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Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence (SVDV) Newsletter

November 2017

Welcome to De Montfort University's Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence (SVDV) Research Network second Newsletter of 2017

It has once again been a busy time for our members and this newsletter seeks to outline just some of the exciting collaborative research activities that have taken place during 2017. It is particularly important as we welcome a new co-convenor to the Network, Ms Di Turgoose. Di has brought huge enthusiasm and energy to the network since she accepted the position this year and the Network is delighted to have her. Di is available to support members of the network in generating relationships with our external partners and other research activities.

Having had a third successful conference in 2016, plans are afoot to host another event in the latter part of 2018. The final details of the theme are still under discussion however, it will certainly focus on issues associated with children and young people in the context of sexual violence and domestic violence. So far we are working on the plans for this next conference with our colleagues from Leicester's Civil and Criminal Justice Working Group (CCJWG), but would welcome any expressions of interest from organisations keen to raise awareness in this field to sponsor some or part of the conference.

We have also had some excellent student contributions to the network this year, with students set to lead on some creative avenues. For example, Paris Connolly is leading the SVDV's network's reading group launch in January, which you can read more about below. If you have students that would be interested in becoming involved with the network and its activities please get in touch with us.

I hope that you enjoy reading about the many activities that the SVDV network and its members have been involved in over the year.

If you would like to contact the network, either to join as a member, connect us with interested students or external partners or to express an interest to sponsor our forthcoming conference - to name but a few, please contact Vanessa Bettinson via email (vbettinson@dmu.ac.uk).

Thank you!



Vanessa Bettinson

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Research Project: Adolescent to Parent Violence (APV)

An interesting project being carried out under the auspices of the SVDV Network is the APV research undertaken by Vanessa Bettinson and Christina Quinlan.

The research is grant funded by Leicester City Council and The Jenkins Centre. The focus of the study is on awareness raising around the issue of APV, adolescent to parent violence. The project won a DMUengage award, and with the funding the researchers commissioned a screen play from Written Foundations, a theatre group founded and run by two DMU graduates. They then developed the screen play into a short film, which was made in a film studio in the Vijay Patel Building on DMU campus. The film will be used to help start a conversation around the issue of APV. The researchers anticipate launching the film in early 2018, and they plan to use to launch to further develop the SVDV Network and the capacity of the Network to support practitioners working in the field with young people and families trying to deal with the issue. The researchers hope that practitioners will talk about their experiences with APV and will be able to share some of their concerns in relation to the issue, with a view to developing ideas that will help going forward. The SVDV Network is keen to support this work.



Christina Quinlan

If you are interested in the research and the launch please contact Dr. Christina Quinlan at DMU at this email address Christina.quinlan@dmu.ac.uk



Omar Madhloom

Omar Madhloom

Omar Madhloom joined DMU Law School in 2007, having previously worked as a prosecutor with the Crown Prosecution Service. Omar's area of research focuses on protecting autonomy such as non-consensual sexual offences. In September 2017, Omar left DMU to take up a Teaching Fellow at the University of Bristol and the SVDV Research Network wishes him well on his new adventure. In March 2018, he will be convening a stream at the Socio-Legal Studies Association Annual Conference, the University of Bristol, called Sexual Relationships: Deception, Consent and Protecting Autonomy and invites members to consider submitting an abstract by the closing date of 8 January 2018. To learn more about the SLSA's activities go to their website –

<https://www.slsa.ac.uk/>

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Seminar: SVDV Research Network Seminar on Coercion, Trauma and Women in the Criminal Justice System

In May, the SVDV Network welcomed external guest speakers from academia and practice to discuss the theme of Coercion, Trauma and Women in the Criminal Justice System. Dr Charlotte Barlow from the University of Lancaster and author of: *Coercion and Women Co-offenders: A Gendered Pathway into Crime*. (2016) Policy Press presented a paper on her current work, entitled, 'I felt trapped and I couldn't see another option: Women co-offenders' pathways into crime and experiences of coercion.' The paper explored the findings of a feminist methodological study, which involved in-depth interviews with women who have co-offended with a partner. Pathways such as how their relationship with their partner/co-offender influenced their route into crime or their 'choice' to offend and the extent to which the concept of coercion encapsulates the women's reasons for offending was considered. Dr Barlow concluded by emphasising the importance of acknowledging women's choices in social context and within the nature of their co-offending relationship.

