Do we Blame Victims?

A Critical Analysis of Victim Blaming Discourse found in Defensive Narratives of Intimate Partner Femicide Cases

By Erica Matthews, BSc (Hons)

A thesis submitted to the University of Gloucestershire in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science by Research in the Faculty of Natural and Social Sciences

August 2024

Word Count: 35,247

Abstract

The aim of this research was to explore and establish the use and nature of victim blaming discourses in defensive narratives within intimate partner femicide (IPF) cases where the victim is female, and the perpetrator is male. The research consisted of three stages. The first stage reviewed previous literature and studies about victim blaming themes and narratives found in IPF cases. The second stage was data collection of two mediums, collecting 120 media articles and 30 domestic homicide reviews (DHRs) reporting cases of IPF. Finally, the third stage was concerned with analysis of the data collected, conducted using feminist analysis combined with Carrabine's (2001) Foucauldian Discourse Analysis structure.

This research observed many victim blaming themes in the current data, namely Denial of Responsibility, Blaming the/Her Situation, Provocation, Naggers, Whores, Libbers, and Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof. Victim blaming is found to be a common linguistic tool reached for by authors of media articles and DHRs when reporting IPF cases, and it has a strong role in allowing defensive narratives to be perceived as believable and accepted. In contrast to previous literature however, in some cases analysed, victim blaming only became obvious when the connotations of the language and context were analysed, rather than victim blaming being overt and unequivocal.

This research has allowed for a contemporary framework of victim blaming to be produced, whereby previous and current literature and findings are clearly demonstrated and can be used as a foundation for understanding of victim blaming. A recommendation from this research is to expand the data collection to explore more avenues where victim blaming may be present, such as from observing live IPF court cases. This would help increase the understanding of how, where, and potentially why victim blaming appears to be unavoidable for IPF victims and can be used as a basis for training those reporting and working with IPF cases, so we can reflect the life of a victim in a non-blameful manner.

Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of this thesis has been submitted as part of another academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of University of Gloucestershire.

Signed: Erica Matthews

Date: 08 August 2024

DOI: 10.46289/8Y5PVF77

Contents

Table of Contents

1.1 Inspiration for Research 7

1.2 The Current Study 8

2. Literature Review 11

2.1 Introduction 11

2.2 Intimate Partner Homicide and Femicide 12

2.2.1 What is Femicide? 12

2.2.2 8 Stages of Homicide (Monckton-Smith, 2020) 14

2.3 Victim Blaming Theory and Practice 18

2.3.1 Victim Blaming Theory: Techniques of Neutralisation 21

2.3.2 Victim Blaming Theory: Belief in a Just World 23

2.3.3 Victim Blaming Theory and Practice: Loss of Control and Provocation 24

2.3.4 Victim Blaming Counter-Argument: The Gender Paradigm 27

2.4 Victim Blaming and Defences to Homicide 29

2.4.1 What are Narratives and Discourse? 29

2.4.2 Defence: Sex Game Gone Wrong 31

2.4.3 Defence: Sue Lees (1997): Naggers, Whores and Libbers 32

2.5 Victim Blaming and Theoretical Positions 34

2.5.1 Victim Blaming and Feminism 34

2.5.2 Victim Blaming and Social Constructionism 35

2.5.3 Victim Blaming and Patriarchy 37

2.6 Summary 39

3. Methods and Methodology 41

3.1 Introduction and Aims and Objectives 41

3.2 Theoretical Underpinnings 44

3.2.1 Feminism: The Importance of Women in Research 44

3.2.2 Social Constructionism 45

3.3 Methods 47

3.3.1 Feminism 47

3.3.2 Sue Lees (1997) Methodology 49

3.3.3 The Current Study Design – Qualitative Data 50
3.3.4 The Current Study Design – Triangulation 52
3.3.5 Application of Methods 53
3.3.5.1 Secondary Data and Ethical Considerations 55
3.3.5.2 Data Collected 57
3.4 Data Analysis – Feminist Analysis and Carrabine (2001) Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) Structure 62
3.5 Summary 68
4. Findings and Discussion 70
4.1 Introduction 70
4.2 Theme 1: Victim Responsibility and Blame 71
4.2.1 Denial of Responsibility – Not Guilty Plea and Denial of Involvement 72
4.2.2 Denial of Responsibility – Loss of Control and Provocation 74
4.2.3 Denial of Responsibility – Self-Inflicted 77
4.2.4 Blaming the/Her Situation 80
4.2.5 Key Findings 83
4.3 Theme 2: Provocation 83
4.3.1 Provocation: Behaviour of the Victim 84
4.3.2 Naggers, Whores, and Libbers (Lees, 1997) 87
4.3.2.1. Naggers 88
4.3.2.2 Whores 89
4.3.2.3 Libbers 91
4.3.3 Key Findings 93
4.4 Theme 3: Victim on Trial 94
4.4.1 Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof 95
4.4.2 Key Findings 98
4.5 Summary 99
5. Conclusion 100
5.1 Research Objective 1: Examine Historical Themes of Victim Blaming used in Defensive Narratives in IPF 100
5.2 Research Objective 2: Critically Assess how Victim Blaming Discourse affect Defensive Narratives in IPF 100
5.3 Research Objective 3: Develop a Contemporary Framework of Victim Blaming Discourse found in Defensive Narratives in IPF 101
5.4 Reflections on Victim Blaming and the Importance of Research 102
5.5 Recommendations for Future Research 104
5.6 Final Thoughts 105

6. References 108
7. Appendices 122
7.1 Media Articles 122
7.2 Domestic Homicide Reviews 128

1. Introduction

1.1 Inspiration for Research

Claire Oldfield-Hampson was unlawfully killed by her husband, David Hampson, on 25th September 1996. Hampson had buried Claire in a shallow grave in their shared garden, and for 2 years following the killing, he deceived friends and family into believing that Claire was still alive. This deception ended when Hampson confessed to killing his wife and pleaded guilty to manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility due to his alleged depression because of Claire's constant nagging. The judge accepted this defence and sentenced Hampson to 6 years imprisonment, which was then reduced to just 4 years upon appeal. Eventually, Hampson was released after just 14 months from the original court date (see George, 2001).

Claire's case sparked a flame in the current researcher for two factors: 1) just 14 months imprisonment for taking a life; and 2) 'constant nagging' was accepted by the judge as a factor for diminished responsibility. Although before this researcher's time, it seems unbelievable that there was a time where a female victim could be portrayed as nothing more than a 'nag' and 14 months was considered a reasonable punishment for killing a woman. The initial reaction upon first reading about Claire was a suffocating feeling of unjust, unfairness and fear of the treatment of women, even after death. I had to know if victim blaming discourse and in defensive narratives and continue in IPF cases, as reflected in domestic homicide reviews and media reporting.

The current research comes at a time when violence against women and girls is a discussion point in public conversations, in news media, as well as academic research, highlighting different views and opinions of the ways women and girls can be victimised within their lifespan. One major discussion point is that of victim blaming, which has

steadily been gaining speed and scope over recent years, with significant pieces of research being produced by the likes of Jane Monckton-Smith, Jessica Taylor, and Deirdre Brennan, to name a few. The focus of this research is to explore and acknowledge if and how victim blaming has evolved, developed and expanded in relation to female victims of intimate partner femicide, killed by their current or former male intimate partner (just like Claire). This study was conducted using a feminist theoretical perspective in order to place female victims and the oppressions, expectations, arguments of character and difficulties they face in life and after death, at the heart of the research. By taking a feminist standpoint, this research attempts to give a voice to female victims of IPF that were unable to argue against victim blaming discourse and defensive narratives they were susceptible to after their killing. By providing an avenue for this voice to be heard, there is hope that the knowledge and understanding of victim blaming this study provides can help in achieving societal change in the representations of female victims of IPF, and the expectations, pressures and societal norms women are faced with every day, even after death.

Upon initial inspection of literature surrounding this area of research, it quickly became apparent that victim blaming continues to be utilised through many different mediums, including that of media articles and even some institutional reports of intimate partner homicide, such as Domestic Homicide Reviews, both of which are the mediums analysed in the current research. It is unfathomable how the public, the justice system, authors, institutions, and people can blame a woman for their own death.

1.2 The Current Study

To begin to make sense of victim blaming usage in the current day, a framework of victim blaming needed to be produced from data collection and analysis, which is what this current research set out to do. The aim of this research is:

To establish the use and nature of victim blaming discourses in defensive narratives within intimate partner femicide cases where the victim is female, and the perpetrator is male.

To achieve this aim, three objectives have been devised:

1) To examine historical themes of victim blaming used in defensive narratives within IPF cases.
2) To critically assess how victim blaming discourse affect defensive narratives in IPF cases.
3) To develop a contemporary framework of victim blaming discourse found in defensive narratives in IPF cases.

To achieve the first objective, this research had to review, explore and assess historic victim blaming discourse and themes in defensive narratives, such as that of Claire where she was titled a 'nag' (see Chapter 2). To do this, previous research into victim blaming was explored, with significance being placed on the work of Sue Lees (1997) who first noted how female victims of intimate partner homicide was titled as a Nag, a Libber, or a Whore, all of which were observed to be accepted by the courts as an acceptable reason for fatal violence. Howe (2002) was also a researcher who examined the ways in which victim blaming was apparent and attempted to explain some of the reasons why victim blaming was so effective and how it came to be, particularly regarding patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity explanations.

After exploring historic victim blaming themes and discourse, theoretical approaches to victim blaming defensive narratives and opinions of victims, including the work of Sykes and Matza (1957), Christie (1986), and Taylor (2020) were explored to obtain this research second objective. Similar to Howe's (2002) research, this aspect of the current study aimed to further understand why victim blaming is so powerful and consistent in the criminal justice system, attempting to provide insight as to why and how it continues to be accepted in defensive narratives with limited, if any, argument.

Taking all that was learnt from reviewing the literature of historic victim blaming and the explanations, reasonings and effects of its usage, the third objective was then targeted. To achieve this, a large quantity of media articles and domestic homicide reviews were collected and analysed in a qualitative manner to observe, explore and assess victim blaming themes and discourse used in IPF defensive narratives in the current day (for Methods and Methodology, see Chapter 3). Upon collecting this information and

analysing the discussion points raised, a contemporary framework is produced that shows the work of all three objectives collectively, comparing the manner of victim blaming themes, those historic and current, and the effects and acceptances it holds within society (see Chapter 4 – Findings and Discussion).

It is important to define the type of victim blaming discourse that is being collected and analysed in this study. When analysing secondary data such as media articles and domestic homicide reviews used in this research, in the context of victim blaming, it can be difficult to establish whether the author/editor/s of such documents are simply recording the defensive narratives used from trials or official statements, (that may or may not involve victim blaming), or if the victim blaming comes from independent views and prejudices (perhaps even their own) that are separate to the 'official' documentation of events. In this study, both types of victim blaming discourse have been collected and analysed to ensure no such example was missing from the overall data findings. As discussed in Chapter 4 (Findings and Discussion), any example of victim blaming discourse that was found in data collection (including reporting of defensive narratives in legal discourse, the framing of the victim and/or perpetrator, and justifications and explanations for the killings), were explored to show how particular statements, quotes and positionings can be examples of victim blaming and the harm it can cause to the reputation of the victim, the victim's families, and the overarching implications to views and prejudices surrounding women and female victims, regardless of what avenue they came from. By not separating the two types of victim blaming reporting and focusing only on one, a more diverse contemporary framework of victim blaming can be created (objective 3).

Victim blaming is very much still apparent within our current justice system and prejudices of society. Some change was noted in this study, including a reduced usage of the 'Naggers' justification than previous research has shown (Lees, 1997), which suggests the view of female victims may be changing in a positive direction. Nevertheless, victim blaming remained a constant discourse found within the majority of data collected.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The current study consists of analysing written media, to establish the use and nature of victim blaming discourse found in defensive narratives when discussing intimate partner femicide (IPF) where the victim is female, and the perpetrator is male. It examines historical themes of victim blaming to create a baseline understanding and acknowledgement of what discourse is already out there and the research that has previously been conducted in this area. From this, how historical and new themes (if discovered) of victim blaming affect defensive narratives in IPF cases, is critically assessed. This culminates in developing a contemporary framework of historical and recent victim blaming discourse found in defensive narratives in IPF cases.

In this chapter, the report begins by discussing definitions of *Femicide (2.2.1)* and its prevalence both in England and Wales and on a global scale, before moving onto to explore the prevalent research of the *8-Stages of Homicide (2.2.2)*. Following on from this, the deep-dive into the current research's topic, Victim Blaming begins. Although Victim Blaming is a sub-topic within IPF, it can have very explicit and influential effects on people's prejudices, beliefs about IPV and IPF and how victims are treated. Within the *Victim Blaming: Theory and Practice (2.3)* section, the theories of *Techniques of Neutralisation* (2.3.1) (Sykes & Matza, 1957), *Belief in a Just World Theory (2.3.2)*, and *Loss of Control and Provocation (2.3.3)* are explored before discussing the *Counter Argument: The Gender Paradigm (2.3.4)*.

Moving forward, in *Victim Blaming and Defences to Homicide (2.4),* the definitions of *Narratives and Discourses (2.4.1)* and how they related to the current research is discussed. Narratives are said to be socially constructed stories (Matthews & Ross, 2010) that through continued use, can sometimes be believed to be objective and

become the 'norm' way of thinking about a particular topic, in this case, victim blaming in IPF. To explore the prevalence of narratives, discourses and themes, this literature review includes examples that have been commonly found and explored in previous research, including *Sex Game Gone Wrong (2.4.2),* and the work of *Sue Lees (1997: Naggers, Whores and Libbers (2.4.3)*.

Covered within the above-mentioned sections and sub-sections are ideas and theories around patriarchy and women's inferiority and their victimisation in IPV and IPF. To provide a rounded view of research conducted into the above crimes, the closing section of the chapter *Victim Blaming and Theoretical Positions (2.5)* covers definitions and discussions of *Victim Blaming and Feminism (2.5.1)*, *Victim Blaming and Social Constructionism (2.5.2)*, and *Victim Blaming and Patriarchy (2.5.3)* in relation to IPF.

2.2 Intimate Partner Homicide and Femicide

2.2.1 What is Femicide?

Intimate partner homicide (IPH) is where someone kills a person with whom they had an intimate bond with (Decker, 1993) such as their spouse, romantic partner or ex-partner. According to Winstok (2013) many feminist scholars do not use the term 'intimate partner/relationship' due to it implying gender equality within intimacy, where this is often not the case as where one gender is discriminated against or deemed inferior to the other partner, the relationship cannot be equal. Although the current research does agree with this argument, the term 'intimate partners' will continue to be used in this research as other terms relating to ideas of intimacy, such as 'romantic partners', does not feel appropriate to use for a research study about IPF, a crime that has already been seen to be heavily romanticised in the media.

The first explicitly feminist definition of femicide was the "misogynistic killing of women by men" (Russell & Radford, 1992) meaning that women are killed for the fact that they are women. More recently, femicide has been defined as; "the killing of women, girls and female infants and foetuses, predominantly but not always committed by men, in order to maintain individual and/or collective male dominant status, or as a reflection of the lower status of females" (Smith, 2018, p. 169). Women are far more likely to be

killed by their former or current intimate partner than men (44% if female victims compared to 6% male victims) (ONS, 2016), with three women being killed every week in England and Wales (Taylor, 2020), up by 10% from the previous data recording (ONS, 2018). In the period of 2009-2018, the Femicide Census found that 888 women had been killed by a former or current intimate partner (Long, Wertans, Harper, Brennan, Harvey, Allen, Elliot, & Brennan, 2020), identifying that femicide is not an isolated phenomenon but is instead a common occurrence with increasing numbers each year, making it a crime to pay important attention to. Additionally, men kill intimate partners at double the rate of women, representing almost three quarters of all intimate partner homicide perpetrators (Pastore & Maguire, 2006), providing some explanation as to why the current research is focusing on this dynamic of IPH, femicide.

A range of risk factors have been found to correlate with femicide, including marital status (femicide is more common in cohabiting partners than married couples), age (the younger the partners are the more likely one will kill the other) and mental illness (Bourget & Gagne, 2012). A history of domestic abuse is a key marker found in perpetrators of IPF (Dawson & Piscitelli, 2017), with between 60%-75% of all male perpetrators of IPH having at least one incident of physical abuse recorded against them (Bourget & Gagne, 2012). Additionally, an Australian study conducted by Johnson, Eriksson, Mazerolle and Wortley (2019) identified that controlling patterns are also a common identifier in cases of IPF. The factor of controlling patterns can be said to link with the increase of potential for homicide when added to violence and a separation after living together (900%) (National Centre for Injury Prevention and Control, 2003) due to an idea that perpetrators after separation feel less in control of their environment and relationships. In the Femicide Census longitudinal study, of the 888 women killed by their intimate partner, 43% were known to have separated, or taken steps to separate from the perpetrator prior to their killing, with 142 women being killed within the first month of separation (Long et al, 2020).

Femicide has been identified as the leading cause of premature death for women across the globe (Martin, 2012, as cited in Brennan, 2016), with the rate of men killing women showing no signs of slowing down (Long et al, 2020). According to Stockl, Devries, Rotstein, Adbrahams, Jacquelyn, Watts, and Moreno (2013), between 14%-

30% of all homicides globally are perpetrated by an intimate partner, with 95% of all homicides being perpetrated by men (UNODC, 2013). The extent of IPF has resulted in researchers stating that domestic violence and homicide is a pervasive human rights issue and should be paid attention to as a global social problem in need of being solved (Coker, Smith, Thompson, McKeown, Bethea, & Davis, 2002; Kuijpers, Van de Knaap & Lodewijks, 2011).

2.2.2 8 Stages of Homicide (Monckton-Smith, 2020)

A question and narrative surrounding IPV is 'why didn't she leave?' The Backlash Hypothesis (Dugan, Nagin & Rosenfeld, 2003) states that when an event increases the equality between men and women, there is an increased chance and propensity of men committing violence against women. An example of such event could be a woman separating from a controlling and abusive relationship with a man. For the man, this separation can be seen as a 'trigger' that escalates his violent thoughts about the relationship, and can lead to homicide (Monckton-Smith, 2020). This is supported by research that shows the risk of being killed by an abuser increases when women end or attempt to end the relationship (Block & Christakos, 1995; Johnson & Hotton, 2003; Stout, 1991). Although the consensus is that victims of IPV are safer from their abuser upon separating, the perpetrators' belief in privilege, superiority and control of the relationship does not dissipate once separated, and often, they are not deterred from further assaulting the women who has left them. Dobash and Dobash (2015) concluded that when separation occurs, the man may decide to change his thought process from 'controlling the woman' to keep her in the relationship, to 'wanting to destroy her' for having agency against his control and leaving the relationship. This is known as "Last Chance Thinking" where the perpetrator believes there is nothing left for them, and as a result, separation is a significant marker for further violence or homicide (Dobash & Dobash, 2015).

Mullen (2004, as cited in Monckton-Smith, 2020) also explores 'Last Chance Thinking' in his argument that autogenic homicide is self-generated. Mullen suggests that autogenic homicide comes from a place of built-up frustration and anger within the perpetrator after facing 'challenges' from which homicide is felt to be the only relief (pg.

6, Monckton-Smith, 2020). In regard to IPF, Monckton-Smith (2020) suggests that the need for control in a relationship by the perpetrator is linked to the motivation to kill their partner, such as when their control is threatened or lost (pg. 7). It can be suggested that the 'challenges' Mullen speaks of are instances of actual or perceived loss of control, such as partner separation. From this 'journey' (Monckton-Smith, 2020, p, 7) between challenges (control) and killing, Mullen suggests that individuals kill because they have made the decision to do so and have acted on it, rather than the killing being a spontaneous response to provocation or another factor. Monckton-Smith (2020) further researched this journey and created a timeline that shows the process that leads up to a man killing his current or former partners, known as the 8 Stages of Homicide.

Before exploring the stages of this process, it is important to mention the reason for it being discussed in this research. The current research is looking into victim blaming narratives and discourse, and how the victims themselves can be 'put on trial' when their killing is reported in media articles and DHRs. The work by Monckton-Smith (2020) shows a process that has been observed in the reporting of multiple IPH cases, where the focus is instead placed on the perpetrator and their choices, as opposed to the victim and how they may be to blame. The 8 Stages of Homicide research has arguably created a monumental turning point in academia and how IPH is viewed and investigated, and it is a key discussion point before moving forward to discuss victim blaming in depth.

The first stage is called 'Pre-relationship' (Monckton-Smith, 2020, p. 11). which is where a history of abuse is present. Previous abuse has been found to be a factor in predicting future abuse (Websdale, 1999), with past behaviours including, but not exclusive to, controlling behaviour, domestic abuse of all kinds, and/or stalking (Monckton-Smith, 2020). This was found to be discussed in a way that made the abuse a 'couples' problem (Monckton-Smith, 2020) that pertains to the idea that domestic abuse is best left 'behind closed doors'. With the discourse surrounding this behaviour as a problem for the couple, it automatically shares the responsibility between both partners to stop the 'problem' and find a solution.

‘Early Relationship’ (Monckton-Smith, 2020, p. 13) is the second stage, whereby actions that seek a strong commitment are witnessed. According to Monckton-Smith (2020), this is where romantic expectations and experiences are present but at an increased rate. Examples of this could include, but are not limited to, committing to a romantic relationship before the two parties have met in person, moving in together early on, or getting pregnant early (Monckton-Smith, 2020). The result of this a discourse of possessiveness, where once commitment has been secured, gendered rights and responsibilities are conveyed and expectations are required to be upheld, whilst creating little opportunity for the victim to leave (Monckton-Smith, 2020).

Stage 3 is titled ‘Relationship’ (Monckton-Smith, 2020, p. 14) which is where the commitment has started, and the victim and abuser are now ‘together’. Monckton-Smith (2020) observed that the act of gaining commitment from the victim seemed to coincide with rights to control every aspect of the relationship, which exhibits domestic abuse or violence, stalking and monitoring of the victim, and sometimes paranoia from the perpetrator that the woman was being unfaithful. These behaviours resulted in constant demonstrations of commitment and loyalty by the victim to ‘keep the peace.’ Monckton-Smith (2020) notes that a recurring phrase spoken by victims justifying these demonstrations was ‘it is not worth the trouble, it’s better to just do what he wants’. This control creates an environment with little room for change, flexibility, human error and escape, and places a weight of responsibility on the victim to prevent negative behaviours and attitudes in that of the perpetrator. If the perpetrator did engage in a violent, abusive and/or coercive controlling manner, it is argued to be because the victim did not fulfil the perpetrator’s expectations of behaviours such as loyalty, honesty and commitment. Whether this ‘failure’ to meet expectations is real rather than perceived is arguably irrelevant to the perpetrator as he has created an environment where only his interpretation of events is valid.

As previously mentioned, separation is a predictive factor in men killing their partners (Brennan, 2016 and Dobash & Dobash, 2015) and is known as a ‘Trigger’ (Stage 4. Monckton-Smith, 2020, p. 17). Monckton-Smith (2020) notes that separation by the victim can be real, imagined or just threatened to the perpetrator to be a trigger. Separation can come under a theme devised by Lees (1997) known as ‘libbers’ which is

the idea that women can provoke violence or abuse in their male counterparts for exercising their basic rights, standing up for themselves and/or being independent. To choose to separate from a partner is a way for women to take back control, but Monckton-Smith (2020) found in the 8-Stage research that this was often met with resistance, with perpetrators stating in one way or another that women do not have the ability to choose when to leave a relationship, it is instead the man's decision when the relationship is over. It is important to note that separation is not the only trigger that is predictive in IPF, it can be anything that causes the perpetrator or perceive a loss in control of the situation or a loss of status. Other examples of triggers could include pregnancy, change in income, friends/family involvement in the relationship, employment, health; the list is non-exhaustive.

Stage 5 is 'Escalation' (Monckton-Smith, 2020, p. 18), which is where the abuse increases in frequency, severity or variety. Monckton-Smith (2020) states that this is the perpetrator's reactions to their perceived loss of control and status and he does this as a mean to reinstate his control on the situation. Examples of these behaviours include, but is not limited to, crying, violence and threats of, stalking, and suicide threats (Monckton-Smith, 2020). It is important to note here that there is a chain of victim blame that links these stages together. In stage 3 and stage 4, 'Relationship' and 'Trigger' respectively, if the victim is not acting in accordance with the expectations of the perpetrator, they are seen as the cause, the provocation, of the initial and further escalated violence, abuse, stalking and coercive control. To the perpetrators, their behaviour is a valid reaction to the behaviours of their victims, rather than the unjust, destructive criminality it is.

Stage 6 is titled 'A Change in Thinking/Decision' which Monckton-Smith (2020, p. 18) notes can occur in or at the end of the escalation stage which may be a response to a perceived irretrievable loss of control and/or status (p. 20). This is where the perpetrator sees homicide as the only thing that will allow him to regain status and control of the situation, environment, and the victim. However, Monckton-Smith (2020) explains that instead of being a decision to kill, it can be reversed dependant on opportunity, as observed in one case example where a perpetrator broke into his former partner's home to strangle her, but she convinced him that their relationship would

continue if he stopped. Again, the behaviour of the perpetrator appears to depend on the behaviour of the victim.

'Planning' is Stage 7 (Monckton-Smith, 2020, p. 20), where the perpetrator sets out an active plan to murder their current or former partner. Which can, but not always, result in Stage 8 – 'Homicide'. Monckton-Smith (2020, p. 20) notes that the homicide may involve extreme levels of violence, the severity not before witnessed in the relationship, may involve suicide and/or the killing of children or others who attempt to block or stop the homicide from happening (such as police, friends, family, bystanders, and others). Most commonly, the homicide will occur in the home of victim or their place of work (Brennan, 2016). As a reminder, it is important to note that homicide, specifically IPF, can be used to create a perceived increase of control and/or status in the perpetrator.

The 8 Stages research shows a clear timeline of how perpetrators of IPH/IPF get to the point of homicide, and it clarifies to the current researcher that the underlying theme and cause of the homicide is victim blaming by the perpetrator. The victim is valued highly only when they meet the unachievable standards and expectations of the perpetrator, and when they are inevitably not attained, the perpetrator sees this as a provocation for violence, abuse, or control in order to sustain the environment the perpetrator is trying the create (one of control and fear felt by the victim, and power and status felt by the perpetrator); the victim is blamed. Any exhibit of escalation, trigger, or change in thinking/decision is at least partially because of the victim's behaviour, characteristics or attributes. The 8-Stages show clearly how the perpetrator can blame the victim and place them as responsible for their own actions in many, if not all, stages of the homicide timeline. Victim blaming arguably starts in the mind of the perpetrators, but unfortunately, as the below literature and the current research (will potentially) show, it does not end here and is expressed in many mediums by different people.

2.3 Victim Blaming Theory and Practice

Victim blaming is the concept about transferring blame from the perpetrator of the crime to the victim (Taylor, 2020). According to Taylor (2020) victim blaming is split into three types of blame, behavioural (blaming the victim's behaviour), characterological

(blaming the victim's personality and character), and situational (blaming the situation surrounding the crime). In IPH trials, Lees (1997) states that it is the female victim's life, behaviour and reputation is often the focus, meaning the victims is on trial for her own killing.

It can be speculated that throughout history, women have been taught how to mould their behaviours and mannerisms when in the presence of men to meet expectations, ideologies, or to remain safe. Women are told that the threat men can present to them are their responsibility to pre-empt, avoid and act accordingly if the threat were to manifest in a violent act. This idea runs particularly true for discourses in sexual assault and domestic abuse (Monckton-Smith, 2021). In short, one view of this is that women are taught how *not* to provoke men, as an alternative to men being taught to not appear or be threatening, aggressive, or violent, and to be held accountable for their actions. This is known as victim responsibility, which is apparent in contexts of everyday life including in the media, daily conversations, communities, and courtrooms (Monckton-Smith, 2021). By portraying domestic violence occurrences as the result of victim irresponsibility, media and conversations can influence readers and observers into falsely believing that female victims are the people in control of the violent and fatal situations inflicted upon them by male perpetrators (Jewkes, 2004). In turn, this further prompts the belief that women cause their own victimisation (Meyers, 1994; 1997), which leads to a reduction of the perceived responsibility of the perpetrator.

Judges are frequent to sympathise with male perpetrators of IPH, even in cases where there is no 'questionable' behaviour of the female victim, such as infidelity or separation (Lees, 1997), or when the perpetrator is seen to attempt to resolve conflict with the victim through moderate means before resorting to violence (Winstok, 2013). This level of sympathy towards the perpetrator is allowed due to the focus being on victim's behaviour, placing them on trial. Often, media coverage of female victims of IPF display the women in stereotypical ways, noting premarital and casual sex, and drug and/or alcohol use as abnormal behaviour for a woman; beneath the expectations of them, and therefore, a justification for their victimisation (Winstok, 2013). Additionally, if a victim had a history of experiencing domestic abuse and violence, they are considered blameworthy because they did not leave the relationship (Barlow,

2013). From courtrooms and media articles to day-to-day conversations, female victims have been seen to be culpable in their victimisation to varying degrees when they are seen to not behave in line with societal ideologies. However, as Lees (1997) notes above, even when the victim has not acted or behaved 'abnormally' and therefore appears to meet societal expectations, judges, and we can assume people, may still tend to be sympathetic with the perpetrator. It begs the question as to what victims need to have done prior to their death to achieve the same or higher level of sympathy as the perpetrator and to be represented as a victim, rather than culpable.

