

Chapter 6

Predicting and Managing Risk in Men Who Are Domestically Violent

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Introduction

Predicting and managing risk in men who are domestically violent is difficult, if not challenging, to any of us working in the field. With different types of offending behaviour, common sense approaches in managing situations of high risk would focus on avoidance of situations that pose the greatest risk. The key criteria for increased risk are multiple, but suffice to say that access to potential victims is one key indicator. In situations of domestic violence access to victims is commonplace in that the couple are often cohabiting. Add to this the reality that maintaining a well functioning relationship for many of us is not without its challenges, and we have a situation where risk will be exacerbated.

In this chapter I will propose that risk is not constant, but variable in terms of both internal factors to the man being abusive and contextually in terms of the relationship dynamics and history of previous violence and abuse, and also, a product of external safety measures. One way to identify and manage risk with domestically violent offenders is to bring these themes together in such a way that the practitioner can use this information for developing interventions that can minimise the potential for further abusive behaviour.

A number of key questions in the field of risk assessment are therefore around the inter-relationship of factors that might indicate risk of repeated violence, severity of that violence if it were to occur, and frequency of any future violence (Strachan & Tallant, 1997). The other important issue is separating the immediate risk of violence and the risk of violence occurring at some point in the future. Strachan and Tallant (1997) in considering current issues of risk assessment across a number of practice areas, note the need for workers to become more aware of risk factors and improve the way these factors are incorporated into decision-making processes. They state (1997:15-16):

This is based on the belief that raising levels of awareness of the processes we go through when making decisions will enable a more accurate assessment to be made, thus enabling risk to be minimised and uncertainties reduced.

Little is known about the risk factors related to frequency of violence but there appears some indication that frequency and severity are correlated (Saunders, 1995). For example, women who experienced the most frequent

violence were also subjected to sustained threats (87%) and high rates of marital rape (87%) (Snyder & Fruchtman, 1981).

Given the levels of domestic violence that exist in New Zealand society, the need to do better in our assessment and management, becomes all the more important. This chapter therefore provides a way forward in managing these challenges. As I will note throughout this chapter we are at a very early stage in our assessment of domestically violent men. Considering the idea that there are a diversity of pathways for men who are abusive, provides one direction of possible solution to the vexing question of, "Will he do it again?"

Definitions of Risk, Dangerousness and Violent Behaviour

The field of risk assessment is littered with definitions and language, much of which has come from the insurance industry. However, there does not appear to be consistency as to how these terms are utilised within the literature (Kemshall, 1997, Schene, 1996). Risk itself has been defined as "a calculation under conditions of uncertainty as to whether a loss, a damage, or harm will occur" (Kemshall, 1997:234). Risk is understood in the criminal justice area (which is the closest area of study to that of domestic violence) as the potential negative outcome of a potential behaviour. Risk relates to the probability or likelihood of harm occurring, not the harm itself. Harm instead relates to the impact or consequences of the negative outcome feared. In the case of men's violence towards their female partners harm would be defined as the outcome of any act of violence. Danger, another term that is used within the literature describes the actual or potential exposure to harm and relates to the propensity of men to harm their partners through further violence (Brearley, 1982:26-27).

The terms 'dangerousness' and 'risk' have been used interchangeably within the field of risk assessment, which is problematic as this leads to a lack of clarity about what is being assessed and what is being predicted (Monahan, 1981). For example, a man who has a history of violence towards his female partner may be defined as at risk across a number of factors (family of origin abuse, impulsivity, access to weapons), but may not act the factors out and be dangerous. Therefore the assessment of dangerousness and the probability that it will occur, that is, risk, are assessments of two different things; the first, the type of behaviour to be defined, the second the likelihood of the behaviour occurring (Schene, 1996).

"Dangerousness" refers to "risk of harmful behaviour to others" (Monahan & Steadman, 1994:1) but there is a lack of clarity as to whether this is viewed as a personality trait constant over time (e.g. Monahan, 1981) or as a characteristic of a behaviour (Kemshall, 1997). Early definitions (see e.g.

Scott, 1977, in Kemshall, 1997) stressed it as the former, and while the issue is far from resolved, greater attention is now being given to the alternative focus such as harm reduction or harm prevention. This alternative focus allows the possibility of understanding risk more from the perspective of the capacity to harm under certain conditions (Kemshall, 1997). A significant amount of work in the relapse prevention area identifies differing levels of risk related to a combination of precursors, thinking processes, high risk situations, and issues of immediate needs being met.

