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Abstract

This PhD by portfolio consists of a Handbook for training men from Pacific countries to be advocates for women’s rights and the elimination of violence against women, and an exegesis that theorises the principles underpinning the Handbook and other approaches to engaging men as advocates in gender justice. It is the result of ten years working with the Fiji Women’s Crisis Service to develop best practice principles within a pro-feminist framework that is culturally relevant to the Pacific context. The Handbook contains training methods for working as an advocate; gender power, men’s violence against women, culture and women’s rights. The exegesis uses a critical theory framework to examine the principles and rationale, both explicit and implicit, in the Handbook together with a range of other comparable training curricula and guides.

As the Handbook was written and published prior to any systematic evaluation of the underpinning theoretical terrain and similar curricula, the aim of the exegesis is twofold. First, to employ a content analysis of the Handbook along with several other contemporary training programs to explore the meaning and representation of four key concepts relevant to the area under study: masculinity, power, violence and engaging men. Second, to evaluate these understandings in the light of critical theories of gender and pedagogy. The final part of the exegesis explores the idea of a critical pedagogy for training men that is critical of

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1 There is no settled debate on whether men can be feminists. Brod (1998) explains that the use of the hyphen in pro-feminism implies men who actively support the tenets and actions of feminists and primarily see feminism as something that women identify with and do. He is critical of this use as he suggests it distances men from taking an ally role with women feminists. While I have used the hyphenated form for similar reasons I do not admit that it detracts from importance of men undertaking important advocacy work under the guidance of feminist activists. See Crowe (2011) for a more extensive discussion.
developmental paradigms and instead introduces an alternative pro-feminist pedagogy that is focussed on collective action.
Chapter One: Introduction to the Exegesis

Born out of my twenty year history of engagement in pro-feminist politics, and specifically from my six years anti-violence work in the Pacific, this study is a critical encounter with the strategies designed to engage men for gender equality being undertaken within the international development context. This chapter introduces the exegesis by placing it within the context of my own development as a gender justice advocate, provides the theoretical rationale for the study and briefly presents the focus of the remaining chapters.

The general area of research concerns the practical politics of challenging sexism in society. Critical sociologist Buechler (2008: 8) recognises that one key arena of structural disadvantage and oppression is in the area of gender relations. According to Brookfield (2005b: 2), critical theory aims to “illuminate the ways in which people accept as normal a world characterized by massive inequities and the systemic exploitation of the many by the few”. In the context of educating adults, Brookfield (2005b: 8) further argues that critical theory provides a rationale for bringing about freedom and justice in society.

The production of my Male Advocates for Women’s Human Rights Handbook (hereafter named the Handbook; and will only be cited by page number) is influenced by critical theory in two ways. First, it is intended to be a practical intervention to influence social change towards gender justice. Second, the Handbook, in terms of both communication strategies and content, is informed generally by critical sociology and particularly feminism, critical masculinity studies and critical pedagogy.
The second wave of feminism has provided a cogent critique of patriarchal structures and practices that has led to some significant reforms in gender relations, at least in developed countries (Hughes 1997; Ramazanoglu 1993; Segal 1990). In the last couple of decades, we have seen the emergence of men responding to feminism by taking up specific conceptual and political positions (Hearn 1999; Kaufman 1994; Pease 2002; Seidler 2009) which have been identified as men’s rights, men’s liberation and pro-feminist.

The conservative or ‘backlash’ response (Farrell 1993) has been to challenge the gains and claims of feminism and seek a return to an idealised or so-called natural state of clearly differentiated gender roles that entrench inequality. Less reactionary, a liberal perspective uses social learning and role theory (Biddulph 2002) in arguing that while men’s behaviour should change in certain areas, this process should be seen in terms of breaking free of restrictive social expectations on men. It tends to be underpinned by psychological individualism and ignores or downplays issues of power inequality.

The third pro-feminist (Messner 1997) stance agrees with the feminist critique of men’s power and privilege. It seeks to inform men about sexism and reform their views and behaviour based on ethical principles of gender justice informed by a social structural analysis of gender power relations. This is the approach that represents the political and theoretical standpoint of this dissertation.

**Developing a Pro-feminist Orientation**

I have had a long involvement in promoting gender equality through both grass-roots community organisations and in more formal bureaucratic settings. Having been involved in the men’s movement in Canberra between 1982 and 1987, I was already attuned to gender politics when I
moved to Melbourne to undertake a Kindergarten Teacher’s Diploma, I found myself as the only man among a group of 100 or so women studying in this traditionally female profession. While I was disappointed with the lack of a gendered political analysis in the course curricula, I struggled more with gender dynamics among my fellow students. Often, as the only man in tutorials, I was asked to give a man’s point of view on the topic under discussion. I had trouble explaining that I was not interested in defending men, that my view was more oriented towards feminism and therefore counter to what many men would hold. I also found that in tutorials not only was I ‘the man’, but also being ‘mature aged’, I was given undue attention and respect anytime I spoke in class. I fought it for a short while but became acutely aware of my inherent privilege and that the social dynamic was operating regardless of my individual will. I subsequently attempted to adopt a low profile, approach by speaking as little as possible, which probably only reinforced my status. Within my final year, I relaxed somewhat and started to enjoy the practical placements which involved working directly with young children. Having become aware of the high dropout rate of male students within the course, I saw it as a pro-feminist obligation to do what I could to support greater numbers of men entering this relatively low status women’s profession. However, it was not long after establishing the male student support group that it became clear that not only did I share very little with these men other than genitalia, but also more disturbingly that they appeared to me to be entirely unsuited to undertake the important work of an early childhood professional and so I abandoned the group. Many years later I did come across one of these men who had left the course and pursued a career as a successful merchant banker instead.

This experience left me with the realization that it is not men that I want to ally myself with but men with a particular political analysis and outlook. Thus in the 1990s, while undertaking studies in community development and completing a Master of Social Policy, I joined anti-sexist men’s
groups in Melbourne. Working under the titles of Men Against Patriarchy and Men Against Gender Injustice Collective, a small and constantly changing group of men met to discuss masculinity and gender relations, and began to undertake some community education work. This involved providing workshops on gender and sexual assault to boys in secondary schools and presentations at university campuses. We had been doing some regular paid work in schools for a while before some critical reflection led me to consider the possibility that we were doing more harm than good. This was due to three observations. First, the male teachers, who were commonly in attendance, demonstrated many of the characteristics of masculinity that we were there to challenge. Second, the boys resented being forced to listen to these outsiders telling them how bad they were and, as a result, often emerged a core group who engaged in defensive and exaggerated counter argument much to the delight of their peers. We therefore were effectively creating a stage for the valorisation of this form of masculine dominance which would enter the school’s cultural history. Finally, our two hour session had little chance of being very effective, given the majority of the time school structures and cultures support dominant patriarchal gender relations (Connell 1985; Gilbert and Gilbert 1998; Mac an Ghaill 1994). This was a crucial turning point in my understanding that began to set me apart from many other anti-sexist educators.

I became involved in Men Against Sexual Assault (MASA) when it formed in 1989 as the result of a small businessman putting funds and energy towards a public meeting. Building on the public outrage of an apparent upsurge in rapes in Melbourne (Fuller and Fisher 1998), MASA initially had twenty or more men attending meetings; however, this dropped to a committed core who worked mainly on community education over the next decade. Bringing the White Ribbon Campaign to Melbourne became a central focus for a few years, as it appeared to be a ready-
made way for us to enact our pro-feminism. We also had an (at times uneasy) understanding with the local Reclaim the Night women’s collective that we could distribute explanatory fliers to men watching the rally. There was little of this work that could be considered particularly activist or political in the sense of directly challenging power holders (Chan 2004).

One exception was an invitation to attend by a feminist peak body to attend and challenge the dominant claims of a Male Behaviour Change conference in 1995. Victoria’s peak body for perpetrator programs was facing a challenge to the legitimacy of their clinical group practice with violent men. This was because it was becoming clear that there was “a vast difference between the accounts of male participants in Men’s Behaviour Change Programs and those of their partners. In particular, it appeared that men would often overrate their ‘success’ in making changes, whilst partners often reported a very different viewpoint” (Howard et al. 2008: 14). A conference had therefore been convened to validate a set of minimum standards designed to ensure partner contact was part of each program. A couple of us were vocal critics of what we perceived as an administrative defence as we did not believe perpetrator programs were a valid response by the State government to address men’s abuse of women. This then resulted in a submission to the Victorian government responding to a policy discussion paper (Pease and Fisher 2001). While there have been numerous feminist critiques (Apps and Gregory 2011; Costello 2006; Dobash and Dobash 1992; Yllo 2005), the policy and programs are functioning now with relatively little controversy.

I also learnt a lesson about the problem with providing attention-grabbing statistics to explain violence when I spoke to the Victorian Trades Hall Council for White Ribbon Day in 1994. Shortly thereafter, the following appeared in a lucid and referenced internet article arguing against the prevalence of men’s violence against women:
“Steven (sic) Fisher, a representative of the Australian branch of Men Against Sexual Assault, gives a lecture on domestic violence to the Trades Hall Council, as part of trade union support for MASA's annual 'White Ribbon Campaign'. He reads to his audience a woman's story of her violent and abusive husband, and continues: "This situation or something similar is occurring right now in one out of every ten Australian family homes."

His source, he says, is the National Committee on Violence, whose publicity leaflets actually cite a "one in three" statistic - one in three women battered regularly by their male partners. The Committee's source, in turn, is the Australian Bureau of Statistics - who in 1993 reported not 30 percent, or 10 percent, of households suffering violent abuse each day, but 0.6 percent of households suffering any kind of 'significant' physical abuse within the year” (Graves 1995).

This claim and counter-claim politics, especially using statistics, which I first experienced in high school classrooms, continues to be an area to avoid when advocating for gender justice. A version of this was seen recently in an ABC television documentary (Bourke 2012) where Anna Rose, co-founder of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition refused to respond to, Marc Morano, a journalist billed as Congress's leading climate change sceptic. She listened to his list of climate denying ‘facts’ but remained silent. She explained in a subsequent interview with Robin Williams on Radio National’s Science show that to engage in point-to-point debate will give the false impression that there are two equal sides to the debate.

As a MASA activist, I had difficulties in recruiting and retaining new men for a number of reasons. Initially, some men were drawn to the organization as a way to deal with their own
experiences of abuse, and so were moved to form a separate survivors’ group. Other men were keen to explore their masculinity in a more men’s liberation or mytho-poetic (Karoski 2007) approach to men’s issues, rather than get involved in anti-sexist political action. Those that were interested in social action often did not have a sufficiently well developed feminist understanding for some of us to feel comfortable working with them. With this group, we were faced with a dilemma. We could start conducting training with these potential pro-feminist allies to provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge, but that would mean many hours of unpaid teaching work for no guaranteed gains. Alternatively, we could stay small and continue to speak as pro-feminist men on topics and at events when requested. While we opted for the latter, it reinforced for me the importance of men needing not only a compassionate drive for gender justice, but this needed to be directed with a good understanding of the complexity of the area.

Starting to Work in the Pacific

The Pacific region has been very active in implementing gender equality policies and programmes (AusAID 2009) with the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre (FWCC) spearheading developments from a feminist perspective. FWCC is also involved in public advocacy and community education on gender violence. The Centre's strategies are based on the conviction that violence against women is an issue of fundamental human rights and development; that it is necessary to address all forms of violence against women including rape, beating, sexual harassment as well as abuse of children. With the increasing international interest in the role of men in becoming advocates for gender equality (Flood 2011), I was invited in 2003, by the coordinator of the FWCC, to conduct a week of training for a group of local men who had shown an interest in working to address men’s violence against women. The fifteen men were from a
range of professional backgrounds that included military, police, clergy, social workers and a doctor. The training was revised and repeated with a similar group of men in Vanuatu in 2004.

The FWCC, which has a very prominent profile in Fiji, had been approached by a number of men indicating their interest in assisting the work of the centre. While the offer was welcome it was considered crucial that the men must undergo some form of training to enable them to act in an informed way. Before my involvement, they had already experienced a week’s course in 2002 which aimed to ensure the men understood that any form of violence against women was unacceptable and to challenge some of the myths associated with domestic violence and sexual assault.

The aim of the second stage of training was to interrogate further the characteristics of masculinities and male culture that supports and reinforces violence against women. The task was to provide five days of training that presented a complex sociological analysis of gender relations and challenging pro-feminist approaches, in a way that engaged the men and spoke to their local experience. The material was highly interactive and the men were encouraged to argue with myself (as the presenter) and with each other to critically examine their resistances and any unreflected misogynist beliefs. Crucial to the effectiveness of the training was the role of the women’s centres’ coordinators as critical friends, who sat in on the course and who were invited to provide comment, input and criticism.

Westoby (2013) makes the point that too often international community development work is reduced to technocratic interventions comprised of inputs, outputs and measurable indicators.

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2 The understanding of the plurality of masculinity is developed in Chapter Two.
Such an approach is seen in the AusAID (2009: 6) report on responses to men’s violence against women in Melanesia. It employs language that refers to ‘coordination between sector specific approaches’ and relies on a multifactorial analysis requiring responses on ‘multiple levels’. In response to a neo-colonial model of development, Westoby (2013: 12) proposes a dialogic approach that involves entering into a committed relationship of solidarity with marginalised groups. Thus not only have I been involved in continuous respectful discussion and debate about my work for the FWCC, I have maintained a decade-long involvement with the centre. This involvement has extended beyond the training work to include local media appearances, and providing strategic pro-feminist presentations at Pacific wide meetings and conferences. Unlike some international development practitioners working to engage men in the issue of women’s rights, I have never unilaterally initiated any of my work, but have responded to invitations from Pacific feminist NGOs. This respectful solidarity has been fundamental to challenging what Marchand and Parpart (1995: 23) refer to as the neo-colonial discourse of Third World women as “tradition-bound, passive, voiceless and interchangeable objects”, and the concomitant risk of the (white) man as rescuer. I have also been aware of the insensitivity of importing and imposing Western feminist ideas without modification for applicability to Pacific cultures. However, Foucault (1978) makes the point that one form of neo-colonialism is to associate the West with the universal and global, and the Pacific with the particular and local. It is significant to note that Pease and Pringle (2001: 245) found in their volume on global masculinities a “high degree of transnational commonality” with all men experiencing a ‘patriarchal dividend’ (Connell 2005b). In fact, Pacific men will use the claim of Western imposition to resist the claims of Pacific women for greater equality as “increasingly in Vanuatu, as in Papua New Guinea, Bougainville, and the Solomon Islands, women are claiming the language of human rights or universal equality
as theirs” (Foucault 1978: 149). One way through the modernist/postmodern dualism of universal versus local feminism is to employ the concept of transversalism which describes the development of transnational ethically-based coalitions “based on dialogue and debate that take into account the different positioning of women” (Hilsdon 2000: 25).

In this context in 2010 I was contracted by the FWCC to write the Male Advocacy for Women’s Human Rights Handbook as part of their strategy to continue to develop the program which began in Fiji. According to a FWCC press release (2011):

The intention was to set up core groups of men who could then influence other men in whatever sphere of work or social setting they were involved in. Men targeted over the years have been village chiefs, Police Officers, Youth workers, teachers, pastors and priests and other men who were strategically placed within the communities. These men went through various stages of training and this Handbook serves as a tool to assist them to effectively communicate the language of women’s human rights and to understand better the political context within which this work is delivered.

The Handbook is in four parts. Part One is directed at professionals (trainers, policy makers, donor agencies and NGOs) interested in gaining an overview of the area of engaging men in gender issues. It outlines a set of fourteen principles that underpin the male advocacy programme. These cover not only the approach used in engaging men, but also the conceptual frameworks informing the work. Part Two describes in detail a range of learning activities that

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3 See also Macintyre (2006).
4 This title was chosen by FWCC.
can be used by a trainer when providing advanced level courses to male advocates. This is arranged in topics and provides enough explanation to allow a skilled facilitator to provide quality skills development. Part Three comprises a series of short information sheets designed for male advocates to use as they work on projects to improve gender equality and women’s rights. These sheets provide brief summaries of the key material covered in the course. Finally, Part Four comprises all the learning materials described for use in Part Two, as well as a list of sources of additional resources relevant to male advocacy work.

It is important to note that the development of the Handbook was undertaken in the context of a number of alternative programs gaining prominence in the international development sector, particularly ‘Stepping Stones’ and ‘Program H’, that were considered by FWCC and myself as not as politically progressive as the work being undertaken in the Pacific. Thus it was important to begin the Handbook with a set of principles that indicated an overtly pro-feminist approach.

**The Exegesis Aim and Methodology**

The Handbook was developed as a result of having worked in the area of training men for several years and having a sense of discomfort about the way comparable programs were designed and implemented. The first part of the Handbook outlines a set of fourteen principles regarded as important in any work to equip men to act as advocates for gender equality and were framed in response to my perceptions of the inadequacy of other approaches. They are as follows:

1. Clearly defines the role of a male advocate;

2. Aims to be gender transformative;
3. Is based on a theory of masculinity that recognises agency and complexity;

4. Equips men to work for broad social change rather than simply change men’s individual behaviour;

5. Requires men to recognise their role as perpetuators and provocateurs;

6. Requires advocates to remain accountable to the Pacific Women’s Network of women’s centres;

7. Maintains realistic expectations of outcomes;

8. Maintains an emphasis on achieving attitude and behaviour change.

9. Is based on a thorough understanding of feminist critique of power relations;

10. Recognises the risks of unintended consequences of the training;

11. Recognises that the skill, knowledge and commitment of facilitators is more important than their gender;

12. Includes a willingness to challenge, confront and discomfort men about their own behaviour and attitudes;

13. Maintains a breadth of focus rather than concentrating on a single issue;

14. Promotes an understanding of men’s violence against women within the model of coercive control.

These were written, however, without a theoretical exploration of the research and literature supporting them. The goal of the exegesis is to explore the guiding principles of programs for
training men to become advocates for the human rights of women with particular regard to their theoretical and political underpinnings. This will involve the following objectives:

1. To explore the theoretical and political underpinnings of the guiding principles for training men as advocates for women’s human rights as contained within the training Handbook commissioned by the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre.

2. To identify, within the Handbook, the assumptions underpinning the representations of the following key concepts: masculinity, violence, power and ‘engaging men’.

3. To identify within a selection of similar gender equality training programs, and accompanying educational materials, the assumptions underpinning the representations of the following key concepts: masculinity, violence, power and ‘engaging men’.

4. To critically evaluate the representations in both the training Handbook and the similar gender equality programs, and as a result, offer alternative or revised understandings of each representation based on critical theory.

5. To develop a critical, pro-feminist pedagogy for training men as advocates for women’s human rights.

Chapter Two provides a context for the Handbook principles by offering a brief history of the influence of feminism(s) on international development, and discussing the way men have emerged as a contested focus of attention. Chapters Three to Six examine the Handbook principles by employing the methodology of a content analysis of both the Handbook and a sample of comparable gender training programs and reports on training. This was gathered from bibliographies by Esplen (2006), Greene (2006) and Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson (2006) and
the following websites⁵ – engagingmen.net, vawnet.org, menengage.org, www.endvawnow.org, toolkit.futureswithoutviolence.org, and www.xyonline.net (see Appendix for description of each). The sample consisted of nineteen training manuals and four reviews, or bibliographies, of training. Coming from a diversity of regions (Malaysia, Arabic speaking, Australia, South Asia, USA, India, Africa, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Latin America) they each have a focus on gender equality and/or addressing men’s violence against women. Most programs were designed for exclusively male audiences, while a few were for mixed or women participants. Most of the programs were extensive comprising three days to two weeks training, and were published between 2001 and 2012.

The content analysis method employed does not involve any form of evaluation of the programs or their effectiveness. Neither have I interviewed any of the program writers, trainers or coordinators. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) identify three distinct forms of content analysis: conventional, summative, and directed. I have not used a conventional thematic approach where coding categories are derived directly from the text data, neither have I undertaken a summative quantitative textual analysis of the programs. Rather, I have drawn on a directed method which uses a particular theoretical framework to guide analysis. Thus I have identified a broad range of relevant contemporary and comparable documents to explore in more detail the political and theoretical terrain that informs the Handbook principles. I was aiming to inform my understanding of the range of theoretical principles and concepts underlying these documents as a point of reference for the Handbook.

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⁵ These are the main international clearinghouse sites that provide links to resources in relation to working with men on gender equality or men’s violence against women.
In line with Brennen (2013), the directed qualitative textual analysis of the programs is underpinned by a critical conceptual framework to guide the exploration in four areas represented by the Handbook’s principles: theorising masculinity, theorising power, theorising violence and interrogating the notion of ‘engaging men’. The method was inflected by critical discourse analysis, which according to Aguinaldo (2012: 772), adopts an explicit social constructionist approach to qualitative data. Such an approach assumes that language or discourse does not simply reflect the social world, but actively constructs it.

Thus I was interested in the sense-making practices (Fraser and Nicholson 1989) of the program authors in these four areas and included my own Handbook in the analysis, not to defend its content but to equally open it to critical scrutiny. Recognising that certain salient terms are both coloured by and productive of ideology Fairclough (2003) and Locke (2004) explain that critical discourse analysis entails identifying ideological representations in texts. In this sense, I have undertaken a discourse analysis of the ideological representations of gender, power and violence within the programs to the extent that they do not simply provide training guidance for practitioners but also act “to construct our knowledge, values and beliefs, and reinforce our common sense understandings” (Brennen 2013: 202) of dominant power relations. Gramsci’s notion of hegemonic power explains the way certain dominant ways of viewing the world are accepted as ‘natural’ by the majority of the population, and according to McNay (2013: 6) is centrally “about meaning, about struggles over whose ways of making sense of things dominate within an area of social life”.
Utilising computer searches (McNay 2013), I was able to identify the use of key terms within the programs and analyse the way their meaning was presented in the context of the text. For example, while the word ‘power’ occurred in all the sample programs it appeared with a range of different interpretations. In agreeing with Brennan’s (2013) critique of the superficiality of a purely quantitative analysis, with a focus on counting the incidence of words or terms, I undertook a qualitative approach that sought to identify trends in the representation of key concepts within the texts. According to Brennen (2013: 193) “language does much more than describe our lives: it actually helps us to create our social realities”. Thus a qualitative analysis was employed where trends in the range of meanings of key terms such as, masculinity, power, violence and engaging as presented in the texts were identified. Chapters three to six four each cover content analyses of these four terms.

Chapter Three, examines the concepts of masculinity both implicit and explicit within the Handbook and the comparable training programs, provides a critique of some of those understandings, and offers an approach to masculinity informed by the field of critical studies of masculinities. Similarly, Chapter Four, examines the idea of gender power as it appears both implicitly and explicitly within the Handbook and the comparable training programs. Again, these concepts are critically evaluated and a feminist-informed critical approach to power is developed.

Chapter Five also analyses the Handbook and the comparable training programs in the area of men’s violence against women. The various representations of men’s violence against women is critically appraised and a progressive understanding informed by Evan Stark’s (2007) concept of coercive control is presented. Chapter Six does not analyse course content but rather reviews the Handbook and the comparable training programs in terms of the approach to ‘engaging men’ in
the area of gender justice. A range of approaches are scrutinised and arguments are provided to support the Handbook’s key principles in this area. The final Chapter Seven brings the preceding chapters together by exploring the possibility of a pro-feminist pedagogy for men.

Conclusion

This exegesis is important for two reasons. First, Jamrozik and Nocella (1998) make the point that the link between theory and its application is rarely evident, or may even be absent. They refer to the way in which practitioners tend to develop ‘practice wisdom’ which is divorced from critical theoretical underpinnings, but relies on a shared implicit understanding of frameworks and methods. As a result, “practice develops its own theoretical legitimation and its own ontological validity, reinforced through induction of repetitive activities” (Jamrozik and Nocella 1998: 40). When employed, such unreflected practice wisdom can have a powerful influence not only on the nature of programs designed to address men’s violence against women, but can direct funding in particular ways that has potential for impeding real world consequences for the progress of women’s rights. This exegesis therefore aims to seek an alignment between theoretical debates and programmatic implementation.

Second, men’s exploitation of and violence against women is an entrenched social problem which is characteristic of the (patriarchal and neo-liberal) State (Bumiller 2008). The women’s movement has fought long and hard for recognition of this fact. Therefore, any strategy directed at, or involving men, must be undertaken in a way that is accountable to, and recognises women’s critical scholarship and political activism. This exegesis is a modest attempt to write while being conscious of my privilege and responsibilities as a man by enacting a pro-feminism
which “involves a sense of responsibility for our own and other men’s sexism and a commitment to work with women to end men’s violence” (Pease 2011b: 413).
Chapter Two: Transformative Gender Training

This chapter explores the origins of a feminist-inspired approach to the restructuring of unequal gender relations through the strategy of transformative gender training within the context of international development work. While training in gender sensitivity means recognizing the different roles and needs of men and women, Gupta et al. (2003: 6) explain that gender transformative programs go further by seeking to change “gender roles6 and seek to create more gender-equitable relationships”.

Gender training within the international development (ID) arena has blossomed in the wake of a number of international agreements focused on gender equality7. The impetus to include men and masculinity within the content of training grew out of the shift from a women in development (WID) paradigm to an approach named gender and development (GAD). This broadening of focus to include both men and women then laid the foundation for the development of programs, and particularly training, directed specifically at men to improve gender equality outcomes.

My own work training men to be advocates for the elimination of violence against women, under the auspices of the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre (FWCC), has an historical path spanning decades of work by feminists from around the globe. My training program, as described in the introduction, is bound to the trajectory of international development policy and practice as the work of the FWCC is almost entirely funded from international donors. Therefore, tracing the

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6 The language of ‘gender roles’ is critically interrogated in chapter two.
7 For example the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979, The Platform for Action was a reaffirmation of the global commitment to women’s human rights made at Beijing in 1995, and The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993.
origins of the issue of gender inequality within ID is essential to understanding the role and meaning of gender transformative training.

**Gender as an Issue in International Development**

International Development as a conscious project has its origins in the post-war period of the 1950s. Primarily focused on economic growth, “high-income nations channelled monetary and technical aid through United Nations (UN) agencies, based on the theory that this aid would foster growth that would trickle down to the masses” (Visvanathan et al. 1997: 3). The World Bank and International Monetary Fund were established to oversee this process along with the United Nations which identified the first Development Decade (1961 - 1970) with a focus on modernization that was silent on gender. While some accounts did recognise gender, it was in a more traditional sense; for example, the resolution on the Development Decade sought “to release the majority of mankind (sic) from poverty” (Jolly 2004: 85). Within this context, women were seen as secondary to productive output and addressed mainly as recipients of welfare. Therefore, Rai (2011: 28) notes that

- programs of birth control, nutrition projects for women and children and for pregnant and lactating mothers were the focus of aid programs.
- Patriarchal and liberal discourses, at both nationalist and international level, left unchallenged the question of gender relations in society, and often made these attendant upon a sexual division of labour and individual negotiation within the family. The welfarist approach remained dominant in the first phase of development practices.
A challenge to the goal of the focus on economic growth arose as the failure to ameliorate poverty became apparent and coincided with increased awareness of human rights issues during the 1960s and 1970s. Rai identifies three sources of critique – from a liberal framework, a Marxist perspective and a post-structuralist analysis. In this section, I will focus on the first as it led to a shift in the frame of gender and development. The latter two approaches will be addressed in the context of feminist critiques of development later in the chapter.

The liberal concern with the focus on economic growth was in terms of the confusion about ends and means. Rather than seeking economic growth as an end, it argued to prioritise the meeting of basic needs as the goal, with growth as the chief means. Boserup’s (1970) ground-breaking research highlighted the ways women were being ignored, or were missing out under traditional development. An awareness of the diminishment of the value of women’s labour led to a desire to include women in development more actively as a way to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of investments. Thus ‘Women in Development’ became the first way of framing gender equality as an issue for the ID community. However, “while there was initially a strong and varied agenda for improving equality, development agencies narrowed this to a goal of providing equal opportunity for women in production with education and training as the mechanism” (Kabeer 1994: 7).

The aim of gender equality was further attenuated by integrating the call to address women’s issues into the concurrently emerging frame of poverty alleviation and meeting basic needs. However, any income-generating projects for women were marginal and constrained by the need to fit with, rather than transform, women’s domestic responsibilities. Based on a form of liberal feminism, the focus was on demonstrating that women could be as effective as men in the
productive sphere. However, there was no complementary call for men to demonstrate their skills in reproductive work.

The shift to seeing the potential of women to improve the efficiency of development programs soon followed. As neo-liberal economic prescriptions were increasingly offered to deal with development issues, getting women to engage more actively in free market productivity became a logical goal. That WID was co-opted into the economic liberal agenda is not surprising given its political and theoretical roots. Kabeer (1994: 38) is critical of the use of social psychological explanations when what was needed was a theory of male power and conflicting gender interests. The concern with individual attitudes rather than with the larger economic, political and interpersonal power that men exercise over women, is of course inevitable in a theoretical framework which sees the distortions of the sex-role socialisation as the key explanation of women’s disadvantage.