The discussion of women's behaviours, alongside their clothing, personality, or situation as factors in her death is seen as a form of 'othering.' Researchers have noted it to be a means to blame victims IPV and IPH cases (Barlow, 2013). In review, othering is the concept coined by de Beauvoir (1997) where men are considered 'normal', and women are the 'other'; creating a negative and stereotypical divide between the two parties. When used in this context, the female victim's behaviour, situation or personality is considered as 'other' in comparison to other individuals, such as those in a jury for an IPH trial. Here, jurors have the space to argue that their own behaviour, situation and personality is 'normal'; jurors can separate themselves from the victim by saying they personally would never behave in that way, act in that way, or be in that situation, and can begin to question how the victim allowed their own murder to occur. This allows for easy transition to victim blaming attitudes, so much so until they view the victim as wholly to blame for their own killing, and the perpetrator sympathised with and treated leniently.

An example of this lenient treatment has been termed 'textual abuse' (Goddard, de Bortoli, Saunders & Tucci, 2005), where the language used in IPH cases, by any institution, further exploits and abuses the victim, whilst simultaneously treating the offender sympathetically (as seen by some criminal justice judges, Lees, 1997). Alat (2006) found textual abuse to be present in newspaper articles, where it minimised the experiences of victims by referring to the relationship they and their abuser had, and/or the killing itself, as just dating or casual sex. This allows the audience's empathy towards the victim to be achieved by speculating about their morality (implying that a casual relationship is less moral than a 'serious' relationship).

Additionally, a tactic of textual abuse is known as labelling, which is when we categorise people and things in a way that seemed acceptable to society (Becker, 1963). An example of labelling occurs when judges, the media and society in general label female IPH victims as a nag, or a cheater. These labels imply that the victim was not acting in accordance with society's acceptable behaviours and place them as inferior, reinforcing patriarchal values. However, Becker (1963) has argued that the act of labelling speaks more about the individuals who are doing the labelling, than those being labelled.

The following section discusses strategies that are used to blame the victim in conversations, media articles and defensive narratives for court, including Sykes and Matza's (1957) techniques of neutralisation, the theory of belief in a just world, the provocation defence of loss of control, and othering; the way in which women have been presented to be different from the reader, observer, or perpetrator, in order to create abstract distance and room to allow for victim blaming.

2.3.1 Victim Blaming Theory: Techniques of Neutralisation

The aim of this research is to establish the use and nature of victim blaming discourse found in defensive narratives within IPF cases. In this research, the term 'defensive narratives' is used as an umbrella term for arguments and statements used that defend the perpetrator from being placed as partially, or, responsible for the violent crimes they have committed. The focus on defensive narratives was inspired by the work of Sykes and Matza who proposed that perpetrators often justify their offending using one or more of the five techniques of neutralisation: denying responsibility, denying the victim, denying injury, condemning the condemners and appealing to higher authorities (1957). The theory of techniques of neutralisation (Sykes & Matza, 1957) is said to derive from Sutherland's (1924) theory of differential association which states that people learn values, attitudes, techniques and motives for criminal behaviour through interactions with others. Through these interactions, people can also learn ways to justify and excuse their behaviour that are accepted by those around them (Sykes & Matza, 1957). This has been further developed by the researchers who have proposed that perpetrators develop their own techniques of neutralisation, sitting underneath the

five categories noted above, prior to the violence being committed. This is said to be done as a method of justifying to and encouraging themselves to commit the violent act, which is critical for the perpetrators to believe that they will be accepted despite violating the legal norms and rules of society and the law (Sykes & Matza, 1957).

The key techniques of interest to the current research are denial of responsibility and denying the victim, this is because of the possibility that they can be used interchangeably at the expense of the victim. For example, denying the victim is a technique that redefines the victim as someone who is not actually a victim (Sykes & Matza, 1957), which is a result that can be seen to occur when perpetrators deny responsibility. In IPF cases, by a perpetrator denying responsibility, they attempt to bring the victim's culpability into question and if there is perceived responsibility of the victim expressed, this becomes a justification (Scott & Lyman, 1968) for the killing. A sub-category of a justification is an excuse, which Scott and Lyman (1968) noted as being used when individuals exhibited 'unanticipated and untoward behaviour'. In IPF cases, a female victim behaving against what was expected of her can be perceived as an excuse to perform violent acts against her, and when this idea is placed within a defensive narrative context, a justification for the murder is then formed and explored. It is this chain of connection between the victim's behaviour and responsibility (or perceived lack thereof) of the perpetrator, and its potential effects on those that witness the connection, which makes denial of responsibility and denying the victim two key techniques to include in the current research.

Denial of the victim and denial of injury have been explored previously within the Swedish criminal justice system by examining the use of gendered stereotypes by judges in response to violent crimes perpetrated by men against women (Burman, 2010). The law's reaction to these cases meant that "violence is constructed as a part, or as a consequence, of a relationship characterised by quarrels, noise, troubles and psychological stress for the man' and that the violence is a 'reciprocal fight between 2 equals in which the distinction between perpetrator and victim becomes indistinct and vague' (Burman, 2010, p. 184). This implies that violence is a natural occurrence between all relationships that involve arguments and stress, and that both the victims and perpetrators are responsible for violence. This presents a sympathetic

representation of the offender whilst delegitimising the status of the victim, whilst implying that violence against women is recognised as something that 'just happens' rather than an act that should be condemned within all aspects of society, especially within the criminal justice system.

2.3.2 Victim Blaming Theory: Belief in a Just World

The theory of Belief in a Just World (BJW) derives from the work of Lerner (1980) who states that it comes from an individual need for control and personal safety, as well as a want for fairness and justice in a world that they consider to be unsafe and uncertain. From a feminist perspective, Burt (1980) and Brownmiller (1975) apply this theory to victim blaming, arguing that individuals whose BJW is patriarchal, and who fear that patriarchy is in danger of being revoked, use victim blaming attitudes and misogynist views as a means to maintain and protect it. In a patriarchal world where men kill their female partners to reinstate the power and control they have over women, victim blaming can be used to protect the image of the perpetrator, remove them from blame, and therefore protect the patriarchy by retaining the hierarchy of superiority.

According to the Just World Hypothesis, a perpetrator will only commit a crime when there is a justifiable reason for doing so. Those who experience a strong BJW have been found to perceive perpetrators as less culpable (Rubin & Paplau, 1975) and blame victims of domestic violence for their own victimisation, more so than those with a weaker BJW (Schuller, Smith & Olsen, 1994). Often, those who believe in a just world search the victims' behaviour for an explanation for the crime committed against them, and if a perceived justifiable reason is found and the victim is then viewed as deserving of their victimisation, BJW is preserved. However, when no fault can be found in the victim's behaviour, commonly their character is targeted instead (Lerner & Simmons, 1966).

The targeting of victims in this way is known as secondary victimisation which is a phrase defined as additional trauma to the victim and their reputations which has been caused by stereotyping and victim blaming discourse used by individuals and institutions, such as the media or criminal justice professionals/organisations. Examples of secondary victimisation can also include disbelief, negative judgement,

lack of empathy and sympathising with the perpetrator (Council of Europe, 2016, p. 19). The effects of secondary victimisation can be catastrophic. In cases of IPF, if a current female victim of intimate partner violence is fearful for her safety and life in the hands of her partner, and sees the secondary victimisation, victim blaming and disbelief of an IPF victim, it could prevent the live victim from coming forward for help and support by the police, friends or family and increase feelings of isolation and doubt.

Despite the above arguments explored above (Rubin & Paplau, 1975; Schuller et al, 1994; and Lerner & Simmons, 1966), there have been studies conducted that were unsuccessful in finding an associated between BJW and acceptance of physical and sexual violence against women (Hammock & Richardson, 1993; Lambert & Raichle, 2000), however, these studies were looking for the condoning of violence rather than victim blaming and secondary victimisation. Therefore, victim blaming, and secondary victimisation may have been observed in the studies but were not recorded due to not being the primary focus of the research.

BJW has been said to be a functional system to help individuals navigate everyday life as it influences the perception of one's life course, helps to guide social interactions, provides a stabilising force against daily stresses, and reduce the possibility of stress-induced illnesses (Dalbert, 1998). Additionally, Dalbert (1998) suggested that BJW can help support victims of an unjust fate, as their research showed that those who have a high BJW experience higher levels of wellbeing after traumatic events than those with low BJW. Despite this, BJW can be argued to be a societal ideology where individuals and groups of victims are seen to 'get what they deserve,' and are secondarily victimised because of BJW (Lerner, 1980).

2.3.3 Victim Blaming Theory and Practice: Loss of Control and Provocation

Loss of control is a way of removing full responsibility from the perpetrator by using the technique and defence of provocation. Provocation is defined as behaviour exhibited by the victim prior to their death that would cause any reasonable man (in the context of IPF; any reasonable person for other crimes) to lose control of his ability to resist inflicting violence upon the victim (Ainsworth, 2014). Legally, the defence of

provocation was not limited to utilising it for the excusing of male violence against women, however in practice, it was virtually always invoked to justify the killing of women by their former or current intimate partners (Ainsworth, 2014). Lees (1997) argues that sexist assumptions and gendered ideologies mould what it considered to be appropriate behaviour for women, but when women behave outside of this threshold of 'norms', they can be seen as deserving consequences, fatal or not; this is otherwise known as having a self-destructive lifestyle (Timmer & Norman, 1984). When arguing provocation, it was possible for defence counsels to take this 'abnormal' behaviour and use it as a way for explaining the violence inflicted, in an attempt for the perpetrator to receive (in courtroom environments) a lesser charge of manslaughter instead of murder (Homicide Act, 1957, S3). As an example of provocation, Ainsworth (2014) stated that an attempt of a woman to leave her husband would be considered a justified reason why a reasonable man would kill her as she was daring to assert her independence by separating from the relationship.

Victim blaming often overlaps with the idea of victim-precipitation (Wolfgang, 1957), otherwise known as provocation. Wolfgang (1957) used this term when discussing honour killings where the victim was killed as punishment for allegedly dishonouring the perpetrator. By violating honour, a violent pathology is said to be triggered in the perpetrator, by the victim (Wolfgang, 1957). Although there are different foundations between IPF and honour killings, the idea of behaviour triggering a violent pathology can be applied to theories around victim blaming in cases of IPF. Some IPH trials claim that this occurred, but instead of arguing dishonour, they instead argue that the perpetrator lost control due to being provoked by the victim as she allegedly cheated on him, laughed at him, taunted him, and/or left him, so he killed her (Howe, 2002). This places the blame on the victim and their behaviour prior to their death.

In October of 2010, the British government abolished the patrial defence of provocation, and instead introduced the new partial defence of loss of control, found in S54 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (Fitz-Gibbon, 2013). It was designed to allow the law of homicide to better cater and include the unique circumstances in which women who have been abused kill their abusers, whilst also providing a legislation that denies alleged infidelity as being a probable reason to kill an intimate partner (Fitz-

Gibbon, 2013). However, although it was arguably a step forward regarding legislation acting for women rather than against, 'loss of control' still holds a gendered bias in the form of a provocation defence. According to Mitchell (as cited in Fitz-Gibbon, 2013), men are allowed to be angry and lash out when they have been provoked because it is within the gendered ideologies and assumptions that men can be aggressive. However, women are not given this 'excuse' and instead must exercise self-control, which is turn, automatically challenges any 'loss of control' defence they may be trying to claim. In court, judges have been found to be sympathetic of men claiming to have lost control and killed their female intimate partner as a result of her nagging him or cheating on him. However, when women appeared before them after killing their male intimate partner who abused them for potentially years, and in some cases even decades, little sympathy is shown. Additionally, Gavin (2014) argues that what battered women feel is fear and despair, not a sudden and explosive loss of control that resonates more with men who are socially 'allowed' to perform. The loss of control partial defence appears to show an acceptance of male reactive aggression and still a condemnation of female defensive aggression (Gavin, 2014).

Radford (1987) suggested that the law is concerned with establishing the boundaries of which violence is appropriate to control women, and although the partial defence of Loss of Control law was set up to protect women who had killed their long-term violent partners, it was not used in that way (Philips, 2003). Instead, this defence has been used to defend male perpetrators of IPH and blamed women's 'provocative' behaviour, such as leaving the relationship (Lees, 1997), nagging, and infidelity (Gavin, 2014). Tyson (2013) also states that provocation cases and the idea of loss of control is similar to other cases where the law served as a tool for regulating women's behaviour in the crime of being a 'common scold', which in law defined exclusively as a crime of women's speech. The idea of provocation is the law's insistence of women only being the sexual property of men who should be denied agency of all kinds, sexuality and speech included (Tyson, 2013).

Brennan (2016) argues that killing a female intimate partner is not a result of 'lack of control' but is instead to ultimate act of control against her, which is a key perception to use when attempting to break misconceptions of domestic abuse and male

perpetrated IPH. Loss of control still holds the idea that the perpetrator was provoked into losing control, which places responsibility on the victim and can result in them getting blamed for acting and behaving in a certain way which caused her death. It is claimed in retrospect of violence to justify behaviour that is 'out of the norm' for society (Winstok, 2013), with the purpose of minimising the responsibility of the perpetrator (denial of responsibility, Sykes & Matza, 1957) which in turn, places it on the victims. This goes back to the idea that women, from an early age are taught to pre-empt and avoid provoking men because of their ability to be threatening and violent. IPF cases show this expectation in the form of victim blaming by presuming that women are responsible and in control of her own and her partner's violent behaviour.

A case that particularly brings to light the extent of how beneficial victim blaming can be for the perpetrators of IPH is that of Claire Oldfield-Hampson. The perpetrators argued that Claire was a nagging wife and it provoked him to lose control and kill her with a hammer, who remained undetected until Claire's body was found two years later (Johnstone, 1999). The perpetrator was originally sentenced to 6 years imprisonment, upon appeal it was reduced to four years, but he was released after only serving 14 months (George, 2001). The main defence was that of provocation because Claire was allegedly a nag, placing responsibility and blame on her for her death.

2.3.4 Victim Blaming Counter-Argument: The Gender Paradigm

The gender paradigm focuses on power imbalance, dominance, control and violence as separate concepts of the same phenomenon that is gender inequality. It suggests that feminists who research violence against women are gender researchers (Winstok, 2013), with several feminists maintaining that the 'gendered nature' of violence is clear (Myhill, 2017). Here, gender is thought of as the socially constructed roles, behaviours and expectations ascribed to people in society as the makeup of social structure and its norms (Lombard & McMillan, 2013). According to the paradigm, because of men's power advantage over women in society, every action taken against women by men must be regarded as violence and a means to protect the patriarchy, and every offensive action by women should be considered self-defence from this abuse of power and control (Winstok, 2013). Muehlenhard and Kimes (1999) have stated that ignoring

gender when regarding IPH ignores the impact it has on women in society, including those who are not directly involved with the crime.

There are controversies involving the gender paradigm around IPH, with some researchers arguing that men are incorrectly designated as the dominant aggressor in relationships (Hamel, 2011) and are disproportionately arrested compared to the known rates of intimate partner violence in the general population (Shernock & Russell, 2012). Additionally, it is also suggested that men and women physically assault intimate partners at approximately equal rates (Straus & Gelles, 1990; Archer, 2000), with 70% of physical domestic abuse being bi-directional (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Misra, Selwyn & Rohling, 2012). A key speaker against the gender paradigm is Dutton, who has previously stated many arguments against gendered research into intimate partner violence and homicide. For example, Dutton (2012) argues that intimate partner violence is not an issue of women's rights but is instead a problem that couples with dysfunctional conflict management experience. Hamel (2018) is seen to support Dutton (2012) by arguing that in most abusive relationships, there are no perpetrators or victims, instead both parties are co-perpetrators of violence. Additionally, Dutton and Nicholls (2005) go on to argue that intimate partner violence and homicide research is often unscientific as the 'greater good of women's rights' prevails, by directing the data reported, interpretations and applications of data towards supporting the 'agenda', with any data inconsistent with views of domestic violence (such as male victims and female perpetrators) are dismissed, ignored, or explained away (Kuhn, 1965).

Researchers against the gender paradigm have summarised that it misdirects social and legal policy, misinforms custody assessors, police and judges, and disregards datasets that go against the idea of women being the main victims of intimate partner violence and homicide, and misleads rehabilitative change for perpetrators of the crime (see Corvo & Johnson, 2003; Dutton, 1994; George, 2003). In response to this, Dekeserdy and Dragiewicz (2007) has said that Dutton, alongside other researchers who regard the gender paradigm, are engaged in a process of activism that seeks to advance own political agendas by denouncing the significance of feminist and advanced psychological work in the field of crimes between intimate partners. Additionally, Serren and Firestone (2004) have asserted that this research is important

as we live in a 'society where almost every major institution ignores the problem of gender inequality' that results in a patriarchal hierarchy where wife beating and control is legitimised, and unequal power relationships between men and women remain. The current research recognises that intimate partner violence and homicide is also committed against men and is perpetrated by women, but as previously explored in this literature review, it is not performed to the same extent as male perpetrated femicide against intimate partners.

2.4 Victim Blaming and Defences to Homicide

2.4.1 What are Narratives and Discourse?

According to MacDowell (2009), narratives create a story about a past event and the individuals involved and present it in a way that produces a clear explanation of why and how the event happened. Additionally, Baron and Epstein (1997) suggest that narratives represent one collective way of knowing about things and events that have derived from social interactions. This 'one collective' idea is seen within court trials of IPH, where the defence and the prosecution create 'one collective' each, with different stories deriving from the same body of evidence material (Bennett & Feldman, 1981); each counsel pick the narrative that works best for their case. For example, a narrative that can be mobilised in IPH trials for the defence is one where the offender can argue provocation, and stories of jealousy, betrayal and infidelity (Fitz-Gibbon, 2013).

Narratives and discourses tend to be used as a method of achieving an aim. Discourses are productive in the way that they define and establish what the 'truth' at moments is (Foucault as cited in Carrabine, 2001). Victim blaming discourses, for example, can minimise the abuse and violence experienced by the victim, and instead focus on the behaviour of the victim prior to the crime. For example, the argument of provocation creates a scenario where the victim and their behaviour are up for trial, rather than the offender (Lees, 1997), and the lack of an alive victim allows for false allegations to be presented without argument (Lees, 1997), creating an ideal environment for an offender to remove themselves from being wholly responsible for the murder. Here, Howe (2002) argues is where it becomes apparent what kinds of homicidal violence against women

are approved and non-approved. Where victim blaming narratives are accepted, implying approved justifications of homicidal violence, Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds and Gidycz (2011) suggests this reinforces social inequality between men and women, given the idea that victim blaming attitudes are connected to women's freedoms (Block, 2006). An example of provocation in IPH is the female victim stating the desire to end the relationship. It has been found that when a woman attempts to do so, their risk of being murdered by their partner increases considerably (Block and Chistakos, 1995; Johnson and Hotton, 2003; Stout, 1991). When this narrative is accepted, it reinforces the imbalance of power between genders as it implies that murdering a woman is justified when she wants to leave her male partner, further implying that women do not have the freedom to leave their relationships due to the potentially fatal consequences.

This imbalance of power, and the acceptance of narratives that are pulled from this inequality arguably comes as a result of social constructions of what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman. This is where feminism becomes important, as it challenges this imbalance of power which is, can be argued is necessary to help change the way women are viewed in the contexts of intimate partner violence and homicide.

Every society has its own stock of narratives which represent typical behaviour within their society which is accepted (Jackson, 1996). These narratives, from a social constructionism perspective, come from social interactions that have created an accepted truth and thus, a consensus within society, allowing individuals to draw on these narratives without fear of being disregarded. For example, Landowski (1989) suggests that in outlets such as the media and courtrooms, people use narratives and language that reflect outside realities; 'the way things are' (Meyers, 1997). So, when there is a narrative within a society that justifies male perpetrated IPH based on the victim's behaviour, such as nagging, cheating or leaving, it is easier for that society to believe the narrative is plausible because it has been accepted.

2.4.2 Defence: Sex Game Gone Wrong

The phrase 'sex game gone wrong' has often been seen to be used interchangeably with 'crimes of passion,' however despite their perceived similarities between the use of 'sex' and 'passion', there are differences in definitions. The discourse around crime of passion shares knowledge with other dominant discourses about romantic heterosexual love, which focus heavily on gender roles and perceived differences in male and female behaviours, responsibilities and expectations (Monckton-Smith, 2010; Websdale, 1999). It is characterised as being spontaneous and unpredictable violence that is motivated by provocation (Lees, 1997). In contrast, the sex game gone wrong discourse focuses on the idea that some women like to be asphyxiated during sexual intercourse and unpredictably, it 'goes too far' and the perpetrator 'accidentally' kills the victim whilst doing so. It is not unusual for this type of sexual force to be described as playful and/or consensual (Monckton-Smith, 2021) and is often used as an explanation for killing. In the Femicide Census longitudinal study, between the years of 2013 and 2018, 24 'rough sex' defences were used in court by the perpetrators, and 2 were cleared or murder or manslaughter charges (Long et al, 2020).

Within court proceedings, there has been an increase in the use of 'sex game gone wrong' defences, also known as the 'fifty shades' defence (Monckton-Smith, 2021, p. 91). As a result, a UK based group called 'We Can't Consent to This' campaigned against this defence tactic after researching into how frequently it has been used within murder trials where dangerous sexual gameplay may have played a part (Monckton-Smith, 2021), which can be assumed to be intimate partners homicide. Recently within the Domestic Abuse Bill in the UK, the 'rough sex' defence has been weakened by the criminal justice system announcing that no perpetrator or defence counsel would be able to say consent for dangerous sexual gameplay was given by the victim when serious injury or death had occurred during sex, in order to reduce charges (to manslaughter from murder for example) or avoid an investigation altogether (Monckton-Smith, 2021).

Although on face value, the 'sex game gone wrong' appears to focus purely on the 'accidental' actions of the perpetrator, its foundations lie in the behaviours and desires

of the women who are killed. The defence rests on the claims that some women enjoy being strangled to unconsciousness during sex (Monckton-Smith, 2021) which is purely about the personality of the woman. Legal actors consciously manipulate discourses, like this one, to secure a legal advantage in cases that involve allegations of sexual misconduct (Ainsworth, 2014). Victim blaming narratives can come as a result with arguments of wanting to be strangled being against the 'norms' and societal expectations of heterosexual sex, therefore othering the victim and placing them as the instigators for the sexual gameplay occurring. Because the discourse bases itself on the killing being 'accidental,' by default, the perpetrator is rid of all responsibility and blame and instead can be treated sympathetically. Arguably 'sex game gone wrong' can be seen to be a quick explanation to accept for killing an individual, especially when other contributing factors such as a history of domestic abuse has been avoided when being reported in the media.

2.4.3 Defence: Sue Lees (1997): Naggers, Whores and Libbers

Naggers, Whores and Libbers were themes identified by the researcher Sue Lees (1997) when studying victim blaming narratives used by defence counsels in domestic homicide criminal trials. Her standpoint is one of feminism, stating that men can avoid responsibility for IPH by pointing to irrational behaviour of women, termed 'woman trouble' as a focus of victim blaming to divert attention from their perpetration (1997). She argues that it is not rational to believe that men cannot control their anger, whether provoked or not, as a principle that underlies loss of control. By arguing men cannot control their anger and behaviour and are easily provoked into committing violence by their female partners' behaviour, personality or situation (Taylor, 2020) is a convenient way to condone male violence and victim blaming as a means of justifying it (Lees, 1997). Men hold power over women historically and culturally and have real motives for murdering them which are hidden, denied and rationalised away often through victim blaming (Lees, 1997), if the attention and blame is on the victim, it is easy for the perpetrators' real motivations to be missed.

According to Lees (1997) in IPH trials, it is the women who drives the man to take a temporary leave of rationale and control to kill her, and she does this by acting outside

of the legitimate behaviour of women and what is viewed to be the responsibilities of a 'normal' female intimate partner. Women who are killed by their male intimate partners as a result of (as argued by defence narratives) failing in 'wifey' duties, is unfaithful, or nagging, are treated unsympathetically by judges who often agree with the perpetrator (Lees, 1997). This is also supported by the work of Meyers (1997) who found that when discussed in media reports, female victims who engaged in premarital sex, casual sexual relationships, or drug and/or alcohol use was portrayed as being deserving of their fatal victimisation to some degree. Additionally, in Spain, cases of domestic violence and IPH reported by the mass media have shown to be linked to situations in which women challenge their traditional gender roles, also known as libbers (Valor-Segura, Exposito & Moya, 2011). The news media tends to present female victims as provokers of violence by referencing her behaviours as explanatory factors for her victimisation (Alat, 2006; Berrington & Honkatukia, 2002). By calling female victims naggers, whores and libbers as a reason for their murder is focusing on their behaviour, characteristics, situations and personality, and further condones violence against women and relieves male perpetrators of homicide of responsibility and blame by way of subtle linguistic choices (Carll, 2003).

Taylor (2020) is another key speaker of victim blaming and the use of 'naggers, whores and libers', who sets out a list of theories as an attempt to explain it, including individualism. Individualism is the idea that people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, they possess free will to make their own choices and are responsible for them (Triandis, 2001). In terms of victim blaming, individualism argues that female victims are somewhat responsible for their killing because, for example, they did not leave their abusive relationship beforehand, they cheated on their partner, they nagged their partner, to name but a few behaviours. So, therefore, if they arguably played some part in provoking the killing, they are held responsible for their actions and their death. However, what this theory does not consider is the counter argument of the perpetrator being responsible for their violent and fatal actions (Taylor, 2020). Nevertheless, if victim blaming and patriarchal ideologies are engrained in society, it is somewhat expected that those taking an individualist stance focus only on

the victim's behaviour and forget that individualism is the idea of everyone is responsible for their own actions, including murderers, regardless of who they kill.

2.5 Victim Blaming and Theoretical Positions

2.5.1 Victim Blaming and Feminism

This research is concerned with exploring the victim blaming discourse found in defensive narratives surrounding female victims of IPF. The research was conducted with a feminist perspective, with most previous research having used the same position (Barlow, 2013). This is arguably reasonable due to the idea that feminists are overwhelmingly concerned with gender equality (Winstok, 2013), an area which victim blaming challenges. Feminism is concerned with the fact that men and women are under different social pressures to act in different ways (Richards, 1982), and this is seen in IPF where women who act outside society's expectations of a woman, for example are unfaithful, or not a housewife, wanting a divorce (Lees, 1997), are blamed for their victimisation.

Broadly, feminism is about targeting gender equality and arguing that women should be equal to men in all senses of the word. There are many 'feminisms,' with Tong (1995) offering seven choices: liberal, Marxist, radical, psychanalytic, socialist, existentialist and postmodern. This research focuses on liberal and radical feminism. Liberal feminism challenges the idea that women are less than men, both intellectually and physically, which derives from customary and legal constraints that do not allow equality of genders (Taylor, 2020). Similarly, radical feminism argues that men and women are not equal due to society's patriarchy allowing men to dominate, control and supress women (Taylor, 2020), with one of its key principles being to challenge social constructions of genders and their roles within society.

Regardless of what type of feminism one identifies with, Alcoff and Potter (1993) suggest that there are two different forms of feminist epistemology within each feminism. Firstly, they argue that some feminists take feminist epistemology to mean that women are fundamentally different than men, and that they know things differently than men. However, this can have enormous and unwelcome consequences. If one

answers questions in a radically different way when referring to women specifically compared to men, then women will emerge as being the 'other' (as discussed above). It could arguably be contradictory to the principles of feminism for it to present an epistemology that puts women in this position. In contrast, the second feminist epistemology argue that women theorise the act of knowing in different ways than men, instead of fundamentally knowing differently. For example, feminists raise issues and gain insights into topics that are not generally discussed in male epistemologies, like patriarchism and female victim blaming. To add to this, Gilligan (1982) suggests that women and men speak about topics with a different voice as a result of the differences in how they perceive and relate to the world, not due to the differences in knowing.

As previously implied, feminist scholars focus their attention on the unjust inequality between men and women. The work and research conducted by them aims to explore this inequality as a social problem that is in drastic need to change (Winstok, 2013). For feminist scholars, IPF and violence against women has for decades been a means to maintain a society where men are superior and women are inferior (Winstok, 2013). Feminism tends to focus on the victim as it has been documented that women are laid responsible for their victimisation, with claims of provocation being the main method of achieving this (Howe, 2002). They seek to answer the question of why men beat and murder their wives (Bograd, 1988), with research discovering that men are motivated, from their social structure, to be violent as it awards and maintains male dominance and control (Hamburger & Guse, 2002). This exchange constructs violence as equal to power. This construction is said to be a result one or more of the varieties of patriarchy (Hunnicutt, 2009), and could explain male violence against women (Brownmiller, 1975; Caputi, 1989; Russell, 1975).

