

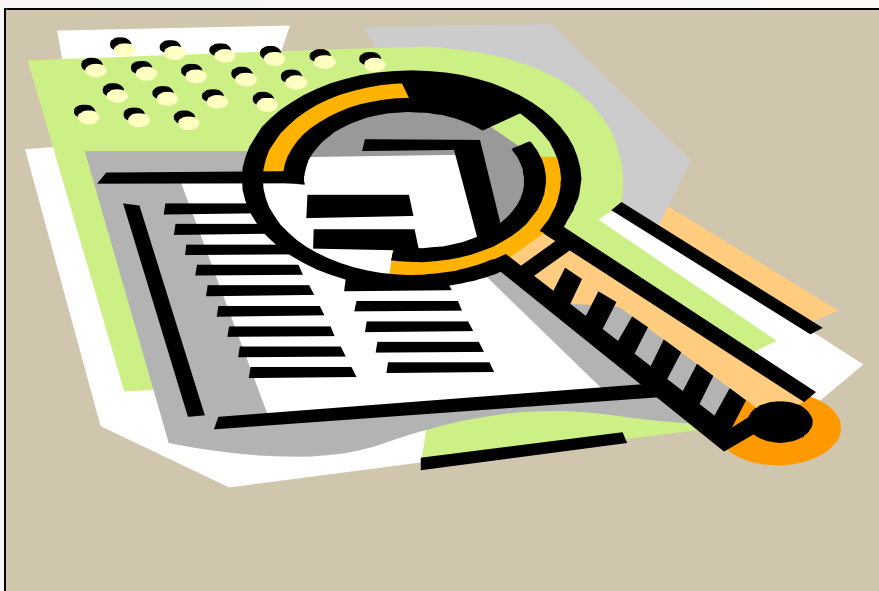
*EU DAPHNE III*

# EMPOWER PROJECT

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## INTIMATE PARTNER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE UK PRESS



### UK CONTEXT

IPDV rates in the UK

Role and influence of media

Press freedom

### COMPARISON of *Sun* and *Guardian*

2001-2002

2011-2012

Key findings

# IPDV in the UK

- Home Office (2010):
  - 1 in 4 women
  - 1 in 6 men
- Women - more likely in severe and repeated forms (Women's Aid, 2009)
- UK women experience an average of 35 incidents before contacting police (Starmer, 2011)
- 77 women killed by partners of ex-partners 2012-13 (HMIC, 2014)
- 1 man killed approximately every 3 weeks

# Freedom of the press in the UK

- Television and radio broadcasting legal obligation to be impartial
- No obligation for printed news media
- Calls for law-backed regulation of the press
- Reflect and/or shape public opinion?

<i>Guardian</i>	<i>Sun</i>
Left of centre broadsheet, known as one of the quality newspapers	Right-wing tabloid UK's biggest-selling national newspaper
Average daily readership of 210,000	Average daily readership of 2.5 million
8.95 million readers in print and online each month (monthly print readership is almost 4.1 million)	17.8 million readers in print and online each month (monthly print readership is 16.09 million)
£1.20 in December 2012	40p in December 2012
More text than <i>Sun</i>	Economical with language
Few pictures	Many pictures (including page 3)
Owner: the Scott Trust	Owner: Rupert Murdoch empire (wealthy, powerful media magnate)
Editorial independence	Appoint editors who will be true to owner's ideology

## Increasing number of articles citing the term domestic violence 2000-2012

*Guardian* has more than 5 times the number of articles than *Sun*.