By the 1980s, two mutually reinforcing international feminist trends were occurring. First, the criticism of the inadequacy of WID led to an emphasis “towards the transformation of gender relations as the major concern” (Rai 2011: 32). Thus the phrase ‘gender and development’ (GAD) began to arise. Intended to have a greater emphasis on the power relations between women and men, and the institutional and cultural power structures that support them, the efforts to mainstream GAD into development bureaucracies has generally resulted in a simplification; a reversion to seeing gender as an empirical category for instrumental planning purposes or simply as shorthand for ‘women’. Gouws (2005: 78) remarks that “while the driving force around
gender activism used to be women’s experience, mainstreaming turns it into a technocratic category for redress that also suppresses the differences between women”.

Second, there was success in the international arena to codify the recognition of gender inequality and the need to country-led measures bound by global agreements. The United Nations World Decade for Women (1976-85), called for equality, development, and peace. In the early years, women’s issues were seen primarily in the context of human rights. While the UN Declaration on Human Rights was created post-war,

by the late 1960s, it had become clear that a general plea for non-discrimination did not suffice to guarantee the protection of women’s rights. In 1975, a global call for an international convention specifically to implement those commitments emerged from the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City. (Koh 2002: 263).

Thus the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was launched in 1981. This commitment to gender equality was further developed with The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action (PfA) adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Ertürk (2004: 4) demonstrates that it represented “a commitment on the part of the international community, governments, non-governmental organization (NGO) actors and women themselves to eradicate the most pervasive and universal form of inequality”.

In spite of the progressive intentions of feminist advocates, the aim of gender equality gained a foothold in the ID world primarily in terms of the desire for efficient and effective aid programs rather than women’s rights.
**Gender Transformative Approaches to Gender and Development**

While the liberal feminist desire to recognize the importance of women in development may have been transformative, or at least novel, at the time there were stronger feminist critiques of the role of development work. Drawing on critical theory that emphasizes the embedded structures of domination and inequality in society, Kabeer (1994: 44) notes, that in spite of traditional Marxist writing being gender blind, Engels did recognize women’s oppression:

> The first class opposition that appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression coincides with that of the female sex by the male (Engels and Leacock 1972: 74).

Kabeer (1994) identifies three feminist critical frameworks used to explain women and development issues: dependency theory which gives primacy to class relations, women’s unpaid reproductive work and which ignored men as a class of beneficiaries; global patriarchal capitalism which sees capitalism as a new form of patriarchy and emphasizes the overriding power of men giving no agency to women; and capital accumulation and the social relations of gender. Dependency theory places class relations and capitalist exploitation at the centre for understanding women’s condition in developing countries. Women’s reproductive (unpaid) labour is crucial to capitalist profit making as is the provision of a cheap labour pool that can be drawn on when needed. Maintaining that men and women share common class interests, Nash and Safa (1976) claim that men are not the oppressors of women but it is capitalism that exploits their unpaid or underpaid labour. Taken to the logical conclusion, contemporary Marxists argue that women’s oppression is inextricably tied in with class oppression at both national and
international levels. Accordingly, Bandarage (1984: 500) argues that “the liberation of most women – and men – is not possible within the prevailing capitalist world system”.

In contrast, feminists, identifying a global patriarchal capitalism, refused to see class conflict as the primary oppression. Writers such as Mies (1998: 13) claim that the structure of patriarchy predates the development of capitalism and that both men and capitalists benefit from women’s subordination. In criticizing both of these universal explanations for women’s oppression, Kabeer (1994: 53) asserts that “they represent a form of ‘holistic’ analysis which effectively reverses the flow of causality found in methodological individualism, so that instead of flowing up from the lowest level of analysis, causality is now imposed top-down from the higher levels.” Seeking a more grounded and complex account, Kabeer refers to a social-relations approach, which does not give priority to either class or gender as the determining principle of individual identity or social position. Accordingly, not only does class determine the meaning of gender for an individual, it can also explain antagonism between women, not only between women and men. This is a complexity which some radical feminist accounts might find difficult to accept. A more complex picture is provided whereby the common thread of gender oppression varies geographically and historically in terms of specific class and gender relations (Kabeer 1994: 58). Thus, a gender relations approach steers a path between a liberal feminist account of supporting women to better compete within capitalist systems (WID), and universal theories that are too deterministic to provide practical directions for strategy. While the former WID approach provides support for practical interventions, for example, training women in leadership skills, broad structural theories tend to dismiss the value of anything less than a total transformation of society. From this perspective,
national and international agencies are merely one of many manifestations of imperialist or patriarchal capitalism. Short-term measures through such agencies can be dismissed as, at best, ameliorative, and at worst, a co-opted form of feminism. However, this is not a satisfactory position, if only because we cannot afford to ignore the official agencies of development (Kabeer 1994: 67).

According to Kabeer, whatever our vision of gender equality, we need interim strategies that allow us to move ahead; simply disengaging with any mainstream international development work is counterproductive. This position provides the space for attempting to incorporate feminist challenges to men’s violence against women within the international development field.

**Violence Against Women and International Development**

According to Sen (1998), development literature which addresses violence against women tends to take one of three approaches. The first approach argues that violence against women limits the effectiveness or efficiency of development projects; the second approach focuses on how such violence hinders participation; and the third approach argues that violence is an offence against human development, and that all forms of economic development must address the issue.

The efficiency argument for addressing men’s violence against women considers violated women to be a wasted resource, particularly because their participation in the labour force is constrained, and thus the economic costs are unacceptable. Commonly, a link is made to the health burden of violence where women’s freedom from injurious violence is a necessary instrument to “provide a foundation for future economic growth” (World Bank 1993). Using an econometric analysis, a World Bank discussion paper notes that estimates of the global burden of
disease indicate that in established market economies “gender-based victimization is responsible for one out of every five days of life lost to women of reproductive age” and prevents their full participation in the economy (Heise 1994: ix). In the second approach, and similar to the impediment to women’s productivity, men’s violence against women is seen as preventing women’s participation which is a key barrier to a country’s development.

The third international development approach to men’s violence against women is where the issue of human rights is considered to underpin both violence and development (Peters and Wolper 1995). World-wide agitation and lobbying on women’s human rights have had considerable success in establishing mechanisms which have made violence a more central issue. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979, and the appointment of a UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, following the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights were both key initiatives. It was this 1993 event, which brought together advocates from around the world, that succeeded in making governments acknowledge that violence against women is a fundamental violation of their human rights (Bunch and Reilly 1994). So far, this has been the main approach in ensuring adequate legal protections are instituted by, and within, states.

This is not to say that such mechanisms have necessarily been successful in reducing men’s violence against women, nor that women have been readily able to access to formal justice institutions (Bumiller 2008). There is considerable debate among feminists as to the value of state based rights mechanisms to support women. Merry (2006) notes the widespread concern about the lack of enforcement mechanisms leading CEDAW to have little practical ‘teeth’ although she suggests it has valuable cultural influences. Similarly Kelly (2005: 488) warns against taking continued progress for granted and reminds that, in the face of an anti-rights
opposition “continued lobbying and oversight” is required. Another important problematic, particularly relevant in the Pacific context, is the tension between cultural rights and women’s rights. Traditonal culture “as national essence is fundamental to claims to indigenous sovereignty and ethnonationalism, often in resistance to human rights” (Merry 2006: 14).

Kelly (2005: 490) summarises the ambivalence surrounding the strategic use of a human rights framework. On the one hand it has provided a universal language for claim making on the patriarchal state by women across the globe. She suggests it is “unlikely that the more challenging language of domination and oppression” could have had the same effect. On the other hand Kelly questions whether rights based claims can effectively end men’s violence against women when a “deeper social transformation of gender orders and gender relations” is required.9

**Involving Men in Gender and Development**

The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action (PfA) adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, along with the shift to GAD, eventually led to considering men’s role in the gender equality scheme. In 2000 the UN general assembly adopted further actions and initiatives to implement the PfA which included initiatives to develop policies and implement programs,

8 This tension is discussed further in the final chapter.

9 See pages 81-83 for further critical discussion on rights based frameworks.
particularly for men and boys, on changing stereotypical attitudes and behaviours concerning gender roles and responsibilities to promote gender equality and positive attitudes and behaviour; and strengthen gender-awareness campaigns and gender equality training among women and men, girls and boys to eliminate the persistence of harmful stereotypes (Assembly 2000: 31).

While the use of the term stereotypes indicates a less progressive analysis, in 1999 the UN’s World Survey on Women in Development explicitly names power differentials between women and men as the key issue. The report goes further in employing a structural analysis in insisting on a gender analysis of all social, political and economic structures and development policies and recognizing “that achieving gender equality requires ‘transformative change’ [emphasis added]” (United Nations. Division for the Advancement of Women. 1999: 7).

Ertürk (2004) notes that while including men in analysis is clearly a step forward, the question remains as to how this will be translated into policy and practice. There is a risk that with GAD being reduced to identifying the different needs of the two gender categories, men will become a new constituency drawing funds and resources away from women. For example, she notes that the UN’s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) approach to gender mainstreaming, while recognizing men, reinforces a static and essentialist view of gender missing the possibility of gender transformative intervention. Highlighting the complexity and pervasiveness of the patriarchal gender order, Ertürk (2004: 5) argues that “any effort to integrate the role of men into

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10 While there have been some more critical uses of the term for example in cultural studies (Bhabha (2003); Hall 1997), most use in relation to gender and masculinities has tended to psychologise and individualise.
the international gender agenda should start with a deconstruction of the concept of masculinity and an assessment of its policy implications under changing conditions”. This analysis is the central focus of the next chapter.

Notwithstanding the risks of focusing on men, Erturk argues for four policy measures to ensure a transformative approach is maintained. She reiterates firstly, the importance of a gender perspective on all policy making and, secondly, the elimination of gender discrimination from all institutions in society. Third, she emphasises the importance of providing alternatives for women and ensuring their empowerment must remain central and should not to be supplanted by a new focus on men. Finally, she recommends “engaging in a dialogue and alliance with like-minded men to sensitize various social segments in addressing the problem of gender inequality as a societal problem concerning women and men equally” (Ertürk 2004: 16). This reference to ‘alliance with like-minded men’ is significant as most of the emerging international work speaks of ‘partnerships’ with men11.

In pursuing men’s support for gender equality work, there are strategic difficulties concerning men’s motivation for joining what may appear to be a self-abrogating project. The idea that gender inequality is something that should matter to men and women equally stems in part from strategic considerations. Thus the project of engaging men often centres on how to identify benefits that would encourage men to act to undermine their own privilege. When comparing the benefits of wealth, status, control and servicing by women, the drawbacks may be hard to specify. For example, according to Johnson (1997) men can undo the costs of trying to live up to

11 The ethics and politics of how men and women should be strategically positioned is interrogated further in Chapter Four with a discussion of gender power.
the core controlling values of patriarchy which include a distorted sexuality and their compromised humanity. In explaining men’s motivation for involvement in gender equality Ertürk (2004: 15) appears to contradict her previous critiques of determinist essentialism by asserting that working cooperatively with men will inevitably occur because “human history has inherently been driven towards the freedom from oppression.”.

It is possible that the optimism towards engaging men may be a reaction to a caricature of the radical feminist view that men are never to be trusted. Tripathy (2009) suggests that conceptions and applications of gender in development have been ‘truncated’ by an implicit position that men are the oppressor, and until the disadvantages of women are redressed men should remain invisible in gender studies. With men as the enemy, positive changes can only come from women. She argues, that in the ubiquitous oppressor model, men become a fixed barrier to be overcome by women who are, in contrast, able to reconstruct themselves. Tripathy (2009: 3) therefore claims that men are only understood in terms of women and “not as a subject in itself; if men are to be discussed, it must be their instrumental value to advance the cause of women empowerment”, which helps to explain the common emphasis on engaging men in gender equality projects rather than directly interrogating masculinity per se. Stressing that because men have no incentive to change the existing system of gender privileges, she argues that it is vital that men and masculinity are also critically interrogated.

Tripathy (2009: 7) has no time for ‘irrational’ women who have a paranoia about male feminists (sic) taking over the agenda and who would therefore prefer that men remain “fossilized in their depravity and as patriarchal agents”. Her aim is to dislodge any ahistorical or essentialist notions of patriarchy that lead to an inability to effectively challenge gender inequality. Rather, for her, it
is the “slippery and fluid” nature of gender power located within a specific historical context that makes change possible.

Tripathy presents a common ethical and strategic dilemma confronting advocates of men’s involvement in gender equality, which is represented by the historical shift from Women in Development to Gender and Development. Is the gender problem primarily a women’s issue and thus women’s responsibility, or is the issue of gender inequality a problem for both women and men. On the one hand, she refers to the need to make men aware of ‘women’s problem’ and on the other claims that “inequality is not just women’s issue, but an issue to be confronted for human freedom and development” (Tripathy 2009: 16). This dilemma will now be explored further in the context of training for gender transformation.

**Approaches to Gender Transformative Training**

The preceding discussions indicate that liberal feminist approaches to gender transformation are not sufficient, as they do not address power inequalities within the structures of society. A human rights approach addresses the specific entitlements women would enjoy in a gender transformed world (Ertürk 2007: 44). However, according to Ertürk (2004: 16), it is important to focus “attention on transforming the structural causes and consequences of violence against women” and to break the link between masculinity and power at all levels.

Plantenga (2004) refers to her training work in terms of transforming both the understanding of the individual participants, and of organisations’ ‘deep structure’ - the history, culture and practices. In another schema, Gupta et al. (2003: 27), when referring to technical approaches for gender integration into HIV/AIDS work, identify four approaches along a continuum from
‘harmful’ (i.e., making discriminatory distinctions between men and women that actually negate any real or potential program successes) to ‘empowering’ (i.e., fostering the ability of men and women to become free of gender-related constraints and power imbalances, and improving women’s capabilities to organize, make choices and decisions, take positions of leadership, and shape their own destinies).

In between these two ends of the spectrum are gender sensitive and gender transformative approaches. Gender sensitivity means recognizing the different roles and needs of men and women, whereas gender transformative programs transform gender norms and seek to create more gender-equitable relationships (Gupta et al. 2003: 33).

In the area of training programs specifically focused on men and boys, those that are gender transformative are the preferred model. In their report analysing the impact of gender-based training, Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento (2007: 7) make the assertion that the transformative approach, does “not seem appropriate to apply to interventions with boys and men” as they interpret this approach as empowering women. While they are right to question the idea of giving power to men, they have missed the important structural dimension of this approach which is designed to move away from treating genders as separate categories to be targeted, but seek to change gender power relations. While many of the programs they reviewed were considered gender transformative, the report recognises that the outcomes for most programs are very limited. Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento (2007: 11) note that

programs generally focus on relatively small groups of men and boys and only a few seek to change institutional cultures, broader social norms or
policies and laws. As such, most of the transformative programs are transforming or changing the social norms of a relatively limited group of men and boys and their partners and children. True gender transformation is clearly longer term and must transcend relatively small-scale community-based or service-based activities.

This assessment is not always evident when programs are presented as transformative. For example, Dunkle and Jewkes (2007: 173) describe the importance of a fundamental shift in gender relations if the HIV pandemic is to be arrested, recognizing the overwhelming scale of change needed. However, they cite an evaluation of the Stepping Stones project as an example of a gender-transformative program where, over a two year period of follow-up, “there was a sustained reduction in young men’s perpetration of intimate partner violence”.

Closer examination of the results of their cluster-randomised controlled trial shows strikingly similar results with 15% of men in both groups prior to the program indicating more than one incidence of violence perpetration. This is compared at the two year follow up, where men in the program indicated the same 15% incidence, whereas the control group had decreased to 14%. In spite of this result, the authors claim that the changes in sexual and violent behaviour of men were supported by the findings of qualitative research. Stepping Stones is a behavioural intervention that, according to a recent classification of interventions by WHO, is ‘gender transformative’ in that it seeks to transform gender roles and promote more gender equitable relationships between men and women (Jewkes et al. 2008: 8).
Putting aside the problems with measuring violence in incident specific terms, (see Stark 2007 for example), the qualitative research was based on men’s self-reports of their levels of violence against women. Seeking empirical evidence to confirm the transformative efficacy of such programs can lead to methods which are subject to epistemological gender biases. Dobash et al. (1992: 82) make the point well:

Unfortunately, the presumed gain in objectivity achieved by asking research subjects to report only ‘acts’, while refraining from elaborating upon their meanings and consequences, is illusory. As noted above, couples exhibit little agreement in reporting the occurrence of acts in which both were allegedly involved, and self-reported acts sometimes fail to differentiate the behaviour of groups known to exhibit huge differences in the perpetration of violence. The implication must be that concerns about the validity of self-report data cannot be allayed merely by confining self-reports to a checklist of named acts.

Therefore, claims to gender transformation must be more acutely analysed and defended. For example, the evaluation by Bradley et al. (2011: 10) which refers to Stepping Stones as an ‘individually focu...
have multiple interventions that take account of cultural and environmental influences at the individual, community and policy levels, with emphasis on participation, mobilization and ownership by existing bodies such as women’s groups and village health committees (Bradley et al. 2011: 10).

Carolyn Moser is well known among gender and development practitioners, particular for the development of her often cited gender analysis tool, the Moser Gender Planning Framework (Moser 1993). However, she has also been influential in the way gender training has developed in the international development sphere. In analysing Moser’s approach to training, Mukhopadhyay and Wong (2007) note that she presents contradictory positions. On the one hand, she acknowledges that training is only one strategy advocates can use and that achieving gender equality requires political intervention, while on the other hand, she claims that gender planning training can be transformative.

Similar to the apparently overstated success of Stepping Stones, Mukhopadhyay and Wong (2007: 16) observe that Moser claims ambitious results and optimism that short training sessions will allow participants to, not only easily grasp complex concepts, but will develop the ability to undertake complex gender analysis. They further explain that this confident orientation is also evidenced in Moser’s concern that gender training does not promote tension by raising personal or political issues, but stays focussed on professional, technical skills.

Rather than the issue being an over-optimistic expectations of gender training, or the lack of a multi-faceted set of interventions, Standing (2004) explains that the problem has been that gender advocates do not understand how to engage effectively with policy machinery. The
notion that gender training can be transformative by equipping participants with clear and simple analytical concepts, such as gender roles and responsibilities, practical and strategic gender needs, is attractive. While these concepts are underpinned by feminist theorising “they can equally be problematic in reducing the complex to the banal and seeming to promise the riches of political change without the long work of politics” (Standing 2004: 82).

From a policy advocacy perspective, the target of progressive transformation are the various sector bureaucracies that are managing and implementing development projects on behalf of governments. However, there is a paradox whereby gender equality advocacy is both overly politicised and depoliticised. Standing (2004) notes that, on the one hand, bureaucrats are not simply technical implementers but are influenced by a range of political and personal patronage, and act in ways that maintain their own interests. On the other hand, the work becomes “depoliticised as the demand for ‘industrial’ or mass production models of gender mainstreaming in the form of toolkits and checklists grows” (Standing 2004: 84). She goes on to argue that this depoliticisation is due to a lack of sophistication in the analysis of the functioning of bureaucracies and their potential for social change (Standing 2004: 84).

In essence, Standing’s concern is that bureaucracies are ‘inherently non-transformatory contexts’ and any attempt to bypass political processes to achieve social justice aims will be doomed to failure. Political organising (see for example Schutz and Sandy 2011) and coalition building, not technical skills training, are required. Thus the emphasis in my own male advocacy training (Fisher 2011) is on developing men who can act as effective political allies to non-government
women’s rights organisations, and is not restricted to improving their espoused attitudes or interpersonal relations\textsuperscript{12}.

**Conclusion**

Having outlined the historical context for the involvement of men in efforts to improve gender equality, the proceeding four chapters undertake an analysis of four substantive content areas: masculinity, violence, power and ‘engaging men’. One key focus of the ‘stage two’ training\textsuperscript{13} described in the Handbook is to explore in depth the meaning and making of masculinity so participants can understand the gender dynamics that underpin women’s oppression and reflect on their own gendered self-conceptions. Brod (1998: 313) outlines three analytic orientations to masculinities: a ‘gender specific’ ethnographic approach to understanding masculinities in different cultural contexts, an orientation that charts the harmful effects of hegemonic masculinity on young and marginalised men, and third, an instrumental method that “explores masculinities as a way to end patriarchy and promote gender justice”. It is the latter approach which is taken in the following chapter.

\textsuperscript{12} This is not to underrate the importance of improving men’s interpersonal relations with women, and other men, for them to be effective allies, but to highlight the importance of moving further than personal development programs would entail.

\textsuperscript{13} The week long training represented in the Handbook is undertaken by men who have already received a minimum of a week’s introductory training by women from FWCC.
Chapter Three: Theorising Masculinity

It is time to move beyond the old fixed ideas about gender roles and about universal male domination. Time to find ways of thinking about and analysing gender that make sense of the complexities of people's lived realities. The gender and development sector currently lacks sophisticated tools for understanding difference: is it not time that we turned our attention to creating them? (Cornwall 1997: 12)

The preceding chapter outlined how men are now an explicit focus of efforts to improve gender equality. The degree to which there is a clearly articulated theoretical perspective on men and masculinity varies. This chapter explores the way masculinity is understood within the sample of gender equality training programs from the international development sector. The approach of my own Handbook is also scrutinised and a proposed conceptual framework for teaching about men and masculinity is presented.

While some programs examined spell out a theoretical position on men and masculinity, most of the programs I reviewed assume a standpoint, or use terminology that implies a particular framework. In programmatic terms, there appears to be three distinct approaches.

First, the content of the program material may give explanations for men and masculinity (or more broadly, gender) that is intended as explanatory for a particular audience. In the case of training materials, the curriculum can include content intended for learners directly and/or notes to the trainer. For example, this note to facilitators from a program that seeks to prevent intimate partner violence and promote healthy relationships among South African youth advises:
The central idea of the social construction of gender can be understood as there being many different ways of being a man or woman (girl or boy). We learn how to be a girl or a boy in childhood and the ideas of how to be a girl or boy and then a woman or man change as we get older…. These ideas are under the influence of our social environment and peers as well as the choices we make and values we hold (Gevers et al. 2011: 20).

Further on, this is ‘taught’ to participants by asking them to: “Think of a time when you were treated in a particular way because you are a girl or a boy. Think about how that made you feel and whether it limited what you could do” (Gevers et al. 2011: 20).

A second way that training material may be premised on a model of masculinity is in how the learning is organised. For example, a program may explicitly focus on men and/or adolescent boys as participants as in the Men as Partners Program (EngenderHealth and PPASA 2001: ix) which states that it “needs to approach men in a gentle, respectful, open-minded manner. … Outreach efforts should be designed to match the needs of South African males.” Similarly, Be the Hero, a Victorian secondary school program gives a clear rationale for running male only groups:

In a male only group they can talk freely and openly about the values they hold, about the meaning of courage in this context, about the sort of men they want to become. A discussion about the ethics of respectful relationships, conducted in a male only group, allows a frank, non-defensive exploration of the behaviours they want for themselves and how
they can influence the boys and men around them (Victorian Women's Trust 2009: 7).

The optimistic view that men in single gender settings will be more honest also implies a perspective on the dynamics of masculinity which is at odds with most critical writing recognising conflictual, defensive and competitive dynamics (Carrigan, Connell and Lee 1985).

The third way that programs invoke a theory of masculinity is in terms of the view of how change will occur to improve gender equality. For example, ‘promising approaches’ (Esplen 2006) can include engaging men in “alternative views about manhood” (Aguinaldo 2012), creating alternative, non-violent peer groups, putting young men in contact with non-violent role-models, and tapping into popular youth culture by making it ‘cool’ to be non-violent (Barker 2006). Each of these strategies implies theoretical orientations towards masculinity.

The following will briefly review current interpretations of masculinity that may assist to develop a framework complex enough to be a credible basis not only for informing trainers and their students, but also approaches to the transformation of gender relations.

Wharton (2012) identifies three broad sociological frameworks for understanding gender that are beyond the common sense ‘natural attitude’ (discussed below) that most people have about men. First, the individualist position holds that masculinity is a characteristic or personality trait of men. It is expressed mainly through socialisation and gender role theory which Wharton notes have much in common with lay understandings of gender. The second approach takes a more dynamic approach to masculinity, understanding it as a process or outcome of social interactions that are largely framed by the context. Third, masculinity has been explained as a phenomenon that is created by and creates institutions and social structures.
Critiquing the Natural Attitude Approach

Before examining these three frameworks and their implications for an approach to transformative gender education, it is worth reflecting on the most pervasive and common sense explanation outside of sociological understandings – functionalist, gender dimorphism; or the ‘natural attitude’. Hawkesworth (1997: 649) explains Garfinkel’s (1967) concept of the ‘natural attitude’ as one that encompasses a series of "un-questionable" axioms about gender, including the beliefs that there are two and only two genders; gender is invariant; genitals are the essential signs of gender; the male/female dichotomy is natural; being masculine or feminine is natural and not a matter of choice; all individuals can (and must) be classified as masculine or feminine.

This essentialist view about masculinity is often promoted by employing scientific claims of biological differences between men and women. The most commonly cited of these natural sex difference explanations refer to the impact of hormones, brain anatomy and functioning, and evolutionary processes. Thus men’s aggressiveness is seen as being due to their higher levels of testosterone; for example, the highly regarded report on effectiveness of programs cites Renfrew (1997) in claiming:

There are biological influences on boys’ and men’s behaviour. Some studies find that testosterone levels, for example, are associated with higher levels of aggression, although other studies find that environmental
stressors (such as living in violent settings) also raise testosterone levels (Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento 2007: 6).

Popular authors, Gurian and Stevens (2007: 140) assert the biological nature of masculinity by referring to both hormones and brain function: “Testosterone increases male (and female) spatial-mechanical development and use of right-hemisphere brain centers.” The result is a scientific sounding reframing of the familiar ‘boys will be boys’ explanation for a range of anti-social behaviour when they argue that “boys' hormones are pushing the male brain toward aggressive-active, spatial-mechanical, and kinesthetic-physical life experience”. This is in spite of the lack of convincing evidence linking testosterone and violence (Gilbert and Gilbert 1998; Kemper 1990; Pollack 1999).

There are four important reasons for discussing claims of biological essentialism as explanations for masculinity. First, in terms of broader politics of gender, while there is greater interest in the issues of gender equality and gender-based violence internationally, there is also an increase in the anti-feminist voice that draws selectively on science to attempt to demonstrate the unproductiveness of efforts to reform gendered behaviour and relations (Fausto-Sterling 1992, 1997, 2012). Second, there are strong links between the natural attitude and gender conservative frameworks based on religion or tradition. The idea of God’s creation of men and women is akin to biological essentialism, and can be witnessed in the emergence of a Christian men’s movement, The Promise Keepers. Donovan (1998: 825) highlights the movement’s claim “that an essential masculinity exists and they use it strategically to solve problems of manhood, particularly to give men more power at home” and “style men as intrinsically aggressive and naturally competitive”.
Third, there is also the issue that certain groups of subordinated men will be defended by arguing that their biology is to blame for anti-social behaviour. This can be the case with young men who are often considered the more dangerous sub-group of men, and particularly black (male) youth can be stigmatized. For example, in challenging the perceived dangerousness of all African male youth, Sommers (2006: 14) draws on research to argue that young men with high levels of testosterone are easily influenced by their peers. He defends the youth by arguing that those with high testosterone who are surrounded by positive peers will develop into leaders.

Lastly, gender equality training programs invariably make the distinction between biological sex and socially constructed gender, but rarely analyse the dynamics of masculinity in any depth. For example, one Arabic program describing strategies and approaches to working with men and boys to end violence against women acknowledges that masculinity is a complex phenomenon. However, from their perspective the association of masculinity with aggressiveness, control and competitiveness,

results from a combination of biological, cultural, and social influences, and relates to our understanding of power in society as a whole. Although it is difficult to determine the extent to which each of these factors has influenced current gender inequalities and causes of violence against women (GBV), an understanding of all three provides a framework within which to challenge and change the status quo. (Ataya 2010: 58)

Such a statement reinforces the idea that this masculinity is very difficult to determine and it is implied that some aspects of men’s aggressiveness are biological. I refute this assertion in the following section.
Countering Claims of Biological Essentialism

The ideological strength of the ‘natural attitude’ means that most people will readily ‘see’ the naturalness of divisions of labour (women as nurturers, men as protectors) as a result of clear physical differences. People will also commonly invoke nature arguments or evidence to support their claims. Therefore, in order to have any significant impact on undermining this biologism (Srivastava and Roy 2011: iii), it is necessary to explore four key areas: the biological basis of men’s aggressiveness, claims about brain differences, men’s sexuality, and men’s inability to effectively nurture children.

