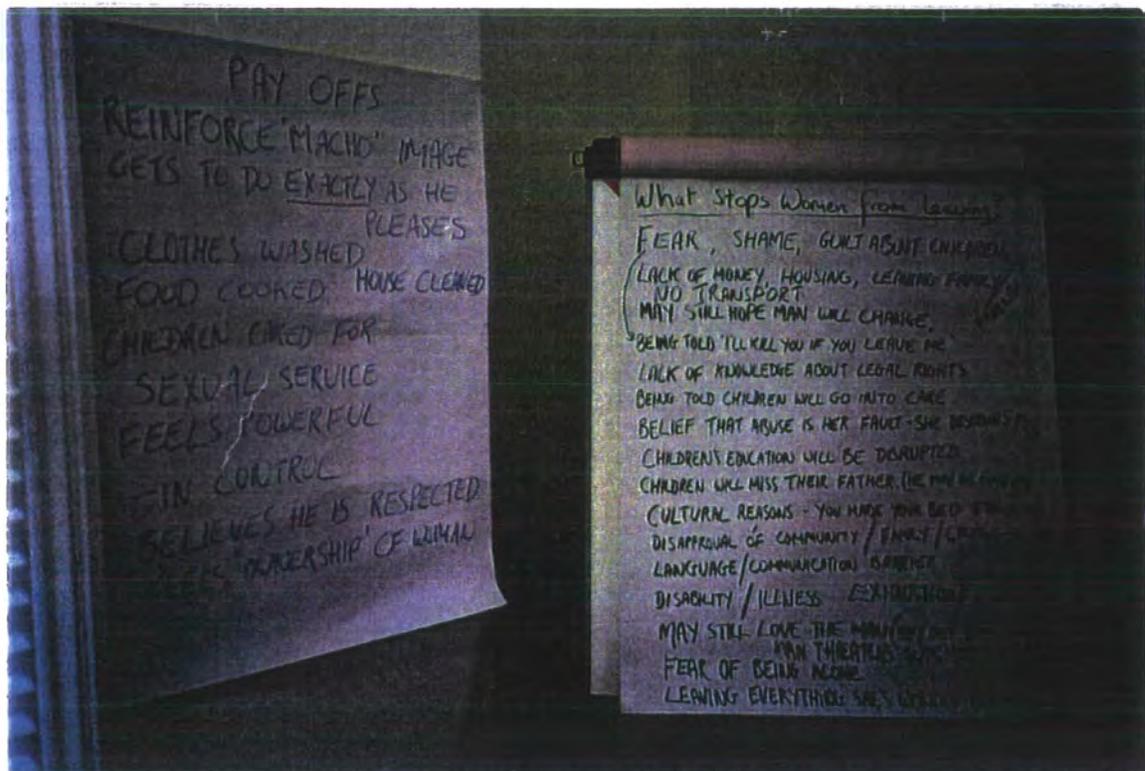
(Home Office Circular. 1995. p.13-14)

APPENDIX TWO

PHOTOGRAPHS

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF PHOTOGRAPHS THAT I
HAVE TAKEN DURING THIS RESEARCH

EDUCATIONAL DISPLAYS GIVEN BY ONE OF THE AGENCIES



APPENDIX THREE

A BREAKDOWN OF
FINANCIAL COSTS
TO SOCIETY
OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Lincolnshire Zero Tolerance Campaign

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Cost to Society - a Scenario

The Family

Barbara is 34 years old and her husband, Ken, is 36. They have been married for 14 years and have 3 children. Laura is the eldest child at 12. James is 8 and Gemma is 2. Barbara had two miscarriages between James and Gemma. Gemma was born eight weeks early and spent several weeks in the Special Care Baby Unit.

Estimated Cost

History of Abuse

The abuse started 18 months into the marriage when Barbara was pregnant with Laura. Initially the abuse took the form of threats and 'put downs', but by the time the baby was born this had escalated and Ken would physically abuse Barbara once or twice a week.

When Laura was 2 years old Barbara sustained facial injuries and she and Laura went to their local Refuge for a three week stay. Ken was arrested and charged with assault. Barbara took out a Non-molestation Injunction and started divorce proceedings. She was not finding it easy to cope with a small child on her own and returned home to Ken, dropping all the proceedings against him.

The abuse continued throughout the next ten years and Barbara went to see her GP on numerous occasions for depression and minor injuries, which she told the doctor she had received in various accidents about the home. On both of the occasions Barbara miscarried in pregnancy an assault preceded it. When Gemma was born prematurely, nursing staff noted that Barbara was in a depressed state. She was seen by the hospital Social Worker who offered to arrange respite care for the two older children, but Ken would not allow this.

Ken got a promotion at work and the family moved to Lincolnshire. Barbara felt very isolated at being separated from her family and having no friends in the area.

The police were called on two occasions by a neighbour who was concerned when she heard screaming. Both times the situation had calmed down by the time the Police arrived. The neighbour was also concerned that she rarely saw Barbara.

The Incident

The police were called to the house by a neighbour who had witnessed a heated argument and had seen Ken assaulting Barbara in the garden. She told the Police that Barbara had been trying to flee the house.

When the Police arrived, Barbara had visible injuries, so an ambulance was called to take her and the children to hospital. Ken was taken into custody for the purpose of collecting evidence, for interview and to prevent a further breach of the peace. He was held overnight.

Ambulance : £150

On arrival at the hospital, Barbara was treated for abdominal pain, two broken ribs and several bruises.

Hospital : £592

cial Services were called and the children were accommodated overnight with a foster carer, whilst Barbara was kept in for observations.

the next day

The Police took a statement from Barbara at the hospital. Ken was then charged with assault ABH and bailed to court. The bail conditions were that he should have no contact with Barbara or any witnesses.

The hospital Social Worker contacted a refuge and space was organised for Barbara and her children on her release from hospital later that day.

Barbara was advised to seek legal advice and emergency Legal Aid was obtained for civil proceedings in the County Court. The case was heard the next day and Barbara was awarded Interim Residency of the children, with a Prohibited Steps order to prevent Ken from removing the children from her care and a Non-molestation injunction with Powers of Arrest in ex-parte proceedings.

Criminal Proceedings

When Ken appeared in Court he pleaded guilty to the charges and the case was adjourned for a Pre-Sentence Report (PSR). He was released on bail. When he later appeared he was given a conditional discharge.

Stay in Refuge

During Barbara's stay in refuge she was supported through the legal procedures to obtain her injunction.

Barbara put in a claim for Income Support and Housing Benefit for herself and the children.

The children attended a local school during the stay and, with the support of the Child Support Workers, they settled well into both school and the refuge.

Child Protection

A case conference was called by the professionals involved to determine if the children were at risk. It was decided that, as Ken was not currently living with Barbara and the children, their names were not added to the Child Protection Register.

Estimated Cost

Foster care : £28.60

Police : £780

Family Court
Welfare : £904

PSR : £218
Magistrates : £290

Injunction : £600

Benefits : £1,568.45
(£120.65 per week
for 3 month stay)

Refuge : £1,152
(3 month stay)

Case Conference
£1,000

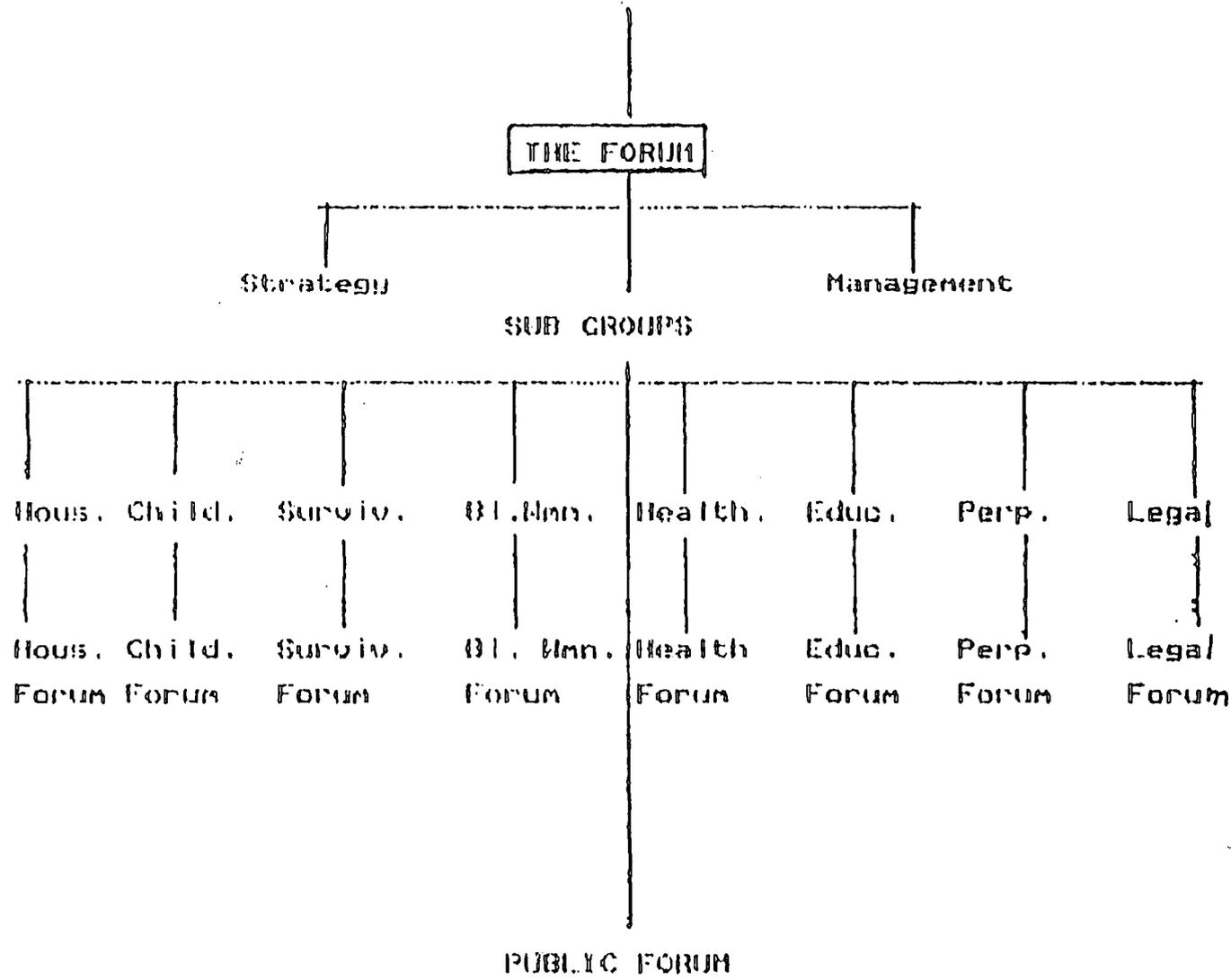
TOTAL :
£ 7,283.05

This scenario gives an example of the type of agencies and the costs involved when domestic violence occurs. Each case is individual and therefore costs will differ from case to case.