2.5.2 Victim Blaming and Social Constructionism

As well as taking a feminist perspective, the current research also centres its approach in social constructionism. Social constructionism is the idea that there is no objective truth, instead, truth comes into existence through constructions from social interactions, but each truth is different as people construct meaning differently (Crotty, 1998). This is argued to be for social, natural and physical truths/realities, however

there are some constructionists who understand it as only constructing social reality, rather than socially constructing reality (Crotty, 1998). The stance taken within this research is the one where only social reality are constructed due to the focus on concepts such as victim blaming and patriarchy that are arguably explored, maintained and reinforced through social constructionism.

Because individuals create social reality through constructionism, it can be argued that culture is a result of social constructionism. As an example, cultural taboos are said to define and maintain activities of women within society (Narejo & Syed, 2010) and the ideologies surrounding masculinity. Additionally, Crotty (1998) argues that social constructionism shapes the way we see our culture, so women and men will experience culture differently due to the contrasting ideals instilled upon them. This difference in perception as well as imbalance of equality within gender creates space for patriarchy and female inferiority to be supported, oppression of women to be maintained, and manipulation and injustice to be enacted upon the oppressed (Crotty, 1998) in forms such as victim blaming.

Victim blaming can be established and maintained through social interactions between friends and family, academics, and professionals in the criminal justice system. This idea of social interactions establishing concepts is one of the main principles of social constructionism. Social constructionism states that there is no objective truth awaiting discovery (Burr, 1995), instead it is created by individuals exploring the world through language (Crotty, 1998). The importance of language in social constructionism has been explored by Foucault, who suggested that by critically examining the language used to create knowledge, it is possible to see the power it has over the varieties of realities as experienced by different individuals (as cited in Rogers, 2014). Deconstructing language, as Foucault explains it, in terms of narratives around victim blaming will arguably shed light on the different ways people view it and use it within their activity. It is important to look at the different ways victim blaming is used, as it is argued that a reduction in victim blaming will not occur until the perceptions and narratives surrounding it has been addressed and challenged (Crowe & Murray, 2015), which is an objective the current research aims to help in achieving.

2.5.3 Victim Blaming and Patriarchy

Masculinity refers to normative beliefs around how men are expected to behave, think and feel within society (Mahalik, Locke, Ludlow, Diemer, Scott, Gottfried, & Freitas, 2003). According to Meyers (1997) hegemony is said to be the unquestioned and unconscious acceptance of ideology, so hegemonic masculinity is the societal accepted version of norms associated with masculinity such as violence, aggression, and lack of emotion. A popular feminist argument states that men are at the privileged and dominating centre of society whilst women are marginalised and expected to willingly accept domination from men (Winstok, 2013). Because of this, many feminists argue that any male behaviour is connected to the want and desire to maintain and sustain their dominance in social structures, and any female behaviour is an attempt to deal with their forced inferiority (Winstok, 2013). In terms of IPF, this perspective is linked with the idea that gender inequality allows for violence and murder against women, especially those in intimate relationships. To have gender *equality*, feminists suggest that the elimination of gendered violence will begin (Winstok, 2013).

The idea of power and violence is a highly gendered construction found within society and is the result of cultural links and ideologies around masculinity and femininity, leading to the theories around hegemonic masculinity (Itzen, Taket & Barter-Godfrey, 2010). Hegemonic masculinity is the term given for when culturally accepted answers to problems are performed that assists the maintenance of a patriarchy where women are subordinate to men (Hearn, 2012). A specific example of this in terms of IPH would be a man killing his wife/female partner because she 'defied' him by seeking separation, therefore he must reinstate power. Hegemonic masculinity is a type of masculinity that idealises the use of violence to maintain and legitimate patriarchy (Ray, 2011). In turn, violence against women works to sustain and create social inequalities and is a means of controlling women's lives (Hester, 1992). It is the embedment of this form of control in society and culture that permits the continuing victimisation of women (Dobash & Dobash, 1988).

It may be assumed that hegemonic masculinity, patriarchy, and the acceptance of IPF as a means of controlling women only occur in social and informal settings such as

general social interactions between individuals. However, it is argued to be much more deep-seated than that. Serren and Firestone (2004) asserted that in society, every major institution either accepts or blatantly ignores problems around gender equality, with feminists having long identified the justice system as an institution where male dominance is both discursively implied and represented (Ainsworth, 2014). This representation comes from laws that have legitimised wife beating, and control and power of men over women (Serren & Firestone, 2004). For example, the conceptions of rationality and loss of control (Coroners and Justices Act, 2009, S54) that underpin definitions within cases of intimate partner violence and homicide are seen to protect patriarchy and condone male violence (Lees, 1997) as a result of the lenient treatment of male offenders reinforcing the condoning of this violent and fatal behaviour (Lees, 1997).

Categorical Theory is a feminist idea of gaining an understanding of gender relations by separating two opposing categories, such as men and women. According to Winstok (2013), key concepts that allow the two categories to remain separate are patriarchy, domination, oppression, and exploitation. An example of which would be Freud's (1905) theory of the Madonna-whore complex which is the idea of heterosexual men not having the ability to unite women's 'tender' and 'sexual' dimensions of their personality and sexuality (Hartmann, 2009). Men who experience this complex can only become aroused when they degrade their partner by reducing her into a sex object (whore) because a respected partner (Madonna) cannot be desired. In feminism, this theory is viewed as an ideology used to reinforce patriarchy (Bareket, Kahalon, Shnabel and Glick, 2018). According to Kane and Schippers (1996), female sexuality is a potential source of power that women have over men, so by discouraging female sexual agency through the Madonna-whore dichotomy, the perceived threat to patriarchy is alleviated.

Cultural taboos, values and norms define and constrict the daily activities and behaviours of women in society (Narejo & Syed, 2010), which further increase the problem of gender inequality. Glick and Fiske (1996) termed 'benevolent sexism' and 'hostile sexism' to distinguish 'good' and 'bad' women as a way to keep the societal patriarchy intact. Benevolent sexism is a tactic aimed towards women who are warm and supportive and do deserve a man's protection or provision. In contrast, hostile

sexism targets women who men view as their competitors, as they seek to gain the level of dominance and control over men, that they hold over women. These tactics of sexism work in a coordinated way in maintain patriarchy by rewarding women who embrace society's gender roles and expectations, as well as punishing women who attempt to challenge and override a male-dominated society (Glick, Fiske, Mladinic, Saiz, Abrams, Masser, ..., & Lopez 2000; Glick & Fiske, 2001). Hostile and ambivalent sexism are seen as ways for men to remain superior to women, and violence against women is yet another tactic that is still to aid in achieving the same aim of maintaining patriarchy.

2.6 Summary

The research presented in this chapter shows that femicide is the leading cause of premature death amongst women on a global scale (Martin, 2012, as cited in Brennan, 2016), with it being used as a tool to reinstate and uphold individual and/or collective male dominant status over the inferiority of women. One way to further reinstate female inferiority, even after death, is to blame the victim for the atrocities acted against them. This chapter demonstrates that victim blaming can be categorised into behavioural, characterological and situational blame (Taylor, 2020), and further divided into individual themes such as Naggers, Whores and Libbers (Lees, 1997). From reviewing existing victim blaming literature in this chapter, it would be naive to believe that these are the only victim blaming themes available and being used currently. The breadth of studies into patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity, belief in a just world, provocation and loss of control as reviewed above suggests that victim blaming is and will continue to be used to ensure that male dominance and society's overarching desire to blame women no matter the circumstances, are upheld.

A review of the Technique of Neutralisation theory by Sykes and Matza (1957) brings into focus how two techniques, Denying Responsibility and Denying the Victim, may be prevalent to the current research in comparison to the remaining three, due to their more direct link with overt victim blaming and can be seen as an attempt to explain a reasoning behind victim blaming usage. These themes, alongside Loss of Control and Provocation, in addition to those derived by Lees (1997) were noted as themes to

observe in this study's data in order to distinguish if these historical themes of victim blaming are still present, and the effects they have on the defensive narratives encapsulating them. However, it is important to remember that this is not an exhaustive list of victim blaming themes, thus an open mind will remain for identifying new or not otherwise listed potential themes.

This chapter brings into focus this research's first objective of examining historical themes of victim blaming found in defensive narratives in IPF cases, as well as the second objective of attempting to explain the effects of victim blaming discourse, with patriarchy, power and control, and female insubordination being mentioned at various points throughout this chapter. In turn, this has aided in creating a baseline of themes and narratives that are critically assessed in the current research, attaining to the third research objective of creating a contemporary framework of victim blaming found in defensive narratives being used today. Additionally, the literature noted above on feminism and social constructionism creates an understanding in how the historical and current themes of victim blaming have been reviewed in the current research; with a feminist and social constructionist perspective.

With at least three women being killed by a former or current partner each week in England and Wales (Taylor, 2020), it is important to research, discuss and question the way in which victims of IPF are constructed and reported in media articles and domestic homicide reviews to establish if victim blaming, and therefore secondary victimisation, are apparent in present day. The following chapters, the methods and methodology of the current research is explored (with additional notes regarding Sue Lees' (1997) methodology due to it being a key influence in the conduction of this study), before critically reviewing the findings and discussions of the current research.

3. Methods and Methodology

3.1 Introduction and Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research is "To establish the use and nature of victim blaming discourses in defensive narratives within intimate partner femicide cases where the victim is female, and the perpetrator is male". To achieve this, three objectives have been devised:

1) To examine historical themes of victim blaming used in defensive narratives within IPF cases.
2) To critically assess how victim blaming discourse affect defensive narratives in IPF cases.
3) To develop a contemporary framework of victim blaming discourse found in defensive narratives in IPF cases.

When deconstructing the aim of this research, significance is placed on establishing the 'use of victim blaming discourse.' Here, defensive narratives are observed to determine how they use victim blaming to achieve their aim of being defensive of the perpetrator. For example, victim blaming discourse found in this research may be able to be separated into at least one of the three categories of victim blaming as noted above, behavioural, characterological, and situational (Taylor, 2020). Additionally, the nature of one or more victim blaming discourse may be found to be able to be categorised as a justification for the violence, or an excuse of the violence (see Soctt & Lyman, 1968), prompting a holistic evaluation of said discourse from its foundations to its effects.

Being able to separate discourse in the above way links with the study's first and third objective of establishing and examining historical themes of victim blaming and creating a contemporary framework of victim blaming discourse in defensive narratives. Categorising victim blaming discourse into themes allows for patterns to be easily

identifiable and separated (Attridde-Stirling, 2001) and creates a clear process for data collection and analysis for the research to follow to achieve its aim and objectives. It is important to note that the researcher will keep an open mind for themes, in addition to those discussed in the above chapter, that may appear whilst analysing the data collected in order to ensure a variety of themes and their effects are noted.

The second objective, to critically assess how victim blaming discourse affect defensive narratives, is about identifying how the themes of victim blaming generated from the first objective affects the success or failure of defensive narratives. In the current study, the success/failure depends on the medium being assessed at the time. For example, if a media article was wanting to appear defensive of the perpetrator by blaming the victim's behaviour, the article may evident themes of Provocation or Naggers, whereas if they were wanting to hold the perpetrator responsible for the killing, the article may actively note and argue against common narratives such as the question of 'why didn't she leave?' by stating findings from research or sharing opinions that are 'on the side' of the victim. The effect victim blaming has on defensive narratives comes from the intent behind reporting the discourse in the first place. The aim of victim blaming is to minimise and defend the behaviours of the perpetrator by placing focus on the victim and their perceived wrongdoings (Taylor, 2020). If this is found to be achieved in the current research, it can be argued that victim blaming has, at least, some influence in defensive narratives achieving its purpose within media articles and domestic homicide reviews.

The third objective, to develop a contemporary framework of victim blaming discourse found in defensive narratives, is about collating all data and information from the first and second objectives to create a framework that aids in establishing the use and nature of victim blaming within defensive narratives in IPF. The body of information within the framework will consist of data collected and interpreted in the modern day, with specific focus on victim blaming discourse and defensive narratives utilised presently in comparison to historically, an example being Loss of Control. Additionally, narratives and discourse within themes derived from previous researchers (Sykes & Matza, 1957; Scott & Lyman, 1968; Lees, 1997) will be seen to be utilised despite being recognised almost three decades previously. When these historical themes are

observed alongside more recent themes, it presents the idea that defensive narratives and victim blaming discourse continued into the present day, adapting and changing to fit the current society.

The following section will explore the study's adoption of *Feminism: The Importance of Women in Research (3.2.1)* and *Social Constructionism (3.2.2)* theoretical underpinnings, which was chosen due to women, and the idea that knowledge of the world is a product of human thought and interaction, are at the heart of the research. In the *Methodology (3.3)* section of this report, *Feminism (3.3.1)* will be further discussed in relation to the current research due to it being conducted through a feminist lens.

There has been feminist research conducted in the past with its focus on women in regard to their discrimination in the criminal justice system, with some showing that type of offence, homelife circumstances, and personality all being factors that contribute to how women are processed in the system; whether as criminals or victims (Farrington & Morris, 1983; Datesmann & Scarpitti, 1980). However, the main piece of research that has influenced the current study is that conducted by Sue Lees' (1997). Because of its influence, *Lees' (1997) Methodology (3.3.2)* will be explored and the similarities and differences between the current study will be noted.

Following this, the current research's study design will be explored, paying specific attention to *Qualitative Data (3.3.3)* and *Triangulation (3.3.4)*, before moving onto discuss the *Application of Methods (3.3.5)* to the current research to fulfil its title of a 'Critical Analysis of Victim Blaming Discourse found in Defensive Narratives of Intimate Partner Femicide Cases' as well as describing the *Data Collected (3.3.5.1)* in this study. This is to be achieved by working through the aims and objectives stated above. Moreover, a separate section on *Feminist Analysis and Carrabine's Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (3.4)* is discussed in order to provide an overview of how the method used to analyse the data collected in the research, before moving onto the overall Findings and Discussion of the thesis.

3.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

3.2.1 Feminism: The Importance of Women in Research

Feminist psychology is thought to be a psychology by, for, and about women so that it is centred around understanding gender relations and/or improving women's environments and societies for the better (Squire, 1995). Gavin de Becker (as cited in Monckton-Smith, 2021) once said that women 'live with constant weariness' and that their lives are 'on the line in ways men just don't experience', making it important to have women at the centre of feminist psychology and divisions of feminist research.

In the context of IPF, Schneider (1992) suggests two terms ingrained within feminist theory and research; 'particularity' and 'generality.' Particularity refers to the unique experiences of women who have violence inflicted upon them by men, whether intimate partner or otherwise. In contrast, generality pays attention to the broader issues women encounter, such as inequality and subordination, as well as the problem of violence against women in society in general. By recognising these terms in research that regards what it is like to live in everyday society as a women, allows the targeting of these situations in the hopes to better understand and improve them. For example, the problems battered women face are viewed in isolation to the victims specifically, they are rarely linked with probable factors of cause such as inferiority of women compared to men, discrimination and lack of community support (Schneider, 1992). The focus itself is on the individual woman, the victim and her pathology, behaviour, characteristics, personality, rather than the violent oppressor and the social structures in place that support and maintain the oppression which condones violence against women. It is important to distinguish here what it means to have women at the centre of research. Although focusing just on the victim (particularity) and her behaviours and mannerisms, can be seen as putting her at the centre of consideration, by ignoring the outside factors (generality) such as oppressive social structures and patriarchy, the research can easily place the woman as responsible for everything that happens as a result of her unique experiences and environment. By ignoring generality, you ignore influences and causal factors to violence and instead place the woman as the answer to all problems. In feminist research, this is not the desired achievement, instead it

looks to be ‘particular’ in documenting the experiences of women who have suffered violence by men, and link that to women’s ‘general’ imposed inferior position in society and to the wider social problems of patriarchy, abuse of power and control (Schneider, 1992).

3.2.2 Social Constructionism

A key principle of social constructionism is that knowledge of the world is a product of human thought and interaction, rather than there being one observable reality (Burr, 2015). Social constructionism can be discussed in two ways, micro and macro, both of which are concerned with language and discourses (Burr, 2003). The current research considers both approaches. Macro social constructionism stems from the work of Foucault who argued that discourses are ways of using language to represent people or objects and maintain a consistent representation of such throughout time. In doing so, issues of power are bought to the foreground due to society’s prevailing discourses often being a product of the views and values of powerful individuals (Foucault, 1976). An example within the current research would be victim blaming discourse. The study is conducted in a patriarchal society where men are viewed as the powerful and dominant group when compared to women. Additionally, its focus is on female victims and male perpetrators; by taking a macro social constructionism approach, it is men who create victim blaming discourse as it best suits them and their aims, whether to achieve a lighter criminal sentence than murder or to present themselves as blame free.

Alternatively, the micro social constructionism approach is concerned with discursive psychology where the focus is on how social interactions use discourses to build accounts of themselves, events, and actions (Burr, 2015). Unlike the macro approach, it is not associated with the power held in prevailing discourses. Using examples from the current research, discourses used within media reports are used to present an event of IPF that best coincides with the values of the media, such as newsworthiness (see Galtung & Ruge, 1965) and the overarching position they want to present to the public.

Research concerned with social constructionism has led to a preference for qualitative methods as they have been argued to be best suited for gathering linguistic and textual

data that represents events and individuals, and the views and opinions behind them (Burr, 2015). Many qualitative methods used, including critical discourse analysis, Foucauldian discourse analysis, and interpretative repertoires are all, at least in part, concerned with issues of power and ideology (Burr, 2015). This is also the case in the current research as it is concerned with issues of ideology and women and men in romantic relationships, ideologies around murder, and the power that intertwines the two. By using social constructionism as a theoretical underpinning, it gives researchers tools that enables them to expose the ways in which language is used to legitimise unequal power relations and ideologies (Willig, 1999). With this in mind, sometimes social constructionist research reaches beyond the idea of 'research for research sake' and instead aims to change the ways which society thinks and views something, someone, or a group of people, and can make and change policy (Hjelm, 2014). Although not changing policy, the current research is concerned with changing the way in which victims of IPF are viewed and used for the benefits of the patriarchy and perpetrators.

The current research uses the Social Constructionism standpoint to explore how society has created an environment through communication where violence against women and girls is accepted due to the 'explanations' being founded on historically, socially-excepted, and gendered ideologies and expectations of women in their patriarchal inferiority to men. The victim blaming themes observed and analysed in the following chapter come from a socially constructed patriarchal society that allows people to judge the behaviours and characteristics of women more harshly than the violent and fatally violent behaviours of men. Additionally, the foundation of victim blaming is language and these linguistic narratives are only able to continue due to the continuous acceptance of such language, without argument. The current research attempts to explain victim blaming narratives and discourse and use those explanations to argue and point out the societal flaws and negativity of placing women as deserving of their inflicted violence. In time, it is hopeful that the more the socially constructed reality of victim blaming is argued against, the weaker and less used the language becomes.

3.3 Methods

This section starts with exploring *Feminism (3.3.1)* as the lens of the current study, before discussing the *Methodology of Sue Lees' (1997) (3.3.2)* Naggers, Whores and Libbers work due to its influence for the methodology of the current research. From this, the current study design is discussed, focusing first on explanations for its use of *Qualitative Data (3.3.3)*, and then moving onto the use of *Triangulation (3.3.4)* as a data collection technique. Taking that information forward, the *Application of Methods (3.3.5)* is explored to show how this study was conducted, the techniques it used, and the types of *Data Collected (3.3.5.1)*, before moving onto examine the analysis technique utilised (*Feminist Analysis and Carrabine's Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Structure 3.4*) when analysing said data.

3.3.1 Feminism

Feminism aims to engage people and researchers in seeing and understanding the world through the lens of oppressed women, with feminist research placing women at the centre of the research process (Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007). Arguably, political aims are embedded within feminism, due to it being grounded in the experiences of women (and men, but in the current research the focus is on women) and using those experiences to challenge mainstream knowledge (Letherby, 2003) and to create social change on women's behalf (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1996). Most importantly, feminist research does not consist of just 'adding' women in because they need to be involved, instead, the research process begins with adopting the perspective of women in the chosen situation the researcher wishes to study; a feminist theoretical position (Letherby, 2003).

Feminist research, as described by Cook and Fonow (1990) is said to be research for women that can be utilised in transforming and influencing change within their sexist society. There have been myths and assumptions about how, methodologically, this can be achieved. For example, there is a common misconception that research concerned with women and feminine values must be conducted in a qualitative manner, and on the other hand, research that is considered masculine should be conducted quantitatively. This has been termed the 'gendered paradigm divide' by

Oakley (1998), but simply, this assumption has been shown to be false. For instance, the current research is concerned with women and feminine values, is taking a feminist approach and is being conducted in a qualitative manner. However, this is for the sole reason that qualitative methods are best suited for achieving the aims, not because of the concepts and persons it is concerned with. As Patai (1990) stated, ultimately, we must make up our own minds for what methods to use and let it best serve our aims. Feminist research is not feminist because of the methods it chooses to use, it is feminist because of the ways the methods are deployed and the frameworks which they are influenced from (Kelly, Burton, & Regan, 1994).

Despite this, Reinharz (1992) does suggest that utilising multiple methods, whether qualitative or quantitative is important for feminist research as in doing so, it allows the researcher to link individual actions and experiences, both past and present to social frameworks easier than just using the one method. In the current research, an overarching aim is to understand an issue that is critical to women's lives and society's view of them, so flexibility in methods is important so that this can be achieved. Here, the data collected will be from two type of reports, media articles and domestic homicide reviews, so that the understanding of victim blaming discourses and defence narratives is enhanced, by using one set of data to validate and refine a second set (Letherby, 2003).

According to Letherby (2003), literature suggests that feminist research should pay constant and reflexive attention to gender as a key aspect of society and research, as well as further considering other differences (than gender) between men and women. Both tasks relate to the insubordination of women in society and can contribute to 'research for women.' However, some feminists would argue that this can only be conducted when the research is about women only, with no reference to men. Despite this, many feminists, that of the current research included, agrees with Morgan's (1981) argument that to pay deep attention to gender and its merging with patriarchy and power, must consist of bringing men into the research. Here, especially from within one data set, views of women and their actions, experiences and behaviours are likely to be coming from the mouths and views of men, so it is imperative for this research to include men. However, in doing so, it does not make this research any less 'for' women

or less feminist, as this research puts women at the centre, with an overarching aim to present a better understanding of an aspect of their lives and views of them within society.

To bring feminism into the current study, women's life and death experiences are at the centre of the research, which are further explored in regards with societal norms, expectations, and pressures of women. The themes found in the data are directly analysed through a feminist lens regarding the effect they may and do have on the reputation of female victims and their families, both living and after their killing. Continuously, the current research assesses not only victim blaming techniques, when and how they were used, but also how these narratives and discourses are only able to become known without disagreement due to the victim not being able to defend herself. Despite the overwhelming focus that victim blaming can be used to mitigate responsibility and blame from the perpetrator onto the victim, the current research reminds its readers of the negative impact resulting from accepting these narratives can and do have on women everywhere, not singularly those victim of violence and killing.

3.3.2 Sue Lees (1997) Methodology

Lees conducted research into how victims of IPH were discussed, gathering data from homicide trials at the Old Bailey, the Central Criminal Court, newspaper reports and judicial interpretations. By comparing the use of the defence of provocation by women who had killed their husbands, to men who had killed their wives, she found that the acts of men and women are subject to vastly different sets of expectations and standards, both legally and socially. Additionally, she found that female victims in some murder trials were put 'on trial' themselves, with their credibility being judged against unfair and sexist criteria which was utilised by lawyers to support a particular ideology within society of how gender relations should be (Lees, 1997).

Lees (1997) attended 14 murder trials and analysed newspaper articles from a 4-year period and consistently found male defendants stating, 'if I can't have her, no one else can', alongside infidelity and nagging being factors that invoked sympathy by the judiciary upon the defendant and placed blame on the victim. In the current study these

themes of possessiveness, infidelity and nagging are thought to be observed within both the media articles and domestic homicide reviews data.

Much of Lees' work was centred around case studies because they allow researchers to make detailed investigation of empirical reality (Lees, 1997). In case studies, researchers can bear witness to the way in which lawyers and writers ascribe specific expectations and standards to women and men, such as differing roles within relationships and society. Lees (1997) often saw these roles being used as evidence to argue whether the murder was 'reasonable' or not. She observed victims being presented as the real offenders of their murder; as having pushed the man to fatal violence. If the woman's behaviour was considered unconventional and differing from society's expectations, the murder was near justified. Lees (1997) found throughout her observations and textual analysis that violence against women was acceptable if the woman behaved in a way prior to the violence that was insubordinate to male authority.

3.3.3 The Current Study Design – Qualitative Data

Qualitative research seeks data that helps to explore and/or explain a social phenomenon; it is a method of learning about the social reality (Leavy, 2014). Unlike quantitative research, qualitative techniques are used with the researcher acknowledging that their own personal and professional morals, values, and views can influence the research process (Leavy, 2014). Because of this, historically, qualitative research and the data it produces have suffered from an 'inferiority complex' (Machlup, 1956) due to quantitative research being dubbed the more accurate and 'real' approach. However, since then, feminists have argued criticisms of conducting quantitative research such as the artificial environments utilised can result in more conventional behaviour from the participants (McHugh, Koeske, & Frieze, 1986) as well as the idea that remaining neutral to the chosen stimuli, the researchers themselves often align themselves with the powerful, ideological societal norms that disadvantage the powerless (Hubbard, 1988). More presently, according to Leavy (2014), when using traditional, quantitative methods, social and cultural factors such as racism, sexism, violence, and stereotypes are eliminated from view of the researcher and thus, the data. As a result, qualitative methods are the preferred choice for many feminist

researchers, including that of the current study, due to it enabling marginalised groups, such as women, to have a voice and be the centre of the research process (Leavy, 2014). Additionally, because qualitative data is often collected in 'real-life' settings (not having been manipulated in any way for the research), it provides the research with greater ecological validity than that collected in an artificial setting and having to be extrapolated to the wider population (Willig, 2013).

For data to be truly qualitative, Willig (2013) states that when collecting data, it must remain natural. In other words, at the point of collection, the data must not be coded, summarised or reduced in any way as the objective of data collection is to create an extensive, all-inclusive record of the words and/or actions being reviewed, to the best of the researcher's ability. However, because of this possible lack of standardised structure in data collection, qualitative research has often been viewed as subjective, another factor adding to its 'inferiority complex'. Despite this, feminists have since claimed that objectivity is an illusion that has been created to add power to researchers to enable them to make knowledgable claims (Leavy, 2014). Instead, qualitative research consists of reflexivity, which is the process of the researcher continuously reviewing their own role in the research process, as well as the research process as a whole being scrutinised. This, Willig (2013) states, promotes validity in qualitative research as it discourages the researcher imposing their own meanings.

In the current study, the qualitative data consists of words and phrases that are examples of, or contribute towards, victim blaming discourses in defensive narratives found in DHRs and media articles. As victim blaming was identified, the statement in which it was found, alongside additional notes of context, were added to a 'matrix,' created by the researcher, that highlighted which theme of victim blaming the quote matched with (this was not limited to one theme, instead there were often overlaps). By adding the context, it removed the chance of the statement, quote or word being misinterpreted upon returning to the data after any period of time. The matrix allowed for a succinct collection of qualitative data that solely related to victim blaming and the diverse ways in which it manifested in both media articles and DHRs.

3.3.4 The Current Study Design – Triangulation

Triangulation is the practice of using several research methods within the same research project. The aims of it are for the researcher to be able to view the point of focus from more than one perspective, to further enrich the knowledge acquired from the research, and to assess validity (Sarantakos, 2013). From a feminist stance, utilising triangulation is thought to express the researcher's commitment to being thorough, to take risks, and to increase the likelihood of obtaining credibility in the chosen research field due to covering multiple methods/approaches (Reinharz, 1992).

There are many types of triangulations, one of which, known as sampling triangulation, is being used within the current research. Sampling triangulation is where two or more samples of data are being collected within the same project (Sarantakos, 2013), here being media articles and domestic homicide reviews. By using this technique, the current research allows room for different perspectives to be analysed, when beforehand they may have been overlooked (Morse, 2009). Alongside this, another advantage to using method triangulation is that it allows the researcher to switch focus between data if it is needed. For example, DHRs are sometimes difficult to obtain, and they can take a great length of time in being created. Whilst this was occurring in the current study, media articles were instead collected and analysed, to ensure that the research is being conducted in a parallel manner and the issue of time constraints is minimised.

By collecting media articles and DHRs, the current study was able to analyse documents from a variety of authors whom we can only assume have different views, ideals and prejudices and collaborated with different companies and organisations, who may also hold different values. Expanding from this, DHRs and media articles can be argued to have different audiences in mind when writing their documents. Media articles tend to be more for the general public, expanding on details as and when they appear in real time and can often be quite vague, whereas DHRs are arguably more for criminal justice institutions (such as police forces, courts, sentencing councils), students, and those who are directly affected by domestic homicide. In contrast to media articles, DHRs state detailed chronologies of events, pulling information from a

multitude of sources, including that of criminal justice professionals, family members of the victims and perpetrators (although not always) and sometimes the perpetrators' themselves. The difference in audience may also influence the information chosen to be provided and how it is discussed, which further influences the range and diversity of victim blaming discourses and defensive narratives. By collecting data from both datasets allows for a much more rounded data pool than if just media articles or DHRs were chosen for the current study.