As previously indicated, aggression is often attributed to levels of testosterone. Yet, Connell (2000: 215) cites Kemper (1990) when she makes the point that “Testosterone levels … far from being a clear-cut source of dominance and aggression in society, are as likely to be the consequence of social relations”. Fausto-Sterling (1992: 126-7) supports this with findings from one of the few studies done on convicted criminals who had been chemically castrated. The ‘treatment’ was found to be so ineffective that more than half of them died in aggressive encounters. Many people tend to refer to animal behaviour as evidence of testosterone’s impact on aggression; however, here Fausto-Sterling (1992: 147), among others, points out the false causality. She cites evidence that male monkeys’ level of testosterone increases after copulation, indicating hormone levels respond to behaviour not the other way around.

Brain sex differences are another area that capture the public interest and resonate with the ‘Mars and Venus’ ideology (Gray 1993). Much was made of one brain scan study by Canli et al. (2001) that found women had better memory of emotion-invoking images than men. The popular press picked up the findings to claim (in spite of a sample size of twenty-four) that men are just not
good at emotions. But as Barnett and Rivers (2005: 188) clarify, there is a simpler explanation for the differential abilities in such a test. Culturally, women are expected to, and often do, take the major responsibility for a family’s emotional life, thus cueing them into and developing a greater emotional memory salience.

The brain has also been the focus of explanations for a biological basis of homosexuality. Sheldon et al. (2007) identify brain anatomical, hormonal and/or genetic factors and note that there have been little in the way of firm conclusions to be drawn. On the other hand, those who claim the unnaturalness of homosexuality are usually unaware of the numerous animal studies demonstrating same sex pleasuring (for example, see Sommer and Vasey 2006). Thus, the presumed ‘naturalness’ of heterosexuality is similarly questionable.Claims of brain difference may be supported by evolutionary narratives.

Evolutionary biology is a particularly potent source of essentialist views about men and masculinity as it implies a fixed determinism, again akin to theism, that explains men’s behaviour in a way that implies they have little ability to control their actions. Buss (1994) claims to have discovered the evolutionary propensity for men to prefer younger women and more physically attractive women as partners. He argues that younger women are more likely to produce more offspring and so are more desirable, although he provides no empirical evidence. On the contrary, Barnett and Rivers (2005: 75) provide field study evidence that demonstrates among primates, there is no indication that males prefer younger females. In fact, younger mothers suffer higher infant mortality rates making them less functionally desirable. They also explain that cross-cultural studies indicate humans experience a wide range of physical body shapes and parts as attractive, demonstrating that desire is much more of a culturally-informed mental construct than any inherent ‘drives’. True to their feminism, the authors assert that unlike
animals, humans create legal and cultural institutions around ‘mating’ which involve men’s dominance over women. The interest in younger women may simply be that it ‘makes coercion easier’.

Finally, the fourth area underpinning the natural attitude concerns claims of men and nurturing. When men participants are confronted with the reality of the inequality of the household, which is frequently a component of gender equality training, there is often a brief moment of guilt. However, whether voiced or not, most men (and women) will believe that this inequality is acceptable or at least inevitable due to women’s natural nurturing (see for example Barnett and Rivers 2005). This is one of the hardest divisions to shift as for the lay person. There is such a clear and logical connection between women’s bodies, reproduction and their care giving; that men are naturally incapable of nurturing children is seen as the corollary of their innate aggressiveness.

Risman (1986) studied a large group of single fathers with the aim of evaluating individualist and structural gender theories for their ability to explain and predict men’s nurturing. Individualist theories claim that adults have essential and fixed psychic predispositions resulting in women desiring to mother in a way that men don’t. On the other hand, structural explanations look to the ability of people to adapt to the immediate context and social interactions. Not surprisingly, her study found that the majority of the men felt quite comfortable and competent in their childcare skills. There was no support for the individualist idea that certain abilities are fixed in women and not men, instead “as structural theory suggests, the situational demands of role requirements influence adult behaviour and lead men to mother when they have no wives to depend upon” (Risman 1986: 101). In the next section I move from biological explanations to Wharton’s (2012) two sociological frameworks - individualist and contextual.
Individualist Frameworks for Understanding Masculinity

The first of Wharton’s (2012) two sociological frameworks, ‘individualist’, is primarily expressed in socialisation and gender role theory. The male sex role is the commonly understood set of expectations and norms of behaviour attached to being of the male sex (Farrell 1974; Parsons and Bales 1955; Pleck and Sawyer 1974). A man’s identity is then an internalised masculinity brought about through the process of social learning or socialisation. The advantage of this approach to the biological explanations for masculinity would appear to be the possibility that masculinity is not fixed but is amenable to change, as long as the agents of socialisation are transformed. Thus feminist engagement with role theory initially was to use the framework as a way to promote strategies to liberate women from their restrictive roles. Programs in schools offering alternative roles for girls and the promotion of positive role models became standard approaches (Browne and Fletcher 1995; Denborough 1996; Friedman and Men Against Sexual Assault. 1996). The move to assist men and boys to move out of their traditional roles soon followed and continues in the popular press and government policy ('Our Schools Fail on Male Teacher Role Models' 2012; Denice 2012; Evin 2013; Training 2002).

It is important to critically examine role theory because although it has been challenged numerous times over the past thirty years, it remains one of the most commonly employed explanatory frameworks (for example see Ataya 2010; Belbase and Heiberg 2010; EngenderHealth and LifeLine/ChildLine 2011; Esplen 2006). For instance, Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento (2007), in their review of gender equality programs, state that all of those reviewed employed a ‘social constructionist’ framework as they attempted to challenge sexist attitudes. Claiming that there is not unanimity about conceptual frameworks among programs, they go on to state:
Among researchers and program staff, there is debate about the definitions of gender norms, gender roles, gender socialization, gender relations, social constructionist theories and masculinity. Although this publication does not ignore the existence of these debates, it focuses on whether the evaluated programs have taken a gender perspective into account in their work with men and boys and how and whether these programs have been able to measure changes in the attitudes and behaviour of men and boys as a result of the intervention. (Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento 2007: 7)

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14 This quote is not just as an example of the way criticisms are discarded, but also as (re)productive of gender inequality itself. Ironically, this equivocating can be seen as a discursive strategy of a dominant form of masculinity. The same problematic masculinity the programs aim to challenge is illustrated in three ways. Suggesting that there are ‘debates’ among competing theories implies there is no settled agreement, and offering a recognition of ‘other views’ can be employed to deflect criticism, and implicitly values instrumental (practical) reasoning above moral (or political) reasoning (Hollway 2006).

A well-used rhetorical device is to attempt to stand outside a conceptual field by presenting an impression of unsettled, differing views on an area. The result is to imply that because there is debate and disagreement, there can be no way of arriving at a clear position, and thus it is inappropriate to adopt a particular framework. This is a political strategy of uncertainty most recently documented by Oreskes and Conway (2010) in their book on climate change, The Merchants of Doubt. Another discursive power technique is to offer disclaimers to reduce potential criticism from readers (Sillince 2002: 1143). This can also be considered a form of tokenism towards feminism (Lyons 2006) where there is a reluctance to enter into the complexity of understanding about gender power relations.

The third way this tentative statement from Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento (2007) could be seen as problematic is that it can be seen as a form of instrumental reasoning. This is not only ‘inextricably intertwined’ with masculinity but also functions as a technique to reduce important questions about problems of instrumental control (Ross-Smith and Kornberger 2004: 294). Thus avoiding confronting theoretical complexities to get to the instrumental task of cataloguing and scaling gender equality programs could be seen as a discursive practice that reflects and reproduces dominant masculinist epistemologies.
In spite of this claim to not ignore ‘debates’, they continue to use concepts such as role, socialisation and attitudes throughout the rest of the document. One of the main problems with utilising role/socialisation theory is that it does not require an analysis of power (Connell 2005b). It implies a static set of two complementary categories that can be described as gendered norms, expectations or requirements, but offers little to provide a dynamic relational understanding. As a result of social learning theory, attributed mutability of masculinity becomes lost and either becomes just an opaque version of biological essentialism or an enormous re-learning task an individual man must undertake to become gender equitable. Thus Hicks (2008: 47) explains, the “problem with socialization theory is that it sees gender as a thing that can be learned and then becomes fixed. So even though gender is seen as socially acquired, it nevertheless has a ‘thing-like’ quality”.

A further problem with role/socialisation theory is that it implies a passive moulding process. Similar to the potter working clay that is hardened by firing, children are moulded by agents of socialisation and fixed by adulthood. Perhaps not always explicitly articulated, this is often the rationale from gender equality programs to address boys as much as men, as they are seen to be more amenable to change or moulding. This conception of self-development provides no account for resistance or critical appraisal of the ‘models’ being presented for a young person’s masculinity. There is also a simplistic rendering of the self as unitary and coherent rather than fragmented and contradictory. It is clear from studies of men who are violent towards women, that they are able to “present themselves as nonviolent, capable, and rational men” (Faireclough 2003: 358).

Referring to the dynamic, contextual nature of gender, Hicks (2008) makes it clear that masculinity is not a result of some sort of socialisation process or a normative set of ‘society’s
expectations’ of us but a ‘complex set of practices and interactions’. There is also the inherent anti-feminist potential use of role-theory that allows a view of gender symmetry in power where men are seen as equally in need of being freed from their constricting role as women are in need of emancipation. This rendering is reinvigorated in more recent international development commentary on ‘engaging men’ as it helps provide an answer to the vexed dilemma of men’s motivation to support gender equality. So, for example, Promundo and EngenderHealth’s work argues that men suffer through enactment of dominant masculinity as

    current gender roles also compromise men’s health by encouraging them to equate a range of risky behaviours with being ‘manly’ while encouraging them to view health-seeking behaviour as a sign of weakness.

    (Promundo 2008: 16)

Not only does this explanation ignore the tangible and symbolic benefits that accrue to men in risk taking, but Connell (1996: 55) critiques such frameworks by arguing that

    the concept of a "male role" has severe weaknesses, both scientific and practical. It gives no grasp on issues of power, violence or material inequality. It misses the complexities within masculinity and the multiple forms of masculinity; and it offers very limited strategies of change.

In spite of its apparent popularity, it is important to move away from role theory and develop a more complete and complex understanding of masculinity. The next section examines Wharton’s (2012) second framework, a contextual approach to gender.
Towards a More Complex Understanding of Masculinity: A Contextual Approach

According to Wharton (2012: 31), rather than seeing gender as a property of individuals, another framework presents it as performed in context in social interactions and embedded in the structures and practices of organisations. Thus in place of role/socialisation theory, Connell gives the following more complex definition of masculinity as “a configuration of practice around the position of men in the structure of gender relations” (1996: 56). To speak of masculinity as a practice draws on West and Zimmerman’s (1987) understanding that masculinity is performed in particular ways in particular social contexts. Therefore, masculinity is not just a pre-recorded script played out by men in similar ways in diverse settings but it is a self-reflexive and purposive practice that is the result of men’s agency. That is not to say that men are always very conscious and rational about their ways of relating to others, but they are definitely not mindless reactions to situations. Connell (1996: 56) makes the point that men’s “sexual violence is competent, generally purposeful, action directed towards intimidation and the maintenance of men’s supremacy”.

Connell’s reference to the ‘position of men’ implies that rather than a singular type of masculinity, there are multiple masculinities which are produced and reproduced through gender relations among men of dominance, marginalization and complicity. A complex understanding of men and masculinities is best elucidated by the key insights from critical studies on men (Hearn 2002). Connell (2001b) outlines several relevant concepts arising from this research and theorising including: multiple masculinities, hierarchy and hegemony, collective masculinities, bodies as arenas, division and dynamics.
I have already noted the understanding that there are multiple masculinities which vary across cultures, history, institutions and even within particular locations. However, this should not be understood in the simple sense of a diversity of types or categories, but as existing in relation to each other in changing and contested ways. A dominant or hegemonic masculinity is the most powerful norm although it may not be the most common in practice. This dominant form is often asserted over and above inferior enactments of masculinity that are often characterised as feminine or gay. Thus men undertake to ‘prove’ their masculinity in the face of real or perceived threats from others, or to affirm their status (Schacht and Ewing 1998). Connell (1987: 184) explains:

It means ascendancy achieved within a balance of forces, that is, a state of play. Other patterns and groups are subordinated rather than eliminated. If we do not recognize this it would be impossible to account for the everyday contestation that actually occurs in social life, let alone for historical changes in definitions of gender patterns on the grand scale\(^{15}\).

A further insight in recognising that masculinity is not simply an individual attribute is to see it as a collective social project. Forms of masculinity are developed and reformulated by institutions such as the church, the military, schools and the mass media. There is a dialectical relationship between individual men and masculine social structures and norms. While individual

\(^{15}\) The masculinity trading card game in the Handbook aims to clarify this common dynamic and encourage critical exploration (See page 29 of the Handbook)
men draw on a particular society’s range of frames for enacting masculinity in a given setting, this enactment, or deviance from it, in turn influences and modifies these frames16.

While much of the practitioner and policy literature on engaging men in gender equality makes it clear that ‘gender is a social construction’, there is usually little that explicates its precise meaning. It usually implicitly defaults to discussions of men’s and women’s roles. When Connell refers to the active construction of masculinity, she is intentionally countering any fixed essentialism by revealing that “masculinities do not exist prior to social interaction, but come into existence as people act.” They are “actively produced, using the resources available in a given milieu” (Connell 2001a: 143).

Furthermore, an individual’s sense of their masculinity is commonly internally divided with many tensions due to competing views, feelings, justifications and actions. This means there is not necessarily any straightforward link between publicly espoused attitudes or beliefs about gender equality and a man’s behaviour. Such behaviour itself may be divided between public and private actions. Finally, Connell emphasises the historical dynamics of masculinities which demonstrates their historically contingent and changing nature.

A number of important implications for the development and application of training programs arise from the more complex view of masculinity presented. These include both pedagogical practice and curriculum content dimensions. The social learning model of masculinity is implicit in many programs. For example, Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson (2006: 7) state that we “know that violence is created, learnt and socialised; boys are not inherently or biologically determined

16 See, for example, Gidden’s (1986) explanation of Structuration Theory for a fuller explanation.
to be violent. Already at the age of three, girls and boys imitate the behaviour of family members of the same sex”. The concept of masculinity as primarily socially learnt underpins the concept of the intergenerational cycle of violence which blames the actions of the violent man on his early childhood experiences (Fisher 2011). It is crucial that training not only educates about the broader societal gendered processes but also maintains the firm position that men have agency meaning that they can and do make decisions about oppressive ways of relating.

It is also important to avoid a simple individualistic voluntarism as evidenced in the directive by Esplen (2006: 12) that “gender training should be carried out to help men realise that it is okay not to conform to dominant forms of masculinity”. Özbilgin and Tatli (2011: 1246) reveal the way the general “equality debate is reinvented along neo-liberal lines of individualism and voluntarism”, with the impact being to maintain hegemonic worldviews and ignore structural inequalities. Training men for gender equality is not simply about reassuring and encouraging them to act differently as individuals. Rather, it is to provide them with an understanding of the very real benefits that accrue to men in a patriarchy and the harms experienced by women. Importantly, such training should be based on an understanding of social change occurring through contested, dynamic and collective actions by non-state actors.

Thus the Handbook has a set of key tasks for male advocates that support such political collectivism:

In carrying out the duties of male advocate, men should be able to:

- respond to misunderstandings or unhelpful views about the nature of men’s violence against women and gender equality and inequality;
• communicate in different contexts and media;

• lobby (or support women to lobby) to implement changes in law, policies or organisational procedures that promote women’s rights and equality;

• communicate with men who may be actively resisting moves towards gender equality; (Fisher 2011: v)

The importance of developing men’s ability as critical and effective allies to the women’s rights movement is further developed in chapters six and seven.

**Conclusion: Gender and Power**

Not only is the concept of masculinity underdeveloped, but a clearly articulated explanation of gender power is also absent in many of the training programs analysed. For example, an African training program by Miruka (2003: 10) has a consistent message that power is crucial to understanding inequality in gender relations and yet the explanation from trainer notes appears to be at odds. “Gender: refers to the socially constructed roles and responsibilities assigned to men and women by society. The roles are learned, vary between cultures and change over time” and an accompanying diagram distinguishes sex from gender as follows:

“Sex -> Biological -> Given by birth -> (Therefore) Cannot be changed.

Gender -> Cultural -> Learned through socialisation -> (Therefore) Can be changed”
By referring back to socialisation and role theory, the progressive potential of a power analysis is undermined. In order to explore this area, the next chapter will examine the range of ways gendered power is understood in the sample of programs analysed.
Chapter Four: Theorising Power

Introduction

Having explored programmatic representations and theoretical approaches to masculinity previously, this chapter will focus on the concept of power. The Handbook advocates for a more complex and feminist-informed approach based on my belief that many comparable gender equality programs tended to offer too simplistic a view. This chapter will firstly examine the range of representations in the sample of comparable programs. Second, the approach developed in the Handbook will be analysed. Finally, a discussion is presented of what is meant by the Handbook’s reference to the importance of employing a complex view of power based on feminist principles (p.17).

There is an eclectic mix of approaches to gender and power both between and within comparable gender equality training manuals. It is helpful to scrutinise the concept using some analytic frameworks from feminist literature. Most of the approaches within the training manuals tend to explain power as a characteristic of individuals or as an interpersonal dynamic, while a few writers make reference to it existing within social structures. However even these approaches tend to be static models rather than recognising its fluid dynamics. The content analysis revealed that most of the reviewed programs have an implicit rather than overtly developed conception of power. This first section of this chapter will present these ranges of representations of power, in three ways – the individualising of power, definitions of power and contradictory explanations of power. This will be followed by a brief summary of its representations within the Handbook and finally a critique and alternative understanding of gendered power is presented.
Individualising Power

A number of approaches to power within training programs locate it within individuals (Ataya 2010; EngenderHealth and LifeLine/ChildLine 2011; Esplen 2006; Insituto 2004; Ruxton 2004) thus ignoring the important social structural nature of gender power. A common form of individualising is portraying men’s power as a problem due to their individual attitudes. The chart below represents the way changes in individual attitudes will create gender equality (Ataya 2010: 15).

Thus, Ataya (2010: 15) locates changes in attitudes as a foundation cause for broader gender equality by claiming that “working with boys and men leads to changes in attitudes and behaviours, which in turn lead to women’s and girls’ empowerment. Gender equality and gender equity lead to a developed society, leading to children’s improved well-being”.

Another form of individualising is to identify power as commodity or an identity that is freely chosen by individual man. For example:

Many men continue to hold power and privilege over women, and seek to safeguard that power. But there are other men who reject fixed gender
divisions and harmful versions of masculinity, and who are more open to alternative, ‘gender-equitable’ masculinities. Seeing the effects of gender discrimination on women they care deeply about, or becoming more aware of the benefits of involved fatherhood, for example, may motivate some men to change. In various settings, small numbers of men and boys are changing their attitudes and behaviour towards women (Esplen 2006: 4).

A further common and problematical form of individualising is to psychologise power. For example, by suggesting men’s violence against women is due to their need to regain self-esteem when feeling under economic stress. The Brazilian Program H gives the following explanation of compensatory power:

For some men, domestic violence is often associated with economic stress. Some men, when they are unable to fulfil their traditional role as provider, may resort to violence in an attempt to ‘re-assert’ their traditional ‘male’ power. Higher rates of domestic violence are associated with low self-esteem and traditional ideas about gender roles on the part of men. Men who have or perceive few other sources of self-worth and identity may be more likely to resort to violence in their intimate relationships (Insituto 2004: 152-3).

Although not developed in the manual, there is a reference here to the way social structures influence masculine identity and the abuse of women. However, by emphasising an individualised and medicalised stress explanation, it misses the more complex reality of the mutual and recursive interplay between individuals and social processes.
A further individualized approach is to present power as anger and a loss of self-control. Whilst both the Handbook and an African training program use biblical arguments for gender equality, the latter uses biblical references in a way that inappropriately individualises men’s violence against women:

Self-control over one’s anger is a virtue that is not usually associated with being a real man. But Proverbs counsels everyone to practice self-control and patience. Proverbs 16:32—It is better to be patient than powerful. It is better to win control over yourself than over whole cities (EngenderHealth and LifeLine/ChildLine 2011: 22).

Moving from the individual to interpersonal relations, a few programs identify the transactional aspect of power although, while reference to gender relations is common, very few programs seem to use the term ‘power relations’. A workshop exercise described within the international Women Peacemakers manual involves one participant positioning another in a way that expresses feelings of superiority. The exercise then results in a short discussion on the importance of feelings and the consequences of that. One person’s feelings of superiority often invoke feelings of inferiority in another person. Such an exercise can be used to illustrate and discuss gender and power relations between women and men (de Vries 2010: 27).

While an improvement on individualist explanations, the exercise still neglects the broader social structural and cultural aspects of power. It also omits the dynamic interplay of move and countermove as power plays are complied with or resisted (Faith 1994). Similarly, in addressing
power in interpersonal relations, Gevers et al. (2011: 30) construct power as a symptom and cause of an unhealthy family dynamic by suggesting that “when there is not a fair and negotiated balance of power, one person in the relationship is likely to become unhappy. Eventually, there is a good chance that this will lead to the end of the relationship”.

Rather than implicitly identifying power in terms of being located within an individual, some of the training manuals offer an explicit definition of power. The two most common definitions are approaches that commodify power and regard it as an exchange between a dyadic pair.

**Commodification of Power**

One approach to power is to view it as a neutral resource that can be used for good or harm. So the problem is how people choose to use their power rather than the existence of power per se. Gevers et al. (2011: 31) explain that: “Power is not a bad or dangerous thing, it is how we use it that might be positive or negative”. Furthermore, the Men as Partners manual reifies power by suggesting that: “In South Africa, men have more power than women do. Often, when groups have power, they treat those with less power poorly” (EngenderHealth and PPASA 2001: 57).

This quote represents power as a ‘thing’ that can be distributed among people more or less fairly. This reification of power is common in many programmes and is in accordance with other static frameworks such as role theory (as discussed in the previous chapter), and can be taken further where power becomes a disembodied ‘thing’ that can be possessed by people unequally. For example: “Begin by reminding participants that you have been talking about power and how it can benefit some people and not others” (The ACQUIRE Project and Promundo 2008, 85). It is therefore necessary to counter this trend by recognising gender power as a relational, not static concept as outlined in the following section.
Power as a Dyadic Force

Perhaps the clearest definition is in the South African Respect4U programme where Gevers et al. (2011: 30) define power as a directly coercive force by explaining that “[p]ower is the ability to act or cause a particular effect; authority; influence; control access to various benefits”. Implied in many of the preceding approaches, and throughout many programmes, is the framing of power as something that occurs between two people, a dyadic phenomenon. For example, one training exercise described entails asking participants to identify examples of powerful groups and targeted groups. The trainer is asked to

help the participants come up with examples of these two groups by suggesting categories that may have a powerful and a targeted group. These include sex, race, age, religion, class, and sexual orientation (Promundo 2008: 85).

Moving closer to a social structural understanding of power, another dyadic approach adds the recognition of individual actions as being socially structured, and circumscribed by situational and institutional contexts. In a note to facilitators on the use of a chart, the Promundo (2008: 86) manual asks that they

explain that the oppressive behaviour and attitudes of people on the left side of the power chart (those with more power) and the internalized oppression of people on the right side of the power chart (those with less power) are not just about individuals and what they think and do. In order to understand why individuals do this, we have to look at the context of
people’s lives. Explain that people’s lives are heavily influenced by a range of powerful political, economic, and social institutions.

This dyadic and ‘cause – effect’ definition of power is also applied to sexual relationships with a number of programs referring to ‘unwanted sex’ (Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento 2007; Dabby 2007). For example, one section within the Respect4U manual (Gevers et al. 2011: 62-3) is titled ‘Recognising and Dealing with Problems in Relationships: Communication Skills and Pressures to have Sex’. The meaning of power is further clarified in notes to the facilitator by noting:

Today we learned about how to deal with problems around the lack of communication and being pressured to engage in unwanted sexual activities. We focused especially on using our assertive communication skills to address these issues with our partner, but to always remember to put our safety first.

A similar approach to sexual power is found in the Stepping Stones manual (Welbourn 2010: 89) which aims to “help participants find effective ways of saying ‘No’ to unwanted sexual situations”. This dyadic or interpersonal approach to power still tends to place responsibility for change on the individual. Thus the victim is expected to demonstrate greater assertiveness, ignoring the evidence that this may escalate violence, and the perpetrator is requested to show greater respect. It is important that any understanding of power moves beyond this level of analysis.

**Levels of Power**

Talking about power in terms of social categories is the beginning of recognizing different ‘levels’ of power, particularly beyond the individual and interpersonal. One increasingly
A common approach is to identify power as multi-levelled. Instituto Promundo’s programme has a workshop section devoted to understanding how ‘oppression’ works and uses a three level framework in the analysis. The exercise asks participants to “identify how oppression at each level (institutional, interpersonal, internalized) might be challenged” and further asks the trainer to “make some recommendations for the Ecological Model” (Promundo 2008: 86).

While the recognition of these levels is promising, the immediate reference to the Ecological Model17, a public health conceptual framework for understanding men’s violence against women, is of concern as it tends to treat different levels as discrete domains and has been criticised for its lack of coherence (Pease 2011a).

Contradictory Explanations of Power

A common approach to power in many programs is to provide a mixed range of implicit and explicit views that are theoretically and conceptually contradictory. It is not clear whether: a) the program designers consider the differing explanations as equally relevant; b) they have not thought very deeply about the differences or c) they hold a conservative view but make reference to more progressive explanations to enhance the program’s legitimacy. For example, the Promundo (2008: 222) provides a mix of factors leading to HIV AIDS infection with power sitting uncomfortably alongside others factors:

17 The ecological model is explored in more detail in chapter six.
Gender norms/roles and inequalities in power have a huge impact on the HIV risks women and men take. However, other factors are important too, such as age, wealth/poverty, and location (village/town).

This disjuncture is also evident in Ataya’s (2010: 108) manual that provides a hand-out on strategies and approaches to engaging men in violence against women prevention. Together with ‘[u]nderstanding the dynamics of gender power’, it suggests the strategies of ‘[u]nderstanding the socialization process at different levels (household, society) and how it relates to external factors relations at macro level and among different social groups’ and ‘[a]wareness-raising for boys and men to promote gender equality’. Following the previous critique an appropriate ‘understanding of the dynamics of gender power’ would not support socialisation theory and awareness-raising.

One definition of power that is dissimilar to the previous descriptions is that of men’s experience of powerlessness. The Promundo (2008: 177) manual reminds trainers that “throughout this activity, it is important to explore the silence and lack of power that men might feel in witnessing domestic violence”. It is not clear whether this lack of power is a lack of agency, inaction, or fear, but one should be careful when referring to men’s powerlessness as this has been a theme in the backlash against feminism (see for example Connell 2005b: 208).

With the exception of the focus on individual men’s ‘attitudes’, few of the preceding approaches attempt to explain the way power is derived or maintained. However, one regularly referenced ‘cause’ of men’s power over women is the existence of gender stereotypes. Fernandes (2005) presents this explanation as a newly formed and progressive stance shifting the focus from women as victims to gender power relations:
The use of the term “gender-based violence” provides a new context in which to examine and understand the long-standing phenomenon of violence against women. It shifts the focus from women as victims to gender and the unequal power relationships between women and men created and maintained by gender stereotypes as the basic underlying cause of violence against women (Fernandes 2005: 136).

While an improvement on individualistic explanations, the reliance on the concept of stereotypes is limiting. This section has described the range of ways power is represented in selected training programs and the extent to which these programs represent individualistic views of power. I now move to an exploration of the ways gender power is presented in the Handbook.

**Views about Gender Power Presented in the Handbook**

Within the Handbook, there are some similarities with the way power is understood in the comparable training materials. For example, there is an implicit recognition that gender power can function at different levels from micro to macro. At the micro level, power is represented as within a person to the extent that individual men believe that they have natural entitlements stemming from privilege (p. 57). Another reference to an individual level is “men as a group have more power (and privileges) than women as a group and, as individuals, many seek to maintain and increase their power in a range of social contexts and individual interactions” (p. 5). Perhaps avoiding the problem of individualising power, this quote explicitly links the individual and group levels.

Within the Handbook another two levels of power are implied. The reference to equality in decision-making needing to occur, not just within the household (interpersonal level), but also
within institutions: “greater equality for women in decision making at all levels – home, community, church and government” (p. 104). In proposing actions to be undertaken by Male Advocates to include: “lobby (or supporting women to lobby) to implement changes in law, policies or organisational procedures that promote women’s human rights and equality” (p. 104) the Handbook recognises the importance of power at the institutional level. Finally, a macro level understanding of power is presented by the following quote: “Society is a patriarchy\(^{18}\), that is, men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it” (p. 61).