Sara Swire, CEO of the charity New Dawn New Day discussed the work the charity does with women offenders, trauma and community based interventions through the "Just Women" project, which has been reducing women's offending in Leicester and Leicestershire since 2010. She spoke about addressing women's health needs through trauma-informed systems of care and their innovative partnership with Leicestershire Police to provide a Women Specific Conditional Caution aimed at diverting women from the criminal justice system at an early stage of their offending. The event was attended by academics from across faculties and mental health practitioners. The network is grateful for the time given by the speakers and delegates in supporting this event.



Charlotte Barlow, Sara Squire

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Tackling Interpersonal Violence: A Partnership Approach in an Age of Austerity

Di Turgoose presented a paper designed to explore the impacts for partnership working in the domestic/sexual violence sectors of austerity at this event following an invitation from Professor Donovan, University of Sunderland. In particular, Di discussed her expertise on commissioning to explore how practitioners and fundraisers might navigate better the contradictory messages about new funding regimes that seem to promote both competition and collaboration. This invitation follows Di's chapter in Hilder and Bettinson 'Interdisciplinary perspectives on domestic violence: Protection, prevention and intervention' Palgrave 2016 entitled "Victim Support Services & the world of Commissioning." The title of Di's paper at this international seminar was "Three steps backwards, The next step forward. Commissioning and the survival of DVA specialist victim support services. Orientating the quagmire!" In the afternoon Di joined the Q&A session as a panel member.



DMU presentations at 2nd European Conference on Domestic Violence held in Porto Portugal Sept 6-9th 2017

Having read SVDV's previous newsletter, Di Turgoose was inspired to submit abstracts to the 2nd European Conference on Domestic Violence. Both her submissions were successful and Di attended this Conference in Portugal presenting two papers. The first centred on Domestic Abuse & Intervention systems in England & Wales and was titled "Is a Change That Lasts a Chance for Change." The paper pursued a gendered, feminist perspective calling for a paradigm shift from risk led to needs led interventions,



for example, through the Change That Lasts model and was rooted in practice and activism. Di received an unsolicited written expression of commendation from a national NGO charity working with victims of DVA in relation to her paper, indicating how well the paper was received. Offers of mentoring and/or co-authoring support to turn this into a journal article for submission to a relevant journal are warmly welcome.

Please contact di.turgoose@dmu.ac.uk

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Hear no misogyny, speak no sexism, see no harassment. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and UK University Campus Culture: Time for change?"

In this paper Di examined how GBV in UK Universities is currently framed before exploring the inter-relationship between HEIs' responses to GBV, civic values and social justice. She particularly focused on how universities might respond to increased expectations that they improve preventative measures, responses to GBV and how prevention interventions might shift campus cultures. Di's paper was well received and a journal has already been identified for future publication for this paper.

When Misconduct in Public Office is Really a Sexual Offence, Sjölin and Edwards, *The Journal of Criminal Law*, Vol 81, Issue 4, pp. 292 – 302

Helen Edwards, (on right) who is a member of DMU's SVDV Research Network, has jointly authored this contribution on the offence of Misconduct in Public Office (MiPO) which focuses on the abuse of power to gain sexual advantage.

cont.

The article outlines the basis for the authors' proposal to the Law Commission for reform of the common law offence of MiPO. Currently at the stage of Policy Development, the Commission aims to publish its report later this year.

Sexual misconduct prosecuted as MiPO falls outside the usual regime for prosecuting and sentencing sexual offences, both obscuring the actual conduct and avoiding sexual offence specific consequences. To examine what kind of sexual offending MiPO has been covering, we analysed newspaper reports and appellate decisions since 2002. This enabled us to identify the conduct MiPO was being used to cover at charge, plea and conviction (or acquittal) stages. We found a significant amount of sexual misconduct being prosecuted as MiPO. We then analysed the sexual conduct to determine the "wrongs" involved, identifying particular categories. This enabled us to propose a new sexual offence (based on the Sexual Offences Act 2003 offences that are not founded on lack of consent), which marks the sexual wrong and enables a focus on the defendant's abuse of position rather than the victim's vulnerability.