3.3.5 Application of Methods

The current study is a 'Critical Analysis of Victim Blaming Discourse found in Cases of Intimate Partner Femicide' which is to be achieved by working through the aims and objectives as explored above. Research methods are chosen because they are seen to be the best tools and techniques to use in order to gather the data sought after to answer the research questions and meet its objectives. Here, the current study is looking to explore the uses of victim blaming discourse in defensive narratives, and the preferred way of achieving this is to utilise methods that will elicit qualitative data. Qualitative data collected for this current research will be from mediums of domestic homicide reviews and media reports, both referring to cases of IPF.

Triangulation was used in order to observe any presence of victim blaming discourse and how its usage in defensive narratives differs, if at all, between the two sets of data, and the effects they have on the reader and also the larger audience of society. To create a contemporary framework of victim blaming discourse, it is important to look for these discourses in different environments so that the critical analysis of the findings is based on a more rounded data set than what just one data set would produce.

Before collecting media articles and DHRs for this study, a criteria of cases that would be relevant to this research's aim and objectives was devised. The criteria included:

- A current or former partner homicide
- A female victim and male perpetrator

- No other causalities or killings (such as familicide, where the perpetrator kills his partner and their children, or suicide of the perpetrator following the killing of the female victim).

This criteria were created to directly match the aim of the research, to analyse victim blaming discourse found in IPF. To include cases of familicide or where the perpetrator committed suicide after the killing of his partner was believed to bring in other narratives and themes about the perpetrator themselves or children, which does not coincide with observing victim blaming. As an example, family disputes may have been the primary focus to the reporting of familicide crimes, or external factors such as mental health may have played a bigger role. To ensure that women remain the centre of the research, singular killings of female victims by a male perpetrator were the cases chosen for this current research.

Once the criteria were selected, data collection for 120 media articles, relating to 30 cases of IPF, began. The website, Counting Dead Women (https://kareningalasmith.com/counting-dead-women/), created by Karen Ingala Smith, was used as a resource to find IPF cases that fitted the above criteria. Starting with the most recent year posted, 2019, and moving backwards in time, the first 30 appropriate cases were chosen. From this list, an internet search using Google, using the victim's and/or perpetrator's name, and year the crime was committed was conducted to find 4 media articles, with 400 words or more, discussing the crime. The first 4 media articles (over 400 words) were chosen because these were assumed to be the articles also seen by members of the public when searching the case themselves. The limit of 400 words was decided as there had to be enough information available that may result in themes and categories being found in analysis, as if there was a smaller number of words available, the chance of repetition between articles was potentially higher. If the case had minimal media outlet exposure, (therefore, did not have 4 differing media articles of over 400 words each) then it was disregarded for the study and the next case that fitted the above criteria was searched. This search continued until 120 media articles relating to 30 IPF cases were collected.

To match the amount of cases analysed, 30 Domestic Homicide Reviews were collected that also matched the above criteria. The current researcher was provided

with a list of website links for county councils in which to collect DHRs from, had the councils shared them to the public domain. In going through the list in alphabetical order, the first 30 DHRs that matched the criteria were chosen for the research.

Once the datasets were collected, a matrix (as previously mentioned) was created, one for media articles and one for DHRs. In this matrix, themes of victim blaming from previous research were titled as and when observed in the data (prior to analysis), including Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof (Christie, 1986), Blaming Her Character, Blaming her Behaviour, Blaming the/Her Situation (Taylor, 2020), Naggers, Whores and Libbers (Lees, 1997), and Denial of Responsibility and Denial of Victim (Sykes & Matza, 1957). In addition to these, new themes that arose from reading the documents were also included, such as Blaming her Appearance and Responsibility for Self-Protection. Loss and Control and Provocation were also titled as key themes in the data.

Upon reading the media articles and DHRs before analysis, any statement that was eliciting victim blaming discourses (overtly or covertly when put in context) were added to this matrix and matched through colour to one or more of the themes listed above. This allowed a clear visualisation of the themes of victim blaming discourse being used in the data, including those most and least commonly used, and how the discourse compared between media articles and DHRs. This created a useful baseline of observations of victim blaming that aided in the analysis which is discussed below after exploring the types of data collected.

3.3.5.1 Secondary Data and Ethical Considerations

Secondary data is material that has been created by other researchers or individuals that has been made available for reuse (Hox & Boeije, 2005). There are a number of purposes for using secondary data, with the most frequent work of this kind being used to apply a new perspective and re-analyse the data from a different point of view (Heaton, 2000; Fielding, 2004). By using secondary data, the generalisability of a study can be greater enhanced due to being able to work with a potentially larger dataset than that of a primary study (due to time and resource constraints a primary study can have) and it allows for comparative analysis between data (Hammersley, 1997). In the

current study, the media articles and DHR datasets are discussed with some comparative exploration between them.

Using secondary data can also be beneficial for participants, especially when it is regarding issues that are particularly sensitive (Fielding, 2004), such as victim blaming in IPF. Qualitative studies are often conducted in environments that involve participants in their everyday lives and it is vital that researchers conducting studies of this nature are aware of the ethical issues and harm that may derive from such interactions (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2011). Where this current study does not involve any active participants and therefore the risk of harm to participant from researcher can be considered to be reduced, there are still ethical considerations that needed to be addressed, such as confidentiality and anonymity of victims. To target this consideration, the datasets for media articles and DHRs were purposely not matched by case (i.e. collected media articles and a DHR for each of the 30 cases). One of the reasons for this is because in some DHRs the name of the victim is anonymous and given a pseudonym or an initialisation. If media articles were collected to match DHRs, it would remove the ethical consideration that the DHR exhibited in the first place of protecting the confidentiality of the victim and their loved ones. Additionally, from a research standpoint, it was beneficial to include a total of 60 cases of IPF in this study than 30. By doubling the amount of cases collected and analysed increased the chance of observing a well-rounded dataset with a large variety of themes, victim blaming discourse and defensive narratives.

Despite the need for confidentiality, confirmability is also required within qualitative research, meaning documentation of all methods and data collected be reported in the research study. This can create an ethical dilemma regarding confidentiality of direct or indirect participants (Orb et al, 2011). All data collected for this study comes from a public domain where any individual can gain access to it. To consider confirmability, all media articles and DHRs used are noted and directly linked in the appendices of this report, making any further changing of victim names (for media articles used specifically) for confidentiality considerations unnecessary. However, all ethical considerations made by those writing the media articles and DHRs were upheld by the current researcher. Additionally, it is important to note that all media articles collected

were from reasonable and recognisable organisations and the information reported was not collected under duress, and those who conduct DHRs are trained professionals.

As stated, victim blaming in IPF is a sensitive topic that can not only affect participants but also the researcher. Kleinman and Copp (1993) report that qualitative research of this kind has the ability to empower those that are being researched and perhaps create change, however, the impact on the researcher from providing this power has been recently noted to be potentially problematic (McQueeny & Lavelle, 2017). Similarly to how it is crucial researchers protect their participants from harm, a number of studies have reported that it is equally as important to protect the researcher (Fashie, 2014; Benoot & Bilson, 2015; Mallon & Elliott, 2019). Researchers may not be aware of vulnerabilities within themselves that their research may arise and provoke (Bloor, Fincham & Sampson, 2010) so it is vital that researchers have a devised plan of how to help protect themselves when conducting research. For the current study, it was important to have a supportive network for the researcher to protect wellbeing, prevent distress and to remain objective to complete the study. This included fortnightly conversations with supervisors when collecting and analysing the data, taking breaks between writing days, having activities to focus on outside of research, and reporting any concerns to supervisors for support.

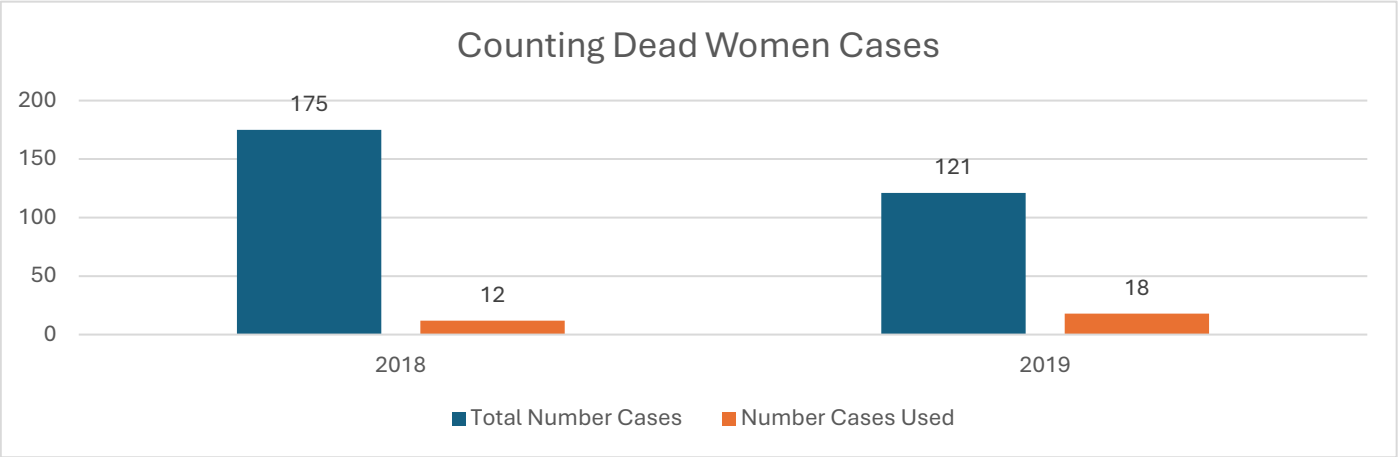
3.3.5.2 Data Collected

The data collected, 30 DHRs and 120 media articles, is of a literature nature, therefore qualitative data was a more efficient approach to achieve the desired aims, than quantitative data. Triangulation has been used in this study so that the different perspectives between media articles and DHRs are observed in an attempt to produce a well-rounded framework of victim blaming discourse in defensive narratives within two mediums.

3.3.5.2.1 Media Articles

The below table shows how many cases were chosen for the current study per year from the website Counting Dead Women, in comparison to how many cases were listed per year:

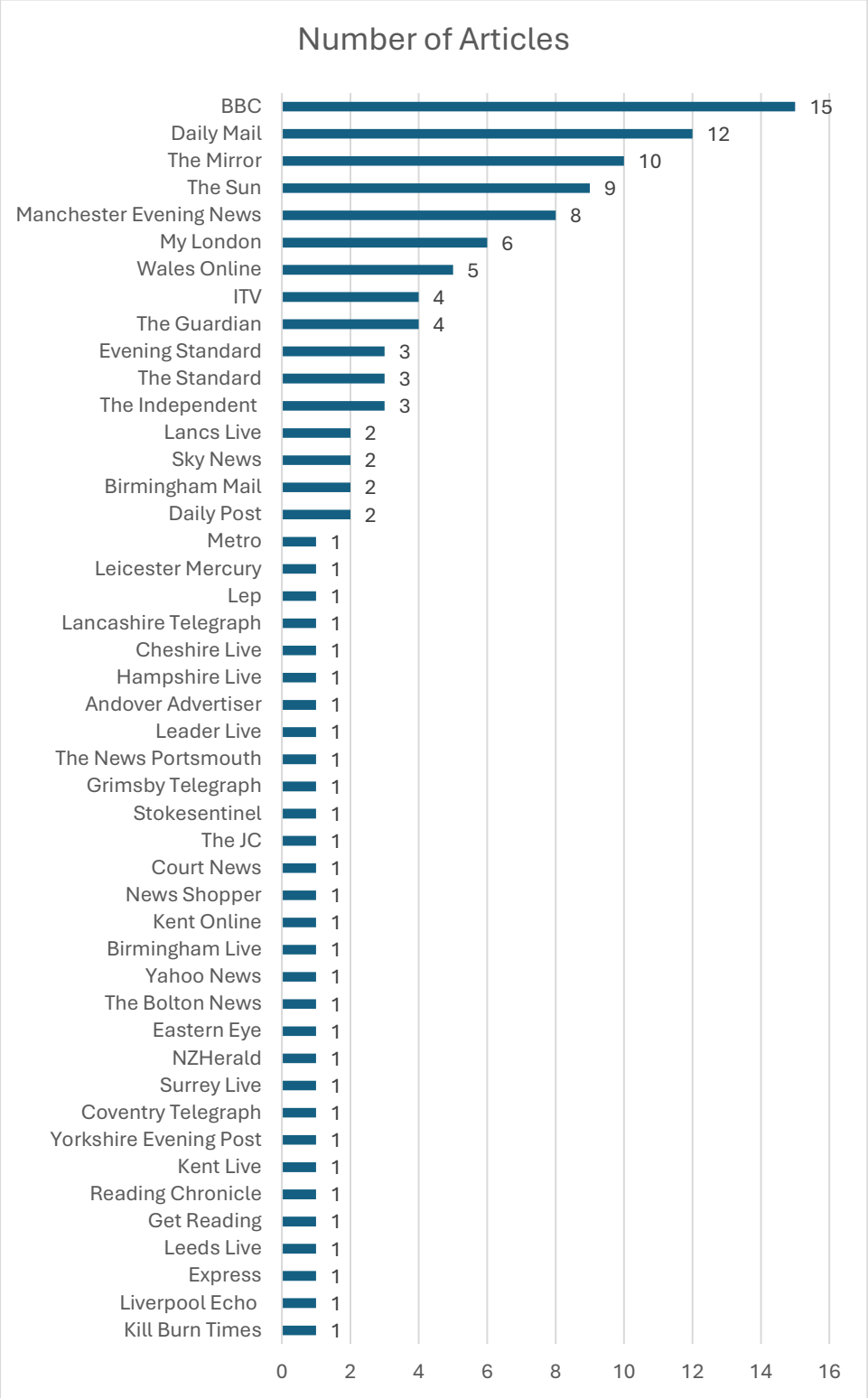
Figure 1.1: Counting Dead Women Cases



In total, in 2019 there were 121 cases noted on Counting Dead Women, and in 2018 there were 175. For the current study, there were 18 cases chosen to that fitted the criteria and had 4 articles of 400 words or more to analyse from 2019, and 12 from 2018. Once the limit of 30 was reached, previous years of 2017, 2016 and prior were not looked into, as the data was required to be as up to date as possible in order to observe themes in recent times.

As stated above, 120 media articles were collected, and the below chart shows the outlet of the articles, with the BBC being the most common (N=15). All media articles excluding 1 (NZ Herald – that reported the killing of victim Anna) that were analysed for this study was UK based:

Figure 1.2: Number of Articles per Outlet



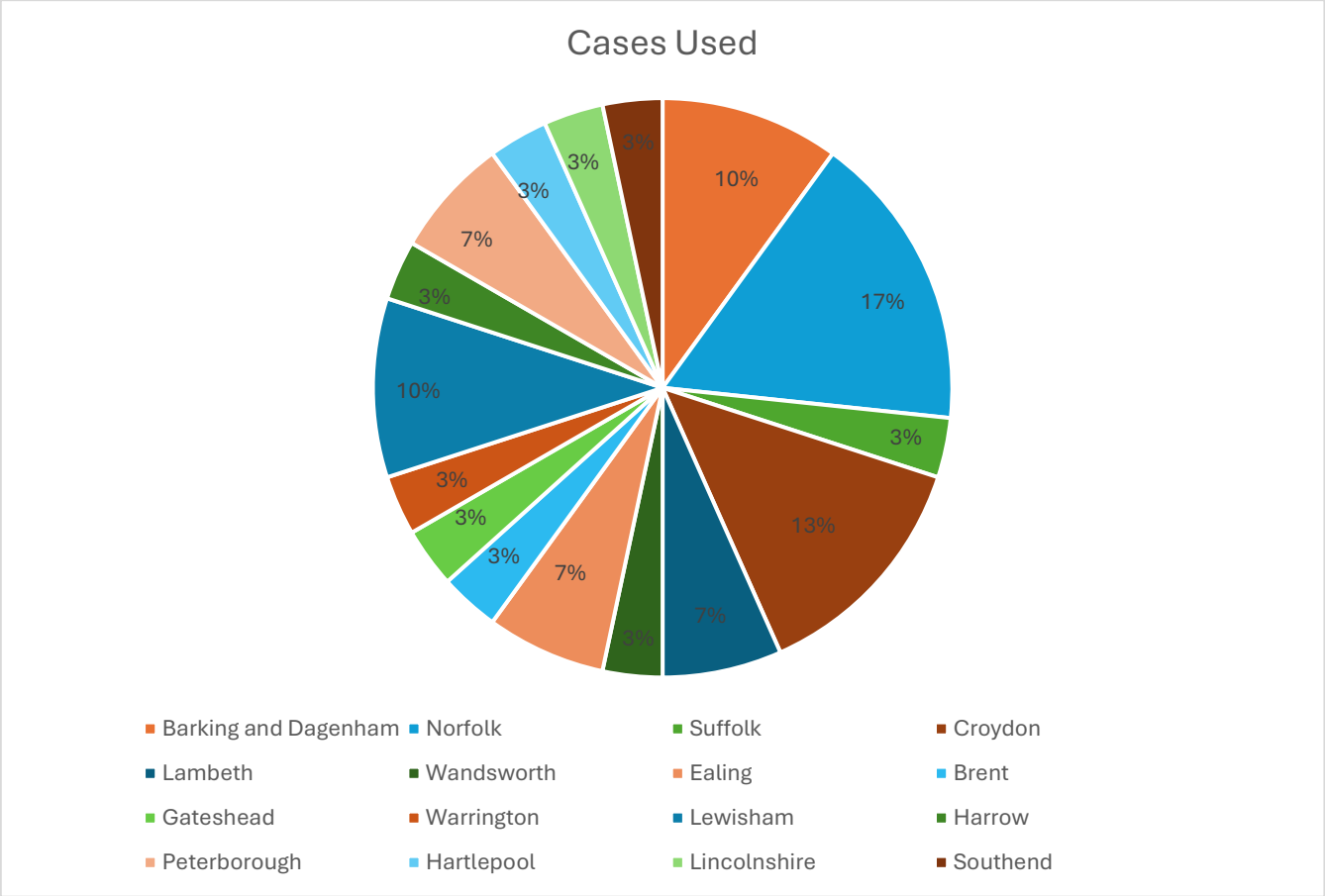
As seen above, the most common media outlets observed in data collection was the BBC (N=15), Daily Mail (N=12) and The Mirror (N=10) with The Sun, Manchester Evening News, My London and Wales Online all contributing at least 5 media articles to the data pool. Other media outlets listed below Daily Post (in chart above) contributed only 1

article to the study, this may be because they related to the area in which the killing being searched at the time was committed, however this information was not specifically researched and definitively concluded.

3.3.5.2.2 Domestic Homicide Reviews

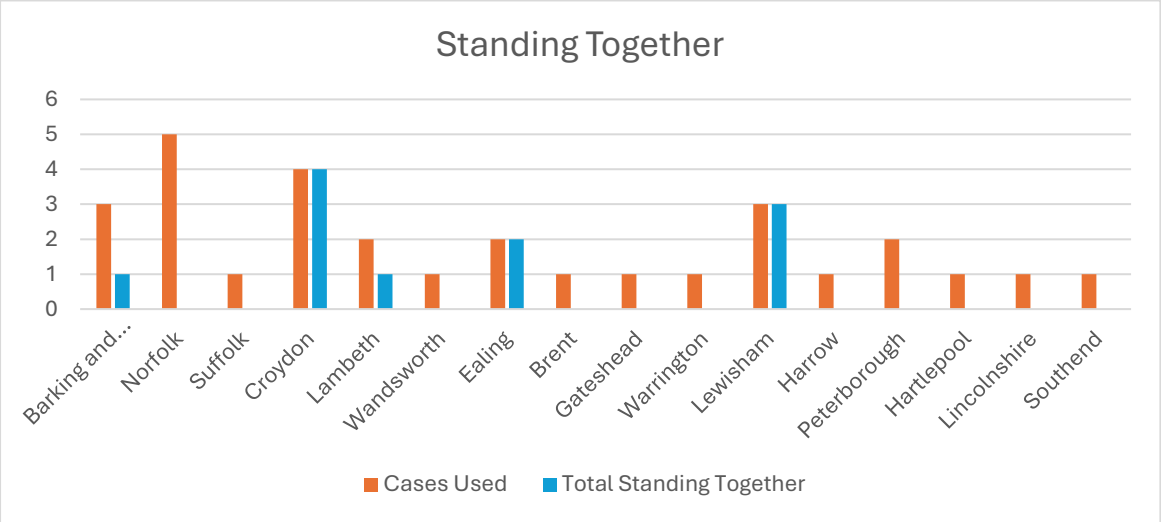
When collecting DHRs from county council websites, an issue that occurred was many councils had not publicly shared DHRs or had only shared the Executive Summary or Overview Report instead of the full review. When this occurred, the Overview Report was prioritised due to it holding more information that would be appropriate to analyse for the current study, such as a more in-depth chronology, findings of the case, and recommendations in the council and institutions moving forward after the review. If only the Executive Summary was available, the case was disregarded and the next DHR was moved onto, this was to keep the data sources as consistent as possible. The below chart shows the percentage of DHRs contributed to the data per council:

Figure 2.1: Proportion of Cases Used per Council



As seen above, Norfolk, Croydon, Barking and Dagenham and Lewisham contributed to most DHRs to the study. Data surrounding whether or not a DHR was completed in partnership with Standing Together was also recorded (see below chart) after the DHRs had been collected and deemed to fit the research's criteria. Standing Together is a national charity that focuses on working locally and nationally to coordinate services to help prevent domestic abuse, ensure survivors of domestic abuse are kept safe and perpetrators are held accountable. They also deliver training packages to a range of professionals with the aim of creating a coordinated and consistent approach to preventing domestic and abuse and how institutions respond to it. As Standing Together's objectives are about improving domestic abuse situations and appear to be victim focused, it was thought to be a note of interest to see how many DHRs in the current study they contributed to, and eventually see if themes in the DHRs differed from those without Standing Together's influence.

Figure 2.2: Standing Together DHRs per Council



As seen above, 11 councils in which DHRs were collected for the current study did not have influence from Standing Together, whereas councils in Barking and Dagenham, Croydon, Lambeth, Ealing and Lewisham all at least had one DHR with their contribution.

It is important to note that time has passed since the data was collected so it is possible that there are more recent DHRs and media articles available in the public

domain that match the criteria for the current study, however these have not been analysed.

Once data collection was concluded, data analysis begun using feminist analysis through Carrabine's FDA structure, which is explored below and discussed as to why it was found to be best suited to the current research.

3.4 Data Analysis – Feminist Analysis and Carrabine (2001) Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) Structure

The analysis of this data was of a feminist nature. This was to ensure that the women observed in the research and data collected remained at the centre of the study, and the wider, societal implications of female victim blaming were discussed. As previously mentioned, an overarching aim of this research is to remind its readers of the negative impact resulting from accepting victim blaming, can and do have on women, not just exclusive to those victim to violence and killing. It aims to show how patriarchy intertwines female subordination and gendered ideologies with victim blaming and defensive narratives to further enhance female inferiority and continue a patriarchal society where victim blaming is accepted, despite the idea that victims should not be blamed for the fatal actions perpetrators elicited upon them.

To provide structure to this feminist analysis, a multitude of analysis techniques were researched, including that of Baxter's (2008) Feminist Post-Structuralist Discourse Analysis, Derrida's (as cited in Chouliaraki, 2008) Discourse Analysis, and Thompson, Rickett and Day's (2018) Feminist Relational Discourse Analysis. These were not chosen for a variety of reasons, such as believing in complexity rather than polarisation (Baxter, 2008 – for the purpose of the current research polarisation of victim and perpetrator is necessary), not dealing adequately with social relations of power (Derrida), and focuses on the language and voice spoken by those oppressed (Thompson et al, 2018 – although this is agreed with by the current researcher, the voice of the oppressed in the current study is that of the victims, which is not available. Instead, it is thought that this method of analysis is better suited to those researching intimate partner violence instead of homicide). However, Monckton-Smith's (2020)

article regarding the 8 Stages of Homicide as previously discussed and noted as being heavily influential in research regarding IPH and IPF, utilised Carrabine's structure for Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) which matched the desired methodology of the current research.

Carrabine's (2001) theory of discourse behind this structure matches that of the current study's theoretical underpinning of social constructionism. Carrabine (2001) states that discourse is a group of related statements that work in the same way as each other to produce meanings and effects in the real world; ergo, discourse is a productive force. When studying discourse as in the current research, Carrabine (2001) argues that it is imperative to pay attention to the social context and relations within which power and knowledge are distributed as a result of the discourse. By doing this, it is possible to see the normalisation process that surrounds a particular discourse; where knowledge of the discourse is practiced, learned and dispersed into avenues of society to create 'expertise.' In other words, discourse both establishes norms within societies and reinforces them through practice. As explored previously in the previous chapter, the current study was conducted with a feminist lens and purposely discussed victim blaming discourse and defensive narratives in relation to the societal context of patriarchy, gender norms and roles, subordination, and female inferiority. Therefore, aligning the feminist analysis and the structure with the social constructionist desire of the researcher to discuss the study's findings in the broader context of society and women's experiences in life and death.

Carrabine's (2001) structure has the initial focus of knowing your data. She argues that only when the researcher is comfortable and has begun to 'know' their data, that the following steps in analysis can begin. Emphasis here, is put on identifying themes, categories, and objects of the discourse, as well as looking for inter-relationships between discourses. Discourses around patriarchy and its links to gendered norms and victim blaming can be an example of an interrelationship. This structure was followed when creating the matrix forms for DHRs and media articles as explained above. From getting to know the data, themes and categories were found and noted prior to in-depth analysis.

From this, Carrabine (2001) suggests identifying discursive strategies and techniques utilised within the discourse, which is how discourses are given meaning and force. Additionally, absences and silences, resistances and counter-discourses are also aimed to be identified within Carrabine's (2001) structure, as well as the effects seen from the discourse presented.

Towards the end of the analytical process, Carrabine (2001) states that the data should be analysed in two contexts. The first context outlines the background to the issue in which the studied discourse is used (in the current research, this would be IPF and gendered prejudice), where the second context involves contextualising the data in the power and knowledge networks of the period in which the discourse was observe/obtained (such as male superiority over women and the idea around IPF being a fatal act of eliciting power and control). Finally, as with all research, Carrabine (2001) stresses the researcher to be aware of the limitations of the research, data and sources that are involved in the study.

The data was analysed using Carrabine's (2001) structure, which was chosen due to its inclusion of power, societal relations, institutions, positionings and subjectivity. These are all factors of which are considered significant to record to achieve this research's objective of creating a contemporary framework of victim blaming discourse, particularly when focus is being placed on patriarchy and the insubordination of IPF victims. Once the data was collected, arguments and observations were formulated regarding how the victim blaming discourse was used and the potential intentions and effects surrounding them. This was completed by applying Carrabine's (2001) structure, which started with the researcher becoming familiar with the data collected in order to see patterns, themes, and categories appearing from the data, as well as interrelationships between the themes and categories becoming apparent, noting specifically how several themes corresponded with each other by one data example fitting in with a variety of themes. From here, Carrabine's (2001) structure aligned with the objectives of social constructionism and feminist analysis by taking into consideration the context in which victim blaming was observed, and the societal wider picture, including factors such as prejudice, expectations, patriarchy and history of accepted victim blaming discourse. By combining feminist analysis with Carrabine's

(2001) structure, the analysis for the current study was able to encapsulate the significance of said external factors in the critical analysis of the victim blaming discourses observed in the media articles and DHRs collected.

Figure 2.1 Visual Representation of FDA and Structure

Theme Name	Origin	Definition	Used in the final analysis?
Responsibility for Self-Protection	Current study	Acts and narratives which place the responsibility of victim safety with the victim, including but not limited to how to prevent and control violent behaviour of others through own behaviour.	No - although interacted with Provocation, more literature and research needed regarding society's education and expectations of women and girls to prevent and control violence
Disposable	Current study	The objectification of victims whereby they are viewed as items that can be thrown away of gotten rid of.	No – this theme occurred only a small number of times and requires further research to increase insight into connotations and explanations.
Loss of Control	Patrial defence legislation S54 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (as cited in Fitz-	Removing full responsibility from the perpetrator by using the technique of provocation - behaviour exhibited by the victim prior to death that would cause any reasonable person to lose control of their	Yes – Loss of Control is seen as one of the two themes that interlink the victims' and perpetrators' behaviours. As it is still currently used in legislation, it is important to discuss the effects narratives of Loss of Control can have on victims.