**Dynamics of Power**

In the Handbook I refer to power as a type of relationship, rather than something possessed by individuals: “Gender is best understood not only as an important identity characteristic but also as a way of describing relations between women and men (boys and girls). Generally speaking, these are relations of power.”(p. vii). This is further developed by explaining that power relations can be not just between genders, but also within a gender as “it also can refer to relations within gender categories an added complexity that will be addressed in the section on men and masculinities” (p. viii).

I also explain power with reference to the idea of ‘gender equality’ with “women’s equal access to resources and services” (p. 113) being one of the key aspects. In the section outlining the goals of a Male Advocate, I frame power in relation to women’s rights – which also appears in the title of the Handbook itself. Men are told the goal is that all women shall have the ability to enjoy and

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\(^{18}\) While not all societies are patriarchal, for the purpose of the Handbook’s use in the Pacific, this is a defensible claim.
access their human rights (p. 113). Thus, not only do I recognise the cultural and social structural aspects of power dynamics, but also that there is resistance; power is not unilateral.

There are dominant social norms – institutional and cultural – which dictate the expected way in which gender relations are performed. This includes prescribing differences in privileges, status, decision making, access to services and resources and enjoyment of rights. Importantly there are also minority views that may run counter to these. (p. 21)

Similarly, I aim to avoid the moral binary of evil men and pure women by acknowledging that not only do some men resist patriarchal norms, but also some women can be complicit in supporting women’s subordination.

In any society, it is more common for men to actively support the dominant (unequal) view and for women to be keen to promote norms of gender equality. However, this is not always the case. Some women do actively argue against changes in gender relations and some men may go against peer pressure to advocate for women’s human rights. (p. 21)

In the Handbook I implicitly recognise that gender power can be understood discursively. There are numerous references and exercises designed to enable participants to critically analyse dominant messages that frame our understanding of gender relations. For example: “If appropriate, you may want to point out the double standard for women where they are expected on the one hand to be virginal, pure and moral (asexual) and alluring and sexy on the other” (p. 22). Another example is an exercise analysing “Justifications for Gender Inequality Four types of
excuses - Culture or tradition; Religion; Nature and Social function” (p. 34). I also make links between power and masculinity.

**Gender Power as Hegemonic Masculinity**

I refer to dominant or hegemonic forms of masculinity a number of times in the Handbook and occasionally the link to power is made explicit:

> Power is fundamental to dominant masculinity. That is, men as a group have more power (and privilege) than women and, as individuals, many seek to maintain and increase their power in a range of social contexts and individual interactions. (p. 5)

Power is also at issue when I warn of the potential ways that hegemonic masculinity may undermine the progressive intentions of training men as advocates for women’s human rights. For example, the job description warns men that: “Male advocates are not to use their role to enhance their own standing within their community” demonstrating a concern with status seeking associated with power (p. 108).

In the Handbook I also acknowledge the fact that existing power relations between women and men mean that it is inappropriate to speak of ‘gender partnerships’; “Male advocates must understand and accept that their role is to work for women’s centres and not as equal partners” (p. 135). The Handbook explains that the reason for not using the language of ‘partnership’ is to “avoid the possibility of advocates unintentionally (or intentionally) colluding with male

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19 This point is developed further in a later section in this chapter.
behaviour that undermines gender equality” (p. 106) thus introducing the power dynamic of collusion as part of hegemonic masculinity. This is in direct contradiction to many programs (see for example Ataya 2010; EngenderHealth 2002; International 2009; Texas Council on Family Violence 2010) that endorse a partnership strategy. Similarly Lang (2002: 1) explicitly argues that a “revised version of ‘eradicating violence against women and girls’ could be: ‘Partnerships between women and men to eradicate men’s violence against women and girls’”. While I believe there are some advantages to my approach to gender power in terms of complexity and political progressiveness, the next section will present a more thoroughgoing, complex and feminist-informed understanding of gender power than that which was articulated in the Handbook.

Towards a Complex Feminist Understanding of Power

There are two problems with the concept of different levels of gender power. First, is the tendency to emphasise individual or psychological understandings (even where other levels are acknowledged), and second a static understanding of levels is presented as a set of independent categories, rather than dynamic set of relations. Each of these approaches will be discussed in turn.

As presented earlier, individualist approaches to power are common in the training programs reviewed. These frameworks include psychological approaches that negate power altogether such as: stress, self-esteem, and impulse control, although equating power with individual attitudes is the most often cited.

The equation of power with individual men’s attitudes is emblematic of an individual perspective that ignores broader social structures. Indeed, the very concept of individual attitudes has been subject to critical interrogation. Flood and Pease (2006) explain that the idea is based on a
number of erroneous assumptions including that: a) individuals hold stable and internally coherent attitudes (individuals’ views are much more contingent on specific social contexts); b) attitudes directly influence behaviour when actually there is a complex and partial relationship between them; and c) openly espoused attitudes are the same as implicit beliefs whereas they are often contradictory. Vandello and Cohen (2003: 1003) highlight this complexity by explaining that there can be an “important disjunction between consciously articulated, explicit condemnation of domestic violence and a more implicit approval of the scripts, norms, and roles that lead to such violence”.

According to Potter (1998: 251), it is quite common for men who profess attitudes in support of gender equality to be “unequal egalitarians who support a status quo of inequality while displaying themselves as non-sexist through their abstract support of egalitarian principles”. This is not to say that individual actions and discussions are irrelevant to understanding power “for it is often at the level of specific arguments or detailed conversational patterns that “micro” issues of ideology, social structure and social setting become important” (Potter 1998: 237). It is important to understand gender power as ideology and as discursive actions or practices.

The second way that an approach emphasising levels of power can neglect complexity is by presenting them as rungs on a ladder (Arnstein 1969). Often, there is no explanation as to how the different levels might connect to each other, but are simply presented as places within which power occurs, or sites for intervention or action. This static and categorical formulation is well
represented in the increasingly accepted ecological model for understanding men’s violence against women.

Further, in the static, categorical view of levels of power, there is little recognition of the interplay between levels. On the one hand what people do at the individual level is constrained or enabled by broader social systems and culture, and on the other, the ‘level’ of institutions or community is created by the collective actions of individuals. Connell (1987) makes the point that one way to resolve this tension is to draw on Giddens’ (1986: 94) theory of structuration showing that: “Human practice always presupposes social structure, in the sense that practice necessarily calls into play social rules or resources. Structure is always emergent from practice and is constituted by it”. A shortcoming of the Handbook can be seen in its reference to different levels of decision making portraying this static and disconnected conception of power. This is in contrast to Connell’s (1987: 95) understanding that

Practice is the transformation of that situation in a particular direction. To describe structure is to specify what it is in the situation that constrains the play of practice. Since the consequence of practice is a transformed situation which is the object of new practice, 'structure' specifies the way practice (over time) constrains practice.

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20 International development agencies such as WHO (Krug, E. G. et al. 2002), AusAID (AusAID 2009), USAID (Group 2010), and locally the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (Webster and Victorian Health Promotion Foundation 2007)
The Distributive and Dyadic View of Power

Reference to discrete levels of power tends to inappropriately solidify power relations, as it tends to treat power as a resource or thing possessed by individuals. The focus on (in)equality tends to lead to a distributive model of justice where the gendered problem is the unequal access to, or possession of material goods, services and employment positions. While Young (1990) is not against the need for redistribution. In critiquing this liberal feminist approach, she argues that this leaves completely unquestioned the social structures and processes that determine unequal distribution in the first place. She identifies three key contextual elements that should be recognised: decision making power and processes, division of labour, and culture. However equality advocates tend not emphasise reforms in these areas.

Young (1990: 17) identifies the ideological nature of the distributive paradigm arguing that it “so ensnares philosophical thinking that even critics of the dominant liberal framework continue to formulate the focus of justice in exclusively distributive terms”. Young is also clear that non-material items, such as power, are inappropriately presented as ‘things’ that can be possessed, rather than a type of relation. To refer to ‘sharing power’ or ‘re-balancing power’ between women and men is to invoke this commodifying frame. While certain resources such as money or weapons may allow exercise of power, they are not in themselves power.

Young is further concerned with what she calls the dyadic conception of power which results from distributive reification. That is, there is a focus on those people or positions who wield power over those with little or none of it, in a top-down dyadic relationship. While an improvement on individualism, this approach misses the myriad ways that larger systems and structures mediate this relationship. Young (1990: 31) explains that power relations between two
people never operate in a vacuum separate from the actions of others: “one agent can have institutionalized power over another only if the actions of many third agents support and execute the will of the powerful”. Her intention is not to deny that certain individuals or social positions are powerful and dominate, but to understand more completely how they ‘enact and reproduce their power’. The result is an understanding of power that is relational rather than substantive, and is an ongoing process produced and reproduced by people beyond the obviously named dyad.

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of Young’s explanation is her use of the Foucauldian concept of the ubiquity of power. So rather than seeing power solely residing in the hands of few elites, it occurs more universally as a dynamic process of people’s interactions both constrained and enabled by particular cultural and decision making settings. Therefore, she says “it is possible to say that many widely dispersed persons are agents of power without ‘having’ it, or even being privileged” (Young 1990: 33).

Young (1990: 41) describes the power relation, she calls ‘oppression’, as “embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules”. Gender oppression then is not necessarily due to individual indentations but a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions of people in their daily lives, and part of the structures of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms. This insight demonstrates the paucity of a simple dyadic conception of gender power.

The value of moving beyond the antagonistic, dyadic model is summed up by White (2000: 38) who explains that:
this takes us a long way from the conception of gender as a seesaw in which the reason for men's 'dis-empowerment' must be sought in women's 'over-empowerment.' Men and women do not form such homogenous groups, and the relations between them are mediated by all sorts of other divisions, which together form a complex skein of power defining multiple positions, each of which has its compensations and its cost (White 2000: 38).

The dyadic conception of power is the focus of Allen (1998) who argues there have been two competing feminist understandings; on the one side men’s domination of women, and on the other women’s capacity for action. Allen criticises the domination and the empowerment views as unnecessarily one sided. In her analysis, the conventional view of domination is based on the cultural valuing of women’s and men’s natural differences. In contrast, Allen argues that differences are created to produce the categories men and women. She quotes MacKinnon (1989: 219), who explains: "Difference is the velvet glove on the iron fist of domination. The problem is not that differences are not valued; the problem is that they are defined by power". In Allen’s view, Pateman (1988) holds a similar, though slightly modified position. All men are potentially capable of having power over women and even the most benevolent men have access to this power if they choose. The implication of this argument is a one-sided conception of power that only recognises domination.

In contrast, an alternative view of power also recognises empowerment; the particular caring traits that women have that allow them to see power as the ability to transform themselves and others. Allen (1998) does not challenge the claim of women’s agency but is concerned about valorising a form of traditional femininity in the context of male dominance. For her, this
constitutes another sort of one-sided power. Seeking a more dynamic and dialectical view leads to the same complex, systems understanding presented by Young (1990), although Allen also raises the need to recognise that race and class also impact on gendered power. For Allen (1998: 31), any sufficiently complex understanding of power must be able to make “sense of the complex and multifarious power relations in which women find themselves, wherein they can be both dominated and empowered”. Allen (1998: 32) argues further that a feminist conception of power needs to account for three aspects: male domination, women’s resistance and the feminist solidarity of coalition building, which she refers to respectively as ‘power over’, ‘power to’ and ‘power with’. However, her promise of a multifaceted understanding is not entirely achieved as (1998: 36) she concludes her paper with the simple definition of power as “the ability or capacity of an actor or set of actors to act”.

Perhaps the most significant challenge to a polarized view of power comes from Foucault (1978) who argues that power is more diffusely distributed throughout social systems. This more amorphous conception of power has been criticised by feminists concerned with not losing the important recognition of systematic domination of women by men (Ramazanoglu 1993). McNay (2013), also critical, argues that Foucault’s analysis gives a one-sided or negative account of agency, which underplays the extent to which women, as subjugated subjects, creatively resist power relations. Other feminists such as Fraser (1989) see value in the Foucauldian analysis to develop a ‘situated politics’ that is flexible to respond to gendered power without relying on an ultimate authority or foundational reality to enter into practical interventions. It also permits new feminist political practice focussed on alliances rather than of unified struggle based on a unitary shared interest or identity (Fraser and Nicholson 1989).
To extend the development of a complex view of power, the next section examines it as decision-making and discourse.

**Power as Decision-Making**

Both the Handbook and the sample programs place prominence on improving the level of shared decision making between men and women. Some programmes, particularly those with a sexual health focus, emphasise interpersonal decision-making processes between couples and leave aside more public, political or institutional contexts. Regardless of the focus, there is potential to provide a far too simple concept of the power issues implicit in decision-making processes.

Kabeer (1994) refers to Lukes’ (1974) three-dimensional view of power to analyse gendered decision making. In a one-dimensional view, the focus is on the observable outcomes of a contested decision-making process among two or more actors. At the household level, this could be as simple as a woman and a man discussing their points of view which results in a particular course of action. In this framework, offering individual women greater assertiveness skills and teaching men to have greater respect for women is a logical programmatic response. This approach, however, misses an important second dimension of power which is how certain issues are removed or side-lined from debate, or allowed to be recognised in the first place. In this way, certain non-decisions are understood as decisions invoking power. Similar to previously discussed explanations, decision making power exists within the institutional, cultural and social structures that routinely constrain and enable in everyday routinized practices. Drawing on Foucault (1979), Haugaard (2012: 36) refers to this modern aspect of indirectly coercive power as “constitutive, positive and disciplinary power”.
Lukes’ (1974: 28) third dimension of power relates to the extent that an oppressed person or group is even aware or able to articulate their interests. Critical of the first two dimensions as to individualistic, the third “allows for consideration of the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics … (which) can occur in the absence of actual, observable conflict.” There is a parallel here with the distinction between women’s practical and strategic interests commonly cited in gender analysis literature. It is possible that women’s practical interests are shaped by dominant social norms and are at odds with their strategic interests. Molyneux (1985: 233) explains:

Practical gender interests are given inductively and arise from the concrete conditions of women's positioning within the gender division of labour. In contrast to strategic gender interests, these are formulated by the women who are themselves within these positions rather than through external interventions. Practical interests are usually a response to an immediate perceived need, and they do not generally entail a strategic goal such as women's emancipation or gender equality.

Molyneux appears to imply that women who are directly impacted by the gendered division of labour are unable, of themselves, to consider their strategic interests but require external interventions to uncover this third dimension of power. This discussion of the more diffuse and opaque aspects of power leads to an investigation of power as discourse and ideology.

**Power as Discourse and Ideology**

The preceding discussion introduces the importance of ideas or concepts in framing people’s ability to act. In modern societies they can be more effective in maintaining oppression than
direct coercive force. Ideology can be considered a set of more or less mutually reinforcing ideas that act to maintain an unequal status quo by being considered natural or ‘common sense’ by the mass of people in a society. Inherent to understanding power as ideology, discourse refers to the everyday use of particular ways of making sense of the world, and recognises that language is used for domination and liberation. “For it is in language where human subjects understand their relationship to relations of power” (Leonardo 2003: 205). Thus the reproduction and articulation of ideologies occurs in the social practices of social actors, and are “acquired, confirmed, changed and perpetuated through discourse” (Van Dijk 2006: 115).

Following Leonardo (2003), the discursive practices of people in their daily interactions maintain oppression through ideology in a number of significant ways. First, discourse functions to provide legitimacy to the current state of inequality. Second, ideology is effective to the extent that it is invisible. That is, people do not perceive that certain worldviews are constitutive of inequality, but rather are common-sense understandings. The ‘natural attitude’ discussed in chapter two is an example of this. It is also an example of the ideological mechanism of ‘reification’, where historically contingent and socially produced power relations are considered fixed, ordained or natural. When people draw on theological or biblical arguments for gender inequality, they are engaged in a process of ideological reification. I acknowledge that the same could be argued when the Handbook suggests reinterpretations of biblical verses to support gender equality. However, as this is counter to the dominant ideology, it has a disruptive effective that counters reification.

The value of identifying ideology and discourse as the locus of power is that it allows recognition of power relations within, and, between genders. For example, southern feminists challenge the northern feminist expert ideology that represents third world women as forever
poor oppressed and passive (Mohanty 1988). The complexity of the power of discourse is captured in the choice of Oxfam staff to use the less overtly political term ‘gender’ rather than ‘feminism’ to gain acceptability for otherwise radical thoughts and initiatives. Smyth (1999: 139) explains that a gender discourse is a more accepted valid approach to analysis that provides for the possibility of feminist practice and thinking 'in disguise'.

She goes on to suggest that the reason Oxfam does not use the language and practices of feminism is that development organisations may be reacting to mass-marketed pop-feminism. Thus anti-feminist views stem from a belief that feminist approaches clash with local culture. Thus resistance to power may arise as counter-discourses attempt to oppose dominant ‘truths’. (Ramazanoğlu 1993). In this sense, power relations are not simply unilateral acts of oppression or victimisation, but a more diffuse interplay of claims and counterclaims about the nature of the social world. That ideology through discourse can have a very real impact is supported by Yakin Erturk (2008: 6), the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, who argues that violations of women’s rights are often due to both relativist and essentialist cultural discourses that naturalise and ignore women’s oppression.

In discussing the way the ‘problem’ of men’s violence against women is recognised and described, Hearn and McKie (2008: 1) argue that discourses have real material effects, particular in the way problems are represented (see also Bacchi 2009). However, the post-structuralist approach to power as discourse is not without feminist criticism. Locating power everywhere in very local and specific interactions can result in an empirical particularity that undermines overarching theories of patriarchy, racism and capitalism (Walby 1990). Kabeer (1994: 54) offers a way through the dichotomy of structural determinism and specific relativism by introducing the idea of the ‘social relations of gender’ which mediates between individuals and
structural forces. Thus, a woman is not directly impacted by her place in a capitalist economic system, but her experience occurs through the range of power-infused, gendered social relations from the domestic sphere to institutional contexts.

**Power and Partnerships**

As indicated by the analysis of selected programs, the concept of engaging men as partners is a common way of framing gender power relations. As an ideological term, this approach contains a contradictory tension that Redman (1996) terms ‘empowering men to disempower themselves’. If one of its ideological purposes is to avoid confronting men’s power and privilege, invoking men as partners may act not only to deflect the gendered conflict of interests, but also act to legitimise men’s involvement per se as praiseworthy (Lister 2000).

In analysing the deployment of the term partnership between NGOs and donor agencies Lister refers to Ferguson's (1990) use of the Foucauldian term ‘instrument-effects’ to understand the way certain ‘taken for granted’ practices and patterns of discourse can have unintended and dominance-supporting effects. Based on exploration of case study material, Lister (2000: 13) contends that the instrumental effect of using the term ‘partnership’ “is the adaptation of the power framework and the creation of a slightly changed reality, which serves to hide the fundamental power asymmetries within development activities and essentially maintain the status quo”.

That there are power asymmetries between women and men is apparent, but the inappropriateness of claiming that men can work as partners with women is clearer when the original meaning of the term is presented. According to (Postma 1994: 451), there is little likelihood that a partnership characterised by “mutual trust and respect, transparency,
complementary strengths, reciprocal accountability, joint decision making, and a two-way exchange of information” could be realistically achieved.

**Women’s Human Rights and Power**

A final approach to understanding gendered power is based on human rights, a central organising principle of the Handbook and work for the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre. One of the central tensions in promoting a human rights view of power is between a non-gendered and gendered view of rights. A non-gendered view suggests an a priori equality of all humans (men and women) whereas a gendered view regards women, as a group, have particular disadvantages vis-a-vis men that need special attention.

The Handbook refers briefly to women’s rights and directs participants to use The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as the source for detail on the types of rights to promote for women. Most of the 30 articles in CEDAW focus on social, economic and cultural rights and are situated within a liberal feminist, non-discrimination framework relying on the principle of equality before the law (Parisi 2002). However, there are some more radical inclusions such as recognition of reproductive rights, of women’s often invisible private reproductive work, and of the need for a new international economic order based on equity and justice to achieve equality between men and women. Parisi argues that in practice the data collecting, reporting and programmatic responses to CEDAW have continued to employ a liberal feminist ‘sameness’ logic. So, for example, the solution to inequality in educational outcomes is to ensure the same access to the same curriculum, same facilities, same financial support, and same teaching staff. This approach mirrors Young’s (1990) critique that the static measuring of patterned outcomes does not get to the structural causes of inequality.
The feminist critique of the CEDAW approach to human rights centres on two concerns – androcentrism and a denial of the public-private divide. The argument is that human rights tend to focus on civil and political rights which are to be enjoyed in the public sphere – the world of men – while the private sphere remains untouched. As Parisi (2002: 579) puts it: “The emphasis on the public sphere as the proper realm of human rights de-politicize women’s experiences in the private and reinforces androcentric constructions of human rights”. This is further exemplified in the way that State-based political torture is recognised as a human rights violation while men’s violence against women is rarely considered torture (Copelon 2007).

Beyond these two concerns, Ertürk (2006) suggests that making claims based on rights, treats contingent social structures as permanent and therefore undermines the possibility for radical transformation. However, she argues that it is the narrow, legalistic interpretation of rights, rather than the human rights discourse itself, which is problematic, and that rights-based claims have been important strategic tools. It has been this use that has put violence against women on the international agenda, although there is an emerging risk of its displacement by the public health discourse (for further critique see Pease 2011a). While some feminists (Bradshaw 2006; Cornwall and Molyneux 2008; Engle 1991; Romany 1993) are critical of the way the rights discourse has been co-opted and depoliticised by international governments and donor agencies, others have found the flexibility of the term advantageous to insert progressive women’s claims into mainstream policy agendas. Rights frameworks in themselves may not explicate a position on power. However, Clark, Reilly and Wheeler (2005: 1) argue that a feminist or gendered approach enables seeing rights “not merely as legal entitlements, but also as a political tool in social change strategies”. Thus a gender analysis helps to:
make the link between rights and power in both public and private spheres. Gender analysis clarifies the role of power relations in mediating the experience of rights, highlighting how rights cut across the realms of people’s experience and identity, from public political action to intimate and personal relations.

Others suggest that working for women’s rights and addressing power inequalities are two separate and complementary strategies. According to Bradshaw (2006: 1337), a sole focus on rights may not challenge power relations “and the discourse of power may be silenced as it is subsumed within the rights discourse”. Thus, while a human rights framework is important, it is not necessarily comprehensive in understanding and responding to gender power.

**Conclusion**

To the extent that a static and individualistic conception is highlighted, it appears that gender power is under-theorised within many of the comparable training programs examined. The Handbook attempts to counter individualism within the curriculum through emphasising an analysis of structural gender power relations (patriarchy), and by presenting the role of the male advocate as working for broader social change, as well as developing personal anti-sexist practices. However, the program does little to explicitly teach participants an understanding of power in three critical areas.
Of Lukes’ (1974) three dimensions of power – direct negotiation, restricting items for negotiation and shaping needs or claims – the latter two are more complex and neglected. Second, while the Handbook exercises are largely focussed on strategic use and analysis of language, there is no explicit discussion of the discursive nature of power. Finally, it does sufficiently develop Young’s (2006) complex explanation of gender oppression. That is, one that moves away from the commodification of power, and towards a recognition that it often is unconsciously manifest in ordinary, everyday interactions.

While such a comprehensive approach is desirable for training male advocates for gender equality, there is a risk that such complexity and abstractness may prevent participants from having enough confidence in their understanding to act. This can possibly be ameliorated in two ways. First, by ensuring that the actions of the male advocates are guided and monitored by feminists within NGO’s who have a good understanding of women’s oppression (Orme, Dominelli and Mullender 2000; Pease 2010). Second, ensuring that men understand that supporting gender equality is more than obvious interpersonal acts of respect, but importantly includes action to advocate for social and institutional change (Pease 2010: 182).

Similar to power, the area of men’s violence against women can be subject to one dimensional, individualistic understandings, with the risk that male advocates may see themselves as women’s saviours or believe their own lack of physical aggression towards women places them above

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21 Of course this third dimension entails more than simply shaping, however this shorthand has been used for sake of brevity. According to Dowding (2006: 137) it also refers to “values that lead dominated people to acquiesce and even celebrate their own domination”.

reproach. The next chapter provides an analysis of the way men’s violence against women is conceived within the sample programs and the Handbook.
Chapter Five: Theorising Men’s Violence against Women

This chapter takes a similar approach to the previous two chapters by examining gender training programs that are comparable to my own program within a particular subject area. Chapters Two and Three focussed on understandings of masculinity and gender power respectively, and here representations of, and theoretical approaches to, men’s violence against women are presented.

The Scope of Men’s Violence against Women

One way to survey the way men’s violence against women is presented in the selected programs is to focus on the scope of violence. The majority of the gender equality program manuals reviewed concentrate on interpersonal violence, particularly that perpetrated by men against women. Even where there is a recognition of the cultural or structural influences, the emphasis remains on interpersonal acts of aggression.

An exception to this trend is the international Women Peacemakers (Anderson, Geuskens and Poort - van Eeden 2007: 78) training which makes reference to “structural violence: injustice or harm that is the result of social systems (legal, educational, etc.) and institutions (religious institutions, marriage, etc.)” and acknowledges that this type of violence “may be more invisible than physical violence between individuals.” Another exception to an individual approach is seen in Insituto Promundo’s (Insituto 2004) module, ‘From Violence To Peaceful Coexistence’.

Having defined it as physical harm or threats, it recognizes group violence, and further, recognizes race and class power relations as forms of violence:
Violence is also the use of power and threats of power by one group over another, sometimes called institutional violence. Men’s domination over women for centuries, in many contexts subjugating them to second class status, is also a form of violence. The domination of one ethnic group by another, or one social class over another, can and should be called violence. But for the purposes of this manual, we will focus on interpersonal violence (Insituto 2004: 145).

While briefly signalling a more extended understanding, the authors, provide no explanation for only addressing the interpersonal level. This discursive technique of acknowledging ‘other levels’ of violence while foregrounding the individual or interpersonal could be seen as an example of a ‘show concession’ (Antaki and Wetherell 1999) where the charge of narrowness is disarmed by acknowledging greater complexity, but the original position is maintained. Such an approach is also familiar in the way the ecological model of men’s violence against women is employed to devise programs (Pease 2011a).

Although is there a trend toward seeing violence as interpersonal, most programs appropriately also present violence as something done by men to women. There are, however, two salient exceptions: a few manuals refer to men and boys being victims of abuse by men, and there are a number of instances where violence is portrayed as gender symmetrical; that is, it is portrayed as being equally perpetrated by women against men (Dobash et al. 1992). While it is true that men are often the victims of other men’s violence this must be understood in terms of the dynamics of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 2005b) rather than suggesting that male victims have an equivalent experience to women. Second, the idea of mutual gendered violence is a common myth perpetuated by backlash politics. Concerns with both of these is developed below.
In her review of strategies to engage men, Esplen (2006: 5) recognizes that gender-based violence “also includes violence towards men and boys, such as male rape or the abuse of men who have sex with men or transgendered people”. This could be read as a more nuanced understanding of the way men police each other’s behaviour within the hierarchy of masculinities, and that such policing maintains a gender order leading to men’s violence against women (Carrigan, Connell and Lee 1985). This point is explicitly acknowledged by Ricardo and Veran (2010: 80) who explain that “Male - male violence: can also be linked to gender norms that underlie violence against women and girls”. However, it is more likely that the recognition of homophobic violence derives from concerns about HIV AIDS infections rather than the contested politics of sexuality (Gosine 2006). Men generally are also presented as victims of violence. For example, Ataya (2010: 24) draws on the men’s liberation discourse of socialisation (Messner 1998) to claim: “Violence hurts men too: some men have suffered from violence and sexual abuse, and many men have suffered emotionally, in relationships, and spiritually, from the limited notions of what it means to be a man”. Messner (1998) notes that the idea of men and women equally being subject to oppression has the tendency to develop into an anti-feminist men’s rights stance. Perhaps an example of the regressive tendency of socialisation theory to explain gender relations can be seen in the hand-out contained in Miruka’s (2003: 63) African training manual:

Women, too perpetuate violence by socialising girls to accept male dominance throughout their lives. Mothers particularly teach their daughters to persevere in order to ensure their sexual and social acceptance in the community.
A gender symmetrical view of violence is presented by Ataya (2010: 18), who, while consistently focussed on men’s violence against women throughout the manual, has the following example in a lesson on why to involve men in violence prevention: “When participatory learning to build more gender-equitable relationships between men and women was used, both men and women reported less substance abuse, less violence, and greater communication among couples”.