APPENDIX FOUR

LIVERPOOL FORUM PLANS

STEERING GROUP
(Directors of the Forum)



STEERING GROUP OF THE FORUM

Comprising of the 8 directors. (see accompanying sheet) Duties would include taking Forum decisions forward and making recommendations at various (decision makers, etc) levels. Would be the driving force of the Forum, would deal with funding issues, would have no power to change Forum decisions, their sole function would be to act on the Forum's instructions. As the Forum grows in various directions this would apportion the workload more appropriately.

(Setting up time scale----before application for charitable Status)

THE FORUM.

The Forum would remain largely the same as now, providing a setting for discussion and debate. Training needs would be dealt with at Forum level. Sub group needs/issues would be dealt with by the Forum. Sub groups would be accountable to the Forum. Steering group would be accountable to the Forum. The steering group would seek approval of the Forum. The Forum would be advised by the Steering group.

STRATEGY GROUP.

The Strategy group would continue to prepare pieces of work for presentation to/and approval of the Forum.

MANAGEMENT GROUP.

The Management Group would continue to support the Line Manager to the Co ordinator.

SUB GROUPS OF THE FORUM.

Sub groups would remain as now but would have an additional function. Would also be expected to provide Forum with group policy, year plans, etc.

Sub group meetings would provide a forum for discussion and debate on their own specialist subject.

New function would be to form and service smaller Forums (with support from main Forum) to enable input from anyone with a particular interest from the public/others. Setting up of small forums is not obligatory but optional.

Each sub group would have the responsibility of running their own Forum and of reporting back to the main Forum on matters which are to be taken forward. The main Forum would decide whether the matter should be dealt with at their level or whether it should be referred on to the Steering Group of the Forum.

(Setting up time scale ----for sub groups not yet meeting = after the sub group development day.

(Setting up time scale for small forums----12 months after development day.

PUBLIC FORUM.

Would be managed by the Steering group with input from the Forum/ as appropriate. Would meet annually? bi- annually? quarterly? Would be open to all.

NB!

All information/input would be fed up and down the "family tree" rather like links on a chain, all connecting.

APPENDIX FIVE

VICTIM SUPPORT



Victim Support

National Office

Kat Ryan
100 Fintayne Court
Parson's Field
Farnham
LH2 1JP

AB/RH9

14 August 1996

Dear Ms Ryan

Thank you for your request for information on domestic violence and how Victim Support Schemes communicate with the National Office.

Victim Support is the national charity which helps crime victims. Trained volunteers in 378 local schemes offer emotional support, practical help and information to people who have suffered crimes ranging from burglary to the murder of a relative. We also work to increase understanding and awareness of the effects of crime and to ensure better recognition of victims' rights. Our leaflet, 'Working for Victims of Crime', contains further information on the services we provide. Victim Support runs a Witness Service in every Crown Court centre in England and Wales. Here, trained volunteers provide support and information to victims and witnesses of crime before, during and after hearings in the Crown Court. Further information on the help which is available from the Witness Service can be found in 'Going to Court'. Our 1995 Annual Report contains the case histories of some of the victims who have been supported by Victim Support and includes statistical information on the number of referrals received, including those for domestic violence and sexual violence.

In 1992 Victim Support published the report of an inter-agency working party on domestic violence, which looked at the current provision for victims of this crime and made recommendations for the future. A copy of the summary of the report is attached. Full copies are available from this office. The Publications List contains full details on this and other research projects and reports, published by Victim Support, which are available direct from the National Office. You may also be interested in the report, 'Breaking the Cycle', from our one-day conference on domestic violence. An order form can be found at the back of the List should you wish to acquire copies. Our response to the Labour Party Consultation Paper, 'Peace at Home', which looks at service provision for victims of sexual and domestic violence, is also enclosed.

In addition to domestic violence, we believe Victim Support has a role in developing effective service provision working in partnership with other local agencies to ensure the best use of resources. All Victim Support schemes work to a nationally agreed Code of Practice, which states that in cases of physical, sexual, emotional and mental abuse of women by male partners or ex-partners, Victim Support will:

- seek to ensure that volunteers, staff and committee members are informed about domestic violence, so that a suitable response is given to women who approach their local scheme

(cont...

Working for victims of crime

Patron : Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

National Office : Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ telephone 0171 735 9166 facsimile 0171 582 5712 **Director** : Helen Reeves OBE

President : The Rt Hon Lord Windlesham CVO, PC **Vice-Presidents** : Christopher Holtom OBE, The Very Revd Dr John Southgate **Chair** : Sir Louis Blom-Cooper QC

National Association of Victims Support Schemes, Charity Registration 298028 Company No. 2158780 Registered in England

Limited by Guarantee. Reg. Office as above.

- provide specialist training to staff and volunteers responsible for work with victims
- ensure that the service Victim Support can provide is clearly described in publicity material
- agree specific local referral policies with the police
- work with other agencies to ensure the best use of resources.

Where such a crime has been reported to the police, referral to Victim Support is only with the woman's prior consent. Contact can also be made through self-referral, or through another agency with the woman's consent.

Victim Support schemes are represented on nearly all of the country's local inter-agency domestic violence fora, playing a part in local policy formulation as well as contributing our own areas of expertise (e.g. information on and contacts with criminal justice agencies and advice on compensation issues).

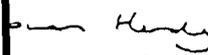
The National Office is currently finalizing guidelines for members on supporting the victims of domestic violence which will be issued very shortly.

The reading lists 'Effects of Crime' and 'Domestic Violence' contain a list of references to publications on these particular topics. Unfortunately our library is not open to the general public and we are unable to loan items from it. Should you wish to acquire copies of any publication mentioned these can be ordered or obtained from your local library.

The National Office communicates with members through a monthly mailing and the quarterly magazine, as well as the annual National Conference and AGM. The latest issue of the magazine is enclosed; it contains an article on children and domestic violence which may be of interest to you. Consultative meetings with the members are held every six months, where members' views and experience are sought, to be fed in to service provision and policy development. Each scheme must undergo a Three Year Review, part of which involves the Field Officer interviewing the scheme about their working practices including provision in relation to domestic violence. The Field Services and Policy and Information Teams at the National Office are always available to answer queries from members. An information sheet about the National Office is enclosed.

I hope you will find this information helpful and I wish you the very best of luck with your research.

Yours sincerely


Owen Hardy
Information Officer

APPENDIX SIX

LINCOLNSHIRE
REVIEW
GROUP

Definition of Domestic Violence

ANY FORM OF PHYSICAL SEXUAL OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE WHICH TAKES PLACE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP.

PROPOSAL TWO

STRUCTURE

Full membership of the Forum to meet once a year at an Annual Forum Meeting (AFM). This meeting to be held in Lincoln in the form of a mini-conference. It will evaluate the work of the Forum in the past year, discuss and agree any proposals for the coming year.

Steering Group - This group will comprise a representation from key agencies whose work brings them into contact with victims and perpetrators of Domestic Violence, potential funding bodies and a member of each of the sub-groups. This group to meet on a quarterly basis with the venue rotated throughout the county in order to encourage attendance. There will be discussion on the progress of the work of the sub-groups, an agency round up and discussion regarding any new developments, conferences etc. taking place.

Sub-groups - Comprising member agencies who have specialist knowledge, experience to interest relevant to that sub-group. To set objectives, targets and points of action. To report back to the Steering Group on a quarterly basis.

PROPOSAL THREE

CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP OF LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

- 1 (a) Any agency or organisation which comes into contact with victims or perpetrators of Domestic violence and/or their children.
- (b) Any individual, considered by the Steering Group to have the relevant skills or experience to make a positive contribution to the aims of the Lincolnshire Domestic Violence forum.
2. There is commitment from the agency/organisation to the aims of the forum and to attend meetings on a regular basis.
3. Representatives should ensure dissemination of information to all levels of their agency/organisation.
4. Representatives should be sanctioned by their agency/organisation.

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective (i): To meet on a quarterly basis to monitor and evaluate the actions of all interested agencies in relation to domestic violence and to establish best practice policy

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
Forum has continued to meet quarterly	Propose an agency "round-up" at each DV Forum meeting to establish extent of anti-DV activity ongoing in member agencies. This to engender a "process effect".	Some agencies <u>have</u> put forward policies: Police SAFA Boston W/Aid	All Agencies

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Alm/Objective (ii): Through a partnership approach, to liaise closely on all matters affected by domestic violence in an endeavour to reduce the stress and trauma that such incidents generate and to take action as appropriate.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
	Possibly need to modify this - it is a catch-all and could be the 'raison detre' of the Forum.		

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective (1a): To assist 'victims' of violence within the home by the fomulation/maintenance of an identification of appropriate resources offering protection to the 'victim'.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
Needs improving	<p>Need for updated directory of services available to victims - this needs to be placed in police control rooms/casualty units, housing sections local authorities, GPs surgeries - health visitors - and others - (Social Services list to include ASK, etc.)</p> <p>Libraries</p> <p>County boundaries and beyond?</p>		

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective (1b): To assist 'victims' of violence within the home by the formulation/maintenance of an identification of appropriate resources offering protection to any children within the household.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
	Ditto (1a) - part of some directory - children's section.		Social Services (with Women's Aid)

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective (1c): To assist 'victims' of violence within the home by the formulation/maintenance of an identification of appropriate resources offering information regarding any legal resource for both criminal and civil proceedings which would offer safety to victims of violence.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
	<p>Need to involve CAB?</p> <p>Are there any Law Centres in the County?</p> <p>Free ½ hour legal consultation.</p> <p>Possible need for additional leaflet?</p>		<p>Member solicitors and Women's Aid</p>

Aim/Objective (2): To investigate the need for appropriate counselling services to be made available for both the victims and perpetrators of violence within the home.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
Victim counselled by Lincoln Women's Centre and Women's Aid Boston & Lincoln. Lincoln Centre for Counselling also counsel <u>reps</u> and victims.	Stop includes counselling for perpetrators.		

