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*Young Men and Domestic Abuse* By David Gadd, Claire L. Fox, Mary-Louise Corr, Steph Alger and Ian Butler. Abingdon: Routledge, 2015 ISBN 9780415722117, 196 pp, £95.00 (hb)

For myself as a feminist reader with an interest in masculinities, this book offered rich opportunities for understanding the male experience of domestic abuse, while also challenging the way that maleness/masculinity is constructed in existing domestic abuse discourse. This made it both an enlightening and disconcerting read. The book is the culmination of a three-year research project which used a variety of methods, including surveys, focus groups and life-story interviews, to explore how young men who have experienced domestic abuse (as victims, witnesses and perpetrators) perceive it. The authors appear to adopt a relativistic stance to explore personal accounts of domestic abuse, where a variety of critical and feminist perspectives assume an equivalence. However, the preference by Gadd and others for psychosocial analysis was only partially convincing because, although they attempt to reconcile the 'sociology of gender versus psychology' debate, I felt they gave more credence to their individualised explanations (Gadd and others, 2015, p. 135). This book is timely as there is a thirst, by academics and from within the support sector, both for the question 'what about the men?' and for an increased recognition that the classic gendered assumptions within domestic abuse discourse can be essentialising and unhelpful for individuals who do not fit this 'victim' mould. This book starts to close a gap in the literature which has not specifically been examined before. There have been studies of young men's masculinities and identities (Frosh and others, 2002) and research that has focussed on children's experiences of exposure to domestic abuse (McGee, 2000; Mullender and others, 2002) but this text is unique, in combining in a single study and through a gendered lens, young men's experiences of being victims, witnesses and perpetrators. The authors have an explicit aim to help improve the front-line response to domestic abuse and this is reflected in the pragmatic topics covered and the toolkit created for open use to accompany the research. Areas covered with immediate utility for service providers include young men's perceptions of domestic abuse publicity campaigns and 'healthy relationship' education [Chapters 4 and 5]. However, as someone with wide experience of these areas, elements of this book left me with a nagging feeling of unease. At times the authors' deployment of a psychosocial approach to interpreting the young men's stories generated an unduly harsh critique of feminist discourse. They use the fact that not all men are abusive, and not all in the same way, to critique what they call 'instrumentalist' feminist theories of abuse including Stark (2007), Mullender (1996) and Kelly (1987). Gadd and his co-authors state that by 'reducing violence to the unrelieved villainy of men we understate the diversity among them' (Gadd and others, 2015, p. 131). However, I found that the authors' rebuttals do not offer enough to explain the worldwide existence of a gender-based issue such as domestic abuse, where patterns and similarities can be seen across the intersections of 'race', age and class. Gadd and others draw upon psychosocial explanations for perpetration of abuse, mentioning 'faulty cognitions' including childhood attachment styles as possible contributors to the development of abusive behaviours, illuminated by case studies (Gadd et al., 2015, p. 135). Adopting a life-story narrative approach provided rich depth and context to young men's stories about their abuse perpetration and was insightful. However, their insistence on a pluralistic view of men's behaviour is intended to resist simplistic condensation of masculine complexity, but has the effect of dispersing a sense of collective gender power (vis-a-vis Connell).