The Stepping Stones program, designed for both female and male participants, (Welbourn 2010: 89) neutralizes gender power by explaining “that it is often difficult for us to say clearly what we want sexually. Sometimes we agree to having sex even if we do not want it because the other person has begged and pleaded with us and saying ‘No means no!’ is just too difficult”. The program goes further to deny power by suggesting a misleading gender symmetry in sexual violence with the accompanying graphic which depicts a woman saying ‘Hey man, I can give you a real good time!’ and a man responding with an unsure ‘Well …’. Another example is the Texas Council on Family Violence (2010: 123) manual which provides a de-gendered definition of domestic violence as “a pattern of coercive behaviour that is used by one person to gain power and control over another”.

It is not clear why such gender neutral or symmetrical portrayals of violence are presented. It is possible that the writers are aware of the need to ‘engage’ and not alienate men by avoiding overtly confronting messages of men’s violence against women. Another possibility is that the framing of women’s victimisation has been primarily in terms of individual or discrete incidents (Stark 2007) thus removing the gendered power social structures and culture that provides the context for men’s violence against women. Furthermore, the implicit gender symmetry of violence is unusually common in program manuals. For example having directed learners to
“discuss and analyse the various types of violence that we sometimes use in our intimate relationships” the Project H guide (Insituto 2004: 180) suggests the trainer asks of participants “Do only men use physical violence against women, or are women also violent toward men?”. Earlier in the manual the claim for symmetry is made with: “young men have reported numerous incidents of having used violence toward their female partners – and some incidents of violence by their female partners against them” (p. 152).

It is alarming that almost twenty years after a clear renunciation of the claim of symmetry in gendered violence, it is still appearing in gender equality training programs. Dobash et al. (1992: 72) make it clear that “claims of sexual symmetry in marital violence are exaggerated, and that wives' and husbands' uses of violence differ greatly, both quantitatively and qualitatively”. Flood (2006b) clarifies that any analysis of domestic violence crime data consistently demonstrates gender asymmetry with men representing the majority of perpetrators. Claims of symmetry are usually based on family conflict studies using the self-reporting Conflict Tactics Scale which find couples equally committing violent acts. Dobash and Dobash (2004) criticise this measure as it provides no understanding of the intensity, context and most importantly, the pattern and meaning of the aggression. In reality the claims of equivalence can only be made by treating violence as individual and discrete acts rather than socially patterned and based on structural gender inequality.

The scope of violence is also commonly described in programs in terms of a range of different types of violence. Typical is the explanation by Sonke Gender (2006a: 2) that includes “physical and sexual assault, sexual harassment, psychological abuse, or emotional abuse” explaining that not all violence leaves ‘visible scars’. Gevers et al. (2011: 72) specifically state that “learners
will be taught how to recognise different forms of violence, including physical, emotional, and sexual violence.”

There are debates about the value of naming a range of harmful actions by men towards women as violence with DeKeseredy and Schwartz (2011: 3) recognising that we do not have “an agreed upon firm definition of violence against women”. According to DeKeseredy (2011b), on the one hand broad definitions are more responsive to and inclusive of women’s experience, and on the other such breadth leads to the view that every woman has been victimized making it difficult to gain clarity. While it is a positive result of feminist efforts that oppression by men is understood as broader than physically injurious acts, few, if any, of the comparable programs reviewed put these forms of violence together in some sort of coherent framework. Rather, the tendency is to provide a catalogue of identifiable discrete and ahistorical acts or even incidents. What is missing is a structure that places physical violence as one strategy within an overall pattern of oppression and entrapment. The final part of this chapter will provide this framework in Stark’s (2007) explication of men’s violence against women as ‘coercive control’.

**Explaining Violence as Coercive Control**

Men’s socialisation, or the learning of violence, is a common explanation within the programs reviewed. The Instituto Promundo manual (2004: 147) advises that:

> When we talk about boys, young men and violence, we must also keep in mind that boys are victims of violence as well as perpetrators of violence. Many young men who use violence were themselves victims of violence. Being a victim of or a witness of violence is associated with using violence.
Here, boys’ experience of violence is presented as a causal explanation for (adult) men’s violence. This is an implicit reference to the intergenerational ‘cycle of violence’ which appears more explicitly in other programs (Ataya 2010; Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson 2006; Belbase and Heiberg 2010; EngenderHealth 2002; Fernandes 2005; Sheerattan-Bisnauth, Peacock and Churches 2010; Sitawa and Now 2007). For example, “UNIFEM works on several fronts to interrupt the cycle of violence against women” (Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson 2006: 7). This framing of violence is made despite few studies on the association between child victims of domestic violence and gendered responses to it supporting the ‘cycle of violence’ hypothesis (Kelly 1994: 50-1). Baker (2009: 444) argues that the cycle of violence concept is more ideological than descriptive as it fits with a conservative view of fathers as role models for boys. She argues that “discourses surrounding what it is to be a ‘good father’ over-emphasise and essentialise the impact which fathers (as role models) can have on any children within their care”. Thus it is too simple to assume that boys who witness abuse will become adult abusers as it denies their agency. Perhaps another reason for the popularity of the cycle of violence theory is because it provides a clear rationale for a primary prevention within the public health approach to men’s violence against women. For example, Insituto (2004: 165) notes: “Helping young men grasp this connection and think about the pain that violence has caused them is a potential way of interrupting the victim-to-aggressor cycle of violence”.

As discussed in the chapter analysing masculinity, many programs distinguish their approach from biological theories of male behaviour. The multi-organisation guide to working with men and boys by Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson (2006: 7) states in the introduction that “we … know that violence is created, learnt and socialised; boys are not inherently or biologically determined to be violent”. Given the dominance of social learning and role theory (Connell 2005a: 22), it is
not surprising that the idea of men’s violence as learned is commonly accepted as an explanation. In the context of a training manual, there is also a logic in framing violence as learnt, as the focus can justifiably be on ‘unlearning’ aggression or learning new, socially appropriate skills. Thus Ricardo and Veran (2010: 150) state that “violence is a learned behaviour and in that sense, it can be unlearned and avoided”. Similarly, Instituto Promundo's (2004: 149) manual asserts that: “Families and parents have a major role in encouraging – or discouraging – violent behaviour by boys and young men” which, given the gendered nature of parenting, could be read as holding mothers responsible for the violence of their sons.

While a social learning framework has the potential to recognise broader social structures of inequality and gender ideologies, its weakness stems from being far too mechanical and unidirectional. It misses both the active appropriation of what is offered, or as Connell (2005a: 122) explains: “the purposeful construction of a way of being in the world”. The socialisation theory of violence ignores the more recent understanding (Stark 2007) that for many perpetrators their violent and controlling tactics are learned and adapted in adulthood.

Another approach to men’s violence against women contained within selected programs is to characterize it as a pathology (EngenderHealth and PPASA 2001; Ricardo and Veran 2010; Texas Council on Family Violence 2010; Victorian Womens Trust 2009). For example, the Instituto Promundo manual (2004: 152) speaks of men repressing all emotions apart from anger, lacking interpersonal skills and acting violently due to stress. Furthermore, the One Man Can brochure by Sonke Gender (2006a) is titled: ‘What can men do to develop healthy relationships with women?’ Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson (2006: 10) portray violence as a “means of conflict resolution, which affects women, girls and boys at large”.
Some explanations for men’s violence against women tend to individualise or psychologise violence. The idea of violence as emotional expression is presented in a manual from India: “Expression of anger may lead to violence. But there are other better and positive ways to express anger instead of through violence. We need to learn to feel anger and to express it constructively” (Fernandes 2005: 131). Similarly, a Christian-based African program suggests the use of violence is simply inappropriate problem solving and reminds readers that “Jesus teaches that we should find other ways than violence to resolve our problems” (EngenderHealth and LifeLine/ChildLine 2011: 31). There is, however, a contradiction in a program titled of ‘From hegemony to partnership’ that has a strong critique of patriarchy, but still offers the following individualistic explanation for violence: “Many men have difficulties trying to live up to the macho images which are popular in their societies. They sometimes suffer from insecurities and low self-esteem” (Sheerattan-Bisnauth, Peacock and Churches 2010: 116).

This explanation of violence as an out-of-control expression of anger is contrasted with the feminist critique of the purposeful or instrumental nature of men’s violence against women. Mullender and Morley (1994: 7) make it clear that

work by feminist activists and researchers has produced strong evidence that the roots of domestic violence lie not in pathology, stress, or family conflicts but in men’s domination and control over women. ... The abusive characteristics of men in violent relationships are best described as control tactics, ways of instilling fear and coercing compliance.

Similarly, Romito (2008: 69-70) argues that the psychologising of violence involves the depiction of men who perpetrate as “frustrated, depressed, with low self-esteem and unhappy”
and “consists of interpreting a problem in individualistic and psychological rather than political, economic or social terms”. Stark (2007: 98), on the other hand, argues that the expressive/instrumental dichotomy is too simple and explains that perpetrators can use anger as a strategy to intimidate in carefully selected ways or ‘lose control to gain control’. In a more nuanced way Stark explains:

All partner violence combines expressive with instrumental elements. Even when men use violence to effect a particular end such as sexual conquest or getting a woman to hand over her money, it is also an expression of their sexual identity, a way to enact masculinity, and a response to the deeply felt if culturally installed sense of loss, impotence, or emptiness excited by signs of women’s independence (2007: 98).

Along with psychologising, a number of the reviewed programs make the claim that men’s silence is crucial in the maintenance and continuance of men’s violence against women. Pease (2012a) makes the point that while not all men are physically violent, most men do not challenge abuse and are thus complicit in the reproduction of violence. For example, the Indian based group, Men’s Action to Stop Violence Against Women, similarly explain on their website that “men are culpable not only as those who most often inflict the violence, but also as those who endorse it through their silence” (MASVAW 2012). Similarly, within their training manual, Ricardo and Veran (2010: 149) explain that violence occurs every day because many people prefer to ignore it or deny it, especially male violence against women. An active bystander is
someone who chooses not to stand by and let the violence continue, but

takes some form of action to help stop the violence.

Here the silence is understood more narrowly in terms of a lack of bystander intervention, which
is problematic to the extent that most perpetrators of violence against women strategically
attempt to conceal their actions away from potential bystander witnesses.

The role of culture in supporting and mediating men’s violence against women is recognised in a
few of the programs reviewed. Sonke Gender (2006b) provides a general reminder to advocates
to reject cultural justifications for violence but does not offer specific examples. One program
that specifically addresses culture is by the Swedish women’s organization, Kvinnoforum (2005:
46), which addresses honour-related violence ‘against women and girls in patriarchal families’.
They make distinctions between domestic violence and honour-related violence (HRV) with the
latter being more often “initiated by a large group and often even encouraged and sometimes
applauded”. Women subjected to HRV are also in greater danger as family and community
members will assist in hunting for the victim, and rumours or appearance of ‘misdeed’ is
sufficient to spur retribution. Even if a woman successfully flees, she remains at risk as the
family will continue to search for her and can wait for years to find the opportunity to commit
the crime. The point here is that the influence of culture is not limited to the effect on individual
perpetrators, but can be seen as constituting broader social relations.

Similarly, Dabby (2007: 20), examining gender violence in Asian and Pacific Islander
communities, identifies the need to interrogate particular cultural practices that lead to violence:
“For example, forced marriages of young girls would indicate coerced sexual initiation”.

However, one area of culture that appears to be entirely absent from any programs, including my
own, is sorcery or witchcraft related violence and murder. This aggression is not isolated to a few countries but is found in areas such as Melanesia, Nepal and Africa (Ashforth 2005; The Asia Foundation 2010), and Amnesty (2011: 5) reports that traditional beliefs are particularly strong in rural areas of Papua New Guinea

where groups of tribesmen target so-called 'Sangumas' or witches whom they accuse of having magical powers. Within traditional tribes, sorcery is believed to account for sudden or unexplained death or illness. The end result is often that someone is killed for another person's unexplained death. Women are six times more likely to be accused of sorcery than men.

Thus, the support culture gives to patriarchal domination can be locally specific and must be included in any explanation of men’s violence against women. Looking broadly at social influences, the majority of the programs reviewed recognize structural gender inequality as the basis for men’s violence against women. Nevertheless, as previously indicated, a number of programs seem to undermine this feminist analysis by reverting to interpersonal or individual explanations in the context of specific training exercises. For example, Gevers et al. (2011: iii) provide an explanation of men’s violence resting on two key underlying causes: the unequal position of women in relationships and society based on an ideology of male superiority, also culture and normative use, of violence. Yet later, for example, a lesson explains that “alcohol often makes people prone to violence to have less control over their behaviour” (p.57).

A few programs explicitly base their analysis and training on a feminist analysis (de Vries 2010; Kvinnoforum 2005; Sheerattan-Bisnauth, Peacock and Churches 2010). The clearest and
The strongest example appears in the manual on honour-related violence where patriarchy is presented as the prime ‘cause’.

The entrenched nature of patriarchy is underestimated. It is not a psychological or individual problem, but a social and historical problem. It is the system or regime of the exercise of male gender power. The exercise of power is critical if only because gender relations are unequal, hierarchical, and conflictual; women resist domination, and this resistance has to be managed if the institution is to survive (Kvinnoforum 2005: 40).

While other programs refer to patriarchal ideologies, such as women being men’s property (Fernandes 2005), and gender exploitation (Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson 2006), overall very few use an explicitly feminist explanation of violence. While it was my intention to incorporate such an analysis in the Handbook, the next section will examine its explanation for men’s violence against women.

**The Handbook’s Approach to Men’s Violence against Women**

The Handbook’s approach to violence is framed within a human rights discourse, which is not without flaws as discussed earlier. The Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre, who devised the ‘male advocacy’ program, states in its frontispiece that their “strategies are based on the conviction that violence against women is a fundamental human rights and development issue.” Notwithstanding the potential risks associated with a de-gendered human rights approach, Ertürk (2006: 13) argues that “most women’s rights activists agree that it is the narrow interpretation of rights within an international legal order rather than the human rights discourse itself” which is at issue. Similarly Parisi (2002: 583) contends that “the complicated relationship between feminist
theorizing and practice with regard to women’s human rights has resulted in many meaningful and real changes for women around the world”. In spite of the potential shortcomings, it is a more progressive and feminist-allied (Perilla 1999) approach than the increasingly dominant alternative public health discourse that is informing contemporary program development.

The human rights approach has the potential to extend beyond individualistic understandings of men’s violence against women. Craven (2003: 5) explains that the preamble to the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recognises that violence against women is due to historically unequal power relations in society, and ending violence “requires an analysis of not only violent acts but of the social conditions, institutions and norms which perpetuate them”. Furthermore, the human rights framing is useful to move away from a focus on incident specific aspects of violence to a recognition of men’s oppression of women as a form of terrorism or capture crimes. Stark (2007) argues that by seeing men’s violence against women as primarily a human rights issue, activists should move away from a focus on preventing incidents of physical abuse to addressing the dynamics of coercive control and the ways that men entrap women in private life. Libal and Parekh (2009: 3) agree with Stark that the primary harm of coercive control is political, not physical. Rather,

it is a deprivation of rights and resources critical to personhood and citizenship. Coercive control is the central way men undermine women’s capacities for and exercise of independent decision making, a key feature of the liberal notion of personhood that is the prerequisite for political rights, claims, entitlements, participation, and representation.
Thus Stark, in highlighting the similarities between hostage taking and men’s coercive control over women, argues that the predominant focus on women’s safety (or increasingly, health) is misguided as the growing body of literature emphasizes “how control, manipulation, isolation, and the other tactics that comprise coercive control inhibit women’s self-direction, compromise their liberty, and cause a range of harms that are not easily subsumed under safety concerns” (2007: 219).

The Handbook presents coercive control as a key concept for training men to understand men’s violence against women as it has clear relevance to a human rights framework. It therefore provides specific lessons which aim to ensure participants “have broadened their definition of violence against women to include the notion of coercive control; understand the four aspects of coercive control: violence, control, isolation and intimidation; and be able to explain the nature of coercive control to others” (59).

The second approach that the Handbook uses to conceptualises men’s violence against women is by adapting, modifying and adding to Kaufman’s (2000) seven aspects of men’s violence: Patriarchal Power, The Sense of Entitlement to Privilege, Permission, The Paradox of Men’s Power, The Psychic Armour of Manhood, Masculinity as a Psychic Pressure Cooker, and Past Experiences. My rendering modifies the list as follows removing the ‘paradox of men’s power’ and adding four new items:

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22 Kaufman’s fourth P, The Paradox of Men’s Power, has been omitted from the list for two reasons. I felt that introduced a level of complexity that would make discussions of men’s power over women more difficult to comprehend for Pacific trainees. Also this point moves closer to a less progressive men’s liberation view and could risk discussion becoming more centred on men’s own feelings of powerlessness which could divert the focus of the training.
1. Proving (added): many men feel the need to prove their masculinity by showing that they are strong and in control. This means not accepting women as their equals and using physical violence to punish women who are not compliant.

2. Personal protection (reworded The Psychic Armour of Manhood): many men are afraid of appearing vulnerable or weak to others\textsuperscript{23}.

3. Pressure cooker: similarly to the previous point, if men feel their worries or fears are building up inside them, they often express these feelings as anger. To maintain power and status men will avoid expressing vulnerable emotions directly.

4. Past experiences: it is commonly believed that men become violent because they have grown up in households where they have seen violence. This is sometimes true, but it is the exception rather than the rule\textsuperscript{24}.

5. Patriarchal power: in an unequal society where men have more privileges and are more valued than women, it is much easier for men to take the opportunity to coercively control women. The fact that men are expected to be in control and powerful supports the decision to use violence.

6. Privilege: men enjoy many privileges that are not available to women: more free time, more money, better work opportunities and greater decision-making power. Many of men’s privileges are supported by the unpaid work done by women who service them.

\textsuperscript{23} Rather than revealing their sadness, fears or worry to their wives, they will act tough or in control to cover it up. This may then lead to beating or bossing around their wife.

\textsuperscript{24} I depart somewhat from Kaufman’s original explanation where he is more equivocal about the learning of violence.
Men use violence or the threat of violence, and other control strategies, against women to ensure their privileges are maintained.

7. Permission: men’s violence and coercive control is not taken as seriously as many other criminal acts. Most violent men know that they are likely to get away with their actions without serious consequence. In some situations they may even be supported in their actions, for example, where people believe that a husband is justified in punishing his unruly wife. In this way society gives permission for men to use violence.

8. Possession (added): Many cultures promote the idea that women and children are men’s possessions. The practice of bride price negatively reinforces this idea. Also the obsession with having a virginal bride is more about the man wanting a high status object to show others than forming a mutually caring relationship. Men who accept this view, and are jealous and determined to guard their property (the woman), may use violent and controlling tactics to do this.

9. Purposeful (added): a common view is that when men are violent they are ‘out of control’ or too drunk to know what they’re doing. However, most of men’s violence has a purpose, which is to control the victim.

10. Pure vs. prostitute myth (added): Women are generally seen as belonging to one of two categories. They can either be good (pure) or bad (a prostitute). It is very difficult for a woman to live up to the standards required to be considered good and it can be very dangerous to be labelled as bad. In either case, a man wanting to control her will use her behaviour as a justification for punishment (121).
While the majority of these explanations focus on structural power relations and hegemonic gendered cultural discourses, the second and third items relate to men’s emotional expression. This appears contradictory given that psychological understandings are often seen as contrary to feminist structural theories based on the view that men too often excuse their abuse by reference to personal emotions. However, Nicolson (2010) argues that the presentation of the feminist view of men’s violence as solely concerned with privilege maintenance on the one hand, and the psychologising position of identifying and treating individual risk factors on the other, is too crude a dichotomy and that a critical approach to psychology has much to offer our understanding of abusive relationships. The extent to which men’s gendered subjectivity influences not only emotional expression, but also gender power relations, requires a critical (social) psychology of masculinity (for example see Kimmel 2007). To move towards such a critical approach the final section of this chapter outlines key aspects of a feminist-informed approach to violence.

A Feminist-Informed Approach to Men’s Violence against Women

Bacchi (2000: 48) maintains that social problems, such as men’s violence against women, do not simply exist awaiting remedy but “rather ‘problems’ are ‘created’ or ‘given shape’ in the very policy proposals that are offered as ‘responses’”. Thus, the naming or explication of men’s violence against women is an inherently political and contested affair, not a matter of neutral, benevolent enquiry. The Handbook is concerned with ensuring that men’s violence against women is named using a critical feminist analysis, by extending a human rights approach to challenge individualistic and narrow explanations, and by presenting “men’s violence as socially constructed and individually willed” (Pease 1995: 259).
There are five key areas in the training presented in the Handbook where the complex nature and dynamics of the violence, including the relationship and social context in which a man perpetrates it is elucidated. Each of these areas is designed to counter the common pitfalls with the way men’s violence against women is represented by taking a clear feminist or pro-feminist stance on it. According to Costello (2005: 42) such a stance “acknowledges the gendered nature of this violence; addresses the complex nature of power, status and inequality between women and men in our society; and is committed to eliminating both this violence and its impact to improve the lives of women and children.” The five areas include: a) gendering violence; b) avoiding medicalising or individualising violence; c) avoiding the dominance of a narrow focus on incident specific acts of physical injury rather than coercive control; d) recognising the criminal aspects of men’s violence against some women; and e) understanding the dynamic and strategic actions of the perpetrator.

**Gendering Violence**

Most terms used to describe violence against women tend to hide the everyday reality that for almost all women the perpetrators of violence are men. Gavey (2005: 6) exclaims that “public discourse and official policy seem to be plagued at this point in time with this kind of blind commitment to gender neutrality”. Gender neutral language abounds – family violence, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, violence in the home, sexual assault, and community-based violence. Each of these terms acts to mask the reality that the overwhelming majority of these forms of violence are gendered – that is perpetrated by men upon women (DeKeseredy 2011b). Gavey (2005: 6) is “suspicious of the way that a gender neutral lens not only inadvertently obscures facets of women’s oppression; but that it also provides the tools of argument for dismantling some of the gains that have been made for women”. Even when the issue is
gendered, by referring to violence against women, the gender of the perpetrator is omitted.
However, there is often a ‘slippage’ that occurs when men’s violence against women is named. There can be a more general call to decry all forms of violence, thereby undermining gendered understandings. For example, in talking about campus programs the White Ribbon Butler (2006: 9) claims “all women, and indeed all students, deserve the right to feel safe and secure on university campuses and move about freely without the threat of violence.” This is not to say that we should not indeed challenge all forms of violence but in such generalisations, we risk losing a critical understanding.

Such a slippage occurs because there is a reluctance to recognise that men’s violence against women occurs because individual men are supported to perpetrate this violence by a social context of broader gendered inequalities inherent within a patriarchal society. Thus, ignoring gender inequalities is both a symptom, and an outcome, of viewing men’s violence against women primarily as a health or individual issue.

**Medicalising or Individualising Violence**

McDonald (2005) demonstrates how neo-liberalism has both individualised and pathologised public issues and, particularly, men’s violence against women. Dutton’s (2006) work is perhaps emblematic of an antifeminist stance that supports a men’s pathology explanation. Many of the ways that men’s violence against women is commonly presented, either implicitly or explicitly, reinforce the idea that there is something wrong with the perpetrator (and sometimes the family or even the victim) that needs addressing. He may have a problem with: anger, alcohol, communication skills, conflict resolution, childhood trauma, or even have ‘sexist attitudes’.

Wallace (1993: 296) argues that such pathologising of criminal actions diminishes the
responsibility of offenders, and by “sponsoring a range of mythological exculpatory manoeuvres which have gained general community allegiance, they (legal and helping professions) have cultivated a climate of social permission” for men’s violence. Thus there is now have a whole service system dedicated to providing ‘behaviour change’ programmes to men designed to work on their issues. In this way violent male perpetrators become clients of the government’s service system in a similar way to female victims. This explains why there are publications that refer to ‘the needs of those affected by family violence’.

**Violence as Criminal**

Naming of violence as an individual problem can ignore the fact that most of men’s acts of violence against women are criminal. A review of the comparable training programs found few reference to violence as criminal. An exception is the Cambodian training manual, UNDP Cambodia and VBNK (2010: i), that includes in the opening statement that a goal to “increase the percentage of popular awareness that violence against women is a wrongful behaviour and a criminal act to 100% by 2015”. Contrast this with Gevers et al. (2011) which provides definitions of violence – emotional, physical and sexual – but presents these as unacceptable. The only reference to criminality is in the context of an exercise analysing the gains and losses within a rape scenario, where it is noted that a downside for the perpetrator would occur, since “if Vanessa reports the assault, Michael will face criminal charges” (Gevers et al. 2011: 82).

Similarly Instituto Promundo’s (2004) extensive and often cited program has only one reference to criminality which is within a lesson aimed at promoting accepting of diversity for all sorts of people, including criminals. The EngenderHealth and PPASA (2001: 226) Men as Partners manual does explain that assault is a criminal offence, giving the following examples to illustrate the point: “A man forces his wife to have sex with him when she does not want to” and “A man
attacks a woman sexually but does not have sex with her”. However, an earlier lesson, that defines violence with the aim of developing a more complete understanding, defines certain terms and acts but makes no mention of their criminality. Also, earlier in the manual, participants are told that it is a myth that violent men are “criminal types”. This appears to confuse the issue about the criminal nature of some violence. It is the denial of violence as a crime that helps maintain the abuse and degradation of women, and enables men to feel safe in the knowledge that they are unlikely to face criminal sanctions for their actions.

Miruka’s (2003: 40) Femnet training manual does refer to the criminal nature of men’s violence against women, but not until an earlier essentialist neo-colonialism position is established: “Gender-based violence is primitive, a violation of human rights and a costly affair. Its primitivism lies in the fact that it is a manifestation of beastly nature rather than civilised human conduct”. This is perhaps an example of the contradictory and confusing messages about violence that occur in many training programs.

While it is important that physical violence is appropriately responded to as a crime, this approach still has a number of shortcomings. Focusing only on isolated incidents of criminal assault does not help reduce the abuse and degradation experienced by women.

**Expanding the Definition of Violence**

Another problem has arisen through the imprecise use of the term ‘violence’ to describe men’s abuse of women. DeKeseredy (2000) refers to both broad and narrow definitions, where the former encompasses more than physical harmful acts and may refer to things such as emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual violence. However, in spite of the consistency with which programs provide broader understandings, there is a tendency for the term “violence against
women” to assume physical acts that cause bodily injury. A criminal justice approach shapes this tendency and thus illustrates a central paradox in feminist politics against men’s violence against women. While a central goal of the women’s movement has been to seek State sanctioning of men’s abusive behaviour, Bumiller (2008) demonstrates the unintended negative consequences of attempting to harness the power of the state to support women’s emancipation. However, there are two immediate issues with focussing only on the physical forms of violence.

First, it has allowed for an argument of gender symmetry: that women are just as likely to hit men as the reverse. Flood (2006b: 2) explains that “to support the claim that domestic violence is gender-symmetrical, advocates draw almost exclusively on studies using a measurement tool called the Conflict Tactics Scale” which has been widely criticised for its inadequacies. While there is evidence of women using physical force, often this can be understood in terms of self-defence, but to argue over the facts about who uses physical violence against whom most often misses the key issue of the way that women experience violence from men as a strategy of control or entrapment.

Second, the focus on physical acts allows a distinction to be made between good and bad men. For example, Flood (2006a: 26) claims that “most men are not violent and most practise consent in their sexual relations with women”. This effectively allows men to believe that if they are not hitting women, then their relationship is unproblematic. In fact many women victims report that they feel most trapped and fearful when the frequency of gross violence decreases (Stark 2007).

Since the late eighties, people who have worked with both victims and perpetrators of violence have been aware that violence is one tool among many that the perpetrator uses to gain greater power in the relationship in order to deter or require specific actions from women, win
arguments, or demonstrate their dominance (Yllo 1993). Thus, rather than referring to violence against women, coercive control describes a whole pattern of controlling strategies employed by a man against a woman. Such strategies occur in an ongoing, even relentless, pattern including isolation, intimidation, belittling, humiliation, threats, withholding of necessary resources such as money or transportation, and abuse of the children, other relatives, or even pets. The result for most women is an experience of entrapment, of having every aspect of their life controlled. Stark (2007) argues that men’s violence against women is best understood as analogous to a form of hostage taking rather than a single assault incident.

When violence is understood in this way, even relatively minor acts of physical abuse, a slap on the knee or an arm pinch, have the impact of reinforcing the woman’s trapped state. In fact, routine use of rather mundane types of harm are often employed strategically by perpetrators as they are less likely to be detected by onlookers, authorities, friends and family and make it harder for the woman to seek help or escape.