	Gibbon, 2013).	ability to resist inflicting violence (Ainsworth, 2014).	
Provocation	Homicide Act, 1957, S3. Additionally, Ainsworth (2014)	Behaviour exhibited by the victim prior to their death that would cause any reasonable person to lose control of their ability to resist inflicting violence upon the victim (Ainsworth, 2014).	Yes – Provocation is the second of the two themes that interlink the victims' and perpetrators' behaviours. Provocation can be seen as an umbrella theme for the subsequent themes of Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof, Blaming her Character/Appearance/Behaviour, Naggers, Whores and Libbers.
Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof	Christie (1986)	The 'Ideal Victim' is someone of respectable character who is unknown to the perpetrator, are seen as weak, are unable to be blamed for the situation they were in when the crime occurred and were carrying out a respectable job at the time (Christie, 1986)	Yes – Christie's (1986) work on Ideal Victim was expanded to include discourses where victims were represented as the 'Perfect Victim' who was argued to be underserving of their violence, and 'Lack Thereof' where victims' behaviour, character or appearance were against expectations so could be portrayed as more deserving. This has links with Provocation and all themes noted in the above box.
Blaming her Character	Taylor (2020)	Blaming the victim's personality or character as, at least, a partial cause to violence suffered.	No – this theme was not specifically identified in the analysis outside of the realm of Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof.

Blaming her appearance	Current Study	Blaming the victim's appearance for as, at least, a partial cause to violence suffered.	No – this was only explicitly noted once in analysis but when the context was considered, the quote and argument was better included in the exploration of the Whores theme.
Blaming the/her situation	Taylor (2020)	This was originally noted by Taylor as Situational Blame – blaming the situation surrounding the crime as, at least, a partial cause to violence suffered.	Yes – this theme title and definition was expanded to include factors specific to the victim's and perpetrator's situation/living experience, such as mental/physical health drug and/or alcohol use, and understandings of relationships.
Naggers	Lees (1997)	'Nagging' behaviours as displayed by the victims to the perpetrator.	Yes – to show fluidity between Lees (1997) and the current study it was crucial that the three themes were used in the analysis for comparative exploration.
Whores	Lees (1997)	Name for victims committing infidelity at the time of their death.	Yes – for the reason stated above, This was expanded to include perceived infidelity and victim's starting new relationships after separation from perpetrator.
Libbers	Lees (1997)	Name for victims whose behaviour was unconventional with gender norms and ideologies.	Yes – for the reason stated above. This definition was further clarified to include examples where victims were seen to be acting with feminist values and autonomy outside of the perpetrator's involvement.

Denial of Responsibility	Sykes and Matza (1957)	A behaviour performed only by the perpetrator where they deny being responsible for the crime committed.	Yes – this definition was expanded to include how other individuals outside of the perpetrator deny full perpetrator responsibility (i.e. to include Belief in a Just World theory and provocation themes).
Denial of Victim	Sykes and Matza (1957)	An argument that states the harm done unto the victim in not unjustified as may instead be a form or rightful retaliation or punishment.	No – when reviewing the data a denial of the victim in this definition was not apparent. However, there were instances where victim status was minimised, but this was more appropriately discussed under Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has documented and reflected upon the aims and objectives of the current research in more detail and how the study was conducted to achieve them. Through the use of qualitative data and triangulation, two data sets of media articles and DHRs were collected in order to be analysed using feminist analysis and Carrabine's (2001) structure, whilst the research holds a feminist and social constructionist view. The data sets were collected to allow the chance to observe any historical themes of victim blaming and build a framework of new and old victim blaming discourses and narratives that were utilised in the current data. From this, the analysed categories, themes, inter-relationships and connections to society, patriarchy, and the world outside of IPF can be discussed and critically analysed to achieve the study's third objective of creating a contemporary framework of victim blaming discourses found in defensive narratives.

The following chapter sets out the findings from this research, including an in-depth exploration of the themes found to be most prominent. These include *Responsibility*

and Blame (4.2), *Provocation (4.3)* and *Victim on Trial (4.4)*. From here, the aim and objectives of the research and how they were achieved is discussed, with further attention being paid to the issues and limitations of the current research conducted, as well as considerations for future research.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the findings of the current research from analysing the collected media articles and domestic homicide review (DHR) datasets. To keep fluidity, the findings have been structured into the themes that were identified when analysing the data. Evidence of victim blaming discourse was observed within the current study, with 14 themes being identified. Many of the themes identified derive from literature discussed in the literature review chapter: Blaming her Character, Blaming her Behaviour, Blaming the/Her Situation (Taylor, 2020); Naggers, Whores and Libbers (Lees, 1997); Denial of Responsibility, Denial of Victim (Sykes & Matza, 1957); and Perfect Victim (Christie, 1986). Regarding the Perfect Victim theme, this was expanded on by the current research to be Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof in order to encapsulate discourses that made the victim perfect and those that purposely suggested the victim was not perfect or 'ideal' in the circumstances of her killing. Additionally, themes derived from legal defences such as Provocation and Loss of Control were recognised, as well as new themes that had not been seen by the current researcher before in previous literature: [victim] Responsibility for Self-Protection and Disposable. The themes addressed below were chosen to discuss in depth due to their significance in frequency and consistency, in addition to the inferred evolutional link between them.

The number of themes derived from the data gives an example as to the number of types of victim blaming that are available to be used in defensive narratives on behalf of perpetrators of IPF. They also provide an insight into the background issues that aid in constructing victim blaming, which is a facet Carrabine (2001) suggests should be examined and contextualised when analysing the data. An example being the education women and girls receive from social media, friends, and family about how to keep safe from men). This environment has created the narrative that focuses on the Responsibility of Self-Protection of victims and what more they can do to keep

themselves safe from violent men and how to navigate interacting with them, rather than the focus being on the men instead, and how best to prevent them from soliciting violent behaviour. It is clear that the attention is on victim and what they should do to prevent violence being acted against them, rather than on the perpetrators and what they should not do.

This chapter has been split into three sections that each discuss two or more sub-themes in relation to the overall theme. The first theme of *Victim Responsibility and Blame (4.2)* brings together observations of *Denial of Responsibility (4.2.1 – 4.2.3)* (Technique of Neutralisation - Sykes & Matza, 1957) and *Blaming the/Her Situation (4.2.4)* (Taylor, 2020). Secondly, *Provocation (4.3)* is explored which discusses *Theme of Provocation (4.3.1)* as well as *Naggers (4.3.2.1)*, *Whores (4.3.2.2),* and *Libbers (4.3.2.3)* (Lees, 1997). *Victim on Trial (4.4)* is the third and final theme analysed, which notes where debates regarding the idea of victims being pitted against each other through the sub-theme *of Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof (4.4.1)* (Christie, 1989), and questions whether victims are represented at all within some defensive narratives that utilise the Denial of Victim sub-theme (Technique of Neutralisation – Sykes & Matza, 1957).

4.2 Theme 1: Victim Responsibility and Blame

This section discusses the theme of Denial of Responsibility inspired by the work of Sykes and Matza (1957). In their work, Denial of Responsibility is a behaviour only performed by the offender; the offender denies being responsible for the crime. However, in this research, the parameters of Denial of Responsibility have been extended to include how outsiders also deny the responsibility of the offender, outsiders such as the journalists or DHR chairs, or other people included within the media articles and DHRs such as spokespeople from courts, experts, and others. Denial of Responsibility here has been paired with findings of Blaming the/Her Situation because throughout the data, it was seen that when responsibility was denied for or by one party (namely the perpetrator), it was sought to be placed on the other party involved (the victim) or situational factors surrounding the crime (mental health, as an example). As found by researchers previously, violence against women is often associated with possessiveness and dominations and there is a system in place that

appears to allow perpetrators to minimise the violence they commit against their female partners (Hearn, 1998) and attribute that responsibility to the victim (Beiras et al, 2020, as cited in Regis-Moura, Ferreira, Bonfa-Araujo and Iglesias, 2022), which was also found in the current research.

It is important to mention before proceeding that in the current study, the terms 'blame' and 'responsibility' are used interchangeably despite the idea that people can perceive and distribute blame, cause, and responsibility differently (Shaver & Drown, 1986). However, Shaver and Drown (1986) also stated that 'blame' is the more emotional but equivalent way of stating responsibility when discussing sexual violence (Shaver, 1985; Heider, 1958) and this can arguably be applied when discussing physical violence or a killing. Considering this research is conducted from a feminist perspective, to put murdered women and their experiences at the heart of this study, emotion in the way of using 'blame' and 'responsibility' is appropriate. Additionally, if a perpetrator or outsider perspectives are not accepting responsibility for the killing of a former or current partner, then they are not accepting the blame either, so the terms will be used interchangeably.

4.2.1 Denial of Responsibility – Not Guilty Plea and Denial of Involvement

At an initial glance, denial of responsibility could be seen in the presentation of a not guilty plea in court or the denial of any involvement:

> '[perpetrator's name] *pleads not guilty*' (AB DHR)
>
> *'he denies murder'* (Andra Media Article)
>
> "*I didn't murder her*" (Janice DHR)
>
> [the perpetrator] "*did not accept the alleged behaviour*" or "*did not acknowledge his abusive/offending behaviour*" (Claire DHR).

However, it is important to acknowledge that the above presentation is just a simplistic way of observing Denial of Responsibility. In the work of Sykes and Matza (1957) and the current research, the theme Denial of Responsibility encapsulates more depth as it is arguably a tool that perpetrators can use to commit crimes with a minimal loss to their morality, a much more complex discussion than 'just' pleading not guilty or no

involvement. Additionally, as mentioned above, the current research is looking also for how others deny responsibility of the perpetrator and if they do so by placing blame on the victim. A not guilty plea can be seen as the legal starting point for defence counsels to argue reduced culpability for the perpetrator, and it is *these* arguments that are likely to be gendered and believed by observers and may often hold victim blaming discourse. The below quotes show examples of gendered arguments that place the behaviour of the victim as a potential causal factor of the killing:

> *"killed his wife to punish her…out of revenge for leaving him."* (Aliny – Media)
>
> *"she pushed me too far and pushed me over the top."* (Tracy – Media)
>
> *"A long term friend reports that Gary* [the perpetrator] *told him he felt trapped by Emma and had no say"* (Emma – DHR)

The idea of these arguments being gendered and believed relates back to Hegemonic Masculinity (Itzen et al, 2010) which aids in the maintenance of a patriarchy where women are inferior to men. In a case of IPF Hegemonic Masculinity is utilised by perpetrators who idealise the use of violence to maintain the patriarchy (Ray, 2011) who therefore kill their partners/former partners because she defied him in some way so that he must reinstate the 'lost' power, such as in the example of separation (see above, Aliny Media). When this view is imbedded within society, it permits the continuing victimisation of women (Dobash & Dobash, 1988) and allows room for secondary victimisation, victim blaming, to occur after death.

What does surround the above presentations is the silence (Carrabine, 2001) that holds options, opportunities, and anticipation of what is to come is terms of arguing reduced culpability (i.e., the defence counsel arguments, but more specifically in the current study, how media articles and DHRs move on to discuss the killing). When a perpetrator pleads not guilty or denies involvement it begins the questioning of if he (this study is focused on male perpetrators) is lying, or *if* he is telling the truth then who else could be responsible. Immediately the credibility and actions of other parties involved are bought into question, and commonly in IPF cases, the only other party is the victim. We live in a society in which people are raised to believe and treat women as if it is their fault, at least partially, when they are raped, abused, or even killed (Taylor, 2020). This

implies that from an early age, individuals are introduced to the social construction that if a woman is involved in a crime, she is often at least partially to blame. The implied belief in this social construction paired with a not guilty plea can begin the growth of believing defensive narratives that may be saturated with victim blaming discourses in cases of violence against women and girls.

From a not guilty plea and denial of involvement, we can begin to see Denial of Responsibility evolve to be more overt in their use of victim blaming discourse in the following subthemes found in DHRs and media articles: Loss of Control and Provocation, and Self-Inflicted.

4.2.2 Denial of Responsibility – Loss of Control and Provocation

It is important to understand what loss of control means under the context of Denial of Responsibility. Legally in England and Wales, Loss of Control is a partial defence of provocation (Section 54 of the Coroners and Justice Act, 2009, see Fitz-Gibbon, 2013) that was designed to rule out the previous widely used argument of infidelity as a justification for perpetrators succumbing to a 'red mist' homicidal fury (Howe, 2013) and killing their partners. Loss of Control is argued to show the societal acceptance of male reactive aggression when faced with a provocation (since Section 54, provocation does not legally include assumed or factual infidelity).

The idea around Loss of Control is that provocation causes the perpetrator to lose command of their minds and actions and perform behaviours that, when in a sane mind and in control, they would not exhibit. A chain of responsibility can be derived from this, illustrating how Loss of Control is caused by a provocation, which is caused by a person or factor that the perpetrator does not have control over, which results in the suggestion that who/what is to blame for the provocation, is therefore also responsible for the behaviour exhibited because of the resulting loss of control. This 'chain' shows the linguistic distance that Loss of Control creates between the perpetrator and their actions, as it places the 'object' (Carrabine, 2001) that is provocation, between his actions and his responsibility (or perceived lack thereof). The linguistic distance mentioned relates to Denial of Responsibility being a tool that perpetrators use to commit crimes with a minimal loss to their sense of morality (Sykes & Matza, 1957); the

bigger the distance between the perpetrator and his actions, the less loss to their morality.

> '*he claimed he was not responsible for murder because he had 'lost control''* (Ann Marie, Media article)
>
> *"I just lashed out and started stabbing her"* (AA – DHR)
>
> *"It was proven during the trial that I wasn't violent towards Victoria! It happened suddenly, I was never violent."* (Victoria – DHR)

The above quotes illustrate how perpetrators connect Loss of Control with minimising and denying some/all responsibility for their actions. The articles analysed about Ann Marie's killing also mentioned how the perpetrator often '*lost* [his]*temper'* and '*got fed up'* as a result of Ann Marie's behaviour. The article structured the narrative of the killing in a way that placed the responsibility on Ann Marie due to her 'provoking' him and causing the perpetrator to lose control. To lose control is thought to be an action that occurs quickly, without prior conscious thought or decision to act in a violent manner. The phrases 'lashed out' (AA – DHR) and 'happened suddenly' (Victoria – DHR), are examples of perpetrators signalling a loss of control without specifically saying 'lost control'. In addition to minimising responsibility, loss of control can also be used in support of denying responsibility and increasing the distance between the perpetrator and the fatal violence. For example, in Victoria's DHR, the perpetrator starts by denying responsibility ('I wasn't violent), supports this statement with the example of losing control ('happened suddenly'), and repeats again his denial of violence. By inputting loss of control discourse, it further reduces the conscious responsibility of the perpetrator, and instead looks to the victim to explain what caused this 'sudden' loss of control.

In most cases of domestic abuse and femicide, the narrative that is presented in media articles is one that has been drawn from court transcripts which are often heavily filled with the perpetrator's version of events. These are often seen to go unchallenged and can perhaps be the only recorded version of events available (Monckton-Smith, 2012). It has been found that narratives surrounding IPF are constructed in a way to show the most plausible story as to why the fatal violence happened, rather than a collation of the facts (Innes, 2002). For example, society can be argued to have a common Belief in

a Just World understanding whereby violence is thought to simplistically only arise as a result of immediate prior provocation. With this assumption in mind, it appears almost automatic that the perpetrator would claim they were provoked by the victim into committing fatal violence and because that narrative is seen to be plausible, it is not questioned or challenged but instead seen as a justification (Ainsworth, 2014).

> *'my devoted love for her, combined with the pain of betrayal made me do something I thought was never in me'* (Ms FC DHR)
>
> '*he again denied any responsibility and in fact suggested that VB attacked him'* (VB DHR)
>
> *'he blamed alcohol, his lack of clarity and his wife, but never himself'* (Teresa Media)
>
> *'ultimately because of her health challenges and temper, it's our case he lost temper, has become angry and got fed up'* (Anne Marie Media)

The narratives of the victim betraying the perpetrator, the victim attacking the perpetrator, the victim's behaviour, and mannerisms (as seen in the remainder of Teresa's media articles) and the victim's health challenges were all used as gendered examples of provocation in the hopes that they would be seen as plausible and justifiable reasons for the fatal violence committed by the perpetrator. In discourse, by placing the victim between the perpetrator and the fatal actions he elicited again creates this distance seen within uses of Denial of Responsibility. They allow the perpetrator to shift blame from himself onto the victim and be portrayed as not wholly responsible for the killing. These types of narratives impact the victim negatively even after she has died as it brings her reputation into question in an environment where in her absence, the victim is put on trial and is unable to defend herself (Lees, 1997). This can also cause further harm to those already suffering the grief of their loss (secondary victims) such as family members and friends of the victim. Equally, these narratives can affect the reputation of other victims (Monckton-Smith, 2012) as they can create negative assumptions and prejudices about present and future victims of IPF that can be damaging for them in court proceedings and trials. Additionally, these assumptions and prejudices may easily be extrapolated on domestic violence victims, which when adopted by society and smaller local communities, may prevent the victim from reaching out for help and support if they feel like they are going to be blamed and

victimised by those they want to reach out to such as police officers, family members and friends.

4.2.3 Denial of Responsibility – Self-Inflicted

In media articles exclusively, a defensive narrative was observed that overtly blamed the victim for their killing by saying the injuries and death were self-inflicted and the perpetrator was not responsible.

> *'tried to argue in his defence that her injuries were self-inflicted' … 'because she did not want her baby'* (Andra Media)
>
> *'his girlfriend stabbed herself by accident'* [as she] '*had been holding the kitchen knife behind her back when she tripped and fatally injured herself'* (Charlotte Media)

These narratives are able to occur in IPF cases because the victim, who may have been the only other individual present at the time of her death, is not able to provide another account of what happened. In Andra's quote, the perpetrator even provided the victim with a motive for the 'self-inflicted' injuries by explaining she committed the act of violence because she did not want to have a baby (Andra was pregnant at the time of her killing). In comparison with loss of control and provocation where the perpetrator acknowledges he committed the killing but seeks to justify it, denying responsibility through arguing self-inflicted violence means the perpetrator does not take any responsibility and instead places it all on the victim. This narrative creates an even bigger distance between the perpetrator and the killing than the arguments stated above, by arguing he was never a factor involved in the first place. The above are examples of the perpetrator attempting to create a plausible argument for the death without involving himself, therefore eliciting no loss of morality for committing the offence.

Historically, the media have framed domestic violence in a negative victim-centred way, where it focuses on the victim and what she has done, or not done, to contribute to her own victimisation, rather than focusing on the structural causes of the violence, or the perpetrator himself (Berns, 2004). This negative focus on the victim was also found in the current study's analysis of media articles:

"Hamer claimed he was taunted by Joanne before he killed her." (Joanne – Media)

"he hit her when she refused to give him money" (Asam – Media)

"he attacked her when she changed her mind" (Lauren – Media)

"I shoved a knife in her because she had been a bad woman" (Barbara – Media)

Although the current research is arguing for reports of IPF to be victim centred, the emphasis needs to be placed onto the victim losing their life, not how they participated or are to blame for their own death. By analysing these articles and the way they portray victims of IPF (in this case as someone who 'accidentally' killed themselves), begins to show the public perception of victims of IPF and the socially accepted defensive narratives and justifications perpetrators, and those defending them, can use (Taylor, 2009). Although not noting the violence was self-inflicted explicitly, the above quotes are defensive of the perpetrator and suggest that the victim provoked the violence, behaving in a way that the perpetrator presented them as deserving. By framing the victims in this way, it implies that the violence could have been 'expected' and the victims 'bought the violence onto themselves' because of their behaviour. This brings back ideas surrounding Belief in a Just World theory, as by stating the victim's fatal injuries were self-inflicted, allows the world to remain a 'just' place, where individuals are not harming one another. Some psychological theories state that outsiders believe these defensive narratives due to a reluctance to see the world as an unsafe and wrong place (Van Prooijen, & Van den Bos, 2009) so it is easier to believe the victim inflicted her injuries herself. Despite this, perpetrators arguing self-inflicted injuries is another example of how they blame the victim for their actions and create distance between themselves and the fatal violence by suggesting justifications and excuses that remove them from blame.

This was not a narrative identified in any of the DHRs analysed for the current study. A reason for this could be explained through the idea of 'newsworthiness.' DHRs are not written to be read for entertainment, nor are they to consider culpability and blame, according to the writing guidance (Home Office, 2016), however, media articles are not under the same rules. Except for treason and kidnapping, homicide is considered to be

the most reported and newsworthy crime (Johnstone, Hawkins, & Michener, 1995), with homicides involving female victims (Peelo, Francis, Soothill, Pearson & Ackerley, 2004) expected to be more newsworthy than those with male victims. In their research looking into what makes a homicide newsworthy, Gekoski, Gray and Adler (2012) found that homicides that involve unpredictable and easily isolated factors can also be as newsworthy and those that fit the standard, predictable criteria, such as homicides involving children and the elderly, white victims compared to Black And Minority Ethnic (BAME) victims (Sorenson, Manz & Berk, 1998), multiple victims (Gruenewald, Pizarro & Chermak, 2009) and 'stranger' murders (Peelo et al, 2004). In this case, an unpredictable factor would be that the defendant was claiming the murder victim 'accidentally' killed herself, and it was unfair for them to be going to court for it. It is near impossible to know the reaction the authors of said media articles were hoping to arise from the readers; however, we can imply that it could be because it makes the case slightly different from the expected report, it also makes it more interesting to readers and therefore higher in newsworthiness. To provide some evidence of this, the number of media articles read for the current study discussing this factor (n=8) was considerably less in number than the remaining media articles that did not discuss 'accidental suicide' (n=112), so it could be that this was included to make the articles more unique.

There have been writing guidelines produced to help journalists report fatal violence in a way in which is seen to help the portrayal of victims, which do not minimise the crime, and does not promote sympathy for the perpetrator. Level Up is a feminist organisation that campaign for gender justice in the UK, and they have written an easy, simple to follow guide book in media reporting. Their advice is to follow 4 guides, Accountability, Images, Dignity and Accuracy (Level Up, 2022). Accountability is about placing the responsibility on the perpetrator and avoiding 'reasons' or 'triggers' (provocation) as to why the killing occurred. In other words, the guide is to not give voice to the perpetrator Denying Responsibility. They state to make the articles a 'memorial for the victim, not propaganda for the perpetrator' (Dignity) and to remind their readers that perpetrators made the choice to kill rather than are 'monsters' (Accuracy). As seen in the quotes listed above and down below, it is evident that these guides are not applied to all media

articles, or even domestic homicide reviews, however it can be argued that without these guides, there may have been more victim blaming observed. However, without doing the research this is impossible to know for sure, but it is hopeful that as these guides have been produced, more and more journalists will read it and take the advice on board, and media reporting of domestic abuse and IPF will become a place where victims are remembered and perpetrators held accountable, rather than where victims are blamed and perpetrators aren't challenged.

4.2.4 Blaming the/Her Situation

As previously mentioned, the second sub-theme under Responsibility and Blame is Blaming the/Her Situation. Originally, this was derived from the work of Taylor (2020) who stated that victim blaming could be split into three categories: blaming behaviour (as explored above), blaming characteristics, and blaming the situation. Taylor's (2020) situational blame regards physical environments in which the perpetrator and victim are in when the crime occurs. However, the current research expanded the parameters of this definition to include the perpetrators' and/or victims' *personal* situations. Examples of this found in the data included factors such as mental health issues and disorders, the influence of alcohol and/or drug use, and financial distress; all of which were situations explored that appeared to attempt to minimise and justify the killing, rather than just provide context as seen in media article extracts below:

> *"I am on drugs. That's the planets. That's what people wanted. Only one of us should live."* (Andra – Media)

> *"I was damaged from childhood by my parents. That's where it all starts isn't it?"* (Elize – Media)

> *"denied murder, citing his depression impaired his mental judgement"* (Simone – Media)

Although not evidence of victim blaming, the above quotes show a perpetrators' ability to create defensive narratives that blame a situation or environment, instead of taking responsibility for their violent actions. In one report analysed, a perpetrator's stressful week was divulged:

> *"he had not slept for three nights and in addition his work on the day of his attack on her was particularly stressful"* (Mrs M – DHR).

Whether it was the author's intention to provide context to the killing or to attempt to provide an explanation, will never be known. But this information and those highlighted in the quotes above, can be interpreted as a partial excuse (Scott & Lyman, 1968) for the killing as it highlights the question that if the perpetrator had been sleeping well and the day was not stressful, or if the situation was different, would the chances of the fatal violence happening, be reduced?

The above situation is not an example of victim blaming as the focus is on the perpetrator's personal situation, however, it does help to show how just one sentence can pull focus and full responsibility away from the perpetrator and place it elsewhere by providing an implied justification (Scott & Lyman 1968). Nevertheless, examples of victim blaming within the context of blaming the/her situation were found in the data:

> *'too many girls are ready to accept controlling behaviour and see it as a normal part of a 'caring' relationship'* (April DHR)

The above is a reminder of the well-known phrase surrounding domestic abuse and homicide; 'why didn't she leave'? It places April as being like other victims who are perceived to have accepted the controlling behaviour and implies, they did not try to stop it, or protect themselves, or leave. However, as previously mentioned, leaving a violent and controlling relationship is extremely difficult and can be just as unsafe for a period of time as staying in the relationship. Sometimes, submissiveness, if only temporarily, is the necessary key for survival of the victim (Walker, 1979). Being a victim of abuse and control creates an environment where victims always need to be in survival mode and fit into the unachievable but desired mould the perpetrator places them in. In the context of femicide, the above quote places April and other victims as disappointing for 'accepting' the relationship they were in and therefore partly to blame for her death as she 'didn't do anything about it.' This remark is unfair, misogynistic and implies that victims are responsible for allowing the violence to happen when the focus should be instead on the perpetrator and holding him accountable for his actions. In a study by Gillespie, Richards, Givens and Smith (2013) they found in media articles, one tactic used by the authors commonly was specifying ways in which the victim failed to

protect herself. However, even when victims were noted to take measures to protect themselves from the perpetrator, they were sometimes blamed for not doing enough (Gillespie et al, 2013). This study, alongside the quotes observed in the current study, creates an environment that is seemingly 'lose-lose' for the victim, where they are constantly portrayed negatively as underperforming and unsuccessful in protecting herself from perpetrators, when the focus should instead be on the perpetrator committing fatal violence regardless of the victims' behaviour.

A set of media articles regarding Patricia's killing was interesting as it was the one case found where the family of the victim had voiced their forgiveness for the perpetrator for killing their ill family member.

> *'He said he couldn't watch her struggle,' … 'it was to put her out of her misery'… 'the burden of looking after her became even harder for you'* (Patricia Media).

From the information collected, Patricia was very unwell with dementia at the time of her death and the need to go into a care home was imminent, despite her (allegedly) previously stating to her husband and family that this was something she never wanted to do. The four articles analysed created the picture of the perpetrator wanting to 'protect' Patricia from going into a care home and did so by killing her. It was noted:

> *"this was a man who was respecting his wife's wishes and struggling as an aging carer"* (Patricia – Media)

It can be inferred that if her situation was different and Patricia was not unwell then the killing may not have happened; her situation becomes the explanation and justification as to why she was killed and in doing so, takes away suspicion that the killing was a result of malice, abuse, status, or control (or lack thereof). In Patricia's case, an emphasis is placed on the thought of 'if only her situation was different' rather than questioning why the perpetrator did not pursue other options besides killing.

Patricia's case is an interesting one that bought about contradicting thoughts when reading. The authors were successful in bringing about feelings of sympathy for the perpetrator from the difficult environment he and the victim were in. However, the fact remains that Patricia was still killed by her husband which is not something that should

happen to anyone regardless of the situation they are in. The above shows why language is so important in constructing reality as the articles analysed here encouraged readers to feel sorry for the perpetrator and perhaps even relief for him when the forgiveness from the family is mentioned. However, the constructed reality of these articles did not stimulate sympathy for Patricia's family or Patricia herself as she was labelled as a 'burden.' The focus instead was taken away from the fact that Patricia was killed and was instead placed on Her Situation as the explanation for her killing.

4.2.5 Key Findings

Denial of Responsibility was identified in almost all written reports and articles analysed in the data in both overt (pleading 'not guilty' or claiming no involvement) and covert (arguing loss of control, provocation, blaming the situation) manners. Denial of Responsibility is the starting point for victim blaming in IPF cases as when responsibility is denied from one party, it is sought in the only other party involved, the victim. This was shown in the theme above by blaming the victim's behaviour, mannerisms, and situations all as reasons for loss of control or provocation which in turn became justifications for the killing, or stating there was no involvement from the perpetrator and the victim harmed themselves. The above quotes outlined and explored are all examples of socially constructed defensive narratives involving victim blaming, which have been used historically and presently as an attempt to construct a reality where the perpetrator holds minimal blame and loses a minimal amount of their morality (Sykes & Matza, 1957), which in turn, creates an environment where IPF can be, at least partially, accepted and justified. Provocation was a subtheme mentioned in Denial of Responsibility as a parallel and companion to the Loss of Control sub-theme, however Provocation as a theme in itself was also found to run concurrently to other themes when analysing the data, as discussed below.