Helen Edwards

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De Montfort University's Mandala Project

DMU recognises that Sexual and domestic violence is an issue that universities need to become increasingly responsive to. Following the Universities UK Report: Changing the Culture: A Report of the Universities UK Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students (2016) <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/changing-the-culture-final-report.aspx> and prior to UUK guidelines, DMU developed The Mandala project. This project shows DMU's commitment to respond to and prevent sexual violence on campus.

Campaign: 'Is it OK?'

Rather than a 'hectoring' approach, the Mandala Project's strategy in terms of prevention has been to focus positively on the promotion of healthy relationships and to engage students in a critical debate around this issue. A poster campaign based around the question 'Is it OK?...' was launched during our Welcome Weekend 2017. Students were asked 'Is it OK for my boyfriend / girlfriend to look through my phone'. They then voted 'yes, no or maybe' (as shown in the photo above) and chatted to staff about their personal rationale. This strategy was an engaging way for students to consider issues such as coercive control within relationships, online privacy and for staff to provide information about support if required. Plans to develop further 'is it OK?' questions linked to a website and our twitter @dmuMandala are currently in development.



Training and Support for staff: First Responders

24 Fully trained First Responders are currently able to meet with students who report sexual or domestic violence to The Mandala Project <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-students/the-student-gateway/academic-support-office/the-mandala-project/the-mandala-project-well-listen.-we-can-help.aspx>

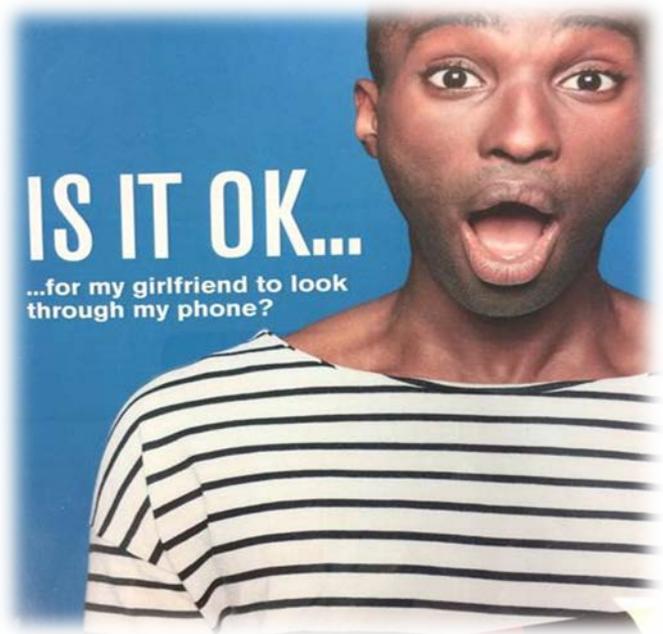
The First Responder role is to listen non-judgementally and to signpost students to sources of support within and outside of the university. At the time of writing the Mandala Project has supported 78 male and female students who have experienced a variety of issues linked to SVDV both recent and historic.

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Collaboration: DMU Welfare Services and the Student Union (DSU)

A key aspect of The Mandala Project is co-production. Since inception the project has been the result of a collaborative relationship between DMU Welfare Services and the Student Union (DSU). We are proud of our diverse cohort of students and inclusion is a core value of DMU as reflected in our DMU Freedom charter. An example of Mandala co-production is the training currently under development for DMU Sport. 'Banter' and appropriate behaviour within sport is a national focus outlined both in Changing the Culture and #TakeaStand. At DMU our emphasis has been to facilitate the development and delivery of training programmes within the teams themselves. The 'train the trainer' approach is labour intensive and is in early stages of development but it is hoped that a sense of self-ownership and autonomy may encourage genuine cultural shifts over time. Similarly The DSU Mandala Student Champion role has recently been launched and will create a team of student activists who can ensure the student voice remains at the centre of the project. Champions will complete bystander training, create resources and facilitate events on campus. The idea of a student produced film is one of the ideas currently under discussion. Bespoke training will also be developed with and offered to students on the autistic spectrum and those with pre-existing mental health conditions over the coming months.



National agenda

A very positive outcome of SV and DV being part of a national agenda is that all Higher Education Institutions have acknowledged that sexual violence a critical issue and collaboration is growing throughout the sector. A Jiscmail CHANGECULTURE@JISCMail.AC.UK has been established and local partnerships are flourishing with several conferences planned during the 17/18 academic year. As has been demonstrated by the recent #metoo campaign awareness and demands on SV and DV support services inside and outside of HE are growing. It is heartening to see that UK universities are wholeheartedly championing these issues and that we are listening to students.