Monahan (1981:25) argues that it is best to avoid terms that are vague and that the term 'dangerousness' confuses "issues regarding what one is predicting with the probability one is assigning to its prediction". He worries about the labelling process and how this can then be used to define the person in terms of personality rather than behaviour. For example, labelling a person a 'dangerous offender' does not indicate when, where, and how this person will be more or less at risk of violence at some time in the future.

Monahan & Steadman (1994) have argued that if the concept of dangerousness is to have utility in risk assessment it needs to be broken down into three inter-related aspects; risk factors, likelihood of harm and risk level. In order to give a reliable prediction of future dangerousness the complex array of variables related to these issues needs close scrutiny. Risk factors or predictor variables refer to issues that workers identify as creating higher risk, for example, family of origin abuse, impulsivity, alcohol and drug use, access to weapons. What constitutes "risk factors" may vary from population to population. For example, in the field of men's violence towards their female partners, given the heterogeneity of the population, different risk factors may exist for sub-groups (see e.g., Holtzworth & Stuart, 1994).

'Harm', rather than being viewed as a dichotomous variable, is better understood in terms of seriousness, that is, a graduation of behaviour from least to most serious (Monahan & Steadman, 1994). This raises an even more interesting debate on how we construct the notion of seriousness. Traditionally this has been developed on severity of impact of behaviour on others with serious physical violence (most visible harm) ranking highest with emotional and psychological violence ranking lower (Robertson & Busch, 1997). It should be noted that the Domestic Violence Act (1995) makes psychological abuse a ground for the granting of a protection order.

The level of risk is now generally argued as a continuous probability rather than a dichotomous variable (is there risk or no risk) (Monahan & Steadman, 1994). A number of writers (see e.g., Kemshall, 1997; Saunders, 1995; Williams, 1997) argue that assessment of risk needs to be ongoing as opposed to a one-off prediction, given that risk is mediated through a complex range of factors and rather than being a static phenomenon, fluctuates over time depending upon a number of variables (intra-psychic, interactional and situational).

Why Become Involved in Risk Assessment?

Workers who find themselves confronted by domestic violence operate within an area of practice where they are constantly working with violent behaviours that impact upon men themselves, a man's close and wider family/whānau, and the wider community. Ultimately workers are involved in assessing risk whether or not they want to. Researchers, theorists, and practitioners have moved towards locating violence within a broader framework and as Edleson, Eiskovitz and Guttman (1985:232) argue:

A definition and estimated incidence of women battering must take into account many complex elements that together weave a web of terror extending over a battered woman's everyday existence. Battering is not just overt physical and verbal behaviour of a man towards a woman. It is living with a constant sense of danger and expectation of violence. These together bring about terror that is slowly constructed and eventually fills the woman's environment.

The definition used in most surveys is that developed by Straus and Gelles (1986:476) who define violence as: "Any physical, sexual, or psychological behaviour carried out with the intention or perceived intention of causing ... pain or injury to another person." Building upon surveys carried out in the United States, New Zealand estimates of violence range from 21% to 39% of instances of victimisation carried out by family members (Liebrich, Paulin & Ransom, 1995). A Christchurch study (Fergusson, Horwood, Kershaw, & Frederick, 1986) found that 8.5% of mothers had been assaulted by their partners over a five year period whereas Mullen, Romans-Clarkson, Herbison, & Walton (1988) found in a Dunedin study that 16% of women reported being physically abused as adults. A study released by the Department of Justice (Liebrich et al., 1995) found in a self report study on 2000 men that 21% of men reported at least one incident of physical violence within the past year. Of more concern in the Liebrich et al. (1995) study was the reported rate of psychological abuse within the previous year that ran to 53% for a sub-sample of 200 men.

This rate of victimisation has been supported by the New Zealand National Survey of Crime Victimisation which found that 12% of women had experienced the use of force or violence which included being hit, pushed, grabbed, shoved or hit in a way that could hurt (Morris, 1996) at some stage during their lifetime. Serious threat including a weapon such as a knife or gun was noted by three percent of women surveyed. It should be noted that this is consistent with international findings on the rates of serious violence.