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective (3): To identify, establish and maintain professional links, and communication channels between agencies working in this field in order to provide a comprehensive approach to 'violence within the home'.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
Increased inter-agency communication has been achieved.	Good foundation for reviewing membership criteria (+ attendance and potential for developing greater knowledge of agency referral routes.		

Aim/Objective (5): To increase the 'victims' self-esteem and income through advice education or skills courses.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective (6): To increase the public's awareness and understanding of the wider issues relating to violence within the family.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
<p>Press/publicity conference, etc, has addressed in part.</p>	<p>ZT appears to address this in part. Wider distribution of Minutes? Newsletter? Radio Lincs/FM Phone-in legal advice. phone-ins Lincolnshire phone line.</p>		

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective(7): To provide acceptable alternatives to remaining in home for victims of violence within the home.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
Forum can't provide this.	Need to examine available alternatives for victims other than returning home. Refuges = starting point. Need to recruit members from 'housing section', eg, Housing Associations.		

Alm/Objective (5): To increase the 'victims' self-esteem and income through advice education or skills courses.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective (6): To increase the public's awareness and understanding of the wider issues relating to violence within the family.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
Press/publicity conference, etc, has addressed in part.	ZT appears to address this in part. Wider distribution of Minutes? Newsletter? Radio Lincs/FM Phone-in legal advice. phone-ins Lincolnshire phone line.		

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective(7): To provide acceptable alternatives to remaining in home for victims of violence within the home.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
Forum can't <u>provide</u> this.	Need to examine available alternatives for victims other than returning home. Refuges = starting point. Need to recruit members from 'housing section', eg, Housing Associations.		

LINCOLNSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Aim/Objective (8): For the Domestic Violence Forum to monitor progress against the aims and objectives and to introduce new initiatives where appropriate.

Status (achieved, needs improving, needs plan, etc, etc)	Further Action Needed?	Other Remarks	Key Agencies
Has been attempted.	Annual review and report to be published. Need for small review sub-group.		

17 January 1997

APPENDIX SEVEN

LINCOLNSHIRE
QUESTIONNAIRE

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMPILATION
OF AN INFORMATION DIRECTORY/BOOKLET**

NOT ALL OF THE QUESTIONS MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO YOUR ORGANISATION. PLEASE JUST PROVIDE THE INFORMATION WHICH YOU FEEL IS RELEVANT AND/OR DESCRIBE WHAT YOUR AGENCY DOES.

Name of Agency:

Contact Name (if found appropriate):

Telephone and Fax Numbers:

Address:

Opening Hours:

Is an Appointment Necessary:

Access (do you have disability/wheelchair access?):

Facilities (are there crèche facilities/):

What type of service do you offer:

- Support
- Advice.....
- Information.....
- Accommodation.....
- Benefits/Financial Assistance.....
- Training.....
- Legal Issues.....
- Health Issues.....
- Other, please state.....

Who do you Provide your Service For:

- Women.....
- Children.....
- Young People.....
- Older Persons.....
- Lesbians.....
- Ethnic Minority Groups.....
- Men.....
- People with Disabilities.....
- Only persons from a specific geographic area(please state area)
.....
- Other, please state.....

Please Provide Background Information to the Service that you Provide in Domestic Violence Cases (i.e. your service to women, children, perpetrator, etc):

Other Information (including information on other area services and facilities not represented on the DVForum, such as hospital opening times and addresses, all area housing departments/homeless section numbers and addresses, accommodation projects, etc):

*** How much would your agency be prepared to pay for a comprehensive directory of contact addresses and services?**

- Nothing.....
- £1-£3.....
- £4-£7.....
- £8-£11.....

*** Approximately how many directories would your agency require?**

Please Provide Background Information on Your Agency's Legal Powers/Legal Assistance (e.g. injunctions, compensation, legal aid, arresting powers, etc):

Are you a Referral Service (e.g. only accept referrals from probation or can be self referral):

Confidentiality (is complete confidentiality given to the woman/children/perpetrator or in what cases is information shared with other agencies):

APPENDIX EIGHT

ZERO TOLERANCE



Lincolnshire Zero Tolerance Campaign

We the undersigned pledge to support the Lincolnshire Zero Tolerance campaign by working towards ending the violence and abuse of women and children and by committing ourselves to Zero Tolerance of abuse. We recognise that abuse of women and children stems from the basic inequality of women in our society and acknowledge that no man has the right to abuse his power and control over women and children.

Name	Organisation / Address	Signature



ZERO TOLERANCE
of violence against women

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
MYTHS AND REALITY



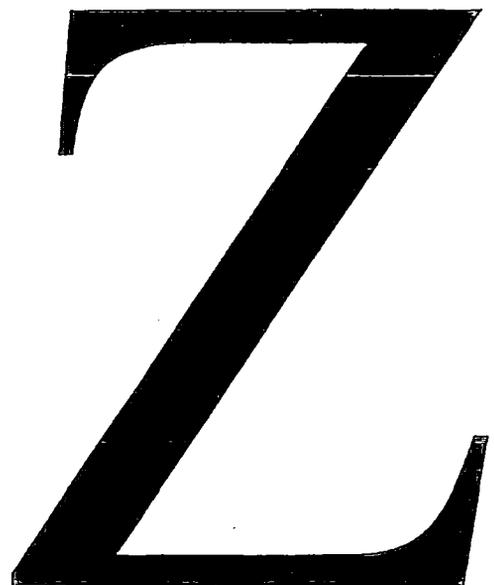
ZERO TOLERANCE
of violence against women

RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT
MYTHS AND REALITY



ZERO TOLERANCE
of violence against women

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
MYTHS AND REALITY

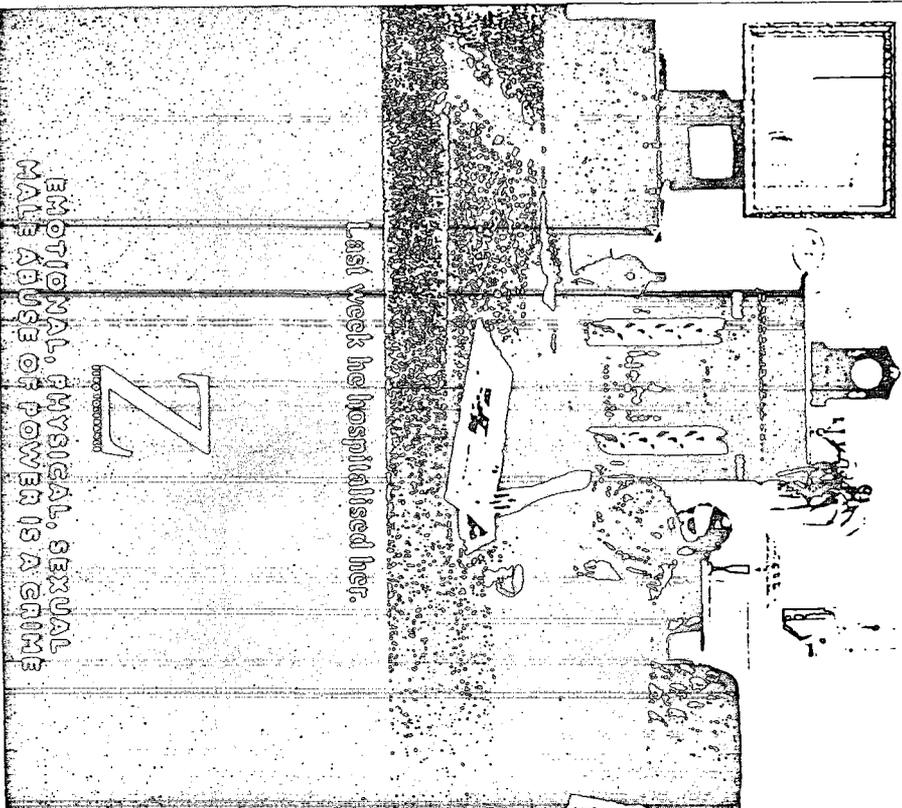


ZERO TOLERANCE
of violence against women

**NO
MAN
HAS THE RIGHT.**

Z
**ZERO TOLERANCE
OF MEN'S ABUSE OF WOMEN**

*She lives with a successful businessman,
loving father and respected member of the community.*



Last week he hospitalised her.

**EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, SEXUAL
MALE ABUSE OF POWER IS A CRIME**

Z
ZERO TOLERANCE

**CLEVELAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM
WORKING FOR ZERO TOLERANCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

APPENDIX NINE

POLICE STATISTICS

VIOLENT CRIME

NATIONAL 1981 -1995

1981

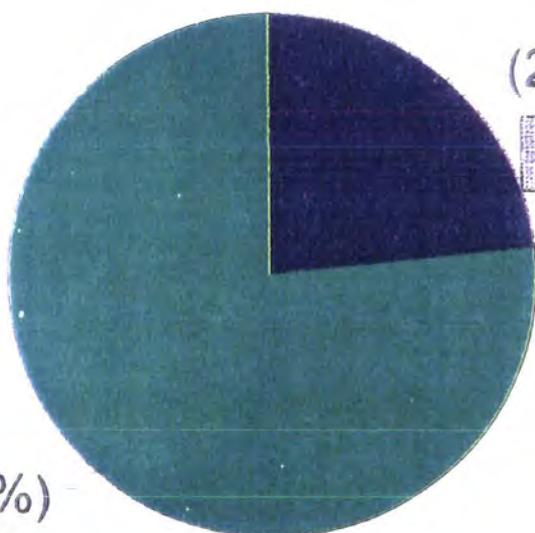
(23.29%)

100207

1995

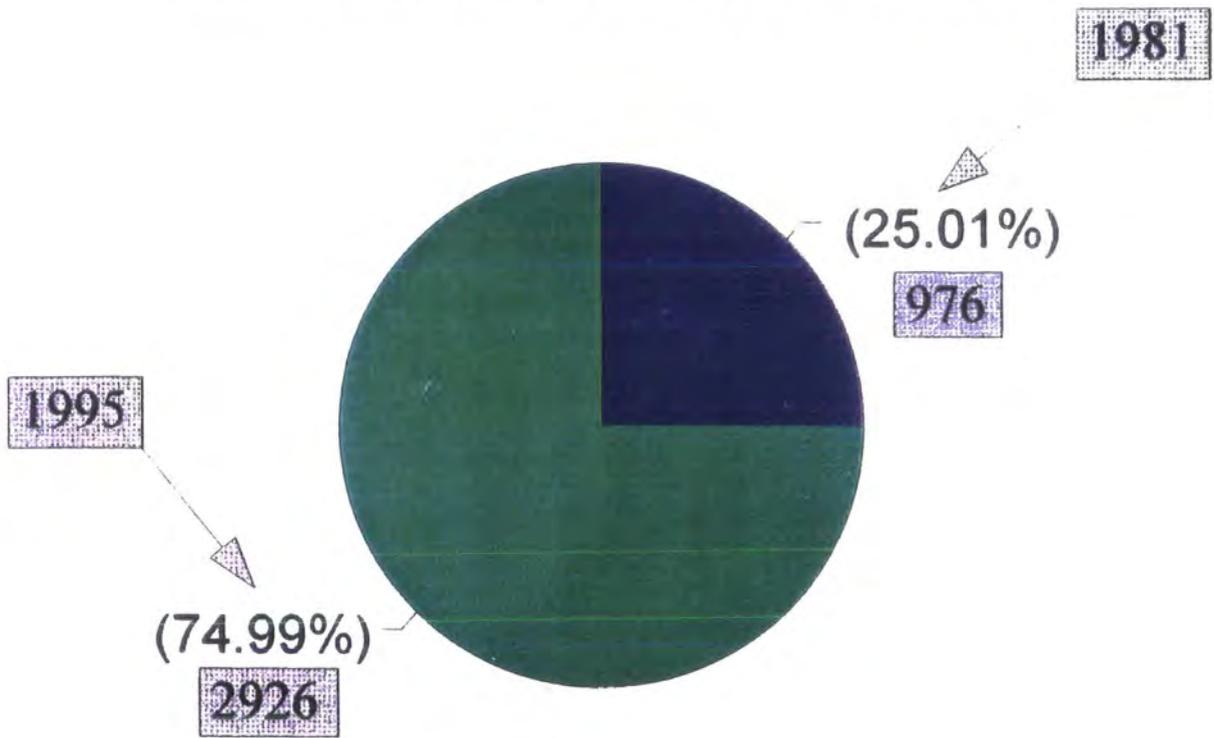
(76.71%)

330000



VIOLENT CRIME

LINCOLNSHIRE 1981 -1995



LINCOLNSHIRE POLICE CRIME SYSTEM

OFFENDER/VICTIM RELATIONSHIP

OFFENDER	VICTIM	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
HUSBAND	WIFE	112	106	97	111	97
COMMON LAW HUSBAND	COMMON LAW WIFE	70	52	43	55	38
EX/ESTRANGED HUSBAND	EX/ESTRANGED WIFE	20	19	22	48	23
BOYFRIEND	GIRLFRIEND		47	54	64	78
FRIEND (MALE)	FRIEND (FEMALE)	68	22	19	5	16
FATHER	SON	10	3	4	10	11
FATHER	DAUGHTER	12	8	7	9	7
BROTHER	SISTER	6	7	2	2	9
		298	264	248	304	279

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (Crime System)

OFFENDER/VICTIM RELATIONSHIP

Offender	Victim	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Average
Aunt/Uncle	Niece/Nephew	2	1		2	1	1
Boyfriend	Girlfriend		47	54	64	78	49
Boyfriends Son	Girlfriend			1			0
Boyfriends Wife	Girlfriend			1			0
Brother	Brother	7		1	11	3	4
Brother	Sister	8	7	2	2	9	5
Brother in Law	Brother in Law			2	2		1
Brother in Law	Sister in Law					1	0
Common Law Husband	Common Law Wife	70	52	43	55	38	52
Common Law Wife	Comm Law Husband		2	1			1
Daughter	Mother			1	5	4	2
Daughter in Law	Mother in Law					2	0
Employee	Employer		2	2	1		1
Employer	Employee		1	1			0
Ex Boyfriend	Ex Girlfriend			23	52	40	23
Ex Comm Law Husband	Ex Comm Law Wife					1	0
Ex Comm Law Wife	Ex Comm Law Husband					1	0
Ex Girlfriend	Ex Boyfriend			2	4	5	2
Ex/Estranged Husband	Ex/Estranged Wife	20	19	22	48	23	25
Ex/Estranged Wife	Ex/Estranged Husband					1	0
Family Group	Family Group			8	5	2	3
Father	Son	10	3	4	10	11	3
Father	Daughter	12	8	7	9	7	9
Father in Law	Son in Law						0
Friend(female)	Friend(female)	12		9	9	15	9
Friend(female)	Friend(male)	38	1	3		4	9
Friend(male)	Friend(female)	58	22	19	5	15	25
Friend(male)	Friend(male)	25		14	11	29	16
Girlfriend	Boyfriend	50	1	4	3	5	15
Girlfriends Ex Husband	Boyfriend			2	2	2	1
Girlfriends Stepfather	Boyfriend			1			0
Husband	Wife	112	106	97	111	97	105
Husband/Ex Husband	Wifes Male Friend					1	0
Husbands Girlfriend	Boyfriends Wife					1	0
Lodger	Landlord/Landlady		1	1	1		1
Lodger	Lodger					2	0
Mother	Daughter	7	2	2	5	5	5
Mother	Son	10	7		7	7	6
Mother in Law	Daughter in Law					1	0
Mother in Law	Son in Law			1	1	3	1
Mothers Boyfriend	Son			1		2	1
Neighbour	Neighbour	15	8	12	8	14	11
Niece/Nephew	Aunt/Uncle					2	0
Not Known	Not Known		12	5	68	20	21
Other	Other			1	25		5
Partner	Partner					1	0
Sister	Sister	6		1	3		2
Sister in Law	Brother in Law					1	0
Sister in Law	Sister in Law			1		3	1
Sisters Boyfriend	Brother			1			0
Son	Father		1	2	12	7	4
Son	Mother		3	4	15	7	6
Son in Law	Mother in Law					1	0
Step Father	Step Daughter	8	4	3	5	11	6
Step Father	Step Son	3	8	5	14	13	9
Step Mother	Step Daughter			1	1	1	1
Step Mother	Step Son	1	1			1	1
Step Son	Step Father		2	2	1	1	1
Step Son	Step Mother		1		1		0
Wife	Husband		7	2	4	9	4
Wifes Male Friend	Husband/Ex Husband			4	7	5	3

