

To: THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

12th September, 2024

Before I begin, a little about myself. I am a woman, [REDACTED] I have worked with vulnerable children/yp for many years and have seen the harm done by the powers that be who want to be seen to be “fixing” the issues of the world and believe me, it is all wrong. Women and men are capable of both, good and bad. All people should be treated equally.

I would like to say I do believe domestic violence exists and I understand the need for it to stop. For the people who are genuine victims of DV, I believe it is necessary for them to be able to access whatever assistance may be necessary to stop what is happening, encourage and assist them to leave their situation and education could prevent recurrence. It is a fact that many men and women will return to abusive relationships or begin a new abusive relationship.

I also know and understand that domestic violence as it appears to be, is not always typical of physical violence. In many cases of DV there is not only one perpetrator. We also need to consider the partner who has suffered mental abuse for many years and in the spur of the moment lashes out with sometimes (but not often) catastrophic results. The verbal abuser is totally stunned, gob-smacked for a better word. They would never have believed their beloved partner of many seemingly perfect years could react that way. The verbal abuser does not see their verbal abuse as wrong, as harmful, as equally destructive and dangerous as physical abuse. Most of these abusers are women. The percentage of women who verbally abuse and torment their partners is far, far greater than the physical Domestic Violence that we see and hear about that is perpetrated by men.

Much more work needs to be done to clearly define what is domestic violence in its true form and what is not. For this reason every case should be investigated in its own right and examined closely because a one-off act of physical violence could quite easily be the result of years of verbal mental abuse. It doesn't make the act less serious or offensive but where there are two people involved it is unfair to not take the mental abuse into account, equally, as mental abuse can be far more hurtful and permanent.

We hear about the women but we do not hear about the men. There are many men also who are physically abused by their women. Many don't complain for fear of being ridiculed and called weak, cowardly, they are embarrassed and ashamed. These men are also being verbally/mentally abused on a daily basis and the incidence of suicide among these men because they cannot be heard is enormous compared to women dying from DV. These men go unnoticed. Women, unlike the men, are not held accountable for their actions and behaviour and they should be. It should be equal.

Men are suffering because they have no power and are not believed, women have power and are taken at their word. Men go to jail without even being charged. Women tell the most incredible and sometimes unbelievable lies, yet they are believed. Men's and women's rights are not equal. Our laws say we all have the right to be listened to. We all have the right to have our say. We are all innocent until proven guilty. But not if you are a man then it is not equal. In fact from what I have personally witnessed, it seems innocence until proven guilty may be a catch phrase that instills the

idea of protection. Why are so many men in jail who have not even been charged? Why are women not accountable for their actions?

It is my opinion that all DV cases should be investigated. Fully. Men and women alike need to be investigated. **The police should not have the power to decide even before charges are laid who is guilty, who is not and to make assumptions.** That statements from the “guilty” party are not taken, their injuries are not considered, they are not allowed medical assistance. To randomly place an AVO where it is not warranted should be criminal. Our police should be held accountable for their actions, because their decisions are sometimes out of spite for the “criminal”. There have been many cases where the man is not at fault, he has not hurt/hit/injured the woman in any way except to push her away when he is being attacked, the man will sometimes have serious physical injuries (or be dead) the woman will not, the woman cried DV, she is believed, there is no statement taken from the man but the man is charged, and if he is really unlucky he will be in jail for no good reason. It appears to be up to the police to make that decision, but they have no qualifications, it is outside their jurisdiction to influence such a serious decision.

I wonder, how many family units have been destroyed because of incorrect police action/interaction?

For myself:

A. I know that: men and women are most times equally to blame when there is violence of some kind.

B. Women are far more likely to be extremely verbally abusive and cruel to men, they can be relentless. Women are far more likely to tell lies and grossly exaggerate a situation and will make up stories to their advantage. The mentality is often to “get back” at their men. Women can be very manipulative! Let’s not ignore this fact.

C. Foremost, children are the losers. Time lapse before seeing their dad can be massive and so destructive and mentally damaging, this is often irreversible.

It is my opinion that in cases of DV, if an AVO is put in place, it should be a short term only solution, that there is a short cooling off period maybe a week or two, and then there is:

1. Mediation - The couple concerned should be allowed to talk the issues through. It should be in a controlled setting with mediators.

2. Investigation - thorough - all parties, proof of injury, witnesses, references, child interviews with a professional non biased person present but no parent in the room. I work with young people, many years now, and it is my experience that a parent in the room when a child is fearful, will greatly influence and impact the child’s true feelings. Step children should not be excluded in any proceedings family or criminal.

3. History - If there is no history of violence towards the children and the children are willing, then access to both parents should be mandatory. It is very negative and mentally damaging to take a child away from one parent when it is clear it may not be what the child wants. Many women use this tactic in the guise of protection to deliberately hurt their partner.

4. Police - Should not be given the power to make decisions outside their jurisdiction, to take sides regarding who is right or wrong, to persecute the person they deem to be the perpetrator, to refuse medical assistance.

It is a fact that far more women abuse family members including children than men do.
It is also a fact that many men would make far better “mums” than their partners.
It is a well known fact that men will make the effort to hang around regardless for the sake of their children. They will suffer abuse willingly as long as they have their family unit.

I believe firmly that it is too easy for either parent to walk away from a relationship. It is too easy to get a divorce and move on. There is no formal education regarding relationships BEFORE we start one.

I believe, if there is a need for men to learn about physical violence and what is acceptable, there is a much greater need for women to learn how to speak to people when they are upset or feel threatened, to learn that it is not ok to be cruel and coercive. Women hold the greater role in this area.

I believe women want a man who is a man, someone who will love them unconditionally, support and provide, protect them. Men want a woman who will show love and respect for their efforts, who will not abuse them and make them feel small. These things between men and women should be a given. Why are mothers and fathers not teaching their children what is right and what is wrong? Why are they not teaching their children to respect each other, to respect their parents? What is happening today is a direct result of previous generations not teaching their children how to relate correctly.

My personal take on this situation is this is where we are going wrong. The morals and values of my time are slowly disappearing. The values of the family unit and the extended family where they did things together are dwindling. We seriously need to look at what is happening.

Best regards,

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