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Exploring approaches to service user involvement in sexual violence and domestic violence services

Research commissioned by Leicester City Council
Project team: Prof Julie Fish, Dr Anamaria Szabo, Di Turgoose.

Social Work and Community and Criminal Justice, Applied Social Sciences, De Montfort University, Leicester.

This research is a continuation of the partnership work that De Montfort University (DMU) and Leicester City Council (LCC) have been engaged in since 2015 in the field of service user involvement (SUI) in sexual violence and domestic violence (SVDV) services. The current research team builds on the work of former DMU academic, Sarah Hilder, who explored the theoretical perspectives underpinning service user involvement and considered different models and meanings of SUI. LCC also undertook extensive work with service providers to evidence how SUI is reflected in their work, and this has been explored by the current research team. Some of this work could be described as user satisfaction surveys or evaluation feedback. To expand on this work, the research team proposed to reflectively explore what is currently being done with respect to SUI at service level and map this to a ladder of involvement underpinned by an empowerment model (Arnstein, 1969; Hilder, 2016). This would develop the base of shared knowledge and skills about the nature and levels of SUI across different SVDV services in Leicester City.

Activity: Launch of DMU's SVDV Research Network's Reading Group

The SVDV research network is very excited to announce the launch of its monthly reading groups! In recent times the network has drawn members from DMU's post graduate research student community. They are a welcome addition to the network with enthusiasm and ideas to increase student involvement in the activities of the network. Paris Connolly has begun the co-ordination of this reading group and is keen for members of the SVDV research network (academic or practitioner) and interested PhD students to take part in a monthly reading group. If you would like to read a range of research papers and learn about new topics that you wouldn't normally focus on come and join us for a discussion on conceptual, methodological and personal views around SVDV research. Attendance at all sessions is not required.

The first session will be held on January 10th 2018 at 12pm in Edith Murphy room 1.01 and we will run on the first Wednesday of every month (apart from April which will be on 25th). The title of the first paper will be emailed to members in December:

For the latest paper or any more information please contact;

Paris Connolly (parisconnolly01@gmail.com)
Vanessa Bettinson (vbettinson@dmu.ac.uk).



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This pilot project aims at aligning metrics for SUI to enable commissioners and partner organisations to have a sense of the extent to which service providers involve service users in the delivery of sexual violence and domestic violence (SVDV) services across LCC. Service user involvement refers to the extent to which service users make decisions about the ways services (in which they are current or previous users) are designed and delivered. In those services where high levels of SUI are present, services will be designed ‘by’ and ‘with’ service users, rather than ‘for’, ‘about’, ‘to’ or ‘without’ them (Charlton, 2000). We identified our research question as: *How can SVDV service providers enable users to be involved in the delivery of their services?* In particular, the project research team aimed to explore what SUI currently looks like in service provision alongside exploring the different views that service users might have on how SUI could look like for them.

This is an exploratory study which sought to ascertain the appropriate methods and approaches to inform understanding about service users’ own perspectives on their levels of involvement in SVDV services. For this pilot study, the research team chose to collect mainly qualitative data which is most suited to elicit the insights and lived experiences of people whose safety is at risk, who may be marginalised economically or socially or may be stigmatised in their use of SVDV services. Partly because of these and other factors, largely beyond our control, the sample was relatively small.

After discussions with the community safety team at LCC, the project research team proposed to gather data via workshops with services users from different SVDV services. The three groups included in the sample are different enough to cover a wide spectrum of services, but these should not be seen as being representative for the SVDV services that are currently provided across the city of Leicester. The service user workshops were organised with the following groups: users from the Sexual and Domestic Violence Service User Scrutiny and Reference Group at LCC; users of support services (i.e. women using specialist refuges) from Women’s Aid Leicestershire Limited; and users of ‘perpetrator’ services, (i.e. male perpetrators who have engaged in interpersonal violence with their female partners victims) from The Jenkins Centre.

The planning for the research project commenced in October 2016, with the project launched at the end of March 2017 and an end date of November 2017.



Julie Fish



Anamaria Szarbo



Di Turgoose

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Publication



Bishop, C and Bettinson, V. 'Evidencing domestic violence, including behaviour that falls under the new offence of 'controlling or coercive behaviour'' *The International Journal of Evidence & Proof* (2017) 1-27 available on DORA <http://hdl.handle.net/2086/14613>.