TOTALS

492

327

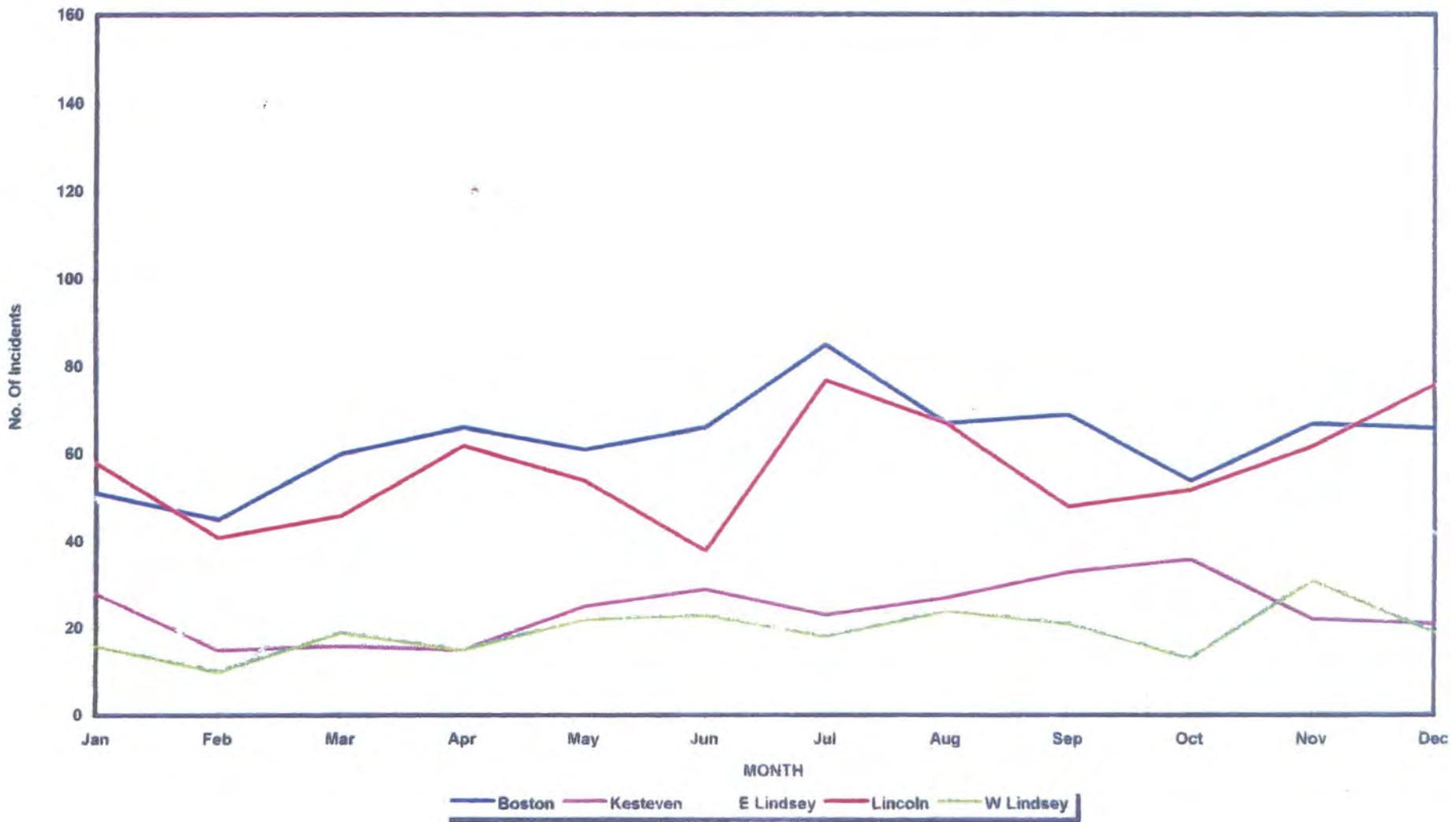
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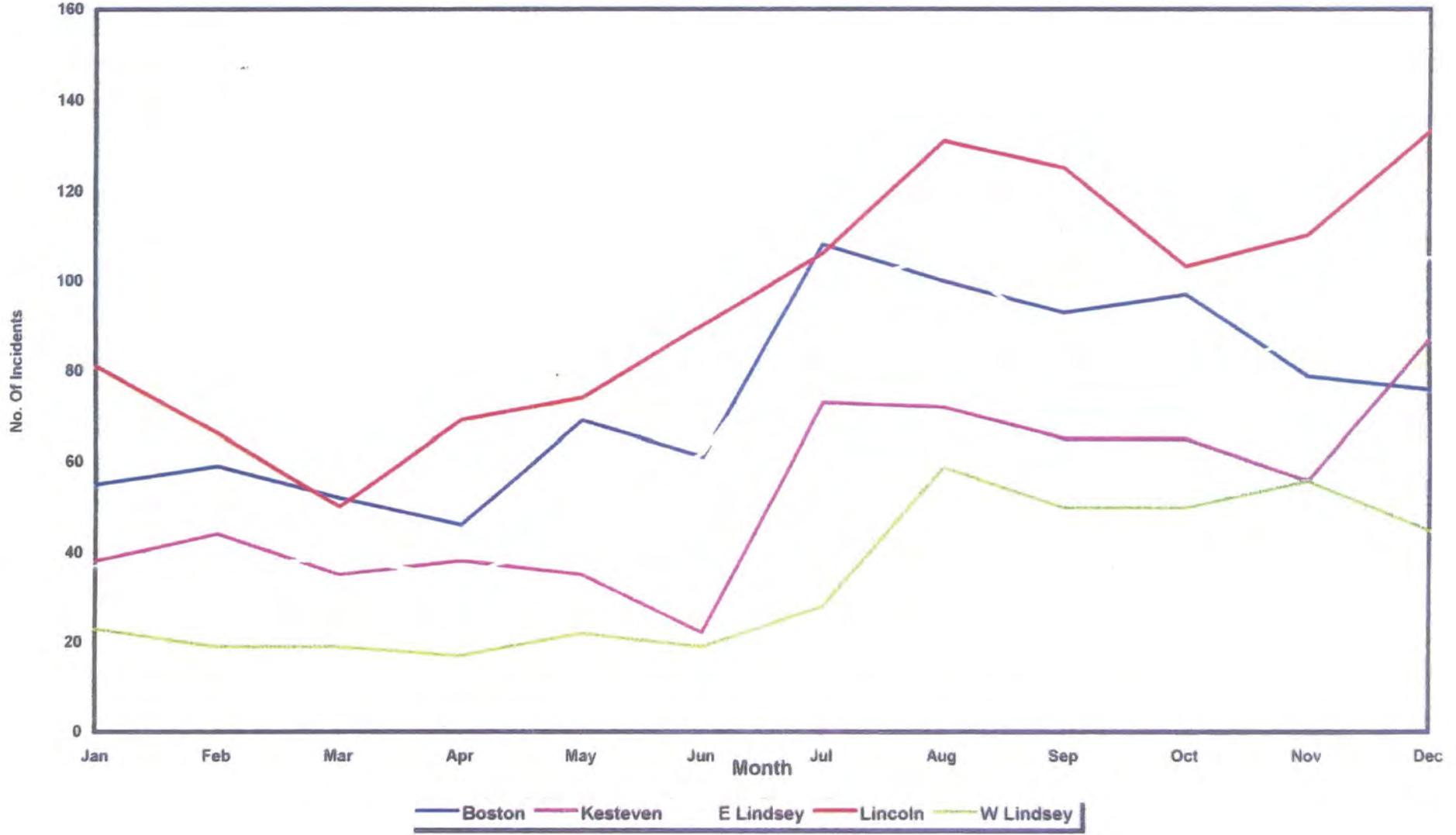
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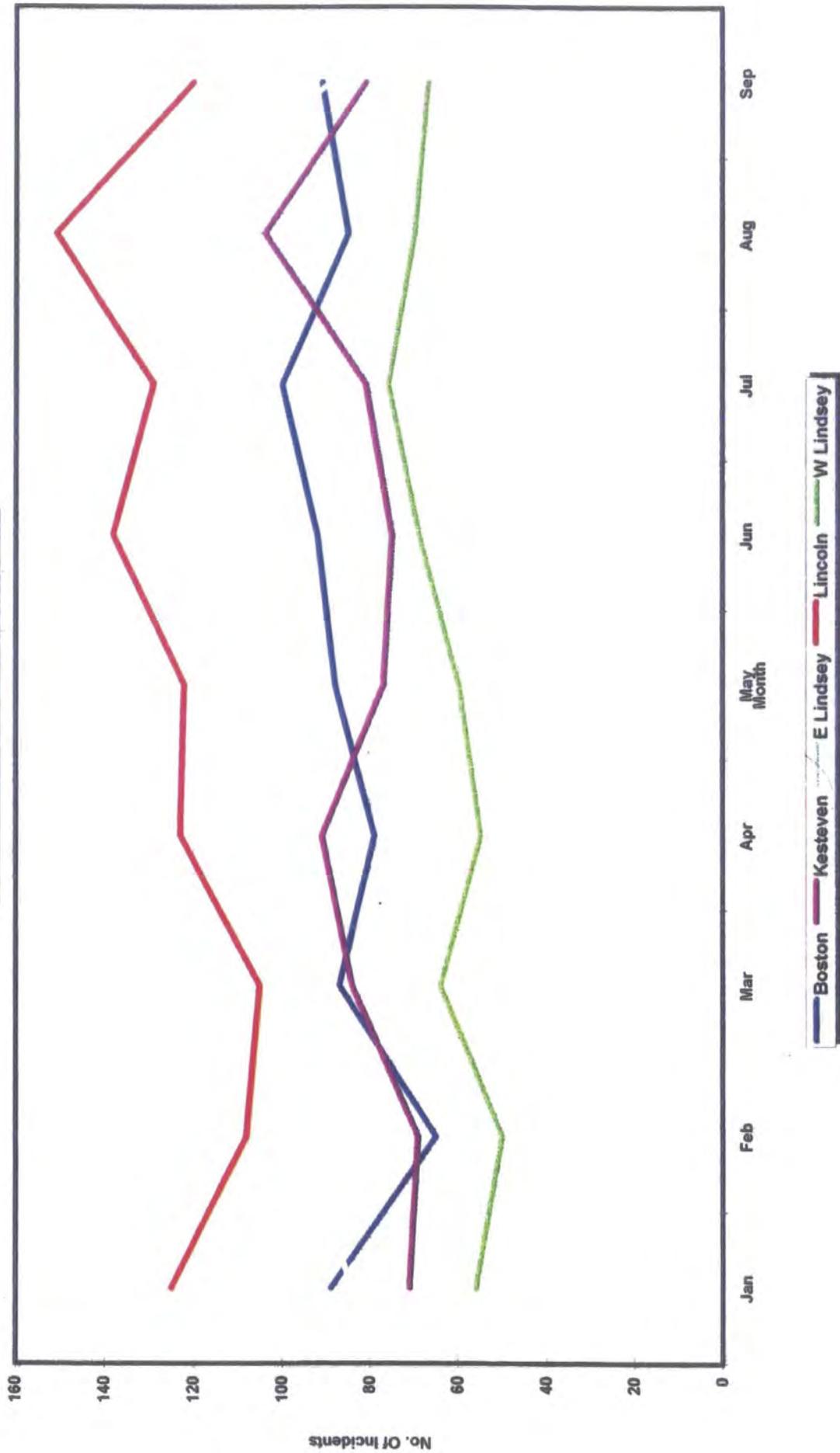
DOMESTIC DISPUTE INCIDENTS - 1994