Number of articles citing 'domestic violence'	<i>Guardian</i>	<i>Sun</i>
2000-2012	3975	695
2001	156	5
2002	203	20
2011	472	79
2012	544	111

# Terms used for domestic violence

*Sun* and *Guardian*:

- disturbance
- argument
- row
- family row
- strife
- marital difficulties
- harassment
- serious assault
- woman killed/murdered
- woman, man, child(ren) killed/murdered
- knife attack
- ‘stab’ horror
- knife crime (interviewee in *Sun*)

# Key findings

1. Blaming the victim
2. 'Ideal' victim
3. DV campaigning
4. Sexualising DV
5. Scaremongering

# Who is being described?

*Sun* - from journalists and interviewees in 2001-2 and 2011-2:

- doting dad
- great father
- model family
- loved his wife and kids
- good bloke
- hero
- proud
- gentle man
- sensitive
- intelligent
- very well liked
- great character and friend
- would do anything for you
- very capable and respected
- worked tirelessly to support the family he worshipped



## TITLE: BBQ dad 'killed 6 over wife's affair', *Sun 14 August 2012*

Rzeszowski stabbed wife, 2 children, father-in-law, family friend and her daughter



**CAPTION: 'Pressure' ... Damian Rzeszowski**  
"A POLISH builder slaughtered six people at a family barbecue after he flipped over his wife's affair"



**CAPTION: 'Affair' ... tragic wife Izabela**  
"Just six weeks earlier Rzeszowski had learned Izabela, 30, was cheating on him"

## Say case

*Sun* (15/02/11) quotes neighbour citing what Say had told her:  
'all his wife did was sleep and go to work'



Source: Antonio Olmos

<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/picture/2013/apr/20/photography-ukcrime>

## PC Bluestone case

*Sun* (30/08/01) described him as a 'devoted dad' 'who adored his kids'

*Guardian* (30/08/01) Bluestone's parents state 'He was a man devoted to his children, dedicated to his job and filled with love for his wife.'



**CAPTION: Berserk ... Pc Bluestone**

*Sun*  
8 August  
2001



**CAPTION: Dead ... Henry seen in his dad's cap and coat**

*Sun* (30/08/01) cites salaries, 'high-flying administrator'

*Sun* (07/11/01) mentions both had affairs

*Sun* makes no mention of Bluestone's previous arrest and disciplinary inquiry at work due to an argument at home 2 years earlier, though details are given in *Guardian* (31/08/01)



**CAPTION: Snapped ... Bluestone with Chandler, son he killed**

*Sun* 7  
November  
2001



**CAPTION: Battered ... Jill**





Toby Day, 2011

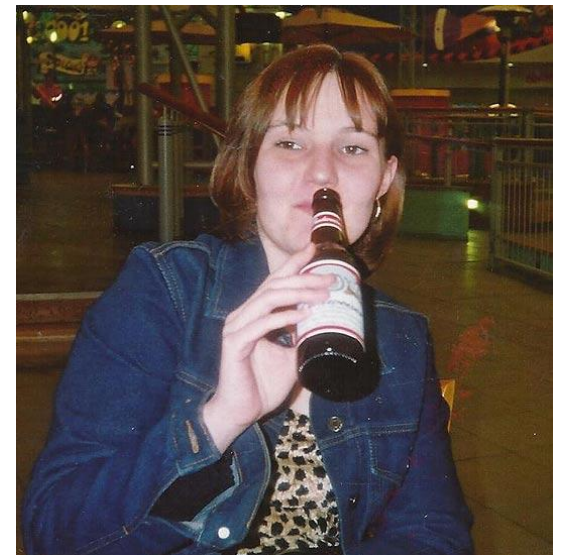
**Sun** photographs of men in uniform contrast with women perpetrators - visual content can reinforce textual content



Michael Pedersen, 2012 (also used in *Guardian*)



Karen Otmani,  
2012



Emma Bushen, 2012

# Evil women

**Title: Evil Andrews serves up cuppas in a church cafe, *Sun* 15 January 2011**

Tracie Andrews, convicted of fatally stabbing her boyfriend in 1996 in their car, spent 14 years in prison.