Focussing only on physical acts also obscures the main means men use to establish control by the micro regulation of everyday behaviours associated with stereotypical female roles, such as how women dress, cook, clean, socialize, care for their children, or perform sexually. In highlighting the impact on women of the deprivation of their basic liberty and autonomy, Stark (2009: 1511) argues that a significant proportion of abusive men are able to accrue these services without physical assault or even long after it has ceased. Thus men’s violence against women is a more complex issue than often presented. Individual perpetrators are not deviants who possess inappropriate attitudes, but their actions are strategic and supported by “dramatic sex-based disadvantages that allow men to translate their relative privilege in the wider society into disproportionate levels of power and control in relationships” (Stark 2009: 1513).
Recognising the Dynamic and Strategic Actions of the Perpetrator

Men’s violence against women is not simply the action of a bad (or mad) man losing his temper and hitting his ‘loved-one’. Hunnicutt (2009: 556) notes that “psychological and other individual-level theories used to explain the victimization of women are limited in that they focus on “sick” people to the exclusion of “sick” social arrangements”. The issue is one of systematic power inequalities and a society that supports men’s entitlement to a range of gender privileges.

Therefore, it is important to recognise that men who seek to control women coercively do so because the range of benefits are high, and the risk of being caught or stopped are low. According to Stark (2007: 207), “coercive control is unintelligible apart from the immediate material, sexual, and other benefits perpetrators garner from exploiting victims”. The benefits to the man are great: he is more likely to be serviced, have food prepared for him, have the house cleaned, have children prevented from disturbing him, and have sex on demand. He is likely to gain material benefits, including money and other resources. He can keep her under control to prevent any risk she may have affairs or seek support from friends or family.

Men use a range of techniques to achieve coercive control including isolation and intimidation. One of the most effective ways to both protect themselves and isolate their victims is to maintain a respectable public face. This means that men will behave and present one way when abusing the woman in private (a terroriser), and very differently when at work or socialising in public (a charmer). This ability to put on a disguise not only prevents people detecting his abuse but also acts to confuse and isolate the woman further. It is therefore possible for him to act simultaneously as a respectable member of society while sending secret intimidating signals to
the woman that only she will understand. For example in this American example even a sweatshirt can be a weapon:

Cheryl was the star pitcher for her factory softball team. After several innings when she pitched well, her boyfriend, Jason, would come onto the field and offer Cheryl her sweatshirt, saying, “Darling, you’re cold. Why don’t you put this on?” To the dismay of her teammates, Cheryl would “fall apart.” Cheryl’s teammates interpreted Jason’s gesture as caring. But to Cheryl, the message was that she had violated an agreement not to make him jealous. The sweatshirt was his warning that, because of her infraction, she would have to cover up her arms after he beat her. Cheryl’s “mistake” was to draw attention to herself by striking out the opposing batters. She quickly corrected this fault by falling apart. She was also too frightened to pitch well. Stark (2007: 229)

The particularly private nature of such ‘cleverness’ makes it very hard to detect men’s violence against women. Even worse, some men are able to express gender equality supportive attitudes and espouse respect for women, while concurrently perpetrating abuse. For example, research into sexual assault by Clark and Quadara (2010: 29) found one “perpetrator had invested efforts into advocating women’s rights and one perpetrator was active in the field of preventing violence against women”.

Going along with such strategic thinking is the ability men have to justify or minimalise the harm of their actions (Hearn 1998). As a result, even the learning from a well-structured and engaged session on men’s violence against women can have unintended consequences:
after an hour-long session, one of the male participants thanked the facilitator and said: ‘It is very helpful to talk about rape. Some men here have raped women. By talking about it, men won’t feel bad about what they have done’ (Eves 2006).

**Conclusion: Implications for Teaching Men as Advocates for Elimination of Violence Against Women**

Having discussed the ways men’s violence is misrepresented or misunderstood in many international development contexts, it is crucial that these are not replicated in training work undertaken with men. Recognising the complexity of, and more accurately, naming men’s violence against women gives men who want to advocate for women’s rights for freedom and safety a much clearer focus for action. Speaking out can move from a vague call to action to specifically:

a) Ensuring that all work clearly names the gender of both the perpetrator and recipient of violence.

b) Challenging explanations or responses that tend to medicalise or individualise the issue

c) Recognising the criminality of much of men’s violence against women

d) Providing more accurate and broader understanding by seeing that violence is one strategy of coercive control

e) Pointing out the strategic and covert ways that perpetrators disguise their actions from public scrutiny
Finally, a more complex understanding of men’s violence against women is crucial to effective action. Therefore, training men who are committed to advocacy for gender justice must involve a complex and feminist-informed analysis of men’s violence against women. The following chapter moves from program content to exploring the conceptual terrain of ‘engaging men’ in gender equality efforts.
Chapter Six: Involving Men in Support for Gender Equality

Introduction

The previous three chapters engaged with the three substantive conceptual areas involved in training men as advocates: masculinity, gender power and violence. This chapter returns to the broad area of how to involve men in responding effectively to violence and explores the place of training as one strategy. The idea of ‘engaging men’ has developed international prominence (Connell 1996; DeKeseredy 2011b; Fabiano et al. 2003; Flood 2003; Pease 2012a) and according to Flood (2005), it has become institutionalised into the philosophies and programs of many organisations. The following section will critically discuss the range of ways that this project has been conceptualised and develop a pro-feminist position on the meaning of involving men in support for gender equality.

Models of Social Change

Most of the sample programs reviewed (see Appendix for list) implicitly suggest a model for social change that will lead to the reduction or elimination of men’s violence against women. Increasingly, there are two dominant and competing discourses that explain men’s violence against women and provide change frameworks: human rights (Howe 2008) and public health (Krug, Etienne G et al. 2002; McDonald 2000). While the development of human rights instruments has been an important strategy of the women’s movement, there remains an ambivalence among many feminists on its progressive potential (Cornwall and Molyneux 2006). Similarly, while some public health models claim a feminist sensitivity, Pease (2011a) claims that it is more commonly marginalised as an analysis. Thus feminism, which explains men’s violence against women in terms of gender power relations within a patriarchal society becomes
a third, and subordinate explanation (Hunnicutt 2009). While the former two perspectives have encouraged a variety of approaches and policies that are designed to directly address men’s violence against women, the latter implies an understanding that eradicating gender inequality is fundamental. Thus broader changes in areas not commonly understood as violence promoting, are also required. So the State may engage in a range of strategies that inevitably disrupt the legitimacy of domestic patriarchy. Some are quite direct: funding women's education on a scale comparable with men's, providing machinery for no-fault divorce, funding women's refuges and training police for intervention in domestic violence, and so on. Others are more indirect, such as the changing provisions about property, taxation and pensions that treat a married woman as a person in her own right. There need be no intention to undermine domestic patriarchy (Connell 1987: 160).

None of the comparable programs reviewed address this area of indirect strategies and few recognize the importance of pressuring government to implement direct gender equality policies. The Handbook does include in the Male Advocate job description the requirement of “Lobbying (or supporting women to lobby) to implement changes in law, policies or organisational procedures that promote women’s human rights and equality” (Fisher 2011: 2) which is a small recognition of the importance of this area of change.

As previously discussed, the human rights approach has potential to either undermine or give legitimacy to a feminist analysis (Parisi 2002). However, on balance it appears to have been the most successful discursive vehicle for making claims on the State to improve gender equality.
The Handbook sits within the human rights framework, as its title indicates, although it contains references to ‘violence prevention’ which is much more commonly seen within the public health model (Krug, Etienne G et al. 2002; Wolfe and Jaffe 1999). Thus use of the term prevention is potentially at odds with human rights as its origins in public health sphere has diminished the importance of a feminist analysis of structured gendered power (Pease 2011a).

It is important to identify these framing discourses, regardless whether explicitly presented in programmatic material, not simply as ‘ideas’, but as they act as rationales and an impetus for action (Bacchi 2010: 6). For example, Phillips (2006: 195) notes in the Australian context that policy had moved away from a discussion of structural power relations to viewing violence against women as a private or relational issue (see also Murray and Powell 2009; Seymour 2012). Such ideological discourses have been named by MacLeod (1985: 374) as ‘policies of chivalry’ as:

wife battering may be providing governments with a convenient, safe and popular way to respond to the demands for greater equality for women without seriously tampering with the institutions which perpetuate inequality. The high visibility of wife battering policy may be providing a smokescreen for the lack of progress in establishing effective programs to guarantee women an equal place in our societies.

Thus, paradoxically, violence prevention initiatives may have the unintended consequence of perpetuating men’s privilege and power which is fundamental to men’s violence against women. Indicating the dominance of the public health discourse, Flood (2011: 360) states that in the last decade there has been “a profound shift toward primary prevention, aimed at preventing violence
before it occurs”. This statement could appear to abrogate the previous decades of work undertaken by a global women’s movement to eradicate men’s violence against women as charted in the second chapter.

Within the comparable programs, often public health and human rights approaches are presented together in an unproblematic way. For example, Insituto (2004: 152) notes that: “Men’s violence against women is an international public health and human rights concern that deserves greater attention”. Occasionally, there is a recognition of the disparity between a feminist or human rights and public health approaches. Chamberlain and Rivers-Cochran (2008: 1) acknowledge that prevention tools and terminology of the public health field may not be a ‘perfect fit’ for domestic violence. Nonetheless, they suggest there is clear common ground given that domestic violence workers are concerned with gender justice, and public health is committed to reducing health disparities, and the two are interwoven. In spite of this, the majority of their paper focuses on outlining a ‘systematic public health approach to prevention’ with no further reference to social justice.

The ambiguity with which the competing discourses are presented is not uncommon. In a report25 by Ellsberg et al. (2008: vii), the authors recognise that violence “has significant human rights dimensions” and praises efforts of women’s rights activists that have ensured all “partner governments have made a public commitment to ending violence against women” (xi). Further on, they provide an overarching recommendation to: “Ensure all interventions are grounded in a human rights and gender transformative approach” (28). However, this sits in the context of an

25 This AusAID report provided the rationale for the funding of the production of the Handbook.
earlier chapter where the ecological model is provided as the framework for understanding violence against women and girls, and the initial discussion is based on health and prevention measures (5-6). This model, based on a public health framework and a human rights framework is inherently contradictory. The disease approach does not easily recognise the politics of power inequalities central to the rights framework.

By framing violence against women as a disease, or analogous to a disease, the public health model requires an identification of the range of risk factors that can inform the implementation of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention measures. According to (Flood (2006a: 27)) in ‘primary’ prevention, the aim is:

- to lessen the likelihood of boys and men using violence in the first place.
- ‘Secondary’ prevention refers to reducing opportunities for violence by supporting the men who are at risk of perpetrating violence. ‘Tertiary’ prevention aims to prevent the re-occurrence of violence, and refers to work with men who have already used violence.

The construction of primary prevention interventions is assisted by Heise’s (1998) adaptation of Belsky’s (1980) ‘ecological model’ that took into account personal, situational and sociocultural factors in explaining family violence. These factors are now commonly presented in a Venn diagram as the fourfold individual, relationship, community and societal level (Bott, Morrison and World Bank. 2005).

A number of the comparable programs include support for the model (Afghan Ministry of Public Health 2011; Ataya 2010; Centerwall and Laack 2008; Promundo 2008). There is a range of significant shortcomings with this model that lead to the conclusion that the model has had more
effect in producing a powerful political discourse than in guaranteeing women’s rights or stop
men’s violence against women. First, while broader ‘factors’ are acknowledged, Winett’s (1998: 499) review of papers discussing violence as a public health issue found that “while authors
tended to identify social and structural causes for violence, they suggested interventions that
targeted individuals' attitudes or behaviors”26.

Second, the suggestion that primary prevention is superior to a reactive approach may be
effective in rallying support and resources, although the actual impact on men’s violence against
women is hard to determine. Moore (1993: 37) argues that preventative measures are by
definition required to work on a broad range of underlying issues which means “the need to be in
so many places where violence might occur stretches resources so thinly that preventive
interventions become too superficial to produce much of a preventive impact at all”. A third
criticism is the internal incoherence of the ecological model. Pease (2011a) points out the
contradictions entailed in having individual psychological risk factors sitting alongside social
structural dimensions. Furthermore, the feminist explanation of unequal gendered power
relations is considered important but only part of any causal explanations (Webster and Victorian
Health Promotion Foundation 2007), thus unequal power becomes one factor among many to be
responded to. This is equivalent to suggesting capitalist relations of exploitation is one factor
along with a lack of budgeting skills that can be used to explain poverty. Pease (2011a: 184)
explains that

26 While this is a dated review there has not been a similar critical evaluation since. See also Crawshaw and
Newlove (2011) for a similar critique of public health.
causal theories of men’s violence that are inconsistent with gendered analyses and an understanding of the role of social structure in perpetuating inequality cannot be integrated with feminist analyses, as the proponents of the ecological model argue.

Lastly, I argue that the public health approach in general, and the ecological model specifically, are prime examples of a neo-liberal politics designed to individualise social issues, deflect attention away from challenges to structural inequalities and reduce the burden on the State to take action on broader structural issues. The ideological nature of this paradigm is occluded by a mask of scientific or technocratic ‘evidence-based’ practice. Viveros Vigoya (2011: 139) notes that “social risk management is a predominant idea in the current neoliberal context in the field of public health, which releases the state from its social obligations for financial motives and delegates these responsibilities of health care on the individuals”. So treating men’s violence against women as a public health issue is similar to the British government’s response to obesity which Share and Strain (2008: 241) observe is framed by “an individualistic health promotion agenda founded in a medical model of health underpinned by epidemiological evidence”.

While it is important to test the validity of programs to eliminate violence against women, we should be wary of accepting claims of objective scientific evidence. Pease (2011a: 186) is critical of “the use of evidence-based practice approaches in ignoring the role of social and political forces in shaping social problems and for failing to recognize competing epistemological assumptions about knowledge and the contested nature of social reality”. Similarly Gondolf (2012: 33) writes of the ‘misuses of evidence-based practice’ referring to the developing “autocratic hierarchy of experimental researchers dictating policy”.
Petersen and Bunton (1997) explain that the linking of new public health discourses to neo-liberalism leads to the regulatory effects of the management techniques which focus on risk and prevention Castel (1991). Having critically surveyed broad frameworks for addressing violence, the next section explores the meaning and implication of ‘engaging men’ in such work.

The Meaning of ‘Engaging Men’

Many organisations and training manuals, including the Handbook, use the phrase ‘engaging men’ to describe their purpose (Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento 2007; Belbase and Heiberg 2010; Crooks et al. 2007; EngenderHealth and LifeLine/ChildLine 2011; Esplen 2006; International 2009; MenEngage ; Promundo 2008; Ricardo and Veran 2010; Rozan 2011). If stated explicitly, most programs claim that the goal of prevention of violence is the cessation of all violence against women and girls and the establishment of full gender equality. However, Crooks et al. (2007: 22) point out that ‘engaging men’ is often ill-defined and tends to revert to the position of individual men being asked to be non-violent and show respect in their interactions with women. She argues that

at the individual level, it is much harder to identify the end state toward which we hope men and boys will progress. Are we simply looking for all men to commit to nonviolence? Are we looking for all men to renounce male privilege and commit to gender equality? Are we looking for men to organize rallies and marches? Without this clear end goal in mind, prevention initiatives are often constrained to the absence of violence perpetration. The expanded notion of violence prevention in terms of
advocacy and personal commitment to being part of the solution is relegated.

From an analysis of comparable programs, a number of different meanings of engaging men in supporting gender equality can be identified as follows:

a) as boys or young men,

b) as a style or approach that will most likely capture male audiences’ interest and support. For example, Kaufman (2004: 25) explains that "language that leaves men feeling blamed for things they have not done or for things they were taught to do ... will alienate men and boys"\(^{27}\),

c) as messengers, men will have a positive impact as they are in positions of authority or are more likely to be influential on other men.\(^{28}\)

d) as learners in programs designed to reduce individual men’s violence in their relationships for example many programs focus on developing skills on “how to express feelings without becoming violent” (Ricardo and Veran 2010, 83)\(^{29}\)

e) as bystanders\(^{30}\) and

f) as advocates for gender equality.

\(^{27}\) \(\text{for other examples see also Ataya 2010; Barker 2006; Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento 2007; Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson 2006; Belbase and Heiberg 2010; Connell 2003; Crooks et al. 2007; EngenderHealth and LifeLine/ChildLine 2011; Kivel and Creighton 1997; Promundo 2008; Ricardo and Veran 2010}\)

\(^{28}\) For example, Ricardo and Veran (2010: 85) claim that “custodians of cultural norms such as village and community elders, religious leaders, traditional opinion leaders and ‘holders’ of customary law who have a massive and influential reach”,

\(^{29}\) \(\text{see also Afghan Ministry of Public Health 2011; Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson 2006; Gevers et al. 2011; Ricardo and Veran 2010; Ricardo and Veran 2010; Texas Council on Family Violence 2010}\)

\(^{30}\) \(\text{Ataya 2010; Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson 2006; Berkowitz 2004; Greig and Edstrom 2012; Promundo 2008; Ricardo and Veran 2010; Texas Council on Family Violence 2010}\)
Speaking more of the possibility of harnessing men’s power, Ataya (2010: 22), in her training manual, argues for engaging men as they are both key decision makers and have influencing capabilities. She identifies key men such as “religious figures, tribal leaders, members of parliament, members of local councils, and representatives of executive authorities. In this regard, mosque sermons have a crucial impact, especially among rural populations, as well as the opinions of tribal leaders and social notables, such as traders and judges”. Similarly, Pease (2008b) identifies a number of ways men can be involved in anti-violence work: as men’s behaviour change facilitators, as anti-violence campaign organisers and activists, as role models in community, as workshop facilitators, as policy makers and program administrators, as interventionist bystanders, and as egalitarian and non-violent men in families.

As only one of the programs reviewed included a discussion of the value of men’s behaviour change programs (Ricardo and Veran 2010: 84), this controversial area will not be discussed here31. An exploration of the work of men as workshop or training facilitators will be undertaken in the next chapter. The following discussion will focus the remaining forms of engagement outlined above.

**Engaging Men as a Style or Approach**

As noted above, many program designers are concerned not to alienate men by presenting too negative a message about men’s violence against women. One easy way to do this is to remove the perpetrator from the naming of the social problem and refer only to violence against women. This issue is echoed by Howe (2008: 2) who explains that “calling men’s violence ‘men’s violence’...”

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31 See Pease (2012b) for further exploration of the issues.
violence’ incites outrage, … One is met immediately with qualifying ‘buts’: but not all men are violent”. She notes there is also a tendency “to find an unselfconscious agent-deleting manoeuvre that presents the violence as a weird kind of disembodied abstraction”. Typical of this approach was an educational video by UNIFEM (2007) that asks “what is the biggest reason for being a victim of violence?”, and rather than ‘war’ or ‘extremism’ their answer is “being born a woman”.

Using positive messages that address men’s concerns is the practical advice given by a number of programs (Ataya 2010; Belbase and Heiberg 2010; Bhandari 2008; Centerwall and Laack 2008; Drezin and Lloyd-Laney 2003; EngenderHealth and PPASA 2001; Promundo 2008; Texas Council on Family Violence 2010). Esplen (2006: 11) endorses this positive approach giving the example from a White Ribbon poster – “You have the power to end violence against women in your community”. Thus men’s power becomes the solution rather than the problem as feminists have argued.

Another ‘positive’ approach is to reassure the male audience that ‘most men are not violent’.

While Flood (2011: 372) might claim that whereas some men are part of the problem, all men are part of the solution, Pease (2011a: 181) argues that this takes attention away from broader gender structures of power and “wider patterns of coercion and control that involves all men”. The shift from focusing on problems to solutions is also part of the move to maintain a positive stance.

Eriksson and Pringle (2011: 105) claim that such a shift

sometimes also means that instead of pointing out men as dominant, prevention workers choose to focus upon how the gender order is oppressive to both women and men. The focus is thus sometimes shifted
from men’s responsibility for violence to men as victims of the gender order.

An illustration of this is found in Belbase’s (2010: 1) ‘Step by Step guide’ to engaging boys which claims that violence is “part of our daily lives, where all of us are victims as well as perpetrators”. In contrast, the Handbook recognizes that all men are implicated in men’s violence against women stating that “even those who are non-violent, benefit from gender unequal societies in terms of access to privileges, status and resources” (p. X).

Some programs may even go to great lengths to exclude women’s voices for fear of upsetting men. Marchese (2008: 65) cites Katz (2006) who suggests using video clips of men talking about violence to disarm potential criticism that might occur if women were presenting. Marchese makes the point that many male-focused anti-violence organisations spend too much time placating a perceived injury and too little time explaining the complicated and multifaceted nature of violence. Comparing anti-drink driving campaigns that are never criticized by drinkers, Marchese sees such approaches to engaging men more appropriately “as part of the feminist backlash that hinders all anti-rape work, but effusive reassurances to men can erase accountability and responsibility” (2008: 66). She goes on to suggest that a range of special roles for men are promoted – as bystanders, as role models, as supporters/advocates, as powerful leaders and as ‘active participants’ – in a way that avoids accountability.

Ataya (2010: 23) also promotes the value of using men for engaging men to improve credibility, while recognizing the latent politics: “Under prevalent cultural beliefs, women’s ideas are considered to be unreliable. Women’s organizations are often accused of adopting international
agendas and of ignoring national and religious parameters”. However, privileging the authority of men’s voices can reinforce the patriarchal ideology of men’s greater authority.

MRI (2009: 8) cites Jackon Katz’s program, ‘Mentors in Violence Prevention’ as a successful male involvement program. So it is of concern that a form of backlash against feminism is seen in Katz’s (2003: 5) ‘Big Tent’ approach. He recognizes that men and women may have different views on the causes of gender violence, and preventing of men’s violence needs a range of approaches, thus in order to “fit the diversity of opinion under the same tent, we must centre the work where there is common ground”. Paradoxically, this minimization of disputes or disputed claims to naming an issue is precisely the form of power play employed by most perpetrators of violence against women.

**Men as Role Models**

A number of programs make reference to the importance of male role models (Ataya 2010; Belbase and Heiberg 2010; Bhandari 2008; Centerwall and Laack 2008; Esplen 2006; Fernandes 2005; Greig and Edstrom 2012; Haas 2009; Miruka 2003). The use of men as role models is premised on the theory of sex role socialization, the weakness of which was critically examined in Chapter Two. Belbase and Heiberg (2010: 4) refer to “the importance of pioneers and role models to effectively spread messages and influence others”. This approach appears to be confused with either a marketing technique or the concept of popular opinion leaders (POL).

The use of popular opinion leaders to disseminate key ideas to achieve cultural shifts is based on the theory of the diffusion of innovation. Rogers (2010) that explains how new ideas and behaviours are adopted and become normalized within communities. Rather than ‘role models’, POLs are respected, well liked and trusted trendsetters who influence others through their
existing social networks. Rogers’ theory also proposes that new forms of behaviour become entrenched once a critical mass of POLs have visibly and consistently adopted the innovation. While this approach has been adopted by a number of programs concerned to promote safe sex practices (Kelly et al. 1991; Kelly et al. 1992; Rotheram-Borus et al. 2011; Sivaram et al. 2004), it appears to be almost unknown among strategies to eliminate men’s violence against women. One exception is an evaluation study by, Banyard, Moynihan and Crossman (2009). However, the concept of the POL is inappropriately incorporated into a discussion of bystander interventions. While there are mixed results with the POL approach to HIV-AIDS reduction, it is questionable whether such a model would be effective for the more complex area of men’s violence against women. As a strategy conceived within the problematic public health discourse this is perhaps unlikely.

**The Bystander Intervention Strategy**

Men intervening as bystanders is supported by many of the comparable programs (Ataya 2010; Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson 2006; Greig and Edstrom 2012; Promundo 2008; Ricardo and Veran 2010; Sonke Gender 2006b; Victorian Womens Trust 2009). The bystander approach is based on the theory of social norms devised by Berkowitz (2002) that suggests people will act according to their perception of the social norms of behaviour in relation to a particular social issue. It is similar to using positive messages with men, as it highlights latent positive norms in a non-confrontational tone and reassures both the men it targets and policy administrators (Wechsler et al. 2003). Originally conceived to challenge college student problem-drinking behaviour, Berkowitz (2003a: 260) explains that
individuals who underestimate the extent of peer discomfort with problem behavior may act as “bystanders” by refraining from expressing their own discomfort with that behavior. However, if the actual discomfort level of peers is revealed, these individuals may be more willing to express their own discomfort to the perpetrator(s) of the behavior.

The non-challenging premise of the approach is perhaps an indicator of the unlikelihood of this approach being an effective response to gender power inequalities. While there is a growing consensus on the value of attempting to shift dominant social structures, most studies evaluating effectiveness of bystander interventions on sexual assault perpetration usually only report on changed attitudes or “self-reported willingness to help as a bystander” (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al. 2011) rather than actual behaviour. One often cited study by Banyard, Moynihan and Plante (2007) that did measure change in bystander actions, found a negligible increase of one extra type of intervention (from a list of fifty) that the experimental group reported undertaking compared to the control group two months after their training.

Wechsler et al. (2003) note very little empirical support for a social norms approach and found in their own study that those colleges that undertook such a program to reduce alcohol consumption actually experienced an increase in consumption compared to those without the intervention. They conclude that their study does not provide evidence to support the effectiveness of social norms marketing programs. Another study by Thombs et al. (2004: 61) found:

(1) a majority of the students did not find the statistics used in the campaign messages credible, (2) higher levels of alcohol use predicted
lower levels of perceived campaign credibility, and (3) only 38.5% of the students understood the campaign's intended purpose.

Most bystander programs addressing violence tend to focus only on sexual assault in relation to college campuses and may understate the complex power dynamics at play. For example, Berkowitz (2003b: 1) claims that “men who engage in verbal and physical violence against women incorrectly interpret other men’s silence as approval, thus feeling emboldened to express and act violently towards women” and thus teaching male peers to ‘speak out’ will “serve to inhibit violence by other men”. In contrast, according to research by Clark and Quadara (2010), it is much more typical that sexual assault will occur by isolating the victim away from potential detection by bystanders.

Most bystander interventions are based on work on U.S. college campuses where men and women are residents, making it more likely that they may have the opportunity to intervene in the situation of (sexual) assault in public arenas. However, the overwhelming majority of men’s abuse of women occurs in private where they are least likely to be caught or challenged. (Clark and Quadara 2010) found sexual assault perpetrators consistently planned consciously to use a range of strategies in order to isolate the victim/survivor, control the situation and impose their own desires, intentions and perspectives on the interaction. In explaining the motivations of their attackers, the victims/survivors interviewed cited achieving power and control over the victim/survivor and reaffirming heteronormative masculine sexuality. None suggested that male peers’ approval was significant in the attacks.

DeKeseredy and Schwartz (2013: 54) are critical of peer norms approaches that focus only on individual behaviour and argue that any explanation for men’s abuse of women must recognize
that “male actions, values, and beliefs are microsocial expressions of broader patriarchal forces”. They are also explicit in their definition of patriarchy as a hierarchical organization of social institutions and social relations that allow men to hold positions of power and maintain privilege. However, in bystander approaches, a recognition of patriarchy appears absent.

Thus Cornwall, Edström and Greig (2011: 6) argue that “engaging men in the project of gender equality has come to be about addressing the need to transform masculinity by changing cultural or social norms that guide men’s behaviour, rather than addressing the structural basis of gender inequalities”. This reluctance to address broader structural issues can be seen in another popular strategy: raising awareness.

**Awareness-Raising to Promote Gender Equality**

Awareness-raising is cited as a key strategy in many of the comparable programs (Ataya 2010; AusAID 2009; Belbase and Heiberg 2010; de Vries 2010; Esplen 2006; Haas 2009; Insituto 2004; International 2009; Sitawa and Now 2007). While awareness-raising is largely accepted as an important aspect of any approach to engaging men, Drezin and Lloyd-Laney (2003: 6) point out that “even the most well-intentioned communications plan can have unintended consequences. Sometimes the messages we intended are not understood, while other times distribution strategies can backfire”. For example, Eves (2006: 88) reports on the case of a national campaign in Papua New Guinean newspaper where the

message, ‘Real men don’t hit women’ was superimposed on a photo of a young woman with a thick bandage on her right eye and her arm in a sling. The newspaper had used the same photograph previously on a poster distributed with the printed version, but bearing the words, ‘This could be
your sister … wife bashing is wrong!’ On seeing this poster, a senior police officer at a meeting with others working in the Law and Justice sector in Buka, remarked, ‘It is good to see that men are still in control’.

Flood (2001: 43) argues that the “best known example of men’s anti-violence activism is the White Ribbon Campaign, a grassroots education campaign which spans at least four continents”. Rather than activism that challenges gender power structures, White Ribbon focuses on awareness-raising by calling on individual men to improve their behaviour or to ‘speak out’, or makes non-specific demands such as one newspaper advertisement that proclaimed: “We call on all men to reject the masculine culture of violence and to work with us to create a culture of connection, of cooperation and of safety for women, for men and for children” (Flood 2001: 43). Both Moore (2010) and Goldrick-Jones (2004) argue that actions, such as ribbon wearing by men, are primarily gestures of fashion designed to enhance personal identity, and that wearers have little concern that such action has any real world impact on the social issue. Moore (2010: 142) explains that in nihilist and individualistic consumer society ‘showing compassion’ “has come to signify emotional authenticity, ‘realness’ … as a means of affirming one’s self-identity”.