Sexual abuse in the form of forced sexual activity was admitted by four percent of women. When this data is analysed for current relationship, 25%

of women reported the use of physical force, use of a weapon or sexual abuse. The figure rises to 65% for previous relationships. Forty-four (44%) percent of women with current partners reported psychological abuse including insisting on knowing where the woman is, put downs, limiting contact with others, and other controlling behaviour (Morris, 1996).

Clearly what has emerged from the two surveys (Liebrich et al., 1995; Morris, 1996) is that rates of victimisation of women appear very high. Some concerns have been raised about the emphasis on minor acts of violence being included within the two surveys, but as Morris (1996:26) notes:

On the contrary, it seems probable from the differences between women's and men's reporting rates....that Liebrich et al.'s findings may underestimate men's violence towards female partners.

The surveys by Liebrich et al., (1995) and Morris (1996) had the advantage of being a random sample in gathering information about rates of victimisation. The Women's Safety Survey also identified that using formal State responses (e.g., Police, Department for Courts) to dealing with victimisation from men's violence occurred in around 11% of situations. This means that the reported nature of crime is dwarfed by the unrecorded private record of men who are violent to their female partners. Despite this, crime statistics (public record) for violent crime have shown a marked increase over the past fourteen years (see introduction to this book).

What Does This Mean for Risk Assessment?

If we are serious about the prevention and elimination of men's violence towards women, then it seems critical that we have to rely upon the risk markers in men who assault. A risk marker refers to any attribute or characteristic that is associated with an increase in the potential for an assault (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1990). Risk markers do not refer to the consequences of assault and are not necessarily causal. They can be identified as relating to either occurrence of violence, to levels of severity or both concurrently (Sedlak, 1988). As Hotaling and Sugarman (1990:389-399) state:

Much of the research work on wife assault has been inadequate for the purpose of identifying risk markers and, consequently unhelpful in the design of primary prevention measures. Two major problems are relevant here. First, the design of many studies does not allow for a calculation of risk. A second problem that affects risk markers centers on the potential relationships between markers.

What they are arguing is that much of the research can best be described as profile analysis and lacks the use of control groups to set out clearly the

significance of a factor or not. For example, if 70% of men who are violent in their adult lives towards their partner witnessed violence in their family of origin, this cannot be shown to be a risk marker without interviewing a control group of men who witnessed violence in family of origin but were not violent as adults.

The inter-relationship between various risk markers as in the case of Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) research goes some way to hypothesising the relationship between the various risk factors, but caution does need to be given to the weighting that each factor has. For example, if the issues of age, unemployment and less education are identified as significant risk markers, these cannot all be seen independently as indicative of risk. A clear overlap exists between each, for example if a person has less education and is young, then the chances of being unemployed are significantly increased. The likelihood of arrest for crime also increases.

Hotaling and Sugarman (1990) in reviewing the literature found that the risk markers that did emerge for men who were violent towards their female partners were: exposure to parental violence as a child, witnessing parental violence as a child, low occupational status, low assertiveness, low income, frequent alcohol use and low self esteem.

Of interest is the finding that the bulk of empirical research points to the clear connection between assault and low family income. It appears that assault by men on their female partners is more frequent and severe in poorer families, a contentious but clear finding (Hotaling and Sugarman, 1990). Several possible interpretations come to mind; firstly, the stress of living in poverty, and secondly, the lack of modelling a wider repertoire of conflict management skills; thirdly, that poverty and violence are manifestations of the some other underlying problem. We however need to be cautious at such a finding for two reasons: the hidden violence within middle and upper class families, and the class bias in the intervention of the State into the lives of citizens.

Saunders (1995) identifies a range of factors in terms of continuance of violence, severity and frequency. Table 1 outlines his findings of the probable risk factors drawn from recent writing. In terms of continuance, most violence towards women is part of an ongoing pattern of abusive behaviour and research indicates (Straus et al., in Saunders, 1995) that the average number of repeat episodes is around six times in the year following identification. This is relying upon police statistics and given the bias in this sampling, caution does need to be taken in accepting these figures. There is some debate around the low number of notifications. It may be that the group that the Police have most contact with are those men who are likely to have exhibited serious and frequent patterns of violence towards their female partners. It is clear from Sherman's work (1992) that 20% of couples account for up to fifty percent of police call out to incidents of violence.