Juxtaposition of evil with church café



**CAPTION:  
Tracie Andrews  
... after killing**

## Honour-based violence

105 articles on honour killing found in the *Sun* (2000-12)

one article used the term 'evil' in its headline in relation to a grandmother who plotted to have her daughter-in-law killed: **'Evil gran will never leave jail'** (04/10/07).

# The Blame Game: Provocation

- 'LAWYER Les Humes stabbed his wife to death in front of their children after she told him she was cheating on him.'
- 'Humes worked long hours to provide his family with a comfortable lifestyle and a beautiful home.' (*Sun 25 July 2002*)
- Humes charged with manslaughter on the grounds of provocation
- jailed for 7 years for manslaughter
- **Message to readers** - rationale for perpetrator's actions and lenient sentence (2010 - provocation no longer permitted as a defence)

# Comparison of photographs and captions

*Guardian* 7 September 2012

**TITLE:** 'Jealous teenager who stabbed girlfriend 60 times jailed for life'

Refers to his jealousy causing problems throughout 9-month relationship



**CAPTION:**

**Andrew Hall, 18, used two knives during his assault on Megan-Leigh Peat, at a house in Ampthill, Bedfordshire**

*Sun* 7 September 2012

**TITLE:** 'Teenage football star admits murdering girlfriend, 15'

No reference made to volatile relationship, article laments the loss of his promising football career



**CAPTION:**

**Player ... Andrew Hall was set to sign pro deal with Stoke**



# 'Ideal' victim

- *Sun* expresses sympathy towards certain victims
- newsworthiness of homicide cases (Gekoski et al., 2012):
  - ☑ **young**
  - ☑ **female**
  - ☑ **white**
  - ☑ **middle-class**
  - ☑ **respectable**
  - ☑ **physically attractive**
- Undeserving, non-ideal victims perceived as contributing to their 'expected' fates (Gekoski et al., 2012)
- Jane Clough (nurse) & Heather Cooper (police officer) – 'ideal' victims

# DV campaigning

- *Sun* giving a voice to women who have experienced DV and encouraging others to speak out
- Sandra Horley, Chief Executive of Refuge, interviewed and weblink to Refuge's 1in4 women campaign included
- Contact details of support for male victims also given
- Sandra Horley in *Guardian* too (10/10/12) - writes that DV cases are not about a man 'losing his temper' or 'flipping out', they are about systematic control and abuse
- Losing their temper and 'flipping' - precisely the terms used by *Sun* to describe some men who commit violent acts

# Sexualising DV

- Association between sex and violence in the *Sun*
- Rihanna abused in 2009 by her boyfriend Chris Brown also a singer
- Sympathetic treatment of Rihanna as *Sun* shows her injuries and condemns Brown's attack on her
- However, articles depict sexualised images of her attached to sexual headlines positioned next to photographs of her injuries

# The association between sex and violence

Sun 4 September 2012  
(image from Eaves et al., 2012)

Headline focuses on the items found on boat and their link to sex and violence

Tuesday, September 4, 2012 **Evening News**

## SECRETS OF BROADS DEATH BOAT

# Purple sex toy, duct tape, hard drive, cable ties and a sheet covered in blood

By the Times



Revealed... forensic map of boat on river. Left, evidence is removed

Investigation... a police car and officer at Norfolk Broads water

**EXCLUSIVE by STEPHEN MEYER**  
**COPS probing the deaths of a couple pulled from a river found a purple sex toy, duct tape, a computer hard drive and cable ties on their hired boat, it emerged yesterday.**

Officers also recovered a blood-stained sheet stuffed into a carrier bag, a laptop, screws, Strathairn, lengths of cable and two tubes of lubricant gel.

Last night police said the woman had been strangled and was dead before being the water. Her death was being treated as suspicious.

The death of her partner was not being treated as suspicious as it was confirmed that he drowned.

Every day in the near 1000 the boat was pulled from the river has been left after being the woman.

Meanwhile the recovery team... revealed the truth, where a girl of 17 was found alive, had been rescued of her mother and her mother's boyfriend. The teenager, who had not raised the alarm, was indicted of their deaths and was yesterday being questioned by police.