4.3 Theme 2: Provocation

The definition of the provocation theme in this study is taken from the work of Ainsworth (2014) which states that provocation in IPF cases is where a behaviour of the victim prior to their murder could cause any reasonable man to lose control of his ability to

resist inflicting violence on the victim. Up until 2009, Provocation was a leading defence in IPF trial cases in England and Wales, and it was almost always used to justify the killing of women by their former or current partners (Ainsworth, 2014). The idea of Provocation is said to rest in prejudices of gender norms and ideologies (Timmer & Norton, 1984; Lees, 1997) that are unattainable and should not be expected to be upheld as it is ultimately going to set the victim up for failure, which in domestic abuse and homicide cases, failure equates to loss of life. Fatal violence justified throughout provocation contributes to the stereotype that a good woman is faithful and submissive to a man, is morally and sexually pure (Vandello & Cohen, 2008) and behaves in accordance with expectations. Provocation within the data was found to imply an acceptance that if norms and ideologies are not upheld, killing is a likely result and this was a common theme amongst both DHRs and media articles. Within this section, Lees' (1997) themes of Naggers, Whores and Libbers will also be explored as sub-themes to Provocation.

4.3.1 Provocation: Behaviour of the Victim

Throughout the analysis, Provocation was the easiest theme to identify due to its sheer transparent victim blaming nature. Authors of both DHRs and media articles were found to have written sentences and paragraphs connecting the behaviour of the victim to the fatal violence inflicted on her. Take for example the DHR of Victoria:

> "*one event that triggered Victoria's death was her application for mail to be redirected from their home*." (Victoria – DHR)

This singular sentence shows a clear connection between the victim's behaviour of redirecting her mail and her death as it implies a provocation occurred. It could be argued that the perpetrator's behaviour is discussed further in the report as '*one event*' implies that there were other factors to contributed to the killing, however upon reading the whole DHR, this was not found to be the case. The above sentence places some responsibility on the victim by way of provocation and creates a silence surrounding the behaviours of the perpetrator.

Referring to the 8-Stages of Homicide (Monckton-Smith, 2020), this act of the victim redirecting her mail could sit under Stage 4: Trigger. It was explained in the DHR that

Victoria had experienced violence and coercive control in her relationship with the perpetrator (Stage 3) and it was soon after the discovery of mail redirection that the abuse escalated (Stage 5) and the killing occurred (Stage 8). As previously, the 8-Stage Homicide Timeline can aid in showing instances where perpetrators and those being defensive of his actions can blame the victim, and the above is an example of the link between a trigger, in Victoria's case a Provocation, performed by the victim and the killing.

This was not found to be a singular occurrence in the DHR dataset, as Kazia's and April's behaviours were situated as responsible factors in their assaults and later deaths:

> "*Kazia had been physically assaulted by Babur after she refused his repeated requests for sex*" (Kazia DHR)
>
> "*she had said something he did not like and he went mad, he then started hitting her, strangling her and put his hand over her mouth and hit her on the head*" (April DHR).

Blaming the victim through Provocation creates an image that victims cannot do anything without the risk of violence being ever present (Monckton-Smith, 2020). The above quotes imply that Kazia could not deny sexual intercourse, and April could not speak her mind without the threat of abuse and fatal violence. The legal and social argument of Provocation is seen as a tool for regulating a woman's behaviour (Tyson, 2013) and attempt to fit them into perpetrators' unattainable expectations, and when this is not achieved, provocation is used as a means to justify the killing of a current or former female partner, such as Kazia and April.

A similar pattern was apparent in the analysed media articles that placed the behaviour of the victim as a provocative event that held some responsibility for the killing. Victims were noted to have been killed:

> "*following an argument over arrangements for their pet dog*" (Barbara Media)
>
> "*was killed after she discovered her partner's secret affair with a man and tried to make him face reality*" (Jessica Media)
>
> "*after she challenged him for gambling away their income*" (Asam Media)

> "*smothered with a pillow after she had upset him* [the perpetrator] *over his mother's grave*" (Diane Media)
>
> "*stabbed 21 times after he* [the perpetrator] *had found an online receipt for a gift she had bought her new partner*" (Kelly Media)
>
> "*he confessed he killed her because 'she's got a new boyfriend and I was jealous'*" (Jayde – Media)

Here, the provocation is written in a defensive way where the authors have taken a cause (behaviour of the victim) and placed it directly next to the outcome (the killing), making it appear to be an 'open and shut' case in terms of where the blame for the crime lays. By blaming the victims behaviour in the above manner creates little room for readers to look for other avenues, such as the perpetrator, to place responsibility. It has been argued previously that society's value systems are reflected in the degree of tolerance and acceptance of violence that creates excusable and inexcusable means for aggressive behaviours by perpetrators (Krahe, 2018). How the above sentences are structured allows for fatal violence to be accepted as an appropriate response and allows societies' structurally granted right for men to use violence on women as a means to maintain control over them (Yllo, 1993).

A counter discourse to Provocation is one that specifically places the blame on the perpetrator without excusing his actions through the behaviour of the victim. Within the data analysed, this was evidence in only two DHR reports:

> "*paranoia is making him believe she is unfaithful and therefore is provoked into acting the way*" …"*to test if she was being unfaithful*" (Rose DHR)

Although Provocation is mentioned, the quote is structured so that the object of the sentence is instead his 'paranoia' rather than the victim's behaviour. By structing the language this way, the perpetrator's mentality becomes the causal factor. Similarly, this also occurred in Zara's DHR:

> "*you and her had separated. She had found another man and you were jealous and angry about that, and you felt humiliated*"

In the same section of the DHR, the author goes on to disclose that the judge in the case stated that the above feelings of jealousy, anger and humiliation were the factors that provoked the killing. Again here, the importance of structure in these scenarios is noted as the author places the emotions of the perpetrator as the cause of the violence

directly, instead of redacting this information and exclusively saying that the victim separating from the relationship caused the killing. Similarly, to perpetrators and those defending him can use Denial of Responsibility to create distance to reduce loss to morality, authors of DHRs and media articles can choose to linguistically create distance between the victim's behaviour/characteristics/situation and the killing as interpreted from the above quotes.

Although the last two quotes of this section provide an example of a positive representation of the perpetrator being provoked, but not through the blame or responsibility of the victim, this only occurred in those two DHRs and was not apparent in any media articles. Despite Provocation legally was not limited to its use for excusing male violence against women, this was the scenario where it was most observed in previous studies (Ainsworth, 2014) and it appears to still be the case in the current research, despite it no longer being a legal defence in the United Kingdom. However, regardless of legality, provocation remains apparent in reports of IPF in different forms of victim blaming to mould women in society to fit the gendered ideologies and achieve what is expected of them (Lees, 1997) or face the threat of violence.

4.3.2 Naggers, Whores, and Libbers (Lees, 1997)

The work of Lees (1997) was very influential in the methodology and the formulation of themes in the current study. In Lees' (1997) analysis on domestic homicide court cases, the reputation of the female victim was imperative to the allocation of responsibility of the male perpetrator. From these observations, Lees (1997) devised three Provocation themes, Naggers (perceived 'nagging' behaviours), Whores (victim committing infidelity) and Libbers (victims behaviour was unconventional with gender norms and ideologies). Although the foundations are from Lees' (1997) study, it is important to state the definition for each theme as explored in the current research. Whores was titled to cover perceived and real infidelity, as well as when the victim formed new relationships; Naggers encapsulates any observations of victims appearing to nag or annoy their former or current partners, similar to the original study; and Libbers evolved from unconventional behaviour to also include when victims appeared

to act in line with powerful and feminist values such as making their own decisions, choices, and living their lives in the way they desired.

4.3.2.1. Naggers

Despite its prevalence in Lees (1997) research, Naggers was not observed as much as first expected in the current research. Naggers was not found to be apparent in any DHRs and only appeared in one set of media articles, the case of Anne Marie where her killing was spoken as an occurrence after she 'nagged' her partner:

> "*after years of being bullied and harangued by his wife*"
>
> "*Ann Marie would often criticise her husband*" and she had once called him a "*crap parent*".

The theme of Anne Marie being a 'nag' overshadowed all the four articles analysed in her case. It encapsulated feelings of sympathy with the perpetrator and was used as an explanation for his loss of control that resulted in the perpetrator killing her. In the above quotes, the structure of the language posits acts of 'criticism' and 'haranguing' as excusable reasons for the fatal violence by painting the victim in a negative way and linguistically having minimal distance between the victim and the killing.

Arguably, it is a positive finding that Naggers was not found to be as common as in Lees' (1997) research or as common as it was expected by the current researcher to be, as it shows a progression where nagging is perhaps no longer considered (as much as it used to be) an appropriate victim blaming argument for provocation. However, the absence of Naggers does highlight the question whether this is an improvement, or if the usage has instead extrapolated to another type of victim blaming, such as Whores and Libbers.

It is important to mention that the following two themes were not often spoken about in the direct way in which Provocation was found to be. Instead, they are used to create a picture of the victim to potentially invoke feelings of understanding as to why she was killed, or to create an explanation on behalf of the perpetrator as to why he killed her.

4.3.2.2 Whores

The theme of Whores was found in both DHRs and media articles in the current study. To clarify, 'Whores' was the chosen name of the theme as it matched Lees' (1997) work and helps to show continuity of prevalence between the two studies. However, if the continuity were not considered necessary, the theme instead would have been titled 'Infidelity and Betrayal' to remove an arguably derogatory name from the research.

Moving forward, the act or idea of infidelity or the victim starting a new relationship was discussed in a way in DHRs that appeared to be a provocation for killings.

> "*Mr H's* [perpetrator] *case rested on the contention that he lost his self-control and snapped when he found out about the new man with Ms FC and that her relationship with him (Mr H) was over*." (Ms FC DHR)
>
> "*my girlfriend is having romantic relations with another male" … "he* [perpetrator] *had a moment of passion and lost control and stabbed her*." (Maria DHR)

As discussed in the above Provocation theme, the above quotes' structure creates little distance between the behaviour of the victim and the violent acts of the perpetrator. It states that the perpetrator was provoked from finding out about the victim's new relationship which resulted in a loss of control when he 'snapped' or 'had a moment of passion and lost control'; suggestion of the 'red mist homicidal fury' that Howe (2013) has previously described. Looking deeper into the idea of new relationships being a provoking factor in killing pertains to the idea of sexual terrorism (Caputi & Russell, 1992). Sexual terrorism is defined as a sense of entitlement whereby men believe they own the women in their lives and can control them. Feminists have argued that this sense of ownership has been woven into both society's historic and modern times (Campbell, 1992; Wilson & Daly, 1992), making it a common and prevalent observation in IPF cases. It can therefore be suggested that the two perpetrators above had a perceived sense of ownership of their former/current partners and when this was jeopardised by the new relationship and infidelity (trigger – Stage 4), they escalated through the 8-Stages of Homicide and killed the victims (Stage 8).

The Whores theme was also observed in media articles, some of which divulged that the perpetrator believed the victim was either cheating on him or had started a new relationship, similar to the above DHRs:

> *"he stabbed her to death after accusing her of having an affair"* (Jayde Media)
>
> *"boyfriend stabbed mother of one to death because he was jealous of her speaking to other men"* (Charlotte Media)
>
> *"Hamer claimed Joanne was untrue to him and having affairs."* (Joanne Media)

However, these articles presented more linguistic distance as they structured the perpetrators' *perception* of infidelity/new relationship as the provocation to the killing instead of the *behaviour* of the victim. Therefore, increasing the distance between the victim and the killing whilst decreasing the distance between the killing and the perpetrator. This was achieved by the infidelity and new relationships being portrayed as 'just is,' factual, events, rather than painting them as provocative behaviours capable of justifying fatal violence. This was an unexpected finding as it was previously thought that claiming infidelity and direct victim blaming of this manner would be more directly linked and more common in media articles due to factors such as newsworthiness (as mentioned in Denial of Responsibility – Self-Inflicted). However, this was only observed in two cases of media articles analysed:

> "*she laughed off his advances and had sex with his friend that same evening",* and afterwards *"killer found guilty of slitting mum of 3's throat after she turned him down'"* (Kelly-Anne Media)
>
> *"Sinclair followed Kylie and strangled her" ..."after accusing her of 'looking at other men'"* (Kylie – Media)

The articles in Kelly-Anne's case focused heavily on Kelly-Anne rejecting sexual intercourse with Sinclair when he asked her, and instead she had sex with one of his friends. The act of Kelly-Anne 'laughing off his advances' and having sexual intercourse with the perpetrator's friend arguably has no relevance to the case or the responsibility for the killing. However, it can be suggested that this note was included in the articles to create a negative image of the victim and make it easier to blame Kelly-Anne for potentially provoking the perpetrator, and therefore placing her as partially responsible for her killing. This and the act of accusing Kylie of 'looking at other men' fits directly in

with the Whores theme identified in Lees (1997) as it suggests the victim was not loyal to the perpetrator's interpretation of their relationship and provoked him into killing her because Kelly-Anne had sexual intercourse with someone else. Bringing back the idea of Belief in a Just World (believing that crime is only committed because the perpetrator was provoked into doing so) in reference to this case and how the authors have structured Kelly-Anne's behaviour directly in contribution to the perpetrator's fatal violence could imply that if Kelly-Anne had had sexual intercourse with the perpetrator, then she would not have been killed. It is problematic for a victim to be expected to have sex with someone who they don't want to have sex with to prevent them from being killed. Although this is not what the article is directly saying, it can be an interpretation from the above quote and the four articles analysed as a whole and is a clear example of how victim blaming is used within the Whores theme.

Like the Naggers theme, the above example was the only example found of Lees' (1997) Whores dichotomy in the current research. This could be a progression in victim blaming and increasing the importance of women's sexual choices, which could be a result of the change in the legal defence in 2009, when infidelity could no longer be argued as a viable provocation to murder. If this is the case, it exhibits how important the choice of language use is when discussing cases of IPF.

4.3.2.3 Libbers

In this study, Libbers encompasses where the act of women showing their own autonomy is structured to be seen as a provocation to their killing. Although prevalent in DHRs and media articles, it was observed to be more common in the latter. From a feminist standpoint, a person making their own choices and standing up for themselves is a positive position to hold. However, in the case of AA (DHR), the act of being a Libber was showed to be considered in two differing ways:

> "*if anything, the information provided in the interview with BB* [perpetrator] *suggested that she felt comfortable answering back and speaking her mind*." (AA DHR)

The above quote can be read and interpreted in two ways; either with the connotation of 'strength' and implying a sense of pride in the victim for defending herself, or it can be read with the connotation of 'testing' and 'provocative' and could even imply that the

victim and perpetrator were 'as bad as each other.' This quote is a helpful indication of the two interpretations that were often found when observing the Libbers theme.

In the media articles analysed, a pattern was identified where victims were placed as the provoking factor for the killing by disclosing (or not disclosing) that they wanted to terminate the relationship or that they were moving on individually from the abuse they had experienced (by way of getting a new job, moving areas, seeing friends and family):

> "*Showed his anger and resentment that his wife was seeking a new life*" (Aliny Media)
>
> "*fatal attack happened after…she said she wanted their relationship to end*" (Charlotte Media)
>
> *"he attacked her when it became clear she no longer wanted to be in a relationship with him*" (Susan Media).

These quotes highlight the idea of ownership that was discussed earlier. It can be implied that the victims provoked the perpetrators by exhibiting behaviour that showed they were no longer capable of being owned or controlled. As outlined in section 4.2.2, it is this perceived loss of ownership and control that may have resulted in the killings occurring in these cases. By breaking the sense of ownership by acting independently with autonomy (Libbers), the victims and their behaviours have been structured to be a provocation.

It is important to again mention the damaging (intentionally or not) effects that language use in media articles can have in real life. The above quotes show victims wishing to move on or separate from an abusive relationship which has been placed linguistically as a provoking factor for their deaths. By structuring news articles or reports in this way can invoke fear in its readers that leaving an abusive relationship could lead to loss of life. Although in research, namely the 8 Stages of Homicide (Monckton-Smith, 2020) states that Separation is a stage that can lead to homicide, leaving an abusive relationship (when possible, for the victim) is ultimately the best thing to do and victims should not be placed in a position that language in media articles dissuades them from doing so. It is not believed that this is a desired effects authors of media articles and DHRs have, but it is a potential consequence of framing the link between separation and homicide in this provoking manner. This argument pertains to the idea that

constructions of reality are created through language and can have harmful consequences if the language and structure are not considered appropriately. Instead of structing the killings as 'he did this because she did that' and therefore blaming the victims, focus should instead be on the behaviours of the perpetrator without this inclusion of the autonomy and behaviours of the victims as contributing factors.

4.3.3 Key Findings

Throughout the data analysed, Provocation appeared to be a backbone facet in defensive narratives including victim blaming. This is suggested to be because when responsibility is denied, other parties and factors involved are sought to be blamed and placed as responsible for the killings. Provocation allows for a socially constructed reality where violent behaviours can be justified as a result of perpetrators being provoked into acting that way, which in turn places responsibility for the killings on the shoulders of those who caused the 'provocation', in IPF cases, these are the shoulders of the victims. These findings can be representative of the 'Belief in a Just World' theory (see section 2.3.2) as the idea of a provocative victim may be more agreeable than an unjust world where people kill without provocation.

Naggers, Whores, and Libbers showed some examples of the ways victims' behaviours and characteristics were seen and structured as provocations in this data analysis and explains potential negative social consequences of doing so. In comparison to Lees' (1997) study, the Libbers theme appears to be used in modernised manner. The above section shows how 'libbers' has expanded beyond women who act outside of gender norms and ideologies (Less, 1997), as it also was found to encapsulate women's choices and freedom to live the life they choose. In another contrast to Lees' (1997) work, 'naggers' was perceived to hold less strength as an acceptable justification than Lees first discussed, due to its decrease in usage than first hypothesised. However, it is important to remember that Lees' (1997) work incorporated live court trial transcriptions, whereas the current study is written word that allows for a period of editing and proofing.

Moving on from Provocation and Naggers, Whores, and Libbers, all of which pertain to the idea of women not fitting in with gender norms and societal expectations of them,

the next theme discussed debates the idea of victims being on trial themselves for their own killings due to the questioning of their actions, behaviours, and characteristics prior to their deaths.

4.4 Theme 3: Victim on Trial

The idea of victims being put on trial themselves in a court regarding their own killing has been touched on briefly in this report. The judge in the Duffy case stated that the victim should not be questioned as culpable of responsible for their own murder as they are no longer alive to argue against and save face and credibility (1948, as cited in Howe, 2013). Lees (1997) however stated that female victims are often on trial for their own killing where their life, behaviour, and reputation are the focus instead of the behaviours of the perpetrator. This brings in the work of Christie (1986) who stated that there is a hierarchy of victimology where some victims are deemed more deserving of the status 'victim' than others, based on their behaviours, characteristics, and situations prior to their deaths. The 'Ideal Victim' is someone of respectable character who is unknown to the perpetrator, are seen as weak (i.e., female or elderly), are unable to be blamed in any way for the situation they were in when the crime occurred, were carrying out a respectable job at the time of the crime (Christie, 1986) and report the crime against them to appropriate authorities (Van Wijk, 2013). When a victim appears unable to meet these 'targets,' or if they are seen in some way culpable in provoking the killing, then they are considered less than the 'ideal victim', creating this hierarchy of victims.

Meyers (1997) notes that in news media, female IPF victims who were seen to have deviated from the above listed expectations and societal gender norms were often constructed as blameworthy for their own victimisation. For example, if they were noted to have engaged in premarital sex, casual sexual relationships, or drug and/or alcohol use, they were portrayed as deserving of their killings (Meyers, 1997). It is this idea around victims being placed on trial, and the work of Christie (1986) that influenced the formation of the theme Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof. There were both DHRs and media articles alike where some spoke very highly of the victim and would place them under the categories Christie (1986) suggested made them an ideal victim.

Other documents however, reported victims to be outside of these categories, and made a point of examining how 'imperfect' that victim appeared.

4.4.1 Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof

When analysing DHRs, it was often found that victims were presented as unable to fit into the categories identified by Christie (1986) and this was presented as a factual statement rather than a suggestable negative connotation. As an example, Ms FC (DHR) and Anna (Media) were overtly described to:

> "*not fit the stereotype of an abused victim*" (Ms FC DHR)
>
> *"she went off the rails and became something of a wild child."* (Anna Media)

The quote noting 'stereotype' suggests that abused victims are easy to identify, perhaps through the way they behave and present themselves. This is not the case as anyone can be killed by their current or former partner and there are no set guidelines as to how victims should look and behave to be recognised as a victim of violence, and being 'something of a wild child' is not a justification for victimisation. Although there is research available that does quantitively identify characteristics of both victims and perpetrators that are commonly seen within femicide cases (see Brennan, 2016), it does not mean that it is an exhaustive list. The above quote implies that Ms FC and Anna were not 'ideal victims' (Christie, 1986) due to not matching the socially constructed stereotype that is expected of a femicide victim.

In contrast to the above, there were also observations in DHRs and media articles that placed the victims as 'ideal' and appeared to compliment the victims on their behaviour prior to their killing:

> "*she was resourceful and proactively asked for help, services did not respond to her appropriately*" (Janice DHR)
>
> "*Alice took proactive steps to safeguard her social media and attempt to block contact from the perpetrator…she did disclose that she was frightened*" (Alice DHR).
>
> *"she was supporting you; she loved you"* (speaking to the perpetrator about the victim – Elize Media)
>
> *"victim 'didn't have a bad bone in her body and couldn't do enough for others"* (Lauren Media)

There is a sense of praise within these quotes for the actions taken by the victims that were seemingly elicited to prevent their killing, and this 'initiative-taking' behaviour arguably places these victims high on the victim hierarchy as they are unable to be blamed for not actioning preventative behaviours. Despite talking positively about the victims and their actions and character towards people the perpetrators prior to their deaths, the focus is still on the victim and their behaviour, not the perpetrator. Whilst this inclusion of information may have been for the authors to build context, it is important to question why said context must include the behaviours of the victim when they were not the ones to be violent. By mentioning the behaviours of victims allows critique of them to occur, thus, putting the victim on trial.

Differing from seemingly positive quotes about the victim's behaviour, some DHRs were observed to write with a more negative view of the victim:

> "*Due to Crystal's past behaviours and lies, these allegations were taken 'with a pinch of salt'*" (Crystal DHR)
>
> "*she is no angel, she has a criminal record and referred to a time when she stabbed him*" (Donna DHR)

Crystal and Donna are not seen to be the 'ideal' victim as they have not behaved accordingly with 'respectable characters' (Christie, 1986). To say, 'she is no angel' and give the impression of being a liar and untrustworthy presents the idea that Donna and Crystal were more deserving of her killing than perhaps Janice and Alice were. The idea of victims deserving the crimes committed against them can be linked back to the theory of Belief in a Just World (BJW). In the context of IPF, BJW argues that nothing will happen if it is unfair or unjust. As an example, a perpetrator will not kill a victim if it was unprovoked or undeserving; the perpetration of crime is seen to only occur when there is a justifiable reason for it. Easteal, Holland and Judd (2015) found that media articles specifically (however their research did not include DHRs and it is thought that the findings can be extrapolated), frame violence against women with a theme of victims and perpetrators being 'mutually responsible'. This is an example of how victim blaming discourse can detract from the underlying social causes of violence, such as patriarchy and societal expectations of women (not perceived as 'ideal' women). Here, the quotes provide the impression that Crystal and Donna were not 'ideal victims' and their

behaviour prior to their deaths is represented to be at least partly justifiable reasons as to why they were killed.

A factor in which makes a victim 'ideal' is them being confident in reporting the crime against them (Van Wijk, 2013). The reporting or lack of reporting by the victim was mentioned across both DHRs and media articles:

> "*Annie never indicated any domestic abuse or coercion and control from the perpetrator*" (Annie DHR)
>
> "*multiple contacts with the police, almost all of which resulted in no further action due to Crystal being reluctant to substantiate initial reports*" (Crystal – DHR)
>
> "*Fatima always withdrew her complaints against Sharifi*" (Suvekshya Media)

There are many reasons why a victim might not report the violence committed prior to her killing, or support a prosecution, an example of which being that they may feel like they will be stigmatised by the justice system and the community (Emery, Jolley & Wu, 2011). Additionally, victims may feel like they must attempt to 'handle' the abusive situation on their own, due to the social narrative that domestic abuse is a problem 'kept behind closed doors' (Straus, Gelles & Steinmetz, 1980). There is also the argument that no one understands the abusive situation better than the victim involved (Monckton-Smith, 2021), who is trying to keep herself safe. This begs the question as to why not reporting is argued to make a victim less than 'ideal.' It creates stigma around victims of IPF and IPV (Intimate Partner Violence), suggesting that they should have 'tried harder' to leave, which further gives the connotation that their actions were not good enough in preventing the killing, which in turn, places the victims as partially responsible.

Specifically in media articles, the theme of Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof was observed to be more direct than when identified in DHRs. For example, in the DHRs explored above, the idea of a victim being 'ideal' or not was found to be more of a connotation to the quotes examined, rather than a direct statement. The following quotes give an example of how direct some media articles analysed constructed the victim as being 'not ideal':

> "*Ann Marie's own mother said to Pomphret* [the perpetrator] *he 'deserved a medal for putting up with Marie'*" (Ann Marie Media)
>
> "*Kylie gave as good as she got during arguments…Kylie was not an angel*" (Kylie Media)
>
> "*Mrs Dunster* [a person who knew the perpetrator and victim] *said it was 'hit for hit, punch for punch'*" (Teresa Media)
>
> "*both* [perpetrator and victim] *prone to fits of violence when they had been drinking"* (Tracey Media)

These quotes place the victims low on the victim hierarchy due to portraying them as problematic and deserving of the abuse and killing they suffered because they seemingly 'gave as good as they got.' Another way to look at the victims, however, is of them standing up for themselves and speaking their mind (Libbers theme). Despite this, the quotes question the behaviour of the victims prior to their killings, presenting them as difficult and not 'ideal victims' due to their provocative actions. In doing so, it can also place victims as being undeserving of the victim status when they are put on trial in this manner (relating back to Denial of Victim, Sykes & Matza, 1957), which can especially be seen in Ann Marie's case, where she is downgraded as somebody to just 'put up with', rather than a woman who deserves love and care.

4.4.2 Key Findings

There is an interesting note of crossover between Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof and the Provocation themes (section 4.3). The idea of a perfect victim is that they are victims who meet the standards and expectations of what society recognises as being traits of a victim underserving of the crime committed against them, which can link to Belief in a Just World theory (see 2.3.2). It became apparent throughout analysing the data in the current study that victims of IPF are subjected to standards in every manner, whether they be standards of a partner, standards of a woman, or standards of a victim. How IPF was reported in the documents and analysed, and the language used within the reports constructed a reality (not in all data collected, but in the majority) where female victims were 'set up for failure' as unachievable standards in the examples above were set out, and then used against the victims when they inevitably were not fulfilled.

The idea of victims behaviour and characteristics being put on trial (Lees, 1997) to see if they were behaving 'correctly' and in line with the 'ideal' expectations of a victim creates this thought that the killing would have been prevented if the standards were met. However, focusing on the victim and their behaviours, characteristics and situations prior to their killings is instead providing the opportunity for the perpetrators' actions to be ignored or brushed over.

4.5 Summary

After analysing both DHRs and media articles, a multitude of victim blaming themes was found and utilised, with the crucial themes being Responsibility and Blame (including Denial of Responsibility and Blaming the/Her Situation), Provocation (including Provocation, Naggers, Whores and Libbers) and Perfect Victim/Lack Thereof. Despite the time difference between the current study and the work of Sykes and Matza (1957), Christie (1986) and Lees (1997), the findings of this research are centred around similar, if not the same findings as the previous literature discussed in section 2. What this chapter demonstrates is that victim blaming is ever-present in representations and discussions of IPF, can appear in many forms, and can have a different effect on the defensive narratives they are presented within.

In the concluded chapter of this research, the research objectives are explored with references to historic studies explored in Chapter 2 and the findings analysed in Chapter 4, before moving onto reflect on the current study, further recommendations for research and the importance of research into victim blaming and the positive affect it can have.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Research Objective 1: Examine Historical Themes of Victim Blaming used in Defensive Narratives in IPF

Through reviewing the literature discussion in Chapter 2, this objective was achieved and then further enhanced through the comparisons made between the literature and the findings of this study's analysis of data. It was found to be a possibility that the frequency of some of the themes may have decreased over time. For example, the Naggers theme was not observed as often as expected. Lees (1997) who devised his theme noted in her research how common it was for IPF victims to be labelled as 'nags'. In the current study however, Naggers was only observed in one set of media articles and was a covert representation of the victim, observed more in the connotations of the language used rather than the language itself. However, this was the only historical theme that its decreased frequency than expected, with other themes being observed as hypothesised, with Denial of Responsibility and Provocation being the most utilised.

Additionally, other themes were seen to be enhanced perhaps through time and society, such as Libbers (Lees, 1997) which now encapsulates women's choice and freedom to live life as desired, in addition to propensity to fit in with gendered ideologies and expectations. Despite these differences, it is clear that historical themes of victim blaming are still present in today's language use and perhaps will continue to be.