Table 1 Risk Factors For Wife Assault

Risk Factor	Degree of Risk		Comments
	Any Assault	Severe Assault	
Violence in family of origin	a	a	More risk if man both saw abuse and was abused
Low education and income of man	a		More risk if woman higher status
Alcohol	a	a	Chronic abuse may be key factor
Behavioural deficits	b		Especially if combined with need for power
Personality disorders	b		Wide variety of patterns and disorders
Child abuse	b	c	Half of violent husbands severely abuse a child
Anger	b		Especially for marital situations
Stress	c		“Stressor” may be the result of violence
Depression	c		Low self-esteem may be better risk marker
Generalised aggression	a		Violent both inside and outside the home
Antisocial traits	c		Criminal lifestyle and no remorse for violence

a = prominent risk; b = probable risk; c = possible risk
 (from Saunders, D.G. (1995). Prediction of Wife Assault. In J.C. Campbell, (Ed.), *Assessing dangerousness; Violence by sexual offenders, batterers and child abusers*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 68-95).

In terms of continuation of violence Walker (1979), who was one of the first to describe a cycle of violence, found that women reported that, firstly, assaults became more public (from 17% to 40%), secondly, women became better able to predict assaults (from 13% to 48%), and thirdly, men became less remorseful (from 82% to 59%). Precipitating events from first assaults

according to Giles-Sims (1983) include: pregnancy, illness, a new job for the woman, moving house and divorce from another partner. Verbal aggression seems to be an indicator of future physical assault as this may signal personality traits of defensiveness and aggressiveness (O'Leary, et al., 1989). As noted by Saunders (1995) separation does not signal an end to violence. Harassment of ex-partners is a common occurrence (from one quarter to two thirds of cases) (see Gondolf, 1988; Morris, 1996). The dysphoric borderline group in Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's research could account for a significant percentage of these men. It is clear also that the majority of men continue to be abusive in subsequent relationships if intervention does not occur. These figures range from 57% (Pagelow, 1981) to 86% (Ganley & Harris, 1978).

The Relationship of Types of Personality and Risk

One of the interesting areas of research that builds upon the meta-analysis by Holzworth-Munro and Stuart (1993) has been laboratory work by Jacobson and Gottman (1998). They identified two major groups of domestically violent men which they termed pit bulls and cobras. Pit bulls would be associated with the dysphoric/borderline group that Holzworth-Munro and Stuart identified, whereas the cobra would more likely to have anti-social patterning.

Pit bulls are slow to become enraged but once they get aroused they are loath to let go. Pit bulls share a number of characteristics. These include:

- Pit bulls are emotionally dependant and what they fear most is abandonment. This fear of abandonment and the desperate need they have to not be abandoned produces jealous rages and attempts to deprive their partners of an independent life.
- Pit bulls become very aroused during arguments – they are prone to fits of rage over small things – they are monitoring their partners behaviour constantly and hypersensitive to any indication of a change in power balance within the relationship. They are capable of chronic and savage brutality towards their partners. For example, social situations are a high risk time, constant phone calls home, checking up on the whereabouts of the person etc.
- Women often describe these men as like having another child in the house.
- Pit bulls are often very demanding in their relationship – they demand their partners are more available while at the same time withdrawing or avoiding changes that their partners seek.
- The partners of pit bulls are angrier and less fearful in relationships – they just want the partner to grow up and stop controlling them.
- They tend to confine their violence to family members, especially their partners. Pit bulls are seldom violent outside of their intimate relationships.

The second group of men can be described as Cobras. Overall cobras can be best described as bullies that have a high propensity towards violence as a mechanism for sorting out any difference. These men share a number of characteristics:

- Cobras are most likely to have been engaged in anti-social behaviour since adolescence. They are therefore likely to be known to traditional criminal justice agencies.
- They tend to be hedonistic and impulsive. This includes high rates of alcohol and drug use. They want things their way and beat their partners to stop them interfering with what they want.
- The violence that Cobras use is more severe – for example the rate of serious violence which is defined by the use of a weapon is 38% in the Cobra population compared to 4% in the overall domestically abusive population.
- The most interesting thing about this group is that while outwardly they appear to become aroused, but unlike the pit bull, they become quiet on the inside. Their heart rate actually decreases as they become more verbally and physically abusive. They become quite still and focused before attacking their victims at 100 kilometers per hour – they strike swiftly.
- Cobras are more likely to exhibit psychopathic tendencies – by this I mean that they are incapable of forming truly intimate relationships. They view their partners as convenient steps to gratification: sex, social status, economic benefits, for example. They are most dangerous when their partners demand more intimacy from them.
- These men are the most difficult for women to leave because their partners live in constant fear. Cobras are quick to react and their responses are belligerent and contemptuous.
- Cobras are also engaging in violence outside the home – they are basic bullies who use violence, intimidation and threat to deal with any challenge to their sense of entitlement.
- In contrast to the Pit bulls, cobras are not particularly clingy, jealous. They often taunt their partners to leave or have affairs. They have the view that there is always another woman they can find. This is interesting, because at the outset of relationships they can be charming in the roguish sort of way.

There is one remaining group that can best be labeled family violence only. This group exhibit very different characteristics from the previous two groups. They have much less severe patterns of abusive behaviour and tend to be more reactive in their patterns of abuse. They tend to be more emotionally abusive and have a pattern of withdrawal in their relationships.

A general observation may be made that the difference between non-violent couples and violent is that the former have a 'Withdrawal Ritual', i.e. when escalation takes place they have an invisible line at which time the process stops or reverses itself before the abuse escalates to outright violence. In men who are domestically violent, this mechanism does not operate.

Implications for Risk Assessment and Management

If we accept that there are clear categories of men who are domestically abusive, then the implications for risk assessment and management are important. Each of the categories needs to be viewed as continuums with different men occupying different positions. They are not either/or categories.

Managing Pitbulls

It is my view that pit bulls are most dangerous post separation – because they have invested so heavily emotionally in the relationship, when separated they can become intensely focused upon their partner and children. They ruminate and are at high risk of breaching protection orders, stalking, harassment and ultimately murder/suicide post separation.

Clearly for the practitioner managing this group is demanding because of the challenges in being able to regulate emotions. These clients bounce around in terms of emotional states. Linehan (1993) suggests that between sessions the man should be offered telephone contact with the worker, including out of hours telephone contact. This can contradict the ethic of the man who has been abusive taking responsibility for his behaviour and being the one to initiate assistance at times of potential risk. It should be noted that the worker does need to set very clear limits as to the level and nature of the contact. In particular, telephone contact is not for the purpose of intervention but to reinforce and monitor levels of risk, particularly post separation.

A key task for the pit bulls is to be able to regulate mood. Linehan (1993) identifies four sets of skills that are required to manage anxiety and thereby regulate mood. These are:

1. Core mindfulness skills.
2. Interpersonal effectiveness skills.
3. Emotion modulation skills.
4. Distress tolerance skills.

'Core mindfulness skills' refer to the ability to recognise what is occurring within one's body and thinking, maintain oneself, and to stay with that experience in the present moment.

The 'interpersonal effectiveness skills' which are taught focus on effective ways of achieving one's objectives with other people: to ask for what one wants effectively, to say no and have it taken seriously, to maintain relationships and to maintain self-esteem in interactions with other people.

'Emotion modulation skills' are ways of changing distressing emotional states and 'distress tolerance skills' include techniques for putting up with these emotional states if they can not be changed for the time being.

Managing Cobras

Cobras on the other hand are more dangerous to live with due to the calculated nature of their violence and abuse. During post-separation they are less likely to stalk and harass. With a common experience of dismissed attachment in childhood, they are not emotionally reliant on others and will often move serially from one relationship to another. Cobras have an inappropriate desire to control others; they are able to effect interpersonal control with both detachment and a willingness to use aggression. With their strong need for independence, they resist being controlled by others (who are usually held in contempt). Even friendly, sociable behaviour from cobras is accompanied by a baseline position of detachment and indifference; they do not care what happens. Their patterns within relationships include use of uncaring aggression, affection that is controlling and detached, reckless self-indulgence, blaming others for their own behaviour, and an insistence on autonomy for themselves.

Cobras exhibit some or all of the following characteristics:

- Failure to conform to social norms with respect to lawful behaviours as indicated by repeatedly performing acts that are grounds for arrest.
- Deceitfulness, as indicated by repeated lying, use of aliases, or conning others for personal profit or pleasure, impulsivity or failure to plan ahead.
- Irritability and aggressiveness, as indicated by repeated physical fights or assaults, reckless disregard for safety of self or others.
- Consistent irresponsibility, as indicated by repeated failure to sustain consistent work behaviour or honour financial obligations.
- Lack of remorse, as indicated by being indifferent to or rationalizing having hurt, mistreated, or stolen from another.