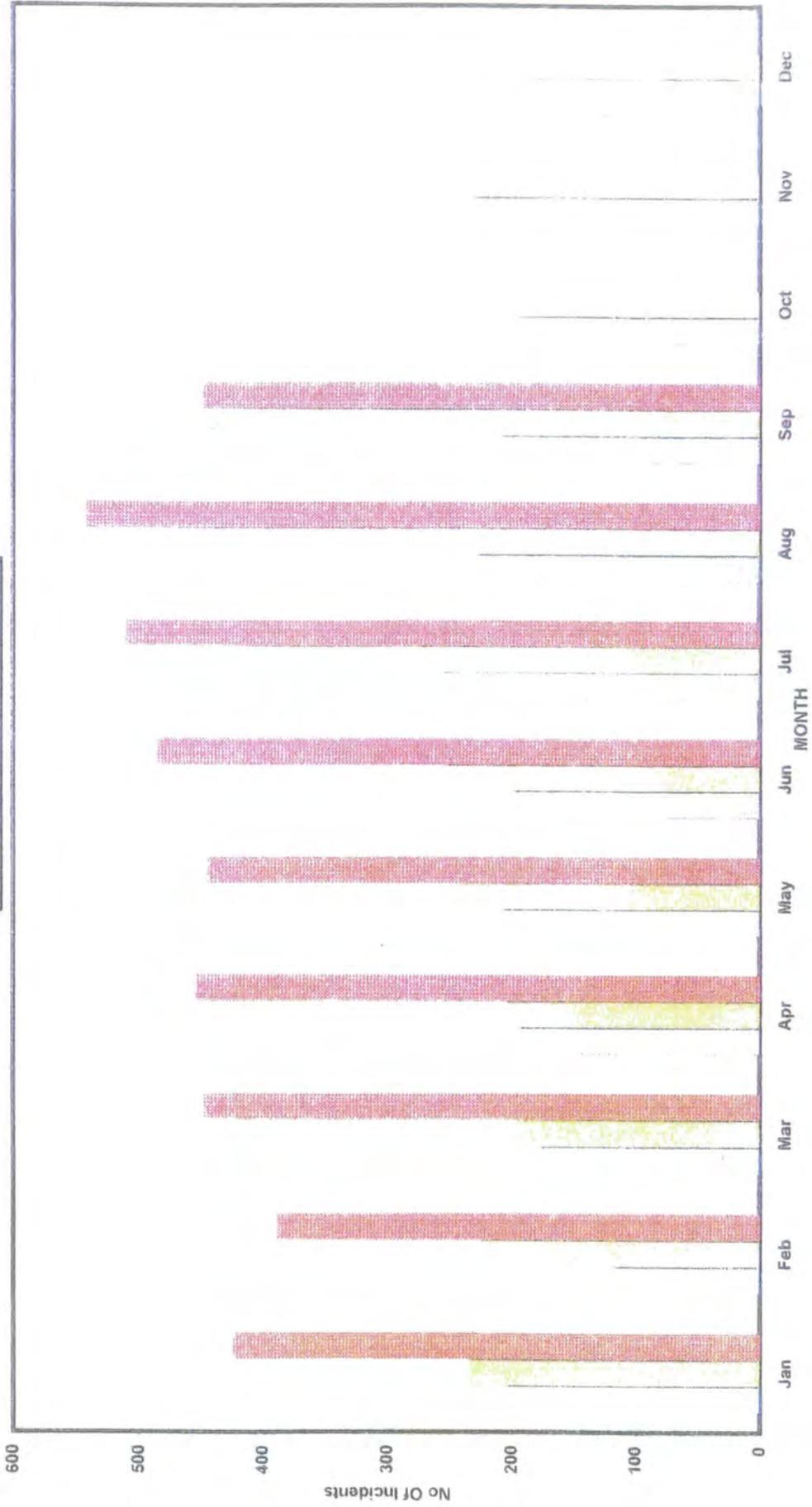
DOMESTIC DISPUTE INCIDENTS - 1995



DOMESTIC DISPUTE INCIDENTS - 1996



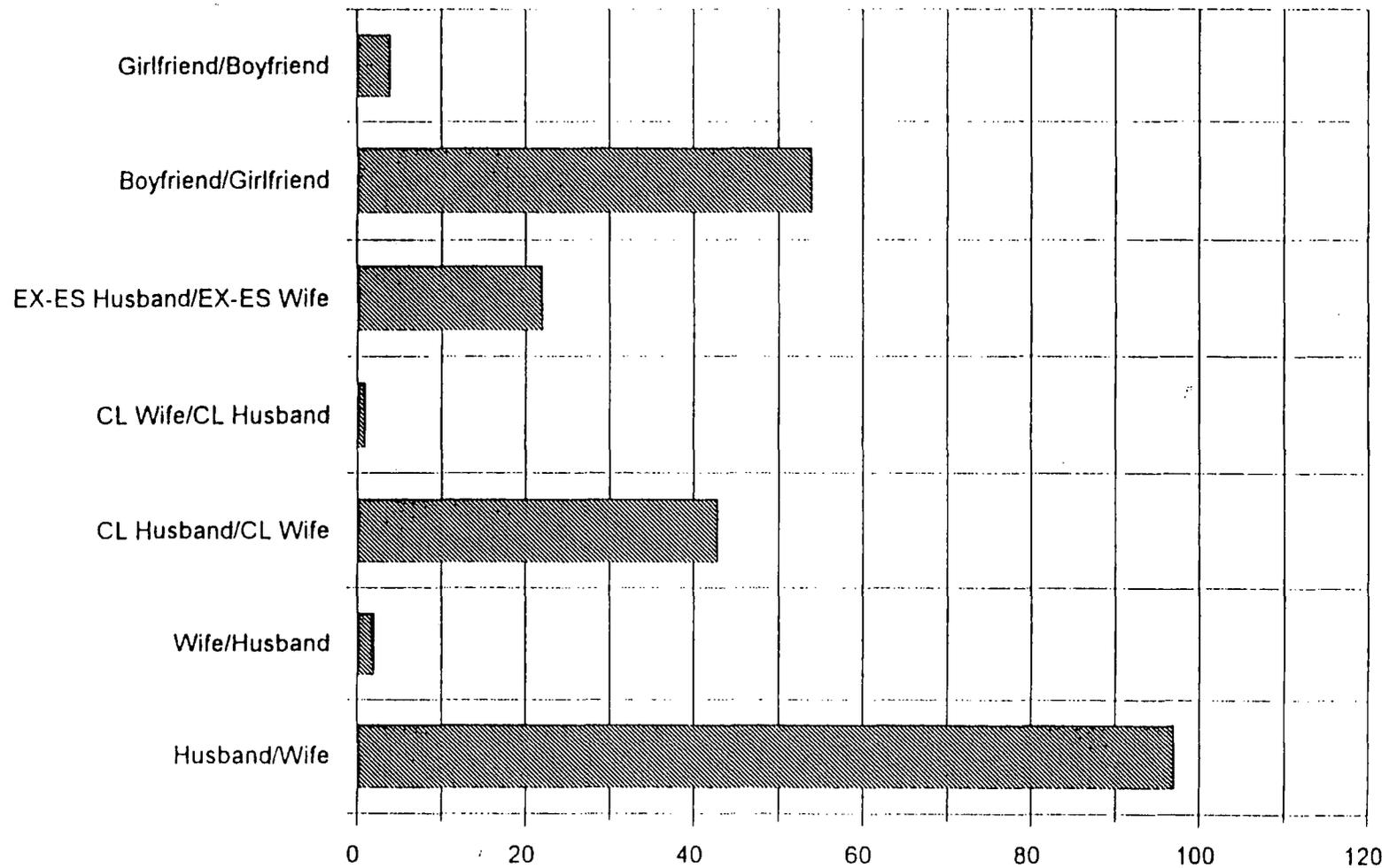
DOMESTIC DISPUTE INCIDENTS
WHOLE COUNTY



1994 1995 1996

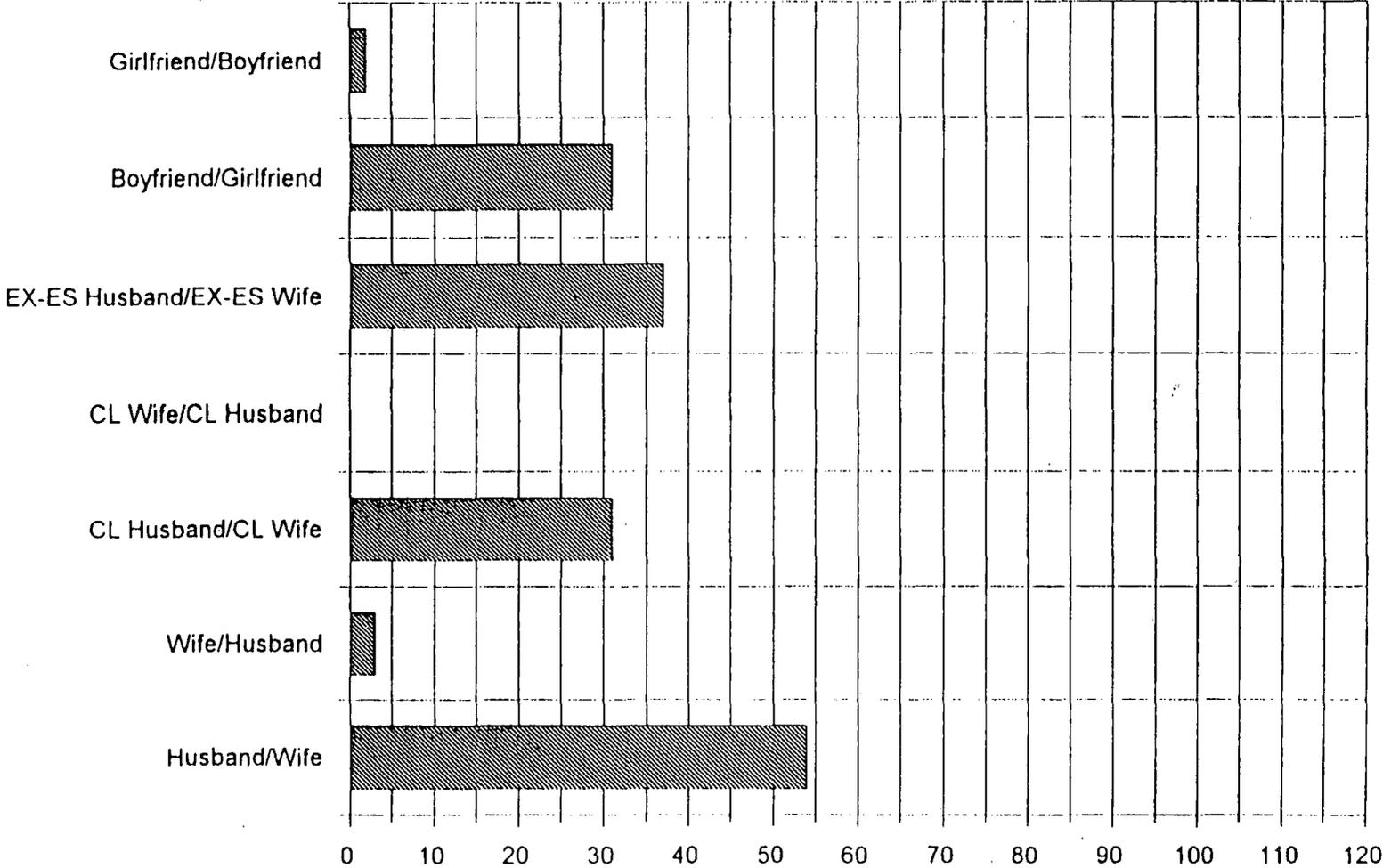
OFFENDER/VICTIM RELATIONSHIP

1st January 1993 to 31st December 1993



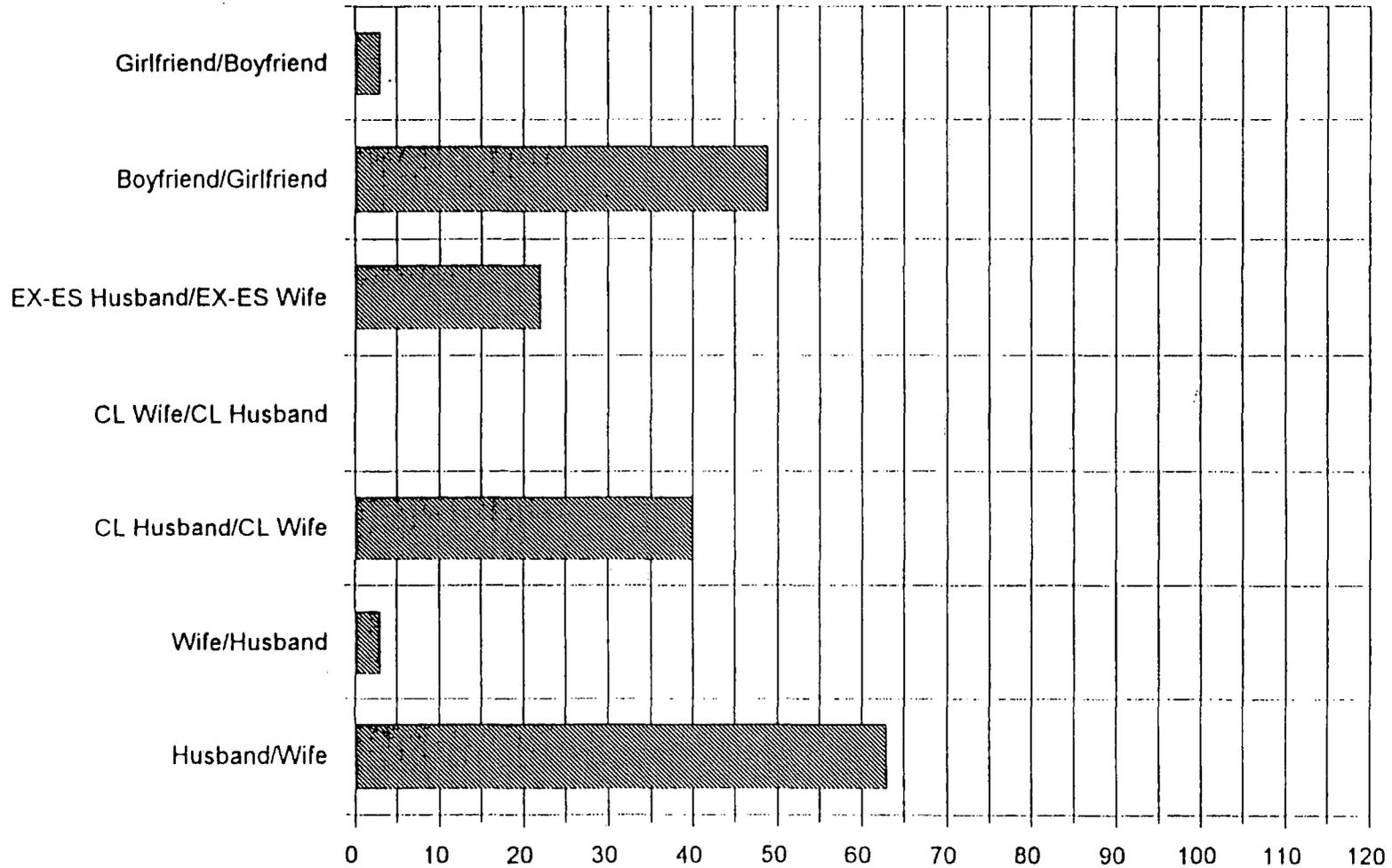
OFFENDER/VICTIM RELATIONSHIP

1st January 1994 to 31st December 1994



OFFENDER/VICTIM RELATIONSHIP

1st January 1995 to 31st August 1995



APPENDIX TEN

REFUGE STATISTICS

Number of Women and Children helped by the Refuge