5.2 Research Objective 2: Critically Assess how Victim Blaming Discourse affect Defensive Narratives in IPF

To simplify, this objective was asking whether victim blaming discourse had a positive or negative impact on defensive narratives; were they useful for those defending the perpetrator, or were they unsuccessful? Chapter 4 demonstrates that throughout this research, victim blaming was a crucial aspect of defensive narratives as the narratives were largely, if not completely, grounded in the foundations of victim blaming. The

effects of the victim blaming discourse was discussed to be the result of the linguistic distance utilised within the language used by the authors of the data as well as further context surrounding the quotes observed. Although DHRs and media articles included different victim blaming themes to varying degrees, it is clear to see that victim blaming remains consistent. Despite this, it is important to explicitly say that not all cases of IPF include victim blaming, including some reports of which were analysed for this current study. It is relieving to note that some DHRs remained objective, factful, and exhibited little, if not any, victim blaming discourse, showing a positive step in the right direction for reporting IPF. However, after analysing 30 DHRs and 120 individual media articles, this was found to be a rarity.

To incorporate Objective 1, it is also important to note that historic themes of victim blaming, such as Naggers, Whores and Libbers (Lees, 1997) and Perfect Victim (Christie, 1986), and past theoretical techniques, to explain aspects of defensive narratives, such as Techniques of Neutralisation (Sykes & Matza, 1957) and Belief in a Just World are still being utilised today in an attempt to remove complete blame and responsibility from perpetrators. However, in some cases it is noted that the context of the report is just as significant in the effects on defensive narratives as the victim blaming themes are. Sometimes, the victim blaming themes only became obvious when the connotations of the language and context were analysed, rather than being overt and unequivocal. Despite this covert influence, it still created an environment where the victim credibility is questioned and can be perceived as blameful.

5.3 Research Objective 3: Develop a Contemporary Framework of Victim Blaming Discourse found in Defensive Narratives in IPF

This objective was to create a framework that tied the information found, researched, reviewed and analysed in the first two objectives, together in one space which Chapter 4 shows. Although not discussed due to their lack of depth and application to this specific study, other themes such as Disposable and Responsibility for Self-Protection was observed in the research as well as those listed previously. Responsibility for Self-Protection is about victims being held as responsible for the violence that happen

against them due to not preventing it. The focus being on how the victims failed to protect themselves, rather than focusing on the perpetrator and why he should not have killed the victim regardless of her behaviour. Disposable is a victim status that placed victim lower than a 'not ideal' victim (Christie, 1986) and instead marks them as objects under ownership which can be disposed of when they no longer match expectation of the perpetrator, dehumanising the victims. The themes mentioned are believed to require specific research and reviewing conducted into them as there is more depth to them than the parameters of this current research include, but by observing them in DHRs and media articles datasets, they begin to steer the framework of victim blaming into a new direction of victim focus than previously observed in the other themes discussed throughout this report.

The aim of this research was "To establish the use and nature of victim blaming discourses in defensive narratives within IPF cases", and this study has been successful in achieving this. This study has found that victim blaming is a very common linguistic tool reached for by authors and editors when reporting IPF cases, both in DHRs and media articles, and it has a strong effect in making defensive narratives believable and accepted. An overall takeaway from this study is that victim blaming appears to be nearly inescapable in the world of femicide and violence against women, and more must be done to learn about it and change the language moving forward. The more we know about victim blaming, the better equipped we are to target and argue against it, so that IPF victims and their loved ones are no longer secondarily victimised.

5.4 Reflections on Victim Blaming and the Importance of Research

As explored and concluded from the above study, victim blaming discourses have a successful impact in narratives that are defensive of the perpetrators' actions. Whether it is by using one or more techniques of neutralisation (Sykes & Matza, 1957), justifications or excuses (Scott & Lyman 1968), or an available victim blaming discourse such as loss of control or belief in a just world, they all have the capability to remove blame from the perpetrator and excuse him of being fully responsible for killing. As seen in the data analysed, many victims of IPF are being secondarily victimised by being places as culpable in their own killing without the ability to defend themselves.

In research about the criminal justice system, it has been long recognised that women are side-lined due to the systems in the UK, Canada, Australia, United States and New Zealand being rooted in dominant male values rather than gender equality (Hudson, 2006; Mackinnon, 2005; Sheehy, 2002; Yancy Martin, 2005). Researchers argue that this is because criminal justice systems in the present day cannot be separated from a history where women were deemed as untrustworthy, inferior and the property of men (Edwards et al 2011). Despite this, in the last few decades, feminist individuals, organisations and researchers have been providing support and education to ensure that the arguably gendered crime of domestic abuse and intimate partner femicide are better understood; attempting to move away from the idea of women being property. According to researchers, there has been a recent shift towards focusing on the perpetrators rather than the victims' behaviour and holding them accountable for their violent and fatal actions in an effort to reduce reoffending (Devaney, 2014; Donovan & Griffths, 2015). The relationship between victims and perpetrators has traditionally been perceived as a critical variable in determining the social and legal reactions to domestic violence and IPF (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1988), so this shift of focus may have altered the way of thinking about these crimes in society.

Researching IPF can have a significant impact on social policy if desired. Within the current literature, there are several studies that have stated and showed predictable patterns and precursors to IPF, leading up to the actual homicide. According to Websdale (2003) many domestic violence experts believe that because of these patterns, IPH with both female and male victims, are potentially preventable. The more research that goes into these killings, the better standing there is for social policy to change when it comes to reporting, charging and prosecuting IPH. Often, the public get their information about IPF from the media, and it is common for the perpetrator to be spoken about in terms of positive attributes such as hard working and having a loving nature, that in turn, minimises and potentially ignores the severity of his murderous actions (Brennan, 2016). By writing about perpetrators of IPF in this way creates a sense of normalisation of violence upon women in society. If policy were to change, victims of IPF may be written about more respectfully and this normalisation would decline in

mainstream media, making it a less romanticised topic of reading and more aware of the victim's experiences.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

As explored in the above chapters many researchers have attempted to explain victim blaming as a product of patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity. However, more current studies may be required to see if there is a correlation between today's belief of victim blaming, and prejudices in society. A focus for future research as an addition to this current study, could be to review victim blaming beliefs and prejudices of female victims and women in general in current day to attempt to find if these prejudices are strong, accepted and consistent in a large amount of people, or if there may be other explanations as to why victim blaming is often an automatic response to IPF killings. To appropriately get an understanding of a society's views and prejudices, this study would have to be conducted on a very large scale with a vast number of participants from different ethnicities, backgrounds, genders and ages, however, to obtain data of this scale can be difficult. Despite that, it seems a necessary feat to overcome to better understand the acceptance and usage of victim blaming beliefs in the public, criminal justice system, and other institutions.

A further recommendation for this research would be to further expand this triangulation dataset to include observations and transcriptions of IPF/IPH court hearings in real time. Where writing and editing media articles and DHRs can take time, it is assumed that often in court hearings there is an aspect of spontaneity where quick thinking is a requirement for those that are wishing to prosecute or defend the perpetrator, and it would be significant to see if and what victim blaming discourses are chosen to aid in defensive narratives. This future research can come with its own difficulties as it can be complicated to find and fund attending court hearings that are appropriate to the study, and with audio recording sometimes not being allowed from the public gallery, remembering and recording what was discussed could cause problems with data collection. However, providing that these difficulties can be overcome, observing court hearings and trials and collecting victim blaming discourse and defensive narratives can only aid in the theoretical framework of victim blaming

and increase our understanding of its usage. This was also a data collection choice by Lees (1997) and as monumental as her research continues to be, it is important that studies can be adjusted and repeated throughout time to find progression and/or regression of its findings within society.

Additionally, the current study and those suggested above would be beneficial to collate together and to recommend changes to policy. For example, the work by Level Up as discussed previously could be expanded to become a mandatory guideline for journalists of media articles, as well as authors and editors of DHRs to eradicate reporting in a victim blaming narrative without challenge. Doing this could ensure that victims of killing are consistently written about mindfully and portrayed accurately and with empathy and compassion, rather than to blame. Regarding intimate partner violence and abuse, this would be beneficial to victims as it could reduce stigma and fear of coming forward to individuals or organisations, such as the police, and allowing victims to instead feel like they would be believed, supported and protected.

Further training to practitioners within the criminal justice system could also be created as a result of the above studies, specifically in the treatment and representations of victims. If attention was paid to training individuals to recognise and challenge victim blaming beliefs and narratives in organisations such as the police, the courts, and probation services, this too would aid in reducing stigma for past, present and future victims. As noted, Brennan (2016) calls violence against women and girls a global pandemic, and it is with further training and changes to policy as a result of research that could pave the way for female victims of violence being more likely to be believed and supported, and perpetrators to be held responsible.

5.6 Final Thoughts

Throughout this research, Claire Oldfield-Hampson constantly comes to mind in regard to how she was failed by her husband, and how she was failed in her death. Many, many women, like Claire, who have been killed by their current or former partner are susceptible to victim blaming beyond the grave, and this study does not even include the victim blaming they may have experienced whilst living in an abusive relationship.

When reading reports of IPF such as the ones above, although individuals are not reading the exact phrase 'the victim is held at least partially responsible for their killing', consumers of information are instead receiving the hidden defensive narratives and victim blaming discourses that can potentially be obtained and stored at a subconscious level. These subconscious discourses of victim blaming can be damaging to victims of IPV, IPF and society as a whole as they can create prejudices and belief systems where violence against women and girls is accepted and justified, based on the arguments they have previously witnessed or observed. When victims of violence are prejudiced against, judged, and questioned, it is possible that they will be less likely to turn to others for support away from their abusive environment and become stuck with little help from outsiders. It is important to remember and consistently remind those around us who argue otherwise, that despite victim blaming beliefs and prejudices active in societies, male perpetrators are 100% to blame for the violence and killings they inflict on women, and the female victims are not to blame at all, regardless of how defensive narratives choose to frame victims of IPF.

To see the amount of victim blaming apparent, just from this one study can be disheartening, but it is important to remember that just as we have given power to these themes, discourse and defensive narratives as a society by accepting them as true time and time again, we can also remove that power by arguing against these narratives and standing up for those that can no longer defend themselves. In further research, it could be helpful have a much larger theoretical framework of victim blaming created that encapsulates all findings from a multitude of studies over a period of time, as an example, the most recent 10 years. This, combined with victim blaming discourse in defensive narratives for intimate partner violence as an addition to femicide, would create a large wealth of knowledge of victim blaming that can be easily accessible for everyone. To have this information in one place could make it easier for training against victim blaming and patriarchal prejudices surrounding victims to be implemented, such as in the criminal justice system and news reporting. Knowledge is power and we give a vast majority of that power to language. If we can shift the language for victims, rather than against, discussions, policies, and reports of victims can and will change for the better. We have failed too many women for too long, like Claire, by accepting that they

are to blame for their own killing. These women are their own powerful individuals, and they are mothers, daughters, sisters, nieces, aunts, grandmothers and friends and they deserve to be represented and portrayed as such, not as a ‘nag,’ not as disposable. It is time that we change the language for them.

6. References

Ainsworth, J. (2014) 'Review of D. Tyson (2013) sex, culpability and the defence of provocation, and R. Shuy (2012) the language of sexual misconduct cases,' *Gender and Language, 9,* pp. 319-325. Doi: 10.1558/genl.v9i2.17939

Alat, Z. (2006) "News Coverage of Violence against Women," *Feminist Media Studies*, 6(3), pp. 295–314.

Alcoff, L. and Potter, E. (1993) *Feminist epistemologies*. New York: Routledge

Archer, J. (2000) 'Sex differences in aggression between heterosexual partners: a meta-analytic review,' *Psychological Bulletin, 126*(5), pp. 651-80

Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). 'Thematic networks: An analytic tool for qualitative research'. *Qualitative Research*, 1, 385–405. doi:10.1177/146879410100100307

Bareket, O., Kahalon, R., Shnabel, N., & Glick, P. (2018) 'The Madonna-whore dichotomy: Men who perceive women's nurturance and sexuality as mutually exclusive endorse patriarchy and show lower relationship satisfaction,' *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research, 79*(9-10), pp. 519-532. Doi: 10.1007/s11199-018-0895-7.

Barlow, A.A. (2013) *News Media Constructions of Male Perpetrated Intimate Partner Homicide*. Dissertation. Library and Archives Canada (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Saskatchewan)

Baron, J.B., & Epstein, J. (1997) Is Law Narrative? *Buffalo Law Review, 141*(45), p.147

Baxter, J.A. (2008) *Feminist Post-Structuralist Discourse Analysis: A New Theoretical and Methodological Approach?* Pp. 243-255. Palgrave, MacMillan.

Becker, H. S. (1963) *Outsiders: studies in sociology of deviance*. New York: Free

Bennett, W.L., & Feldman, M.S. (1981) *Reconstructing Reality in the Courtroom*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press

Benoot, C., & Bilson, J. (2015) 'An auto-ethnographic study of the disembodied experience of a novice researcher doing qualitative cancer research,' *Qualitative Health Research, 26*. Pg. 482-489

Berns, N. (2004) *Framing the victim : domestic violence, media, and social problems*. Aldine Transaction.

Berrington, E. and Honkatukia Päivi (2002) "An Evil Monster and a Poor Thing: Female Violence in the Media," *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 3(1), pp. 50–72.

Block, C. R., & Christakos, A. (1995). 'Intimate partner homicide in Chicago over twenty-nine years,' *Crime & Delinquency, 41*, pp. 496-526.

Block, S. (2006*). Rape and sexual power in early America* . Chapel Hill: University of North Caroline Press.

Bloor, M., Fincham, B., & Sampson, H. (2010) 'Unprepared for the worst: Risk of harm for qualitative researchers,' *Methodological Innovations Online, 5,* pg. 45-55

Bograd, M. (1988) "Feminist perspectives on wife abuse: an introduction," in M. Bograd & K. Yllo (Eds) *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse.* Beverly Hills: Sage

Bourget, B., & Gagne, P. (2012) Women who kill their mates. *Behavioural Sciences and the Law, 30*(5). Pp.598-614

Brennan, D. (2016) *Femicide Census.* Retrieved from: https://www.northwales-pccc.gov.uk/document-library/advice/femicide-census-report-2016.pdf. (Accessed June, 2024)

Brooks, A., & Hesse-Biber, S. (2007) *Feminist Standpoint Epistemology: Building Knowledge and Empowerment through Women's Lived Experience*. Pp. 53-82. Doi: 10.4135-9781412984270.n3

Brownmiller, S. (1975) Against our will: Men, women and rape, New York: Fawcett Columbine

Burman, M. (2010) 'The ability of criminal law to produce gender equality: judicial discourses in the Swedish criminal legal system,' *Violence Against Women, 16*(2), pp. 173-88

Burr, V. (1995). An introduction to social constructionism. London, UK: Routledge

Burr, V. (2003) *Social Constructionism.* Routledge: London

Burr, V. (2015) *Social Constructionism*. Routledge. Available at: *https://eclass.uowm.gr/modules/document/file.php/NURED260/International%20Encyclopedia%20of%20the%20Social%20%26%20Behavioral%20Sciences%20Burr%20Social%20Constructionism%202015.pdf* (Accessed, May, 2023).

Burt, M.R. (1980) "Cultural Myths and Supports for Rape," *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 38(2), pp. 217–30

Campbell, J. C. (1992). "If I can't have you, no one can": Power and control in homicide of female partners,' In J. Radford & D. E. H. Russell (Eds.), *Femicide: The politics of woman killing* (pp. 99– 113). New York: Twayne

Caputi, J. (1989) The sexual politics of murder, Gender & Society, 3: 437–56

Caputi, J., & Russell, D.E.H. (1992) 'Femicide: speaking the unspeakable,' in J. Radford % D.E.H. Russell (ed.) *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing.* New York: Twayne Publishers.

Carll, E. K. (2003) “News Portrayal of Violence and Women: Implications for Public Policy,” *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 46(12), pp. 1601–1601. doi: 10.1177/0002764203254616.

Carrabine, J. (2011) ‘Unmarried motherhood 1830-1990: A genealogical analysis,’ In S. Yates, S. Taylor & M. Wetherell (Eds) *Discourse as Data: A Guide for Analysis,* pp. 267-310. London: Sage

Chouliaraki, L. (2008) ‘Discourse analysis,’ in Bennett, T., & Frow, J (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Cultural Analysis*. London, UK: Sage Publications (pp. 674-698)

Christie, N. (1986) ‘The ideal victim,’ In. E. Fattah (ed) *From Crime Policy to Victim Policy*. Macmillan.

Coker, A. L., Smith, P. H., Thompson, M. P., McKeown, R. E., Bethea, L., & Davis, K. E. (2002). ‘Social support protects against the negative effects of partner violence on mental health,’ *Journal of Women’s Health & Gender-Based Medicine, 11*(5), 465–476. doi:10.1089/15246090260137644

Cook, J.A. and Fonow, M.M. (1990) ‘Knowledge and women’s interests: issues of epistemology and methodology in feminist sociological research’, in J. McCarl Nielsen (ed.) *Feminist Research Methods: Exemplary Readings in the Social Sciences*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Coroners and Justices Act 2009 S54. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/25/section/54#section-56-1 (Accessed: November, 2023)

Corvo, K., & Johnson, P.J. (2003) “Vilification of the ‘batterer’: How blame shapes domestic violence policy and interventions,” *Aggression and Violent Behaviour.* 8, pp. 259-281

Council of Europe (2016) *Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence Against Women: A Learning Resource for Training Law Enforcement and Justice Officers*. Available at: https://rm.coe.int/16805970c1. (Accessed November 2024)

Crotty, M. (1998) *The foundations of social research : meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage Publications.

Crowe, A., & Murray, C. (2015) Stigma from professional helpers toward survivors of intimate partner violence. *Partner Abuse, 6*(2). Doi: 10.1891/1946-6560.6.2.12-57

Dalbert, C. (1998) ‘Belief in a just world, well-being and coping with an unjust fate,’ In L. Montada & M. Lerner (Eds) *Responses to Victimisations and Belief in the Just World,* pp. 87-105.

Datesman, S.K. and Scarpitti, F.R. (eds) (1980). *Women, crime, and justice*. Oxford University Press.

Dawson, M., & Piscitelli, A. (2017) 'Risk factors in domestic homicides: Identifying common clusters in the Canadian context,' *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/0886260517729404

de Beauvoir, S. (1997) *The second sex*. London: Vintage.

Decker, S. (1993) "Exploring Victim-Offender Relationships in Homicide: The Role of Individual and Event Characteristics *," Justice Quarterly, 10(4), pp. 585–612. doi: 10.1080/07418829300092031

Dekeserdy, W.S., & Dragiewicz, M. (2007) 'Understanding the complexities of feminist perspectives on woman abuse,' *Violence Against Women, 13*(8), pp. 874-884

Devaney, J. (2014) 'Male perpetrators of domestic violence: how should we hold them to account?' *The Political Quarterly, 85*(4), pp. 480-486.

Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P. (1998). *Rethinking Violence Against Women*. London, England: Sage

Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P. (2015). *When Men Murder Women*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press

Donovan, C. and Griffiths, S. (2015) Domestic abuse and voluntary perpetrator programmes, British Journal of Social Work, 45: 1155–71.

Dugan, L., Nagin, D.S. & Rosenfeld, R. (2003). 'Exposure reduction or retaliation? The effects of domestic violence resources on intimate-partner homicide,' *Law & society review*, *37*(1), pp.169-198.

Dutton, D.G. (1994) "Patriarchy and wife assault: the ecological fallacy," *Violence and Victims,* 9(2), pp.125-140

Dutton, D.G. (2012) 'The case against the role of gender in intimate partner violence,' in *Aggression and Violent Behaviour 17*(1). Pp. 99-104. Doi:10.1016/j.avb.2011.09.002

Dutton, D.G., & Nicholls, T.L. (2005) 'The gender paradigm in domestic violence research and theory: Part 1 – the conflict of theory and data,' *Aggression and Violent Behaviour, 10*(1), pp. 680-714

Easteal, P., Holland, K., & Judd, K. (2015) 'Enduring themes and silences in media portrayals of violence against women,' *Women's Studies International Forum, 48,* pp. 103-113

Edwards, K. M., Turchik, J. A., Dardis, C. M., Reynolds, N., & Gidycz, C. A. (2011). Rape myths: History, individual and institutional-level presence, and implications for change. *Sex Roles*, 65 (11– 12), 761– 773.

Emery, C.R., Jolley, J.M., & Wu, S. (2011) 'Desistance from intimate partner violence: the role of legal cynicism, collective efficacy, and social disorganisation in Chicago neighbourhoods,' *American Journal of Community Psychology, 48*, pp. 373-383

Farrington, D.P. and Morris, A.M., (1983). 'Sex, sentencing and reconviction'. *The British Journal of Criminology*, *23*(3), pp.229-248.

Fashie, D. (2014) 'Doing sensitive research sensitively: Ethical and methodological issues in researching workplace bullying,' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 13,* pg. 19-36

Fielding, N. (2004) 'Getting the most from archived qualitative data: Epistemological, practical and professional obstacles,' *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 7*(1), pp. 97-104. Doi: 10.1080/1364557031000164069 9

Fitz-Gibbon, K. (2013) 'Replacing provocation in England and Wales: Examining the partial defence of loss of control,' *Journal of Law and Society, 40*(2), pp. 280-305

Foucault, M. (1976) *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Penguin, Harmondsworth

Freud, S. (1905). *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Berlin: Leipzig und Wien.

Galtung, J., & Ruge, M.H. (1965) "The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers," *Journal of Peace Research*, 2(1), pp. 64–90. doi: 10.1177/002234336500200104.

Gavin, H. (2014) *Jealous Men but Evil Women: The Double Standard in Cases of Domestic Homicide*. 6th Global Conference – Evil, Woman and the Feminine.

Gekoski, A., Gray, J.M., & Adler, J.R. (2012) 'What makes a homicide newsworthy? UK tabloid newspaper journalists tell all,' *British Journal of Criminology, 52*(6), pp. 1212-1232

George, A., (2001). *Claire Oldfield-Hampson (Hansard, 8 January 2001)*. [online] Api.parliament.uk. Available at: <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/2001/jan/08/claire-oldfield-hampson#:~:text=The%20judge%20gave%20Hampson%20a,year%20to%20just%20four%20years.> [Accessed December 2023].

George, M.J. (2003) "Invisible touch," *Aggression and Violent Behaviour,* 8, pp. 23-60

Gillespie, L.K., Richards, T.N., Givens, E.M., & Smith, M.D. (2013) 'Framing deadly domestic violence: why the medias' spin matters in newspaper coverage of femicide,' *Violence Against Women, 19*(2). Pp. 222-245. Doi: 10.1177/1077801213476457

Gilligan, C. (1982) *In a different voice: psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press

Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (1996). 'The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory: Differentiating hostile and benevolent sexism,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 70*, 491–512. https://doi.org/ 10.1037/0022-3514.70.3.491 .

Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (2001). 'An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality,' *American Psychologist, 56*, 109–118. https://doi.org/10. 1037/0003-066X.56.2.109.

Glick, P., Fiske, S. T., Mladinic, A., Saiz, J., Abrams, D., Masser, B., Adetoun, B., Osagie, J.E., Akande, A., Alao, A., Brunner, A., Willemsen, T.M., Chipeta, K., Dardenne, B., Dijksterhuis, Ap., Wigboldus, D., Eckes, T., Six-Materna, I., Exposito, F., Moya, M., Foddy, M., Kim, H.J., Lameiras, M., Sotel, M.J., Mucchi-Faina, A., Romani, M., Sakalli, N., Udegbe, B., Yamamoto, M., Ui, M., Ferreira, M.C., and Lopez, W. L. (2000). 'Beyond prejudice as simple antipathy: Hostile and benevolent sexism across cultures,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79*, 763–775. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.79.5.763

Goddard, C., de Bortoli, L., Saunders, B.J., & Tucci, J. (2005) "The Rapist's Camouflage: 'child Prostitution,'" *Child Abuse Review*, 14(4), pp. 275–291. doi: 10.1002/car.894.

Gottfredson, M.R. & Gottfredson, D.M. (1988) *Decision Making in Criminal Justice: Towards a Rational Exercise of Discretion*, 2nd edition. New York: Plenum

Gruenewald, J., Pizarro, J., & Chermak, S.M. (2009) 'Race, gender and the newsworthiness of homicide incidents,' *Journal of Criminal Justice, 37*(3), pp. 262-272

Hamburger, L. K., & Guse, C. E. (2002). Men's and women's use of intimate partner violence in clinical samples. *Violence Against Women*, 8 , 1301–1331.

Hamel, J. (2011) 'In dubious battle: the politics of mandatory arrest and dominant aggressor laws,' *Partner Abuse*, *2*(2), pp. 224-45.

Hamel, J. (2018) 'Intimate partner violence: gender issues and the adjudication of homicide of other cases,' *Journal of Criminological Research, Policy and Practice, 4*(4), pp. 226-237

Hammersley, M. (1997) 'Research note. Qualitative data archiving: Some reflections on its prospects and problems,' *Sociology, 31*(1), pp. 131-142

Hammock, G.D., & Richardson, D.R (1993) 'Blaming drunk victims: Is it just world or sex role violation?' *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 23*, pp. 1574-1586. Doi: 10.1111/j.1559-1816.1993.tb01048.x

Hartmann, U. (2009). 'Sigmund Freud and his impact on our understanding of male sexual dysfunction,' *The Journal of Sexual Medicine, 6*, 2332–2339. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1743-6109.2009.01332.x

Hearn, J. (1998) *The Violences of Men: How Men Talk about and how Agencies Respond to Men's Violence to Women*. Sage. Doi: 10.4135/9781446279069

Hearn, J. (2012) "A Multi-Faceted Power Analysis of Men's Violence to Known Women: From Hegemonic Masculinity to the Hegemony of Men," *The Sociological Review*, 60(4), pp. 589–610. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-954X.2012.02125.x

Heaton, J. (2000) *Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data: A Review of the Literature*. York: Social Policy Research Unit, University of York.

Heider, F. (1958) *The Naïve Analysis of Action*.

Hester, M. (1992). *Lewd women and wicked witches: a study of the dynamics of male domination*. Routledge

Hjelm, T. (2014) *Social constructionisms: Approaches to the study of the human world*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Home Office (2016) *Multi-agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews.* Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-statutory-guidance-for-theconduct-of-domestic-homicide-reviews (Accessed: May, 2023).

Homicide Act 1957, S3. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/5-6/11/section/3/enacted (Accessed: November, 2023).

Howe, A. (2002) 'Provoking polemic-provoked killings and the ethical paradoxes of the postmodern feminist condition,' *Feminist Legal Studies, 10*(1), pp. 39-64

Howe, A. (2013) 'Red mist homicide: sexual infidelity and the English law of murder,' *Legal Studies, 33*(3), pp. 407-430

Hox, J.J., and Boeije, H.R. (2005) 'Data collection, primary vs secondary,' *Encyclopaedia of Social Measurement 1*(1), pp. 593-599

Hubbard, R. (1988) 'Some thoughts about the masculinity of the natural sciences.' In M.M. Gergen (Ed) *Feminist Thoughts and the Structure of Knowledge,* pp. 1-16

Hudson, B. (2006). Beyond white man's justice: Race, gender and justice in the late modernity. *Theoretical Criminology*, 10 (1), 29– 47.

Hunnicutt, G. (2009) Varieties of patriarchy and violence against women resurrecting 'patriarchy' as a theoretical tool, Violence Against Women, 15(5): 553–73.

Innes, M. (2002) 'Police homicide investigations,' *The British Journal of Criminology, 42*(4). PP. 669-688.

Itzen, C. Taket, A. & Barter-Godfrey, S. (2010). *Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse: Tackling the Health and Mental Health Effects*. Taylor and Francis

Jackson, B.S. (1996) Anchored Narratives and the Interface of Law, Psychology and Semiotics. Legal and Criminological Psychology. (1996) 1(1), 17-45

Jewkes, Y. (2004). *Media and crime*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Johnson, H., & Hotton, T. (2003). 'Losing control: Homicide risk in estranged and intact intimate relationships,' *Homicide Studies, 7*, pp. 58-84

Johnson, H., Eriksson, L., Mazerolle, P., & Wortley, R. (2019). 'Intimate Femicide: The role of coercive control,' *Feminist Criminology, 14*, pp. 3-23.

Johnston, H. (1999) 'Six Years for Killer of 'Nagging' Wife,' *London Times* (29 October, 1999)

Johnstone, J.W.C., Hawkins, D.F., & Michener, A. (1995) 'Homicide reporting in Chicago dailies,' *Journalism Quarterly, 71,* pp. 860-872

Kane, E. W., & Schippers, M. (1996). 'Men's and women's beliefs about gender and sexuality,' *Gender and Society, 10,* 650–665. https://doi. org/10.1177/089124396010005009.

Kelly, L., Burton, S. and Regan, L. (1994) 'Researching women's lives or studying women's oppression? Reflections on what constitutes feminist research', in M. Maynard and J. Purvis (eds) *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Kleinman, S., & Copp, M.A. (1993) *Emotions and Fieldwork: Qualitative Research Methods*. Sage Publications: London.