Cobras come to the encounter emphasising a self-directed approach combined with a closed disclosure strategy, they exhibit a concern with promoting the status quo. Generally, they habitually and explicitly oppose feedback that is contradictory to their opening position, typically viewing it as personal attack. By adopting this oppositional style of managing the situation, they seek to prevent the admittance of alternative constructions of

their account, and may actively counter them. In this way, their experience of the session comes to be dominated by the feeling of being under siege, to which they may respond by further entrenching their position. From the playing out of such interaction, cobras are likely to emerge with their understanding of themselves and their behaviour unchanged. At the conclusion of this encounter, this disclosure orientation is likely to remain intact.

Cobras are likely to exhibit low motivation toward the prospect of change. Invitations to engage in a critical analysis of their account of their behaviour are viewed at best with disdain, and at worst hostility. The therapy process is presumed to be a controlling technology. Intervention is typically considered a form of manipulation and is consequently viewed with suspicion. An intervention can be perceived as having an adversarial tone, and a power struggle is anticipated. The worker is viewed as an adversary, or nemesis; often symbolised as a teacher, judge or brainwashing agent.

As clearly indicated, cobras are hard to engage. This is because they are experts on understanding power. Cobras respect power and will not relate well to a powerless service provider or worker. According to McWilliams (1994) the worker needs to demonstrate independent strength verging on indifference. If there is apparent helping professional investment in client change or improvement, cobras will take great delight in sabotaging treatment just to demonstrate the worker's impotence. This has implications for the matching of worker to client. One of the most important features of the worker is the ability to be incorruptible, to hold their ground, and keep their word. Cobras are challenged around being able to experience or understand empathy. They show little gratitude towards the efforts made to assist them. They use and manipulate other people and will take pleasure in any triumph over a worker who wavers from the strict boundaries of professional ethics and the treatment contract. It is at least possible to win the respect of clients with cobras by being tough-minded and exacting (McWilliams, 1994, p. 161). Related to incorruptibility is the service provider's uncompromising honesty, i.e., being clear, straightforward, keeping promises, making good on threats or statements of consequences, and persistently addressing and identifying reality. Given the manipulative and exploitative qualities of the cobra, it is important to note that honesty does not mean self-disclosure. This is challenging for the worker in forming a working relationship with a cobra. The clear distinction in terms of practice is to be honest and firm, without self-disclosure.

Cobras can also pose risk to the worker. Meloy (1996: 962) identifies five features that contraindicate treatment of any kind: 1) a history of sadistic and violent behaviour, 2) total absence of remorse, 3) intelligence two

standard deviations from the mean, 4) no history of attachments, and 5) fear of predation by experienced service providers without overt threat from the individual. These fit the definition of psychopaths that Nick Wilson describes in this volume. They operate at the end of the anti-social continuum and may exhibit some or all of the following features: glibness, superficial charm, grandiose self-worth, high need for stimulation, pathological lying, being manipulative, lack of remorse or guilt, shallow affect, callousness or lack of empathy, parasitic life-style, poor behavioural controls, promiscuity, early behavioural problems, no realistic long-term goals, impulsivity, irresponsibility, short-term relationships, juvenile delinquency, breach of sentence conditions, and criminal versatility.

Managing Family Only Violence

This is probably the easiest group of the three to manage. They are often remorseful and able to generate empathy to others affected by their violent and abusive behaviour. In this group of men they are not likely to exhibit attitudes supportive of violence or misogynist ideas. Working with this group around understanding the circumstances, thoughts and emotions that occurred at the time of the abuse, is a useful intervention strategy. Social skills are also important, particularly the ability to act in an assertive manner within interpersonal relationships. It is shown that this group are able to demonstrate this skill in their public world relationships.

Summary

In terms of accurate assessment of risk posed by men who are abusive and violent, the use of typology research to inform risk assessment and management appears to have merit. What it provides is the opportunity for better matching of both treatment and safety needs, ensuring that while we are intervening, we also take account of what is happening outside of the room. This research is still relatively new, so the very real challenge we face is to develop more robust assessment tools to accurately measure propensity for dangerousness.