	In house at start of period *	In house at end of period	Admitted to refuge *	Age of children	Lincs. resid given refuge in other areas *	Referrals from other areas not accomm. *	Advice only *	Total Bednights	Total Women & Children
Women	6	7	44	Birth-15yr	22	83	33	3366	188
Children	8	13	56		47	188			299
Total	14	20	100		69	271	33		0

Total women and children is calculated using columns marked *

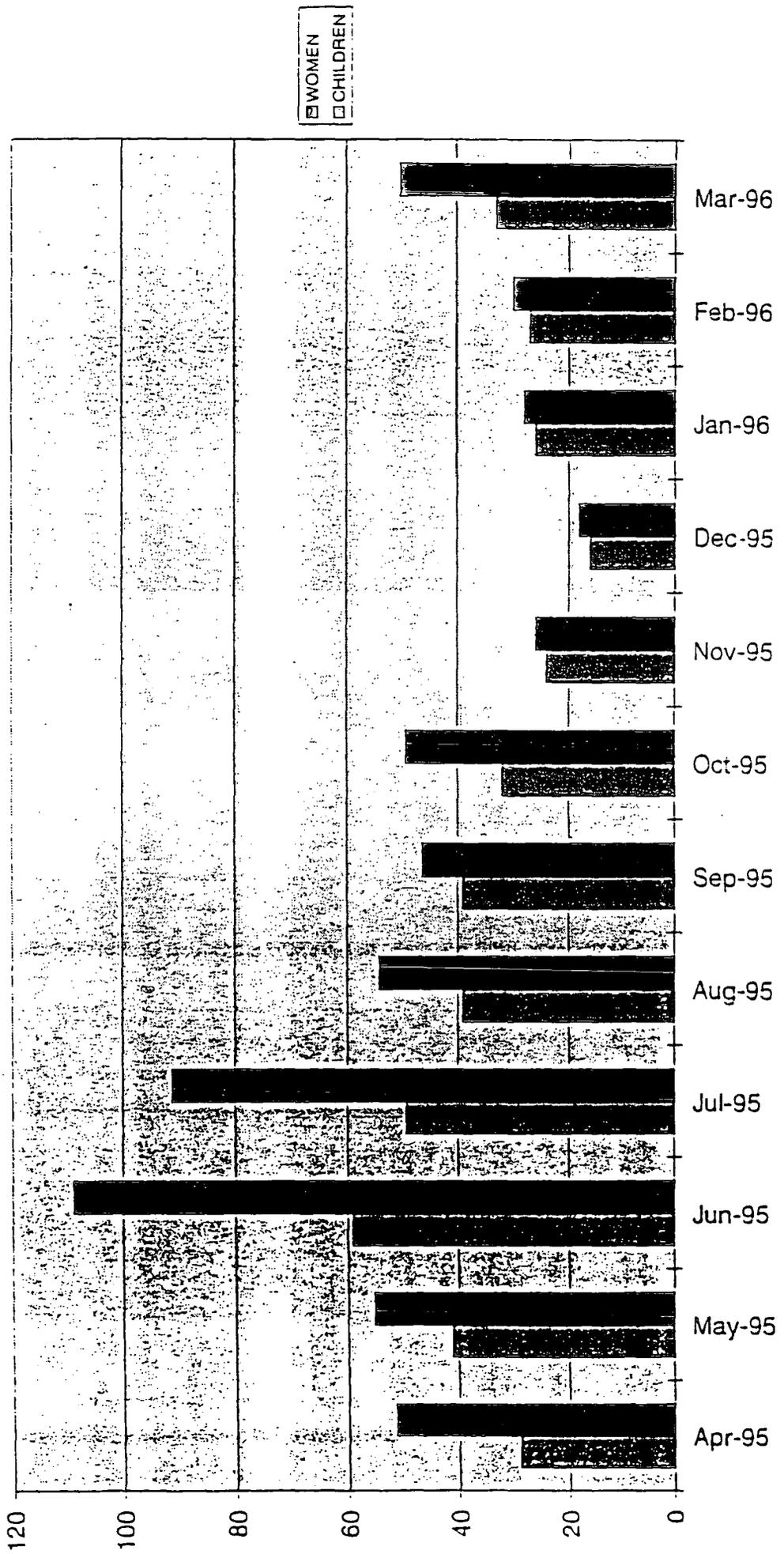
Sources of Referrals to Refuge

	Self	Friends / Family	DSS	Housing	Medical Agencies	Police	Social Services	Solicitor	Other Refuge	Other Vol. Org.	Other / Not Known	Total
Lincs	14	1	0	0	0	5	15	0	1	3	0	39
Other areas	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	6
Total	14	1	0	0	0	5	16	0	6	3	0	45