It is not surprising then that her research found most ribbon wearers had very little knowledge or understanding about the particular social issue the statement was representing; nor the finding that none of those interviewed were interested in any form of political protest or expressed any clear expectations on the State to act. ‘Showing awareness’ is also a symptom of the heightened sense of anxiety people experience in a ‘risk society’ as discussed previously. Thus ribbon wearing arises from a widespread lack of certainty that is “likely to produce a desire to find something that will provide a sense of conviction, especially for the purposes of forging and asserting an identity” (Moore 2010: 30).
Extending this argument, Füredi (2004: 55) contends that showing awareness is a defining feature of what he calls ‘therapy politics’ that “combines political disengagement with public outbursts of emotionalism” and a distrust of political processes. So rather than referring to such public awareness campaigns as ‘men’s collective anti-violence activism’ (Flood 2001), Füredi (2004: 56) argues that in such campaigns, “through a collective display of emotion, an otherwise fragmented society achieves a temporary moment of unity” and little is tangibly changed in terms of gender power relations. Some men’s activism as described by Flood (2001) could be seen as acts of maintaining privilege, or re-privileging, as little is lost in terms of status, while men’s status as leaders, as ‘brave voices’, as protectors of women or simply as ‘good guys’ is measurably enhanced. Crooks et al. (2007: 7) make the important point that for men to organise and attend a rally

may seem indicative of a highly committed stance ... yet it is the innocuous, personal daily challenges that are more difficult for most men to undertake (e.g., confronting a sexist co-worker by the water cooler). Going to a rally may simply require the public role of sitting on a blanket surrounded by supportive, like-minded individuals. In contrast, confronting a co-worker (or even harder, a supervisor) by the water cooler involves a huge personal commitment to counter deeply ingrained social interaction norms.

A further problem with awareness-raising campaigns, however, is that they are unreliable in terms of changing people’s behaviour (Smith 2003). McKenzie-Mohr (2011: 4), among others (Aronson 1990; Costanzo et al. 1986), explains that “information campaigns that emphasize enhancing knowledge or altering attitudes frequently have little or no effect upon behaviour”.
This has important implications for both the goal of work with men generally, and for training programs specifically.

**Engaging Boys and Young Men**

Casey and Smith (2010: 953) begin their paper reporting on men’s involvement in anti-violence work with a seemingly self-evident statement of fact: “Engaging boys and men as antiviolence allies is an increasingly core element of efforts to end violence against women”. However, in their paper, boys are only mentioned once, as targets of engagement, and not as ‘allies’. This is not surprising, as the role of being an ally to a social justice cause implies both a level of maturity and power to act not normally found in children. While not specifically naming boys as allies, many of the comparable programs use the suffix ‘and boys’ in the title (Barker 2006; Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento 2007; Baruah, Karkara and Karlsson 2006; EngenderHealth and LifeLine/ChildLine 2011; Promundo 2008; Ricardo and Veran 2010). Similarly Crooks et al. (2007: 219) cite a number of authors to support their claim that “in the past decade, there has been a call to involve men and boys in the movement (to stop violence against women)”. An analysis of these sources reveals only one reference to engaging boys by a Canadian Government report that recommends educational programs for “young boys and girls to create greater awareness of shared obligations within the family, particularly responsibilities for child rearing” (Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, Marshall and Vaillancourt 1993: 15). When programs are designed for boys, the message tends to remain individualistic and moral in tone. For example, the activities of Program H focus on interpersonal skills such as anger management and alternative ways of defending male honour. The authors are honest in their appraisal of the program’s modest effectiveness stating that
even though participation in group reflection activities is useful, it is not necessarily enough to change the behavior of young people. Nevertheless, we have noticed in practice that these activities are effective in bringing about changes of attitude in young men in the short term. (Insituto 2004: 160)

Coulter (2003: 42) also recognizes the shortcomings of actions by young men as “that to a large extent they had constructed themselves as women’s protectors”. Why then is there such a strong emphasis on boys as key program recipients? Three possible answers are a) changing boys is the logical outcome of intergenerational cyclic views of violence; b) young people are key targets in a neo-liberal discourse of risk and governmentality; and c) focusing attention on boys (and young men) diverts attention away from adult men’s power and privilege.

First, while the appeal of ‘early intervention’ fits well with the public health conception of primary prevention, validity of cyclic explanations of violence were previously challenged in Chapter Two. Second, drawing on Beck’s (1992) concept of a Risk Society, Share and Strain (2008) explain that increasingly, when governments deal with social issues, they ‘responsibilise’ citizens by making them consider their individual lifestyle choices. Also drawing on Foucault’s concept of governmentality, they argue that in neoliberal societies the privatization of risk and the resulting self-surveillance is economically efficient and effectively leaves broader structural power issues unchallenged. While writing about the State’s response to obesity their concern that too “much individualistic health promotion ‘busy work’” (Share and Strain 2008: 241) directed at young people is occurring could equally be applied to some programs in the so-called ‘anti-violence’ field. It is also possible that boys are an easy target group as they can be readily accessed through institutions such as schools and youth organisations which are keen to
remediate them. While this sort of work is common, it is not without its critics as Connell (2003: 19) explains: “there are considerable difficulties in formulating a gender equality strategy for the education of boys”.

Third, Eriksson and Pringle (2011) argue that when greater attention is placed on men’s violence against women, all men come under the uncomfortable spotlight with questions about power and privilege. This, they argue, then implies an “expectation upon men in general to problematize their own dominant position in the societal gender order” (2011: 101). One way to deflect this attention away from men is to restrict gender questions to males who are subordinated due to their age – young men and boys - and so antiviolence work “seems to (re)produce a social order of aged and gendered inequality where adult men remain the invisible norm” (Eriksson and Pringle 2011: 101). In contrast, the Handbook recognizes the problem of including boys in gender equality strategies; however, mainly by critiquing the idea that they are victims of their masculinity (Fisher 2011: X) rather than specific concerns outlined above.

**Men as Advocates for Gender Equality**

A number of authors refer to men acting as advocates for women’s rights or ending men’s violence against women (Ataya 2010; Bhandari 2008; Eves 2006; Flood 2004; Greig and Edstrom 2012; Pease 2008b; Ricardo and Veran 2010; Texas Council on Family Violence 2010), although few explicitly define what is meant by the term ‘advocate’. Ricardo and Veran (2010: 91) define advocacy as:

> the process of building support and positively influencing decision-making and hence policy on a given issue. It can entail a multitude of approaches and tactics that can be undertaken at various levels: from
capacity building and dialoguing with community leaders to garnering political commitment and support for the scaling-up of successful interventions and policies that target men and boys.

Advocacy for gender equality, therefore includes for changes in laws or regulations that perpetuate inequality. Advocacy means pushing for legislation that, for example criminalises violence against women and grants paternity as well as maternity leave, promotes the presence of men in prenatal services and the delivery room and guarantees women equal pay and employment opportunities – to name a few.

It is instructive that their definition is largely technocratic even though it describes a political process. There is no sense of struggle or battle over dominant or entrenched interests, rather a mutually cooperative approach of ‘dialogue’ with leaders is presented. Their approach sits within the previously described public health model with the emphasis on ‘successful interventions’, meaning evidence based and ‘policies that target men and boys’. The reification of ‘men and boys’ as the problematic, or potentially allied, target of policies is to take attention away from the feminist political goal of transforming gender power relations.

The call to guarantee equal pay for women alongside ensuring men have access to pre-natal services and paternity leave, demonstrates the contradictory way advocacy is presented here. Proposing that changes need to occur in laws that perpetuate inequality is laudable, but is presented in such a general way that it is undermined by the suggestion that advocacy strategies need to be based on understanding how gender norms influence “male attitudes and behaviours.”
and the opportunities, programs and services needed to effectively involve them” (Ricardo and Veran 2010), thus placing men’s needs at the centre.

Advocacy in this interpretation becomes attenuated to the more common approach of service provision. On the other hand, Schutz and Sandy (2011: 36) are critical of the concept of advocacy as it involves people speaking “for others instead of trying to help people speak for themselves”. They claim that grassroots democracy involves those impacted by injustice and having skills to battle for themselves and build their own power rather than relying on advocates. The Handbook uses the term ‘male advocate’ and while issues of accountability are addressed, the idea that men may be speaking ‘on behalf’ of women remain underdeveloped in the content of the Handbook.

Perhaps a better term for this aspect of engaging men is ‘organising’ rather than advocacy. Schutz and Sandy (2011) contrast organized collective action with the anti-organising position of service provision which is less likely to produce conflict and generate resistance. Echoing the ‘positive’ ways to engage men discussed above, they argue that any such approach avoids “controversy and makes everyone happy. It’s the ‘feel-good’ approach to social change and civic engagement” (Schutz and Sandy 2011: 17). By contrast, collective organizing does not shy away from power and conflict, in identifying particular power holders to pressure for action. Schutz and Sandy (2011: 22) note that prevention efforts often present social problems in the passive voice in a way that avoids identifying that real people with real power act to perpetuate the issue, for example: there is a problem with the level of violence against women. Simply identifying a crisis is not enough to prompt action; it requires sufficient pressure on those with power and resources to force them to act. The aim of organizing is to build power, that is the capacity of the oppressed to influence (or effect) the actions of powerful people and institutions. For them, an
organized collective has real power when other powerful people and groups are “more likely to keep their promises to you; more likely to consult you before they do something your constituency might object to, and less likely to make decisions that might hurt your constituency” (Schutz and Sandy 2011: 23).

Another important distinction in the organizing approach is between ‘problems’, which are broad and abstract challenges, and ‘issues’, which are specific and achievable actions aimed to address ‘problems’. Identifying a specific claim helps in locating the ‘target’, that is the institution or institutional ‘player’ (person) who has the power to respond to the claim. Schutz and Sandy note that in the absence of specific actions and targets, people are left with generalized ‘awareness-raising’ but no concrete progress is achieved. Critical of generalized protests, or ‘activism’, they explain that organizing involves implementing specific tactics to pressure decision makers. Such tactics should also ensure that a large enough number of people are mobilized to generate collective power. Therefore, solely enlisting the assistance of a few powerful allies to pressure the target does not ensure long-term success.

The concept of organizing is a much clearer political approach that is designed to directly address power inequalities. However, Schutz and Sandy are insistent that such collective action is to be undertaken by the oppressed group leaving the role of men in organizing for gender justice unclear. One possible alternative is to refer to men as pro-feminist social justice allies.

Ataya (2010: 32) defines allies as people from a privileged group working with others from less privileged groups toward equality and social justice. She also emphasizes that being an ally “means being accountable to women and recognizing their leadership in the field of violence prevention”. Similarly, in discussing accountability, Tamasese and Waldegrave (1994: 34) argue
the need for “full recognition of dominated groups to be self-determining, and a requirement of
the dominant groups to check out key aspects of their orientation and projects with the other
groups”.

This process has been very Ravarino (2008: 246-71) describes ten aspects of the role as a social
justice ally: challenge the myths about patriarchy, masculinity and sexual violence; listen to
women to understand their experience and the political issues affecting women’s communities;
accept that violence against women is as much a men’s issue as it is a women’s issue; it is crucial
that men join established organizations that work for gender justice and that hold men
accountable; get involved on a political and personal level and risk facing ridicule and
alienation—or even hate and discrimination—from others; recognize male privilege; always
maintain an awareness of men’s tendencies toward dominating, monopolizing, or competing
with others; remember that our larger institutions, not individual men, are the problem;
understand multiple forms of social injustice and the intersectionality of gender, race, sexual
orientation, disability and class; and practice self-care.

There is great potential in combining Ravarino’s social justice ally with Schutz and Sandy’s
(2011) strategy of collective organizing to work effectively for gender equality. For example,
Ataya (2010: 26) identifies a key role for the organizing model as she laments the lack of
“practical activation of the state’s publicly stated policy to achieve gender equality”.

**Conclusion**

Many of the forms of engagement outlined in this chapter tend to lack recognition of the broader
structural and cultural supports for men’s violence against women. Whaley (2001: 531), for
example, found in her analysis of the structural changes in gender equality between 1970 – 1990,
that the short-term effect of improved gender equality is increased levels of rape due to increased threats to the status quo, whereas over a longer period gender equality results in reduced rape rates due to an improved social climate toward women. More specifically in her analysis, Whaley noted that the percentage of male executives, administrators, and managers was significantly associated with levels of rape. However, few violence prevention programs recommend strategies to challenge men’s power at senior executive levels. DeKeseredy (2011a: 300) explains that

people tend to locate the solution in the same place where they locate the problem. Thus, if the problem of male-to-female violence is one of the mental health of men or lack of respect for the law, then the broader social system presumably does not have a problem. The solution, then, is to treat, “fix,” or punish the men so that they will work within the dominant social order.

As can be seen from the preceding, in many programs the idea of ‘engaging men’ is rarely aimed at challenging broad social structures. Instead it tends to be about individualistic interventions which reinforces the idea that most men are ethical towards women, and only a minority engage in violence against women (Pease 2008a).

The final chapter focuses on a key area of involving men in advocating for gender equality, education and training. Thus far the focus of the exegesis has been on training program content

32 None of the programs reviewed mention senior executives, and while the White Ribbon Foundation actively recruits corporate executives for their ambassador program, it is doubtful this involves a challenge to their power.
rather than teaching principles and practices. Therefore, the next chapter will develop an approach to a pro-feminist pedagogy.
Chapter Seven: Toward a Pro-feminist Pedagogy

Introduction

Having explored critically a range of approaches to engaging men in the previous chapter, the focus here is specifically on the pedagogical dimensions of involving men in gender equality. The Handbook is designed as a training guide to support the education of men as advocates for women’s rights and so it is important that the underpinning pedagogical rationale is also critically appraised. Unlike the previous chapters, the approach here will not examine the content of specific anti-violence programs, but will look more broadly at the philosophical debates on training people to become social justice advocates.

Flood (2003: 34) argues for men’s involvement tackling men’s violence against women for three reasons. First, given that men are the vast majority of perpetrators of violence against women, they are responsible for ending it. Second, dominant views about masculinity are the cause of violence and third, that men care about the issue and have a stake in improvement in gender relations. While his first two points are sound, the third claim is more controversial and has implications for how a pedagogy for men might be framed.

As I have argued in the previous chapter, while there are many approaches to engaging men, several of them have problematic premises. Crooks et al. (2007: 22) point out that engaging men in violence prevention is often ill-defined and tends to revert to an individualising position where individual men are being asked to be non-violent and show respect in their interactions with women rather than effect any broader social change. They argue that

at the individual level, it is much harder to identify the end state toward which we hope men and boys will progress. Are we simply looking for all
men to commit to nonviolence? Are we looking for all men to renounce male privilege and commit to gender equality? Are we looking for men to organize rallies and marches? Without this clear end goal in mind, prevention initiatives are often constrained to the absence of violence perpetration. The expanded notion of violence prevention in terms of advocacy and personal commitment to being part of the solution is relegated.

Without clear guidance, unhelpful or misleading messages may be communicated (Fisher 2012). It is apparent that the strategies aimed at involving men identified by Flood (2003) are essentially all of the one kind – community education, which is broadly of two types, group training or mass media campaigns. While there has been some writing (Drezin and Lloyd-Laney 2003) about the value or otherwise of mass media approaches, there are numerous examples of training from short workshops to more extended training programs (Ricardo and Veran 2010) as discussed in previous chapters. My own work for the Pacific Women’s Network which resulted in the development of a training Handbook (Fisher 2011) is part of this broad development.

Most of these curricula imply, rather than explicitly discuss, their politico-educational rationale. Thus it is important to conclude this exegesis with an analysis of the pedagogical frameworks commonly employed is such programs with the aim of developing a proposal for a pro-feminist pedagogy.

**Analysing the Goals of Gender Justice Training Programs for Men**

In terms of the field of educating for social justice, three goals appear to underpin the range of approaches to training potential advocates. Some programs emphasise the goal of developing a
more moral sense of self; that is, a change in subjectivity. A second common goal of many curricula targeted at men is to achieve a measurable and substantive change in attitudes. A smaller number of programs aim to address the third goal which is to equip men directly to undertake actions, both personally and politically, to achieve gender equality.

In terms of changing men’s subjectivity, Goodman’s (2011) approach to training people from privileged groups focuses on developing a person’s empathy and ethical sensibilities. The change in men’s attitudes towards women was the focus of study by Pulerwitz and Barker (2008) examining the effectiveness of a group education program for young men in Brazil. Using a psychometric gender equitable men scale, they found that the training interventions successfully influenced the young men's attitudes towards gender roles. While some programs focus exclusively on attitudes as the target for change, most tend to use the phrase ‘attitudes and behaviour’ when describing their key focus (Ataya 2010; Berkowitz 2004; Centerwall and Laack 2008; MRI 2009; Promundo 2008) when describing their aims. However, the training tends to focus on the former in the implicit belief that this will result in a change in the latter. While there is no clear connection between actual behaviour change and shifts in attitudes, many programs appear to assume that a renewed set of attitudes automatically results in anti-sexist ways of relating. As discussed in chapter three, the assumption that a man with a changed sense of self or a renewed set of attitudes will consistently demonstrate this through his active support for gender is not self-evidently true.

The link between ‘teaching’ progressive attitudes or advocating new forms of masculine subjectivity and men’s agency is complex and contested. Some argue that behaviour does not arise from, but forms identity and attitudes. For example, Butler (2006: 33) explains that gendered action and identity are inextricably linked. She argues that masculinity is performative
and “gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed”. This insight undermines the essentialist premise of many liberationist approaches to changing men that claim a ‘good man’ can be found once the layers of social conditioning have been removed or men are taught to take off the mask. This brings into question the very project of attempting to create new men in the sense of some permanently achieved, reconstructed subjectivity. While one’s sense of self appears to have a certain biographical consistency, I argue that the pedagogical effort needs to be more firmly on the particular skills and knowledge men need in order to enact gender equality advocacy, rather than focussing exclusively on remoulding masculine identity.

Many programmatic evaluations of success rest on evidence of changed attitudes among male participants in spite of a lack of evidence to suggest such changes translate into improved ways of relating to women. Some programs appear to improve the measure by evaluating behavioural intentions rather than simply attitudes, although questions are raised about the supposed action that will follow:

If students’ responses show that they are less likely to report that they would hit their dating partner after participation in the curricula/program, then a change in their behaviour is assumed. But, does answering on a survey that one is less likely to hit his/her dating partner after participating in a teen dating violence prevention program translate into an actual change behaviour? (Meyer and Stein 2001: 7-8)

Therefore, there appears to be a lack of clarity or focus within men’s advocacy training programs on how they intend to equip men to challenge gender inequality and support women's rights.
beyond merely gaining their agreement that such a change should occur. At issue is the underlying pedagogical rationales that either prevent or support such action.

**Problematising Pedagogical Rationales of Training Men as Advocates**

Education for men as anti-violence advocates can also be examined by focussing on the two common pedagogical rationales that are explicitly grounded in social justice frameworks: democratic *Freirian* humanism and stages of self-hood development neither of which are employed within the Handbook. I argue that they are both open to criticism and instead I offer here a more appropriate rationale for training men as advocates of violence elimination.

While there are many books that deal with the pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire 1973; Kincheloe 2008; McLaren and Lankshear 1994 and Shor 1992), few (Allen 2002; Breault 2003; Rasmussen 2005; Schapiro 2001; Schilb 1985) have employed Freirian principles to educate those from the oppressor class. While Kimmel (2002) titles a paper “Toward a pedagogy of the oppressor”, it is more an exhortation for white, middle-class men of privilege to be willing to see men’s unearned privilege, than a philosophical or practical engagement with pedagogy to bring this about. He does recognize the commonly cited pedagogical risk that men who hear about their complicity in patriarchy will become immobilised by guilt rather than spurred to action. Rather than offering a teaching strategy in response, he suggests the remedy is collective organising. Other writers refer to a pedagogy of the oppressor; for example, Breault (2003) focuses on the need to gently shift the perception of privileged students to accept greater

33 Rasmussen (2005) is similarly philosophical in tone, while Curry-Stevens (2007) is much more focused on teaching and learning processes

34 Collective organising is a laudable political strategy, but my focus here is on training men to undertake such work.
diversity without generating defensiveness, while Rasmussen Rasmussen (2005) is concerned with preventing the oppressive behaviours of well-meaning neo-colonialists.

Perhaps recognising the potential risk of alienating men, Schapiro (2001: 1) outlines a Freirian approach that seeks to “help people to grow and change in regard to such issues without subjecting them to coercion, indoctrination, or other forms of political correctness”. He is keen to take a ‘student-centred’ approach that involves learners in ‘genuine inquiry’ and using the concept of transformation is firmly centred on men’s selfhood.

Schapiro takes two key elements from Freire to apply to his own pedagogical rationale. First is the task of assisting learners to work towards a state of critical consciousness involving a systemic and structural analysis of individual problems. To achieve this outcome, learners must travel from the ‘magical-conforming’ phase where social reality is accepted as either unproblematic or unchangeable, and through the ‘naive-reforming’ phase to where problems are inappropriately individualized. While this sounds progressive, and indeed is invaluable, it can be more prosaically understood as developing sociological thinking (Mills 2000). This raises the question as to whether learning sociological analysis requires such staged personal transformation. While in my own teaching, I am aware that students who begin to see beyond the individual do indeed speak of shifts in their sense of self, I regard this as secondary to the pedagogical goal of developing skills and knowledge to critically analyse their social world.

The second element employed by Schapiro is the pedagogical technology to achieve this staged transformation, namely dialogic education. Repeating Freire’s critique of banking education, where knowledge, beliefs and ideas are pre-determined and deposited by the teacher in the democratic classroom, he argues that knowledge is something people can discover for
“themselves in their struggle to understand and change their world” (Schapiro 2001: 9). This is an understandable moral stance given the context Freire critiqued, where educated and privileged teachers were teaching poor peasants knowledge about their world in a way that maintained their oppression. This concern with the inequality in such didactic teaching is valid regardless of whether it is an empirically effective way to learn to think structurally about social problems. However, there is no such moral imperative in the case of training male learners to support gender equality, where they themselves are confident and privileged beneficiaries of gender inequality. Of course if the training were to focus on racism, or issues of class oppression, then the men’s social location in these areas would be very important.

It is important to investigate critically the idea of the dialogic, democratic classroom as an important way to train men to be advocates for gender equality. Some argue that the notion that teachers can ever simply be facilitators of students’ collective knowledge-creation is misleading, as we are constantly faced with conflicting value positions and understandings that require a clear moral choice (Bizzell 1991; Dune 1996). From this perspective, it is actually our moral imperative as teachers to actively promote particular progressive worldviews with our students. Other writers (Knight and Pearl 2000, and Ellsworth 1994) are critical of the notion of a democratic classroom to the extent that it masks the actual unequal power dynamics occurring within the learner group. Or worse, the dialogic tools are practiced in a way that increases oppressive practices and understandings rather than the purported opposite.

Critiquing the naïve humanism inherent in the work of moral adult educators such as Shapiro, Baptiste (1998) argues that we are unwilling to consider the possibility of a progressive pedagogy designed to disempower rather than simply support. Somewhat controversially, in the context of training for profeminism, he suggests that three sorts of caring get in the way of
recognising the need to directly challenge power and privilege. First, caring as human capital formation is based on the view that teaching is simply about building people skills and talents while denying there are any fundamental structural conflicts in society. Second, caring as self-improvement occurs when the educational process is primarily about altering the learner’s state of being. Baptiste cites Mezirow (1981) as a progressive educator who is keen to change individual perspectives through transformative learning, but notes that “although positive social change might be a serendipitous outcome, it is not a requirement of the theory”. He notes that Newman (1994) calls this introspective activism, where the idea of starting with changing ourselves usually also ends there, and no collective coordinated political action is undertaken. Thus the pedagogical value of the goal of changing men’s subjectivity is further weakened.

Third, caring as empowering our allies refers to efforts to develop critical consciousness among marginalised or oppressed groups. In this case, all the effort and focus goes on those with least power, while the powerful, who he refers to as our enemies, remain unchallenged. Baptiste (1998) is critical of Freire who writes at length about oppression and yet seems to imply that “critically conscious allies will eventually transform their enemies into friends”; thus everyone will win in a world where the powerful are allowed to connect with their true humanity. The proposed path to a liberated society is to free oppressors by giving them the ability to think critically about social relations. Schapiro (2001, 11) draws on socialisation theory35 to suggest that as oppressors as well as oppressed are socialized to believe that society is immutable, Freire’s pedagogy should be experienced by both groups. In this way he appears to be removing the notion of structural power relations. The risk here is identified by Allen (2002) who, based on

35 Socialisation theory is now largely discredited by sociology of gender writers (see, for example, Connell (1987)).
his experience as a teacher, recognizes that most who encounter Freire tend to imagine themselves as the oppressed and the understanding of oppressive global hierarchies disappears.

Baptiste (1998) is concerned that oppression is inappropriately conceived as being due to ignorance, and that simply ensuring oppressors are thinking critically will result in progressive action. He considers Freire’s stages of development schema as being uncritically naive as it rests on the belief that once an oppressor has an understanding of the nature of oppression, reformed ethical behaviour will automatically follow. Thus, in recognising that inequality in structural power and privilege cannot simply be overcome through empowering the oppressed, nor appealing to the enlightened good nature of oppressors, he proposes the development of a pedagogy of disempowerment of the privileged.

In a subsequent paper, Baptiste (2000) advances his proposal with a suggestion to move beyond reason and personal integrity and towards a pedagogy of coercive restraint. In this way he goes directly against the invitational, non-threatening and democratic approach commonly adopted within not only the transformative learning field, but more particularly within gender equality programs for men. For example, Fernandes (2005) explains that her training manual is produced from a male-centred and male-sensitive perspective to ensure participants feel affirmed rather than threatened. Similarly, Esplen (2006: 12) in describing lessons learned in training men, has at the top of her list the importance to use only positive messages and avoid blaming men for ‘things they were taught to do’ or being made to feel guilty for the actions of the violence of

36 Social learning theory is commonly employed to both individualise violence and excuse men of a range of anti-social and misogynist behaviours (Hicks 2008).
other men\textsuperscript{37}. Psychologisation of the oppressor allows Curry-Stevens (2005: 95) to note “that superiority is embedded in one’s self concept and that efforts to undo it may induce the privileged learner to feel threatened. We need to avoid imperilling such learners”. On the contrary, imperilling men by confronting them with the reality of gender oppression is an important aspect of such training.

Within Freirian humanism, men become re-cast not as privileged and powerful, but as fragile beings requiring support and care. For example, one report describing promising practices of engaging men around gender-based violence. MRI (2009: 15-6) recommends creating “a safe environment where personal feelings and experiences can be shared, thus making the reality of gender violence visible and showing how it affects everyone in society”. This concern for ‘poor men’ is supported by a wealth of anti-feminist and men’s liberation literature (Biddulph 2002; Bly 1992; Farrell 1974; Parker 2008)

Allen (2004) supports Baptiste’s pedagogy of coercive constraint by arguing that educators need to hold privileged learners clearly on track to prevent or challenge resistant or avoidant responses. Ellsworth (1994) is similarly concerned with the naïve humanism in current discourses on critical pedagogy, asserting that many of the key concepts such as empowerment, student voice, dialogue, "... and even the term critical, are repressive myths that perpetuate relations of domination”. She notes that, in spite of its political intent, the literature on critical pedagogy rarely explains how particular teaching methods will actually alter specific power

\textsuperscript{37} Pease (2008a) highlights the importance of recognising men’s responsibility not just as perpetrators of direct violence against women but also as perpetuators of a violence-supporting society.
relations. This is possibly due to a reluctance by proponents to recognise the tension inherent in teaching supportively while simultaneously wishing to undermine the power of men.

Ellsworth (1994) is troubled by the techniques of dialogue and promoting student voice, arguing that they are based on the constraining rationalist assumption that students will engage in reasoned debate and count that each person’s position on an issue is equally valid. This false neutrality does not take into account the varied cultural backgrounds and social locations of students that privileges some over others in such discursive settings. Similarly (Huber and Cale 2002: 1) refer to Brookfield (2001) in criticising democratic teaching as it “allows for the voicing and acceptance of intolerant perspectives creating an environment that Marcuse (1965) calls repressive tolerance”. Thus, there is a potential risk in following the advice of writers of gender equality training programs, such as (Haas 2009: 101), who suggest a “crucial step for promoting behavioural change is creating spaces for dialogue and reflection” adding that men-to-men dialogue offers the opportunity to reconsider views and attitudes. On the contrary, it is often homosocial men-to-men dialogue that maintains patriarchal privilege (Bird 1996).