The 16-year-old, who had been on the river with her son, told: "She had been photographed the boat because it looked so strange."

The vessel, which was seen to be pulled, said: "There are several official places to stop and it seemed odd anyone would stop in such a remote place. It seemed abnormal."

"I had made it even stranger was the purple, wet towel and everything looked odd. Despite there being no way of getting on and off."

Another witness told how he approached the 10th vessel - only for a man on board to peer his head out and shout at him to "get away".

The 20-year-old businessman said: "The boat was moving slowly. I saw it, I don't want anything. Then he waved the boat with his hand."

Other witnesses were in shock about the tragedy last night.

One said: "We were here, we were from 11 to 12. You don't expect this."

...@meyer@the-ebc.co.uk

## RIVER WOMAN WAS STRANGLED, COPS SAY

It is possible she had at least a WEEK. The boat today appears a shrine to the sexual relationship between the couple. It was taken here Friday - two days before the bodies were found - by a holidaymaker who gave witnesses after being the boat "completely abandoned" on the water.

The teenager, the daughter of the woman who died, was found alone on the boat on Saturday after it was reported missing by the Leamington boat company which owns it.

Police divers recovered the two bodies of what appeared to be the River Boat on the following day.

"Neither body had been sexually abused but signs, according to the medical staff, said: "We are not looking for anyone else in connection with this incident. Both deaths will be referred to the coroner and a file will be prepared for the inquest."

Investigators were trying to work out why the craft was led to a tree in a quiet, old, bathhouse-like, brook where thick shrubs and marshland made it impossible to get off.

### Strange

The police line of blame returned from the boat was reported yesterday and added to the ranks of what did in the deaths of the couple who were in their 20s and lived in the ferry area.

The girl lived on the vessel, but has questioned by specially trained officers about what happened to