Krahe, B. (2018) 'Men's violence against female partners: the role of culture,' In T.K. Shackelford & V.A. Weekes-Shackelford (Eds) *Encyclopaedia of Evolutionary Psychological Science, 10,* pp. 1-8. New York: Springer

Kuhn, T.S. (1965) *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kuijpers, K., Van der Knaap, L., & Lodewijks, I. (2011). 'Victim's influence on intimate partner violence revictimization: A systematic review of prospective evidence,' *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 12*(4), 198– 219. doi:10.1177/1524838011416378

Lambert, A.J., & Raichle, K. (2000) 'The role of political ideology in mediating judgements of blame in rape victims and their assailants: A test of the just world, personal responsibility, and legitimisation hypotheses,' *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26,* pp. 853-863. Doi: 10.1177/0146167200269010

Landowski, E. (1989) Truth and Verediction in Law. *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law.* 2(4), 29-47

Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J., Misra, T.A., Selwyn, C. and Rohling, M.L. (2012) 'Rates of bi-directional versus unidirectional intimate partner violence across samples, sexual orientations, and race/ethnicities: a comprehensive review.' *Partner Abuse, 3*(2), pp. 199-230.

Leavy, P. (ed) (2014). *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Lees, S. (1997) *Ruling Passions: Sexual Violence, Reputation and the Law*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Lerner, M.J. (1980) *The Belief in a Just World: A Fundamental Delusion.* New York, NY: Plenum Press

Lerner, M.J., & Simmons, C.H. (1966) 'Observer's reaction to the innocent victim: compassion or rejection?' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 4*(2).

Letherby, G. (2003) *Feminist research in theory and practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Level Up (2022) *Dignity for Dead Women: Media Guidelines for Reporting Domestic Abuse Deaths*. Find here: https://www.welevelup.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Media-Guidelines-V2-1.pdf Accessed: May 2023

Lombard, N., & McMillan, L. (2013) Violence Against Women: Current Theory and Practice in Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence and Exploitation. (Research highlights in Social Work, 56). Jessica Kingsley.

Long, J., Harvey, H., Wertans, E., Allen, R., Harper, K., Elliot, K., & Brennan, D. (2020) *Femicide Census: UK Femicides 2009-2018*.

MacDowell, E.L. (2009) 'When reading between the lines is not enough: lessons from media coverage of a domestic violence homicide-suicide,' *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy and the Law, 17*.

Machlup, F. (1956). 'The Inferiority Complex in the Social Sciences', in M. Sennholz (Ed.), *On Freedom and Free Enterprise: Essays in Honor of Ludwig von Mises*. Princeton: D. van Nordstrand.

Mackinnon, C. (2005). *Women's lives, men's laws* . Boston: Harvard University Press.

Mahalik, J.R., Locke, B.D., Ludlow, L.H., Diemer, M.A., Scott, R.P.J., Gottfried, M., & Freitas, G. (2003) 'Development of the conformity to masculine norms inventory,' *Psychology of Men and Masculinities, 4*(1), pp. 3-25. Doi: 10.1037/1524-9220.4.1.3

Mallon, S., & Elliott, I. (2019) 'The emotional risks of turning stories into data: An exploration of the experiences of qualitative researchers working on sensitive topics,' *Societies 9*(8), pg. 62.

Matthews, B., & Ross, L. (2010) *Research Methods: A Practical Guide for the Social Sciences*. Harlow: Pearson Education

McHugh, M. C., Koeske, R. D., & Frieze, I. H. (1986). 'Issues to consider in conducting non-sexist psychology: A guide for researchers'. *The American Psychologist*, 41 (8), 879– 890.

McQueeny, K., & Lavelle, K.M (2017) 'Emotional labour in critical ethnographic work: In the field and behind the desk,' *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 46,* pg. 81-107

Meyers, M. (1994). 'News of battering,' *Journal of Communication, 44*, 47-63.

Meyers, M. (1997). *News coverage of violence against women: Engendering blame*. London: Sage

Monckton-Smith, J. (2010) *Relating Rape and Murder: Narratives of Sex, Death and Gender*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Monckton-Smith, J. (2020) 'Intimate partner femicide: using Foucauldian discourse analysis to track an eight stage progression to homicide,' *Violence Against Women, 26*(1). Doi: 10.1177/1077801219862876

Monckton-Smith, J. (2021) *In Control: Dangerous Relationships and how they end in Murder.* London: Bloomsbury

Morgan, D. (1981) 'Men, masculinity and the process of sociological inquiry', in H. Roberts (ed.) *Doing Feminist Research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Morse, J.M. (2009). 'Mixing qualitative methods'. *Qualitative Health Research*, 19, 1523–1524. doi:10.1177/1049732309349360

Muehlenhard CL & Kimes LA (1999) "The Social Construction of Violence: The Case of Sexual and Domestic Violence," *Personality and social psychology review : an official journal of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Inc*, 3(3), pp. 234–45.

Myhill, A. (2017) Measuring domestic violence: Context is everything, Journal of Gender-Based Violence, 1(1): 33–44.

Narejo, M., & Syed, S. (2010) 'Paradigms of homicidal female honour victimisation in Sindh,' *Pakistan Journal of Criminology, 2*(2), pp.123-134

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2003) *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. Atlanta, GA: Centers for disease control and prevention

Oakley, A. (1998) 'Gender, methodology and people's ways of knowing: some problems with feminism and the paradigm debate in social science,' *Sociology*, 32(4): 707 – 32.

ONS (2016) *Focus on Violent Crimes and Sexual Offences, Year Ending March 2015, Chapter 2: Homicide*. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/compendium/focusonviolentcrimeandsexualoffences/yearendingmarch2015/chapter2homicide (Accessed May, 2024)

ONS (Office for National Statistics) (2018) Homicide in England and Wales. Year ending March 2017, Published online: ONS, https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/homicideinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2017

Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L., & Wynaden, D. (2001) 'Ethics in qualitative research,' *Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 33* (1), pp. 93-96

Pastore, A. L., & Maguire, K. (Eds.). (2006). *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics*.

Patai, D. (1991) 'U.S. Academics and Third World women: is ethical research possible?' in S. Berger Gluck and D. Patai (eds) *Women's Words, Women's Words, Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History* London: Routledge.

Peelo, M., Francis, B., Soothill, K., Parson, J., & Ackerley, E. (2004) 'Newspaper reporting and the public construction of homicide,' *British Journal of Criminology, 44*(2), pp. 256-275

Phillips, A. (2003) 'When culture means gender: Issues of cultural defence in the English courts,' *Modern Law Review 66*(4), pp. 510-531.

Radford, J. (1987) "Poling male violence – policing women," in J. Hammer and M. Maynard (eds) *Women, Violence and Social Control*. London: Macmillan, pp. 30-46

Ray, L., (2011), Violence and Society, London: Sage

Regis-Moura, A., Ferreira, L.B., Bonfa-Araujo, B., & Iglesias, F. (2022) 'If not mind, she won't belong to another: mechanisms of moral disengagement in a femicide perpetrator from Brazil,' *Violence Against Women, 28*(12-13), pp. 3135-3153

Reinharz, S. (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, J. R. (1982) *The sceptical feminist : a philosophical enquiry*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Rogers, A. (2014) *A Sociology of Mental Health and Illness*. (5th ed). Open University Press

Rubin, Z., & Peplau, L.A. (1975) 'Who believes in a just world?' *Journal of Social Issues, 31,* pp. 56-89. Doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.1975.tb00997.x

Russell, D. E. H. and Radford, J. (1992) *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Russell, D.E.H. (1975) *The politics of rape*, New York: Stein and Day

Sarantakos, S. (2013) *Social Research*. 4th edn. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan

Schneider, E.M. (1992) Particularity and Generality: Challenges of Feminist Theory and Practice in Work on Woman Abuse, *New York University Law Review, 520*(67).

Schuller, R.A., Smith, V.L., & Olson, J.M. (1994) 'Juror's decision in trials of battered women who kill: The role of prior beliefs and expert testimony,' *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 24,* pp. 316-337. Doi: 10.1111/j.1559-1816.1994.tb00585.x

Scott, M., & Lyman, S. M. (1968) 'Accounts,' *American Sociological Review, 33*, pp. 46-62.

Serran, G. and Firestone, P. (2004) 'Intimate partner homicide: a review of the male proprietariness and the self-defense theories,' *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 9*(1), pp. 1-15.

Shaver, K.G. (1985) *The Attribution of Blame: Causality, Responsibility, and Blameworthiness*. New York: Springer-Verlag

Shaver, K.G., & Drown, D. (1986) 'On causality, responsibility, and self-blame: a theoretical note,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50*(4), p. 697.

Sheehy, E. (2002). Evidence law and 'credibility testing' of women: A comment on the E case. *Queensland University of Technology, Law & Justice Journa*l, 2 , 157– 174.

Shernock, S. Russell, B. (2012) 'Gender and racial/ethnic differences in criminal justice decision making in intimate partner violence cases,' *Partner Abuse, 3*(4), pp. 501-30

Smith, O. (2018) *Rape Trials in England and Wales: Observing Justice and Rethinking Rape Myths*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.

Sorenson, S., Manz, J., & Berk, R. (1998). 'News media coverage and the epidemiology of homicide,' *American Journal of Public Health*, 88, 1510-1514.

Squire (1995) 'Pragmatism, extravagance and feminist domestic abuse,' In. C. Kitzinger & S. Wilkinson (Eds) *Feminism and Discourse: Psychological Perspectives*, pp. 145-164. London: Sage

Stockl, H., Devries, K., Rotstein, A., Adbrahams, N., Jacquelyn, C., Watts, C., & Moreno, C.G. (2013) 'The Global Prevalence of Intimate Partner Homicide: A Systematic Review' *The Lancet, 382(*9895). Pp. 859-865

Stout, K. D. (1991). 'Women who kill: Offenders or defenders,' *Affilia, 6*, pp. 8-22.

Straus, M. & Gelles, R. (1990) *Physical Violence in American Families*. Transaction Publishers: New Brunswick, NJ.

Straus, M.A., Gelles, R.J., & Steinmetz, S.K. (1980) *Behind Closed Doors*. NY: Anchor Books.

Sutherland, E.H. (1924) *Principles of Criminology*. University of Chicago Press

Sykes, D., & Matza, D. (1957) 'Techniques of neutralization: A theory of delinquency,' *American Sociological Review, 22*, pp. 664-670.

Taylor, J. (2020) *Why women are blamed for everything : exploring victim blaming of women subjected to violence and trauma*. Derby UK: Victim Focus

Taylor, R. (2009) 'Slain and slandered: a content analysis of the portrayal of femicide in crime news,' *Homicide Studies, 13*(1). Doi: 10.1177/1088767908326679

Thompson, L., Rickett, B., & Day, K. (2018) 'Feminist relational discourse analysis: putting the personal in the political feminist research,' *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 15*(1), pp. 93-115

Timmer, D.A., & Norman, W.H. (1984) The ideology of victim precipitation. *Criminal Justice Review*. 9. Sage Publications

Tong, R. (1995) *Feminist thought : a comprehensive introduction*. London: Routledge

Triandis, H. C. (2001) "Individualism-Collectivism and Personality," *JOURNAL OF PERSONALITY*, 69, pp. 907–924.

Tyson, D. (2013) *Sex, Culpability and the Defence of Provocation*. Abingdon: Routledge

UNODC (2013) *The Global Study on Homicide*. UNODC Publication: Vienna Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/gsh/pdfs/2014_GLOBAL_HOMICIDE_BOOK_web.pdf (Accessed May, 2024)

Valor-Segura, I., Exposito F., & Moya, M. (2011) 'Victim blaming and exoneration of the perpetrator in domestic violence: The role of beliefs in a just world and ambivalent sexism,' *The Spanish Journal of Psychology, 14*(1), pp. 195-206. Doi: 10.5209/rev_SJOP.2011.v14.n1

Van Prooijen, J.W., & Van den Bos, K. (2009) 'Family support for family violence: Exploring community support systems for lesbian and bisexual women who have experienced abuse,' *Journal of Lesbian Studies, 12*, pp. 211-224. Doi: 10.1080/10894160802161372

Van Wijk, J. (2013) 'Who is the 'little old lady' of international crimes? Nils Christie's concept of the ideal victim reinterpreted,' *International Review of Victimology, 19*(2), pp. 159-179

Vandello, J.A., & Cohen, D. (2008) 'Culture, gender and men's intimate partner violence,' *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 2*(2), pp. 652-667.

Walker, L. (1979) *The Battered Woman*. New York: Harper and Row.

Websdale, N. (1999). *Understanding Domestic Homicide*. Boston: Northeastern University Press

Websdale, N. (2003). 'Reviewing domestic violence deaths,' *National Institute of Justice Journal, 250*, 26–31.

Wilkinson, S. and Kitzinger, C. (eds) (1996) *Representing the Other: A Feminism and Psychology*. Reader. London: Sage.

Willig, C. (1999) 'Discourse analysis and sex education,' in C. Willig (Ed) *Applied Discourse Analysis: Social and Psychological Interventions,* Buckingham: Open University Press, pp. 110-24

Willig, C. (2013) *Introducing Qualitative Research is Psychology*. 3rd edn. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education

Wilson, M., & Daly, M. (1993) 'An evolutionary psychological perspective on male sexual proprietariness and violence against wives,' *Violence and Victims, 8*(3), pp. 271-294.

Winstok, Z. (2013) *Partner Violence: A New Paradigm for Understanding Conflict Escalation*. New York: Springer. Doi: 10.1007/978-1-4614-4568-5

Wolfgang, M. (1957) ‘Victim-precipitated criminal homicide,’ *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science 48*, pp. 1–11.

Yancy Martin, P. (2005). *Rape work: Victims, gender and emotions in organization and community context* . New York: Routledge.

Yllo, K.A. (1993) Through a feminist lens: Gender, power and violence, in R.J. Gelles, D.R. Loseke (eds) Current controversies on family violence, Sage: Newbury Park, 47–62.

7. Appendices

7.1 Media Articles

Aliny

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-surrey-48826050
2) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-school-run-killer-who-18336148
3) My London: https://www.mylondon.news/news/south-london-news/first-picture-epsom-man-who-16604269
4) Surrey Live: https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/surrey-news/aliny-godinho-mendes-murder-trial-16512534

Andra

1) Kill Burn Times: https://www.kilburntimes.co.uk/news/crime/andra-hilitanu-s-murderer-ioan-campeanu-jailed-for-life-3809520
2) My London: https://www.mylondon.news/news/west-london-news/crack-addict-neasden-monster-jailed-15659940
3) The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jan/10/london-man-who-killed-pregnant-girlfriend-jailed-for-life
4) The Independent: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/brent-murder-stabbing-london-trial-court-case-ioan-campeanu-andra-hilitanu-old-bailey-a8666631.html

Ann Marie

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-50046201
2) Daily Post: https://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/killer-pictured-strolling-round-supermarket-17072503
3) Liverpool Echo: https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/ann-marie-pomphret-killer-covered-17077219
4) Manchester Evening News: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/david-pomphret-ann-marie-pomphret-17062366

Anna

1) Daily Mirror: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9203861/German-traveller-30-trial-charged-murdering-British-heiress-22-money.html
2) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/anna-reed-german-boyfriend-who-14288110
3) NZHerald: https://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/killed-in-sex-game-gone-wrong-how-british-globetrotters-life-spiralled-out-of-control-after-mothers-tragic-death/PHACOG2LVIWLAFLX3OHVUTKICA/
4) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/13993577/german-bouncer-murder-british-heiress/

Asam

1) DailyMail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7257315/Gambling-addict-47-named-Angry-Indian-GUILTY-stabbing-wife-60-times-horrific-murder.html
2) Eastern Eye: https://www.easterneye.biz/gambling-addict-found-guilty-of-murder-of-his-wife-at-their-home-in-tower-hamlets/
3) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/gambling-addict-who-stabbed-wife-18367770
4) My London: https://www.mylondon.news/news/east-london-news/wife-killer-jalal-uddin-jailed-16616504

Barbara

1) Manchester Evening News: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/arthur-heywood-barbara-heywood-bolton-17433416
2) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/harrowing-999-call-old-man-21070319
3) The Bolton News: https://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/19946450.stabbed-pensioner-repeatedly-told-social-workers-not-feel-safe/
4) Yahoo News: https://uk.news.yahoo.com/barbara-heywood-killed-domestic-abuse-arthur-heywood-192809477.html#:~:text=Barbara%20Heywood%20told%20agencies%20about,home%20on%2020%20March%202019.&text=Only%20seven%20days%20later%20%2D%20and,death%20in%20a%20brutal%20attack.

Charlotte

1) Birmingham Live: https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/jealous-boyfriend-michael-rolle-guilty-16609593
2) Evening Standard: https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/charlotte-huggins-murder-controlling-man-convicted-of-killing-girlfriend-in-new-year-s-day-attack-a4193316.html
3) My London: https://www.mylondon.news/news/south-london-news/father-woman-stabbed-death-south-16620103
4) The Independent: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/charlotte-huggins-murder-trial-stabbing-michael-rolle-london-camberwell-a8986486.html

Danielle

1) Express: https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/998782/crime-manchester-michael-marler-jailed-murder-danielle-richardson
2) Manchester Evening News: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/danielle-richardson-murder-michael-marler-14974880
3) The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/03/michael-marler-life-sentence-murdering-girlfriend-danielle-richardson-manchester
4) The Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/man-who-stabbed-girlfriend-death-13028525

Diane

1) Kent Online: https://www.kentonline.co.uk/bexley-and-bromley/news/vulnerable-woman-beaten-and-strangled-to-death-218754/
2) My London: https://www.mylondon.news/news/south-london-news/controlling-boyfriend-brutally-murdered-beckenham-17444320
3) News Shopper: https://www.newsshopper.co.uk/news/18112249.truly-horrendous-boyfriend-jailed-life-brutally-murdering-vulnerable-beckenham-mum/
4) Standard: https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/david-mccorkell-diane-dyer-death-jailed-for-life-murder-a4317136.html

Elize

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-49241675
2) Court News: https://courtnewsuk.co.uk/killed-for-kindness/
3) Evening Standard: https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/eliza-stevens-murder-north-london-man-who-stabbed-partner-86-times-out-of-rage-and-resentment-jailed-for-life-a4217641.html
4) The JC: https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/ian-levy-convicted-of-elize-stevens-murder-and-jailed-for-21-years-1.487643

Jayde

1) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9884155/Boy-8-screamed-hes-killed-mummy-mother-26-stabbed-death-inquest-hears.html
2) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/boy-8-cried-hes-killed-24733308
3) Stokesentinel: https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/neighbours-heard-boy-8-cry-5767491
4) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/15836373/boy-cried-killed-mummy-attack/

Jessica

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tees-53389877
2) Leeds Live: https://www.leeds-live.co.uk/news/leeds-news/tragic-story-jessica-patel-murdered-18623285
3) Manchester Evening News: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/murdered-controlling-husband-who-refused-18641806
4) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/tv/13779921/mitesh-patel-strangled-wife-jessica-countdown-to-murder/

Joanne

1) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8750455/Police-tackle-killer-husband-strangled-wife-dressing-gown-cord-hes-jailed-22-years.html
2) Grimsby Telegraph: https://www.grimsbytelegraph.co.uk/news/grimsby-news/live-updates-ian-hamer-sentenced-4528724
3) ITV: https://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2020-09-18/man-jailed-for-22-years-for-murdering-wife-in-north-lincolnshire
4) Manchester Evening News: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/uk-news/moment-killer-arrested-car-park-18963941

Kelly

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-53447982#:~:text=Aaron%20McKenzie%2C%2026%2C%20from%20Peckham,a%20knife%2C%20to%20run%20concurrently.
2) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8534247/Pure-evil-lover-murdered-pregnant-woman-26-killed-unborn-baby-jailed-life.html
3) Sky News: https://news.sky.com/story/kelly-mary-fauvrelle-man-guilty-of-murdering-pregnant-ex-girlfriend-and-killing-their-unborn-child-12025844
4) Standard: https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/kelly-fauvrelle-aaron-mckenzie-pregnant-girlfriend-unborn-baby-peckham-stabbing-jailed-a4501811.html

Kelly-Anne

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-51357444
2) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-man-guilty-murdering-mum-21427522
3) The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/feb/04/kelly-anne-case-man-convicted-of-savage
4) The News Portsmouth: https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/crime/gosport-murder-victim-kelly-anne-cases-sister-says-killer-brendan-rowan-davies-must-never-be-released-3382545

Kylie

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-47557966
2) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6805099/Abusive-boyfriend-28-stabbed-lover-heart-storms-dock-rage.html
3) Get Reading: https://www.getreading.co.uk/news/reading-berkshire-news/man-who-killed-partner-violent-15967646
4) Reading Chronicle: https://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/17497825.sentenced-mark-sinclair-sentenced-life-killing-girlfriend-12-years-kylie-dembrey/

Laureline

1) Evening Standard: https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/laureline-garciabertaux-death-kirill-belorusov-jailed-for-life-for-murdering-french-film-producer-exgirlfriend-a4254516.html
2) Sky News: https://news.sky.com/story/laureline-garcia-bertaux-woman-breaks-down-over-strange-texts-sent-by-friends-murderer-11807311
3) The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/sep/30/stuntman-strangled-film-producer-ex-girlfriend-court-hears
4) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8685382/kirill-belorusov-laureline-garcia-bertaux-murder-charge-estonian-kew-london/

Lauren

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-60820973
2) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9304631/Murderers-chilling-999-call-strangled-fiancee-released-jailed-life.html
3) Leader Live: https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/20017920.oswestry-family-lauren-griffiths-denied-chance-save/

4) Wales Online: https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/madog-rowlands-court-sentencing-live-19718167

Lucy

1) Andover Advertiser: https://www.andoveradvertiser.co.uk/news/18557232.lucy-anne-rushton-murder-mother-speaks-one-year/
2) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-50866778
3) Hampshire Live: https://www.hampshirelive.news/news/hampshire-news/lucy-anne-rushton-murder-detective-5899725
4) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/10562711/husband-broken-ashamed-after-admitting-killing-wife-denies-murder/

Pamela

1) Cheshire Live: https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/dangerous-wilmslow-man-who-unlawfully-18128672
2) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8245671/Man-44-kept-secure-hospital-life-strangling-mother-four-death.html
3) Lancs Live: https://www.lancs.live/news/lancashire-news/man-who-killed-girlfriend-danger-18130423
4) Manchester Evening News: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/uk-news/controlling-possessive-man-killed-girlfriend-17779093

Patricia

1) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6418557/Devoted-husband-84-avoids-jail-battering-86-year-old-wife-death-iron-bar.html
2) Kent Live: https://www.kentlive.news/news/kent-news/bbc-ambulance-first-picture-pensioner-2858597
3) Manchester Evening News: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/husbands-determination-keep-promise-wife-15451778
4) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/7804597/husband-battered-wife-death-iron-bar-freed/

Poppy

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-47912020
2) Independent: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/poppy-devey-waterhouse-murder-latest-joe-atkinson-stab-math-leeds-court-a8867701.html
3) ITV: https://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2020-11-19/leeds-murder-victims-mother-calls-for-tougher-sentences
4) Yorkshire Evening Post: https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/crime/timeline-poppy-devey-waterhouses-life-and-relationship-joe-atkinson-he-jailed-her-murder-483288

Sammy-Lee

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-50260407
2) ITV: https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2019-11-01/man-jailed-for-brutally-murdering-22-year-old-partner-sammy-lee-lodwig

3) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/10244264/jealous-boyfriend-stabbed-lover-dumped-by-her-mum/
4) Wales Online: https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/sammy-lodwig-jason-farrell-murder-17185961

Simonne

1) Manchester Evening News: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/uk-news/ex-soldier-found-guilty-stabbing-16455705
2) Standard: https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/simonne-kerr-murder-trial-iraq-war-veteran-phoned-999-to-report-murdering-britain-s-got-talent-finalist-a4159281.html
3) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/7032492/simonne-samantha-kerr-stabbed-death-battersea-home/
4) Wales Online: https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/britains-talent-murder-desmond-sylva-16527096

Sophie

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-46507475
2) Birmingham Mail: https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/jealous-martin-cavanagh-killed-ex-15530458
3) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6417961/Bromley-husband-Martin-Cavanagh-accused-killing-wife-Sophie-100-sex-offer-refused.html
4) My London: https://www.mylondon.news/news/south-london-news/chilling-message-left-bromley-husband-15522493

Susan

1) ITV: https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2022-01-28/detectives-renew-appeal-to-find-the-body-of-missing-murder-victim
2) Lancashire Telegraph: https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/19432169.darwen-killer-alan-edwards-launches-appeal-susan-waring-murder/
3) Lancs Live: https://www.lancs.live/news/lancashire-news/family-murdered-darwen-woman-think-20978811
4) Lep: https://www.lep.co.uk/news/crime/blackburn-man-sentenced-to-life-in-prison-for-murder-of-susan-waring-3191837

Suvekshya

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-51574617
2) Leicester Mercury: https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/children-screamed-stepdad-stop-stabbed-3872932
3) Metro: https://metro.co.uk/2020/02/22/dad-stabbed-ex-partner-death-front-children-12283366/
4) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/dad-stabbed-ex-front-kids-21550150

Teresa

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-48203905

2) Dailypost: https://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/north-wales-news/controlling-cowardly-egocentric-killer-who-16308950
3) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-man-who-killed-wife-16176900
4) Wales Online: https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/jealous-man-battered-partner-death-16284202

Terrie-Ann

1) BBC: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-west-wales-44797456
2) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7438649/Councillor-suspended-allegedly-telling-taxi-drivers-murder-victim-deserved-killed.html
3) The Sun: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/6755359/moment-terrie-ann-jones-killer-john-lewis-admits-knifing-her-26-times/
4) Wales Online: https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/police-handling-murdered-womans-domestic-15364605

Tracy

1) Birmingham Mail: https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/jealous-husband-murdered-estranged-wife-14996238
2) Coventry Telegraph: https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/local-news/solihull-murder-arthur-stonehouse-14997399
3) Daily Mail: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6035235/Jealous-husband-murdered-estranged-wife-rang-step-daughter-say-Im-sorry.html
4) Mirror: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/jealous-ex-killed-wife-before-13043953

7.2 Domestic Homicide Reviews

AA: https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/LBBD-Domestic-Homicide-Review-Overview-Report-May-14-AA.pdf

AB: https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/publicsafety/violence-against-women-and-girls/informationforprofessionals/domestic-homicide-reviews--reviewing-a-death-as-a-result-of-domestic-violence

AB: https://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/file/2177/dhr-full-report-of-ab-yz-feb-2014

April: https://www.norfolksafeguardingadultsboard.info/domestic-violence-review/april/

Ayesha: https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/noise-nuisance-anti-social-behaviour-and-safety/domestic-violence/safer-lambeths-domestic-1

Carina: https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Domestic-homicide-review-Overview-Report-September-2020.pdf

Crystal: https://www.harrow.gov.uk/downloads/file/24101/domestic-homicide-review-october-2017

Donna: https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/publicsafety/violence-against-women-and-girls/informationforprofessionals/domestic-homicide-reviews--reviewing-a-death-as-a-result-of-domestic-violence

EC: https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/SaferPeterborough-Priorities-DomesticAbuseReview.pdf

Ellie:
https://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/52/domestichomicidereviewellieoverviewreport

Emma: http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Community/community-safety/Domestic-homicide-reviews/96-SCDC-DHR-Overview-Oct-2015.pdf

H: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Adult%20H%20Overview%20Report.pdf

Janice:https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Croydon%20DHR%20revised%20overview%20report%20case%20of%20Janice%20Nov%202014.pdf

Jasmine:
https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Croydon%20Jasmine%20Overview%20Report%20-%20HO%20approved.pdf

Kazia: https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/publicsafety/violence-against-women-and-girls/informationforprofessionals/domestic-homicide-reviews--reviewing-a-death-as-a-result-of-domestic-violence

Kirsty: https://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/file/4281/dhr-executive-summary-of-kirsty-june-2016

Kitty: https://www.norfolksafeguardingadultsboard.info/domestic-violence-review/kitty-published-july-and-august-2015/

M: https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/community-wellbeing/domestic-homicide-reviews

Maria: https://www.norfolksafeguardingadultsboard.info/domestic-violence-review/maria-published-25-january-2021/

Mary: https://www.norfolksafeguardingadultsboard.info/domestic-violence-review/mary-published-october-2020/

Mrs M: https://www.norfolksafeguardingadultsboard.info/domestic-violence-review/mrs-m-published-november-2013/

Mrs Moon:
https://www.ealing.gov.uk/downloads/download/5145/domestic_homicide_review_safer_ealing_partnership_-_case_of_mrs_moon

Mrs Z: https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/noise-nuisance-anti-social-behaviour-and-safety/domestic-violence/safer-lambeths-domestic-0

Rose:
https://www.ealing.gov.uk/downloads/download/3824/domestic_homicide_review_safer_ealing_partnership_-_case_of_rose

Rukhsana:
https://www.ealing.gov.uk/downloads/download/5144/domestic_homicide_review_safer_ealing_partnership_-_case_of_rukhsana
Sophia: https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/noise-nuisance-anti-social-behaviour-and-safety/domestic-violence/safer-lambeths-domestic-2

VB: https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/SPP-DomesticHomicideReview.pdf

Victoria: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Final-Overview-Victoria-HO-approved.pdf

X: https://www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/download/3282/dhr001-executive-summary-november-2016

Zara: https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1287/dhr-zara