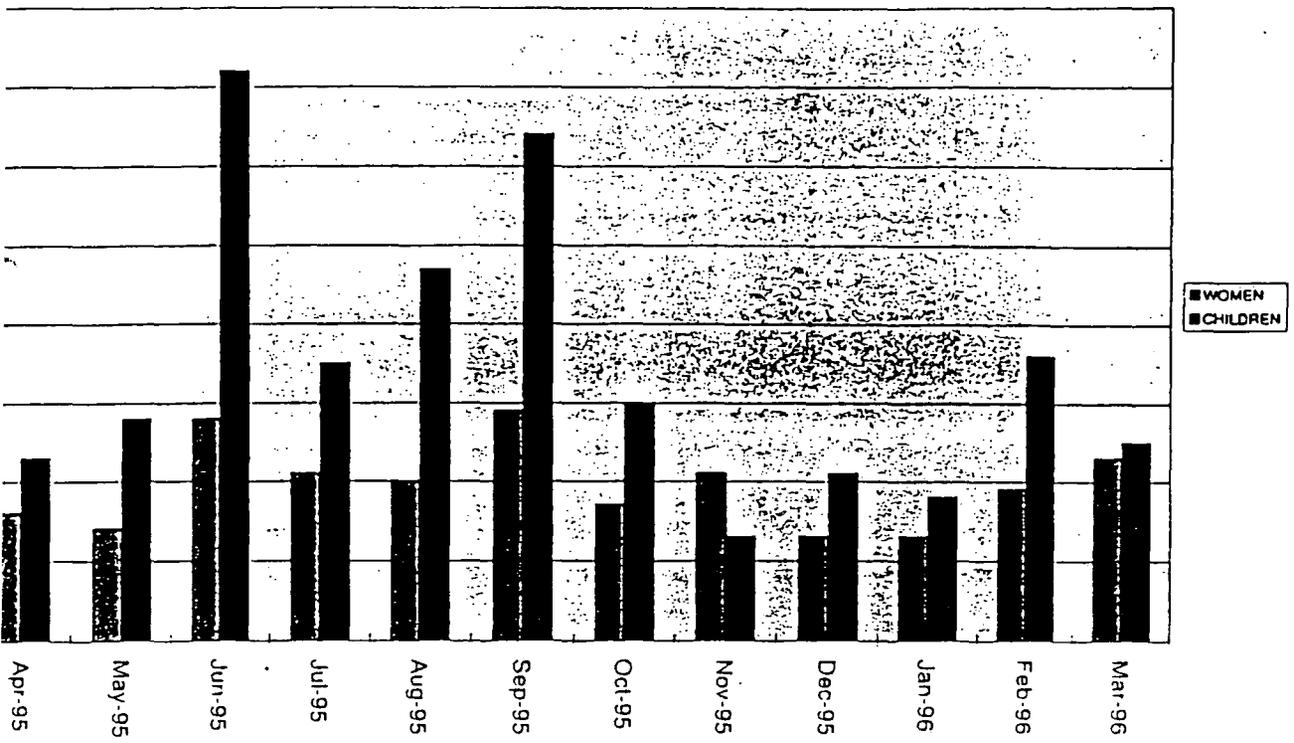
Destination of Women and Children leaving Refuge

	Return to abuser	Return with Injunction	Reloused by Council	Tenancy Transfer	Move-on Accomm.	Other Refuge	Private Accomm.	Friends / Family	Other	Not known	Total
Women	13	8	8	1	4	4	0	4	2	0	44
Children	10	4	11	2	10	4	0	3	9	0	53
Total	23	12	19	3	14	8	0	7	11	0	97

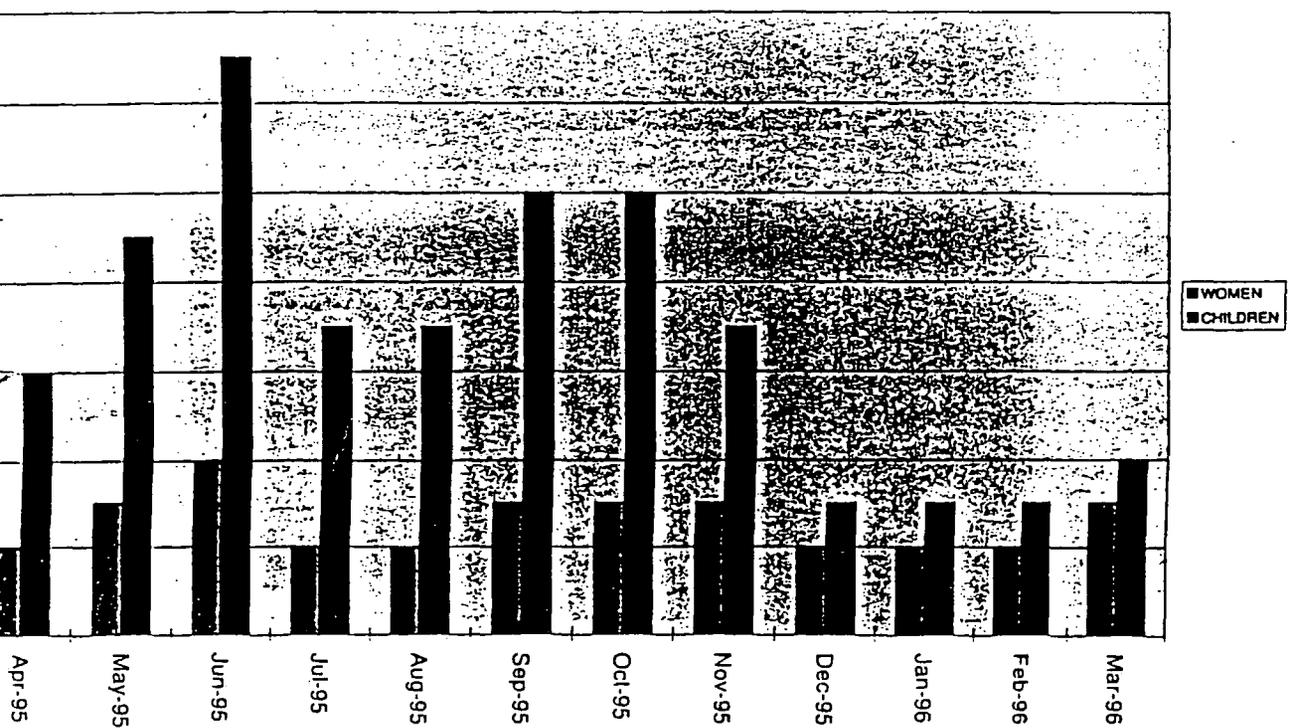
TOTAL WOMEN AND CHILDREN HELPED BY LINCOLN
REFUGE 95/96



TOTAL WOMEN AND CHILDREN HELPED BY BOSTON REFUGE 95/96



TOTAL WOMEN AND CHILDREN HELPED BY BOSTON MOVE ON REFUGE 95/96



APPENDIX ELEVEN

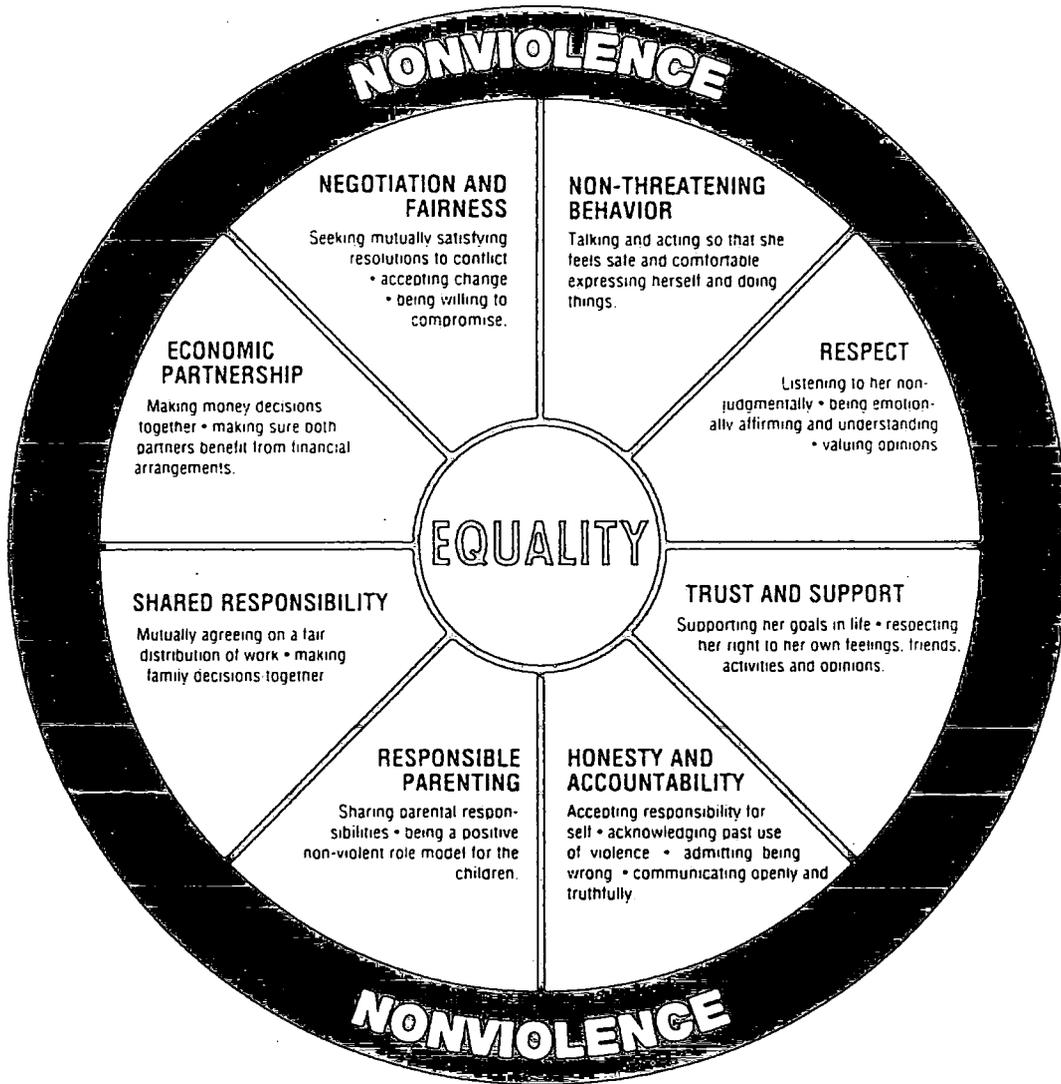
EQUALITY

WHEEL

(Reference: Pence. E. and Paymer. M. 1993)

Equality Wheel

DOM



Name _____
to participate in _____

1. ___ I agree (day/date) session

2. ___ I agree Group by ___ I agree at (time) Other (I unknown)

3. ___ I understand two if I will court

4. ___ If re:

5. ___ I understand I understand Protection head

6. ___ I understand price

7. ___ I understand vic

8. ___ I understand Th pe

9. ___ I understand

10. ___ I understand 9'

11. ___ I understand o

12. ___ I understand

I HAVE PROTECTION \$700. VIOLATION IMPOSITION

Participate Date _____

APPENDIX TWELVE

POWER
AND
CONTROL
WHEEL

(Reference: Pence. E. and Paymer. M. 1993)

Power and Control Wheel