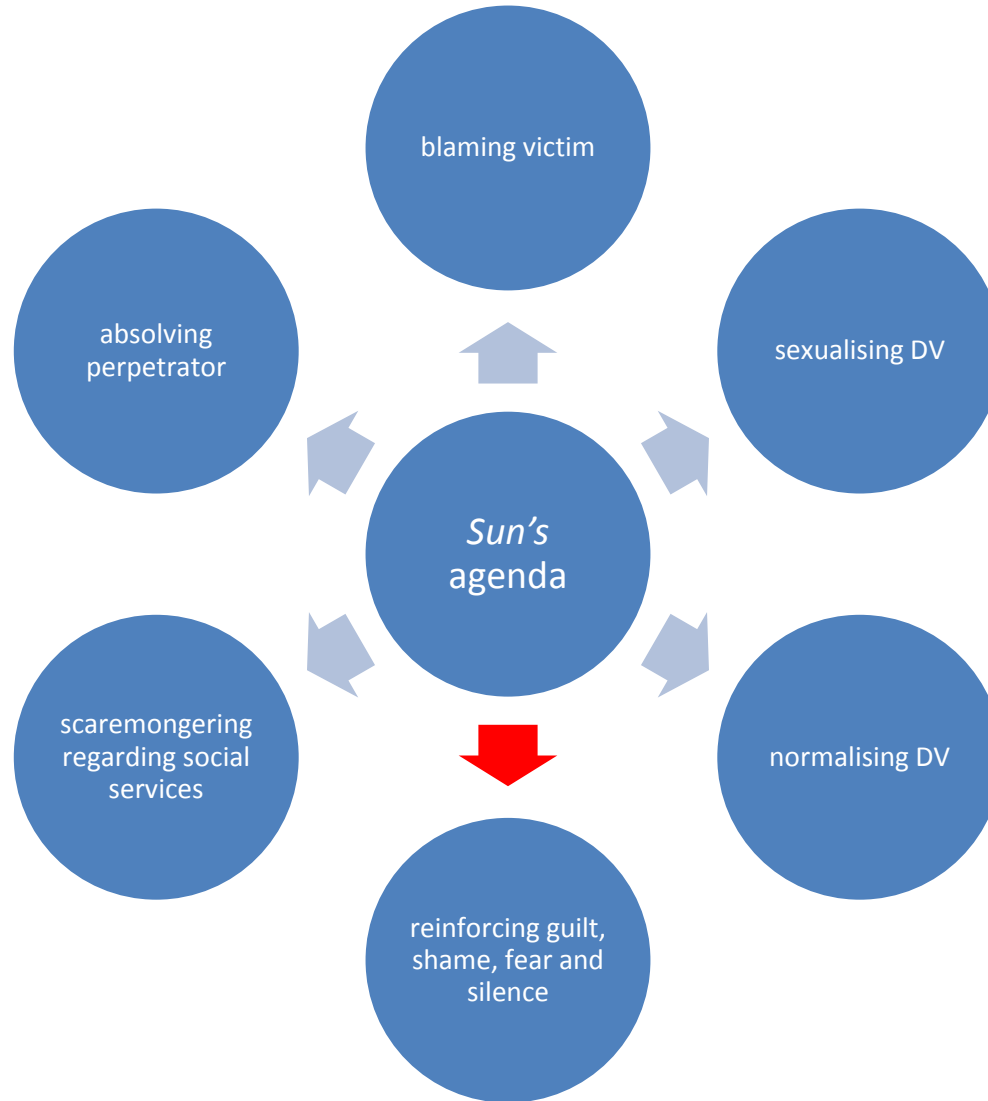
# Sexualising DV

- Diana Garbutt fatally beaten with metal bar in bed
  - ‘sex cheat’ (24 March 2011)
  - ‘string of affairs’ (2 April 2011)
  - ‘used internet dating sites’ (24 March 2011)
  - ‘had sex with a man on a sofa’ when visiting friends with her husband 15 months before she died (22 March 2011)
  - ‘romped with a cousin’s husband’ (22 March 2011)
- continues to be referred to as ‘unfaithful’ and as having visited dating websites after her husband’s conviction of murder (25 May 2012)

# Scaremongering

- ‘Self-righteous’ (22/11/02), ‘overzealous’ social workers (22/06/11)
  - ‘the tyrants of child protection’
  - ‘playing-God mindset’
  - deny parental access on ‘mere suspicion’ and ‘hearsay’
  - Child Protection Plans often ‘based on nothing more than an unfounded suspicion plunging one or both parents into a Kafka-esque nightmare’ (28/11/12)

## ***Sun's* messages to readers about DV**



**Guardian adopts a more progressive agenda on a wider range of themes**





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WORLD EXCLUSIVE

## UK NEWSPAPERS ON TRIAL: THE VERDICT



### Is the UK free press

“the envy of the world”?

(Jane Moore, *Sun*,  
30 November 2012,  
p.10)

or portraying  
“demeaning and  
sexualising  
representations of  
women”?

(Leveson on the  
*Sun*, 2012b, p.664)

# Discussion

- Increased newspaper coverage over 10 years, yet portrayal remains primarily unchanged in tabloids like *Sun*
- Continuity with concerns over 20 years ago - Soothill and Walby (1991, p.47): 'It is the cuckolded husband who kills who gets the sympathy'.
- Women can be blamed for *action* and *inaction* such as not standing up to abusers or not leaving them
- Language and photographs within *Sun* carry a parable-like message: women need to conform to gender-appropriate behaviour to avoid provoking domestic abuse

# Conclusions

- Not naming cases as *domestic violence* - not joining up dots and seeing pattern of violence and control linking incidents
- *Sun's* misrepresentation ranging from subtle and implicit to overt and explicit
- Multiple faces of the *Sun*
- Moved paradoxically with the times
- Sexualising violence and blaming victims remain consistent across the time span of our research

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