In a related field of anti-racism training, (Srivastava 2007: 305) critically refers to the dialogic method as the ‘let’s talk’ technique which tends to have a more self-development intention than organizational or structural change. Her main concern is that this pedagogical model of personal exploration of feelings and perspectives is “influenced by trends towards individualization, discussions of experience (which) often glide over any close examination of social relations”. Further, challenging the focus on developing the individual moral character, she agrees with Newman (1994) in suggesting that “these preoccupations with morality and self are common obstacles to a fuller discussion of antiracism” and social change. She similarly argues for a more explicitly activist approach to training “formed around particular political objectives,
community or organizational projects, or tasks; which would focus on sharing the analyses, skills, and strategies required to promote and support action on racism” (Srivastava 2007: 309).

The common themes among these criticisms of the application of Freirian principles to training the privileged to be advocates for social justice, is the lack of both a clear political position on the part of the trainer, and a lack of emphasis on skills and analysis for community organizing or political action. A further concern is the individualistic underpinning of such training evident in a number of authors who employ a ‘stages-of-development’ pedagogical rationale. Goodman (2011) and Curry-Stevens (2005) both draw on such stages of development of social justice allies. They refer to a range of different selfhood development models, including Adamset al (2007), Bishop (2002), Kegan (1983), Lawrence and Tatum (1997). One of the more commonly employed is Hardiman and Jackson’s (1997) concept of white identity development to explain the steps undertaken by people of privileged groups. The stages include: naïve, passive or active acceptance, passive or active resistance, redefinition and internalization.

Based on in-depth interviews with allies of privilege, Curry-Stevens (2007) develops her own alternative set of developmental stages, starting with a confidence-shaking process: awareness of oppression, oppression as structural, locating oneself as oppressed, understanding the benefits that flow from privilege, understanding oneself as implicated in the oppression of others and understanding oneself as an oppressor. These stages are followed by a confidence-building process: to take action and knowing how to intervene, planning actions for departure from the course, finding supportive connections to sustain commitments; and declaring intentions for future action. This could be seen as either a set of steps of self-hood development, or as a series of staged learning goals, followed by an action-planning process. Such a scheme seems to meet the challenges previously identified that privileged learners: a) are clearly directed in their
learning; b) understand the structural basis of inequality; and c) are required to identify specific actions towards social justice. The only questionable stage perhaps is the requirement that students see themselves as oppressed. Based on the belief that it is easier to accept this position and the affirmation that accompanies it, Curry-Stevens (2007) argues that without such recognition, learners will be resistant to accepting their oppressor status. This idea that feeling heard and understood as a victim is a necessary pre-condition to learning about one’s own privilege, is contentious and runs the risk of allowing men to divert attention away from an analysis of gender inequality back onto themselves. Notwithstanding the range of men’s subordinate race and class locations, that men would much rather position themselves as victims of societal pressures does not necessarily translate into their understanding of their oppressor location vis-à-vis women. In discussing the politics of the ways women and men are approached in gender and development (GAD) discourses, White (2000, 35) notes:

GAD for women' is robustly materialist, concentrating on social relations particularly as they define rights and responsibilities in work, consumption and households. That is, it has not been characterised by the exploration of female subjectivities. ‘GAD for men' is by contrast much more individualistic and personal, much more preoccupied with the self.

Thus, it is important to develop a pedagogical framework that responds to the danger of moving away from a feminist focus and turning attention to men in an apologetic way (White, 2000). There may thus be value in exploring a pedagogy of coercive restraint.
The Potential of a Pedagogy of Coercive Constraint

As previously discussed, Baptiste (2000) is concerned that education for social justice should not focus on the development of learners from the oppressor class, but on coercively restraining the perpetrators of injustices. Based on his recognition that in the real world people harm others not out of ignorance but freely and knowingly, the role of the educator is primarily to reduce the likelihood of them committing such acts. He thus proposes negative pedagogy in opposition to the weaknesses of a positive developmental approach with men.

Arguing further in favour of the requirement of educators to promote clear and strong directions on students’ learning, (Baptiste 2008: 8-9) exposes fallacies associated with the practice of ‘educational niceness’ centred around the refusal to recognize and use one’s power as a teacher that contributes to the maintenance of unethical student behaviour or learning. Following Dykstra and Law (1994), who promote a pedagogy of political mobilization outside the classroom, Baptiste is arguing that it is appropriate to also confront students’ inequality promoting actions and views within the classroom. As a result, Baptiste supports the use of manipulation by educators, as there are times when maintaining neutrality or being completely open and honest about one’s actions means one is unlikely to be very effective in achieving training for social justice goals. For example, it is not uncommon for trainers to tease out a particular resistant student’s misogynist stance for the purpose of trapping (and even publicly chastening) them in their contradictory or inconsistent stance. This would be a form of ‘ethical’ manipulation designed to thwart support for a dominant sexist worldview.

While I agree with Baptiste’s antidote to the discourse of reassurance of men, I maintain that it is important and possible to hold both a firmly critical stance on patriarchy and masculine practices
within a training context, while also working towards developing necessary skills and knowledge required for men to become effective pro-feminist allies. Thus far, the pedagogical discussion has presented a dichotomy of the ethics and politics of training men. On one hand are the perspectives that men, even as oppressors, need the opportunity to develop themselves, and thus privileged social justice allies need to go through a series of transformative stages, while on the other hand any training of the privileged must primarily focus on constraining their likely oppressive and harmful actions. This dualism is represented by Redman (1996) who writes about the contradiction of empowering men to disempower themselves. I now turn to writings on critical feminist pedagogy as a potential way forward.

**Towards a (Pro)Feminist Pedagogy**

Notwithstanding the recognition of a range of feminisms that inform feminist pedagogies (Forrest and Rosenberg 1997), Allen, Walker and Webb (2002) review a range of authors’ works to identify six recurring principles: 1) Reformation of the relationship between professor and student; 2) Privileging the individual voice as a way of knowing; 3) Empowerment; 4) Building community; 5) Respect for diversity of personal experience; and 6) Challenging traditional views. Aside from the criticisms of Ellsworth (1989), the first two principles which are focussed on democratising the learning experience appear appropriate given the assumption of a female student group. However, as indicated previously (coercively) constraining privileged male learners is more politically and pedagogically appropriate. An interesting parallel is found in the experience of a teacher challenging students’ white privilege. Levine-Rasky (2000) noticed that some students may avoid recognising their own complicity in systems of oppression by simply admitting their privilege in a sort of act of redemption. Thus it becomes imperative for a pro-feminist pedagogy to forego a simply democratic and supportive environment, and push male
students beyond the superficial level of acceptance to a more complex understanding of the web of patriarchal gender power relations. This is not to imply a didactic teaching method, as robust, probing discussion (Brookfield 2005a) is still the best adult learning approach. However, this is undertaken in a more directive than democratic manner.

On the other hand, the remaining four principles could well be incorporated into a pro-feminist pedagogy. While the concept of empowerment as applied to women students is understandable, it can also apply to men in the sense that it recognises teaching itself is a political act (Forrest and Rosenberg 1997) and requires students to participate in transforming their world. Scanlon (1993) argues for the importance of teaching for social action and thus the principle of building community by engaging learners in collaborative projects outside the classroom is very relevant to a pro-feminist pedagogy.

While the principle of respect for learners’ individual experiences is similarly based on an assumption of women learners, it is relevant to training men to the extent that women’s individual narratives and perspectives are an essential part of learning about gender inequalities (Forrest and Rosenberg 1997). In terms of a pro-feminist pedagogy, this means that women’s perspectives of abuse and inequality should be included, not primarily to induce empathy as per Flood (2006a), but as an important politico-educational method. The final principle of challenging traditional views is core to a pro-feminist pedagogy as it works to denaturalise men’s sense of privilege and entitlement, and so reveal the workings of patriarchy. In the context of the Pacific Islands the idea of challenging tradition is potentially more contentious. For example, Bowers (2005) argues that too much of what counts as progressive education is actually culturally imperialist as it imposes western ideals of development, and denies the inherent value of indigenous culture and tradition. Lange (2012: 14) counters by pointing out that so-called
traditional societies are not free of oppression and hierarchy and it is a falsehood to suggest that indigenous people are the holders of ‘static, pristine knowledge’. Similarly, Linnekin (1992: 249) explains that tradition or kastom “is a symbolic construction, a contemporary human product rather than a passively inherited legacy”. Thus it is consistent that, at a workshop of women to discuss Pacific feminism, Foucault (1978: 107) noted “that what is now called ‘traditional’ - in the family and ‘traditional’ society - are roles and responsibilities influenced by the missionaries and colonial contact”. Clearly supporting a challenge to Pacific traditions and Christian institutions the workshop participants concluded with a vision that included:

a) challenging and changing the interpretation of religious teaching and values
b) challenging the oppressive and exploitative aspects of and the acquisition of wealth and land by the churches especially through women's fundraising and
c) religious teaching should speak to the present situations in countries, projecting positive images and non-exploitative marriage arrangements for women (Foucault 1978: 113)

This set of goals makes it clear that, from a (pro)feminist perspective challenging cultural traditions is only controversial if it is not undertaken, and gives a more complex meaning to the idea of cultural sensitivity. Further, Ife (2012) refers to the mistake of ‘culturalism’ whereby outsiders reify culture allowing “the continuation of the most abusive and oppressive practices”. While this is ethically more straightforward for people from within their own culture or nation, there is a place for outsiders to be invited in, having demonstrated a genuine long term commitment to solidarity with the oppressed group (Bailey Jr 1973; Westoby 2013).
Along with this incipient list of pro-feminist pedagogical principles - listening to women’s individual stories of oppression, building a social action oriented community of gender activists, and challenging traditions – I would add the importance of including a critical analysis of patriarchal masculinity. In their experience of pro-feminist pedagogy, Lambert and Parker (2006) have found that ‘feminist-informed masculinities literature’ can be crucially supportive in having students develop a desire for gender transformative practices.

There are many potential pitfalls in a focus on developing men’s subjectivity as a pathway to involving men in gender justice activism. I argue that Freirian pedagogy, while revered as central to many projects of teaching for social justice, does not appear to be an appropriate framework when dealing with men as learners. Similarly, too strong an emphasis on taking men through stages of ally development risks an individualism that diverts attention away from a feminist structural analysis.

Recognising “the vested interest many men have in resisting change” (Cornwall and Lindisfarne-Tapper 1994: 34) does not mean, however, that teachers must avoid confronting or alienating men. Nor does it mean that an educator’s only option is to implement a pedagogy of coercive constraint. While it is necessary to be ready to directly challenge men’s misunderstandings and defence of patriarchy, it is also possible to implement a pedagogy of pro-feminist activism that equips men with the capacity to analyse critically taken for granted gender relations and act as effective allies to the women’s rights movement.

Finally, a pro-feminist activist pedagogy can be seen as part of a broad project of radical teaching that Brookfield and Holst (2010: 107) explain is about ensuring “people learn the skills,
acquire the information, develop the aptitude, and solidify the commitment to create” a world of social justice”. Thus the essential elements of such a pedagogy must

- be informed by, and grounded in, women’s experiences and feminist analyses
- develop men’s critical thinking skills
- encourage men to act as allies for the women’s movement
- challenge patriarchal traditions and customs

**Conclusion**

I maintain a certain ambivalence about this work, even as I continue to be invited to conduct men’s advocacy training in the Pacific\(^{38}\); and with the production of this exegesis it has not waned. On the positive side, there is clearly a demand, or even a strategic and moral requirement, for some sort of work to be undertaken directly with men to address men’s violence and the Handbook provides an explicitly pro-feminist position. The Handbook curriculum has managed to avoid many of the common held views about men’s violence towards women, for example, by emphasising the relational nature of gender power and understanding physical violence within the context of coercive control. There is also a strong emphasis on developing participants’ critical thinking skills (Brookfield 2011) to enable men to take a questioning approach to many taken for granted assumptions of gender relations. However there are two areas that remain insufficiently developed or recognised.

\(^{38}\) As I write I am planning to run one course in Fiji in February and another in Papua New Guinea in March 2014
While not explicit within the Handbook, there is a tendency within the training to respond to the explicit criticism of hegemonic masculinity(ies) by suggesting that there is a positive way to express one’s manhood, and that masculine identity itself does not have to be abandoned as a way of dealing with the contradiction of ‘empowering men to disempower themselves’ (Redman 1996). Having earlier argued the merits of ‘refusing to be a man’, Stoltenberg (1999) has more recently suggested that “talking about ‘healthy masculinity’ is like talking about ‘healthy cancer’” (Stoltenberg 2013b). It is the gender binary itself that is at the root of relations of domination and oppression, and so for Stoltenberg acting from one’s sense of moral responsibility rather than a reformed gender identity is the key to ensuring effective allies. It would seem to require a great leap to attempt to embed the aim of ‘refusing masculinity’ into future training. However, this is a direction I wish to pursue.

Related to the radical idea of questioning masculinity is the social practice of homophobia or heterosexism. Connell (2005b) argues that it is broader than individual discrimination against homosexuals but part of a broader authoritarian structure that is linked to oppression of women. While I have included some sessions on challenging homophobia in the training, this section was removed from the Handbook by request of the publishers, the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre without explanation. The link to misogyny is seen to the extent that homophobia is enacted as a hatred of feminised men (Reeser 2010). Pharr (1988) makes the point stronger arguing that the patriarchal, heterosexual institution of marriage is essential to maintaining women dependent and oppressed by men. It would be important to consider pushing the boundaries of the training and Handbook in future iterations by more directly questioning the idea of masculinity and heterosexuality.
As a ‘male advocate’ myself, I will maintain Stoltenberg’s (2013a) baseline principle that precludes any man of conscience—whether self-identified as pro-feminist or not— to “presume to speak in women’s place or ‘decide what feminism should be about’” and will continue to be guided by concerns and wishes of the women leaders of the Pacific.


**Exegesis Conclusion**

The first objective of the exegesis has been to explore the theoretical and political underpinnings of the guiding principles for training men as advocates for women’s human rights as contained within the training Handbook commissioned by the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre. This initially involved providing a brief outline of the development of a focus on engaging men in gender equality within the international development field. The exegesis and Handbook do not avoid the controversy and ambivalence surrounding the new masculinities agenda in the international development field (Cornwall, Edström and Greig 2011). It remains important to recognize that any developments towards gender justice will be primarily led by women with work involving men being a subsidiary, although significant, aspect.

The second and third objectives entailed analysing the Handbook and a selection of similar documents for the range of representations of the key concepts; masculinity, violence, power and ‘engaging men’. It appeared that many of the documents, and to some extent the Handbook, did not use critical social and gender theory in the articulation of these concepts. Rather, there was a tendency for functionalist, and individualist explanations to be employed, in some cases influenced by a dominant public health-framing in the field. The fourth objective was to offer an alternate critical rendering of each of the key concepts, as outlined in the latter part of each chapter. These then should provide the basis for further development of training guides for men to become gender equality advocates.

As a result of this examination of the field, the final exegesis objective has been to conclude this dissertation with the development of an approach to a critical, pro-feminist pedagogy for men. This runs counter to a more common view that training men should emphasise supportive
pedagogical methods where men’s egos are the primary focus. I argue instead for the need to recognize men’s continuing position of privilege vis-à-vis women and the necessity, therefore, for a more challenging approach. My many years’ experience has led me to conclude that if the training is of sufficient duration, then any initial resistance men may have tends to dissolve as they recognize the validity of the claims of gender inequality and acknowledge their own complicity. The fact that the participants are explicitly being trained to advocate for women’s rights also ameliorates the potential defensiveness. The insights gained from this dissertation will now inform the development of any future training programs I devise.
Appendix: List of Gender Training Programs Reviewed

(Full bibliographic details for each program is contained in reference list)

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<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ataya, O., 2010. Women and Men Hand in Hand Against Violence: Strategies and approaches of working with men and boys for ending violence against women. Oxfam International.</td>
<td>Arab Countries</td>
<td>“Ending violence against women (VAW) requires the collaboration of all community members. There is a growing awareness that men, in partnership with women, can play a significant role in ending violence against women. This training resource was developed for use in Arab countries in order to teach the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to promote gender equality and to prevent violence against women through the effective engagement of men. It explores the concepts surrounding VAW, what factors are involved, and the consequences. It presents case studies, tips, and lessons learned, drawn from different experiences and from programmes that work with men as partners in VAW prevention. The primary audience for this document will be community workers and practitioners working in the Middle East and Northern Africa Region who are involved in working to prevent violence against women, particularly through the engagement of men.” <a href="http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/women-and-men-hand-in-hand-against-violence-strategies-and-approaches-of-working-118174">http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/women-and-men-hand-in-hand-against-violence-strategies-and-approaches-of-working-118174</a></td>
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<td>Be The Hero. 2009 Victorian Women’s Trust</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>“Be the Hero! is a web-based violence prevention program. It demonstrates that a decent person rejects violence against women in all its forms, and that young men can choose to live a life free of violence. The website content has been designed for use by small groups of young men aged around 15 years, led by a male teacher. Considerable time has been spent developing the content and design of this website. It has been trialled with nine groups of year 10 students in Victorian schools.” (Victorian Womens Trust 2009)</td>
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<td>Belbase, L. and T. P. Heiberg, Gemma 2010</td>
<td>South and Central Asia</td>
<td>“The fact that not all boys are socialised to be violent and the fact that not all definitions of being men imply violence gives hope for changing the world we live in. Save the Children has therefore developed, along with its history of major publications in the past documenting good practices and challenges of working with boys and men as partners for change, this step-by-step guide to provide practical steps explaining how to go about engaging boys and men as partners to stop the violence against boys and girls, women and other men.” (Belbase and Heiberg 2010: 5)</td>
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<td>Berkowitz, A., 2004. Working with men to</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>This document by provides “an overview of best practices in prevention, the content and format of men’s prevention programs, and an overview of different program philosophies or pedagogies.” (Berkowitz 2004)</td>
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<td>prevent violence against women: An overview</td>
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<td>(part two). (Review not a manual)</td>
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<td>Bhandari - 2008 - Men’s action for stopping</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>“Men’s Action for Stopping Violence Against Women or MASVAW is a network of over 175 individuals and 100 organisations, a member based campaign in the Indian State of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. These men have decided to bring about a change within themselves and in other men to raise their voice against traditional patriarchal values and challenge stereotypical notions of what it means to be a man” <a href="http://masvaw.blogspot.com.au/p/about-us.html">http://masvaw.blogspot.com.au/p/about-us.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>violence against women. (a report on training</td>
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<td>not a manual)</td>
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<td>Centerwall, E., Laack, S., 2008. Young Men as Equal Partners.</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>“Created within the YMEP-project, a collaboration between Kenyan, Tanzanian, Ugandan, Zambian and Swedish Member Associations to IPPF, the International Planned Parenthood Federation. … this is a guidebook with the aim of providing knowledge, values and understanding of issues on sexuality education to boys and young men.” (Centerwall and Laack 2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Created in God’s Image: From Hegemony to Partnership. 2010 Edited by Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth and Philip Vinod Peacock</td>
<td>Africa.</td>
<td>“Created in God’s Image: From Hegemony to Partnership is based on the understanding that gender includes both men and women and any attempt to transform gender relations must be inclusive of both. It takes into consideration the fact that patriarchy also stereotypes and marginalizes men, and is a barrier that prevents men from living life in fullness. Men are placed at the top on the pyramid of human relationships and are systematically encouraged to view power as dominating and controlling. Men, like women, have been socialized with deeply-held beliefs and values which form the basis of how gender is constructed. They also carry the weight of societal expectations of being masculine, which in many cases requires that they show bravery, virility, aggressiveness, dominance, competitiveness, insensitivity and emotional repression. Men are generally socialized into not dealing with their sense of self, especially their emotions, fears, and vulnerabilities. Often, they exercise violence against women so as to maintain their gender privileges of male authority” <a href="http://www.gelfer.net/2010/11/25/created-in-gods-image-from-hegemony-to-partnership/">http://www.gelfer.net/2010/11/25/created-in-gods-image-from-hegemony-to-partnership/</a></td>
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Namibia

“This book is a supplement to Engaging Boys and Men in Gender Transformation: The Group Education Manual. It was created to:

- Promote gender transformation through biblical and spiritual discussion
- Stimulate conversation and deeper reflection on topics from the Men As Partners® (MAP) Group Education Manual with Christian audiences
- Support facilitators in dealing with difficult questions, of a religious or spiritual nature, from training participants
- Give facilitators religious and spiritual justifications for gender equity and equality, as well as deepen training participants’ understanding of the topics covered” (EngenderHealth and PPASA 2001)


India

“Each module has several session outlines with the learning objectives spelt out as well as notes for the facilitator, handouts and references for further reading for participants, exercises, case studies. Since the contents of this training are directed towards changing mindsets and challenging existing beliefs and attitudes, it has also attempted to list some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and possible responses by facilitators at the end of each session. Facilitators’ Notes include the theoretical issues that may need to be highlighted as well as specific experiences and struggles that facilitators may need to share as role models and gender sensitive men.”

| Gender and Development for Cambodia 2010 Gender Training Manual | Cambodia | “In order to build the capacity of participating organisations to address gender issues adequately so that human rights and in particular the right to lead a life free of violence can be achieved equally for women and men, two training workshops will be held. The first training focuses on gender issues concerning human rights achievement and major tools to analyse and identify gender issues which contribute to the high prevalence of gender based violence in Cambodia. This will be followed by a field exercise where participants practice these tools. The second training then concentrates on the principles and practical implications of the Gender and Development Approach (GAD). Based on the findings from the field exercise and lessons learnt from the GAD approach participants will then identify concrete activities to address gender based violence more effectively and to promote the achievement of human rights equally for women and men” http://www.engagingmen.net/resource/gender-training-manual-rights-based-approaches-address-gender-based-violence-cambodia-first |

| South Africa | “Respect 4 U is an intimate partner violence (IPV) prevention programme aimed at young adolescents. The 17-lesson programme was originally designed for implementation in Grade 8 Life Orientation classes.

The intervention is informed by a theoretical model that is derived from existing research addressing the associations between IPV and ideologies of male superiority, a culture of violence, and high levels of alcohol and drug use. The goals of the intervention are to increase social support for girls, change norms that support boys’ right to control girls and insist on sex, increase understanding of substance use in the context of relationships, and improve communication to prevent the use of violence in relationships.

The process of intervention development has included integrating existing relevant evidence-based programmes, team workshops, and consultations with experts in the field and with key informant adolescents.” |

www.mrc.ac.za/gender/respect4u.htm
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<th>Author(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Greig and Edstrom</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>“The Mobilising Men programme is developing and documenting answers to this question. Through exploring ways of engaging men as gender activists within the institutions to which they belong, Mobilising Men is working to better understand what it takes to confront sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings. Since early 2010, the Institute of Development Studies, with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), has partnered with civil society organisations in India, Kenya and Uganda to develop the programme. These partners at country level have identified, recruited, trained and supported teams of male activists to work with women in developing campaigns to challenge and change the policies and cultures of specific institutional settings that enable and enact violence against women. Mobilising Men in Practice brings together stories and lessons from this work, as well as some of the tools used by the Mobilising Men partners in India, Kenya and Uganda. It is intended to inspire and guide others who are committed to engaging more men in efforts to address sexual and gender-based violence within the institutions in which we live our lives.” (Greig and Edstrom 2012)</td>
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<td>Instituto Promundo, 2004. From Violence to Peaceful Coexistence.</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>“This is a set of methodologies to motivate young men to critically reflect about rigid norms related to manhood and how they influence their lives in different spheres: health, personal relations, sexual and reproductive health, and fatherhood. This toolkit provides program planners, health providers, peer educators, and others who work with young people with innovative resources to facilitate discussions and encourage critical reflections about manhood.” <a href="http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/232-what-are-the-practical-steps-for-planning-and-evaluation-that-is-right-for-programme-and-organization.html">http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/232-what-are-the-practical-steps-for-planning-and-evaluation-that-is-right-for-programme-and-organization.html</a></td>
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<td><strong>Instituto Promundo 2002 Project H Manual</strong></td>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>“This manual is a translation of the Project H series from the Spanish and Portuguese original versions. The activities included here were designed for and tested in the Latin American (and in one site in the Caribbean) context. In addition, background information and research cited is mostly from Latin America. We have left the examples and activities as they were developed – to be culturally relevant for Latin America. Nonetheless, the co-authors believe that many of the activities and the themes included here have relevance beyond the Latin American and Caribbean region. The co-authors are also involved in several initiatives to adapt portions of this material for use in other regions.” (Instituto Promundo 2002)</td>
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<td><strong>Men As Partners: A Program For Supplementing the Training of Life Skill Educators (2nd Edition)</strong></td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>“EngenderHealth’s Men As Partners (MAP) program is a global initiative designed to work with men on reproductive health issues within a gender framework. This manual is designed to be used by PPASA MAP educators to lead workshops with groups of men and mixed-gender groups. The manual is intended for MAP master trainers: skilled individuals who would use it to train and supervise selected life skills educators to implement MAP activities with the public.” <a href="http://www.engagingmen.net/resource/men-partners-program-supplementing-training-life-skill-educators-2nd-edition">http://www.engagingmen.net/resource/men-partners-program-supplementing-training-life-skill-educators-2nd-edition</a></td>
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<td><strong>Men’s Resources International, 2009. Engaging Men in Ending Gender-Based Violence in Liberia. (Case Study Not a manual)</strong></td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>“In order to develop gender-based violence (GBV) programs that included prevention, as well as survivor services, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) saw a clear need and opportunity to engage men as active allies and partners. After reviewing male involvement programs in other contexts and the existing literature on male involvement, the IRC, through its GBV program in Liberia, and with support from Irish Aid, partnered with Men’s Resources International (MRI) to launch a pilot project called Male Involvement: Part of the Solution (MIP).” (International 2009)</td>
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<td>Miruka and African Women Development and Communication Network - 2003 – FEMNET training manual on gender based violence</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>“This manual is meant to be a contribution towards building the capacity and commitment of men to eradicate violence against women and girls and to develop the men’s movement for gender equality. The strength of the manual lies in its systematic linkage of gender-based violence issues with the overall movement for gender equality. It does this by providing comprehensive historical information and theoretical analysis of these issues. It also brings into play the expertise and experience FEMNET has developed over more than a decade in conducting gender training for and with different development actors spanning the governmental, United Nations, donor, civil society, political and private sectors.” (Miruka 2003)</td>
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<td>Ricardo and Veran - 2010 - Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>“Despite the increasing recognition of the important role that men and boys play in family planning and sexual and reproductive health, HIV/STI prevention, Gender-based Violence, maternal health and in childcare, they are still rarely engaged in health policies and programs. In many cases, this is due to doubts about how to most appropriately and effectively integrate them in health promotion as well as lingering scepticism regarding whether men and boys really can change their behaviour. This toolkit serves to articulate and reinforce the benefits of working with men and boys and provide practical strategies for doing so in ways that address the underlying gender norms which most often influence their health-related attitudes and behaviours.” (Ricardo and Veran 2010: 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SANAM - 2011 - Understanding Masculinities Culture, Politics and Social Change</td>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>“South Asian Network to Address Masculinities (SANAM) aims to provide a platform for women, men and trans-people to work together in developing a culture of resistance to gender based violence. SANAM offers young leaders from institutional and non institutional settings an opportunity to enhance their conceptual understanding as well as build the required skills to effectively work on the issues of men and masculinities in South Asia region and beyond.” (Srivastava and Roy 2011)</td>
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<td>Sitawa - 2011 - Dare to Speak Assist Survivors of Sexual and Gender Violence</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>“The aim of this guide is to help members of the general public to understand their roles and responsibilities in prevention and response to Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV). It is also designed to help the user gain knowledge required at all levels &amp; in all sectors, to be able to effectively respond to cases of SGBV.” (Sitawa and Now 2007: 7)</td>
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<td>Welbourn - 2010 - Stepping Stones</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>“Designed to help trainers and community groups organise workshops to help women and men explore social, sexual and psychological needs, this is a manual with exercises involving role play and other participative methods of group learning. Stepping Stones workshops provide opportunities for participants to examine their values and attitudes towards gender and relationships, to build on their knowledge on aspects of sexuality, HIV and STIs and to develop skills to help them communicate with others and ensure that other people know exactly what they want. The workshops are based on participatory learning approaches as we all know that we learn better when we have our knowledge affirmed and are able to discuss and decide things for ourselves, rather than just receiving lectures. They are designed for use with men and women.” <a href="http://www.spc.int/hiv/images/what%20is%20stepping%20stones.doc">www.spc.int/hiv/images/what%20is%20stepping%20stones.doc</a></td>
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<td>Women Peacemakers Program - 2010 - Overcoming Violence Exploring Masculinities. (report on training, not a training manual)</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>“This is the report of the first block of the 2009–2010 pilot Training of Trainers (ToT) cycle, entitled ‘Overcoming Violence: Exploring Masculinities, Violence, and Peacebuilding’. Organized by the Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), that first training block, which took place in early December 2009, brought together an international group of male peace activists.” (de Vries 2010)</td>
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