The substantive criminal law is no longer able to treat domestic violence/abuse as single, isolated incidents following the introduction of s. 76 Serious Crime Act 2015. S. 76 makes it a criminal offence where a person uses behaviour that amounts to coercion or control of an intimate partner or family member. Previously Vanessa Bettinson and Dr Charlotte Bishop, the University of Exeter, have written about the gaps in the criminal law of England and Wales and analysed the potential application of this relatively new offence in 'Is the creation of a discrete offence of coercive control necessary to combat domestic violence?' *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 66(2): 179-197. Vanessa, in 'Criminalising coercive control in domestic violence cases: Should Scotland follow the path of England and Wales?' *Criminal Law Review* (2016) 3, has also compared the criminal justice approach to this issue in Scotland with England and Wales, a timely exercise as Scotland consults on its own Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Bill (<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/103883.aspx>).

Teaming up again with Dr Bishop, the authors have now focused on the complex and practical concerns of how to evidence all forms of domestic violence/abuse in a criminal court in their latest journal article. The authors note that this offence for the first time implicitly recognises psychological and emotional harm, inherent in many cases of domestic violence/abuse, and the need to consider the controlling or coercive nature of this behaviour in the context of the gendered power dynamics of the relationship in question. As a result this offence raises unique evidential difficulties. The article also advocates that the courts need to acknowledge the ongoing trauma often experienced by victims, and the ways in which this may hinder their ability to safely and effectively participate in the criminal justice process and recommends creative prosecution methods which would allow these types of cases to be prosecuted without being solely reliant upon the victim's oral testimony in court.

Contemporary Issues in Law a Special Issue on Coercive Control

Following the success of the DMU's SVDV Research Network conference, part sponsored by the Police and Crime Commissioner of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in November 2016 (reported in our previous Newsletter) a number of presenters focused on important legal aspects on the conference's theme 'Coercive control: In the commission of sexual violence and domestic violence.' In recognition of this Vanessa Bettinson edited a special issue on Coercive Control for the journal, *Contemporary Issues in Law*, with contributors exploring the theme in the context of national and international law. Omar Madhloom, a member of the DMU's network's contribution is an article entitled, 'Deceptive Conduct: Recognising a Further Typology of Abuse Under Section 76', where he explores the manner in which lying and deceiving can be used as means of controlling and coercing victims.

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He outlines using a moral framework underlined by Kantian ethics how lying and deception can have a serious effect upon a victim's autonomy by limiting their freedom to make choices according to standards she sets for herself. Such conduct allows the perpetrator to manipulate the victim to his advantage, by restricting her freedom of choice. He considers these ethical themes by reflecting on the case of *AJA & Ors v Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis* [2013] EWCA Civ 1342; [2014] 1 W.L.R. 285, which involved the practices of some undercover police officers, who used false identities with women, for the purpose of their investigations. The authorities had been aware of these methods and actively encouraged undercover officers to engage in short relationships. Madhloom argues that any future use of such policing practices would amount to a criminal offence under the Serious Crime Act 2015, s 76.

Other contributors are Dr Rachel Killean, Queen's University Belfast, 'Exposing Coercive Control in the Commission of Forced Marriage: A Cambodian Case Study' and Dr Diana Sankey, Liverpool John Moores University, 'From *Lubanga* to *Bemba*: Towards the Recognition of Sexual Violence and Gendered Harms at the International Criminal Court?'

Violence Against Women and Girls No More Project

Members of DMU's Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence Research Network teamed up in a successful bid to undertake the university provision of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland's Violence Against Women and Girls No More Project. The project received funding from the Home Office's Violence against women and girls service transformation fund and runs from October 2017 to March 2020. DMU's team is made up of members from two faculties Business and Law and Health and Life Sciences, demonstrating the strength of the Network's cross-faculty collaborative ethos. The team includes: Vanessa Bettinson (PI), Chris Alcott, Tracey Willets, Tina Billington-Hughes, Kevin Bampton, Di Turgoose and Jean Hines.

Further Meetings

Wednesday 31st January | 1-4pm
(inc a 1 hour presentation)

Wednesday 7 March | 2.30-4

Wednesday 25 April | 1-4pm