Partnership, power and policy: A case study of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse

Marsha Scott

Submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
The University of Edinburgh
2005
Declaration

This thesis and the research described within have been completed solely by Marsha Scott.

It has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or at any other university

Where other sources are quoted, full references are given

Marsha Scott

30 June 2005
Abstract of Thesis

Men's violence against women in Scotland has only recently emerged onto the national policy agenda, based to a large extent on three decades of work on the issue by feminist activists and organisations. The research presented here is a case study of the policy process that produced domestic violence as a policy priority in Scotland—the Scottish Partnership to Address Domestic Abuse, which operated from 1998 to 2000. The research describes the maturing of a social movement as it engaged with the State at a key moment in Scottish history, exploring the nature of that engagement in the context of power, influence, political opportunity, policy processes and partnerships. Key findings focus on feminist engagement with the Scottish State, on the structures of partnership working, and on prospects for intervention in political processes for those usually marginalised in policy making.

Set up in 1998 to define a national strategy for addressing domestic violence, the Partnership officially ended its work in November 2000 with the presentation of the National Strategy on Domestic Abuse to the Scottish Parliament. Data were gathered from interviews and documentary analysis. Data gathering focused on feminist efforts to penetrate policy processes, on the establishment of the Partnership in the context of an increasingly minimalist, differentiated system of governance, and on the location of the Partnership at the intersection of devolution and 30 years of feminist activity on men's violence against women. How new voices came to the table, Partnership processes for agenda setting and decision making, and the naming and framing of policy problems throughout the life of the Partnership—all emerged as important themes. Analysis revealed substantial increases in access to decision makers and policy networks, and the
findings reflect significant influence of the VAW sector on the national policy agenda. Also clear was the success of resistant institutions within criminal justice and health at maintaining the status quo in their sectors and protecting their policy processes from feminist influence.
Acknowledgments and a dedication

Writing this page is the 'consummation devoutly to be wished' for every PhD student; the writing is almost over, the time to say thank you is finally at hand. I am taking full advantage of the opportunity.

Thanks to my dear, dear friends of the 10 Buccleuch clan (Goretti and Danny too): Euan Dick, Debs Headrick, Sue Anderson, Cameron Paton, Nina Dutton, Sue Kelly, Julia Gibbs, Kathryn Faulkner, Richard Brodie, Anna Efstathiou, Paul Norris, Audrey MacDougall, Donna Woods, Jackie Gulland. A PhD student could never have a better cohort—to argue with, to dance with, to laugh with, to moan with, to survive with. I learned more from our lunch chats than from all my courses. I'm getting tickets for the Messiah, who is in?

Thanks to the honorary members of the 10 Buccleuch clan, members despite having (annoyingly) already received their PhDs: Liz Forbat and Rachel Adam (aka Louise, thanks for coming to that red-neck blues bar in Maryland to eat crabs and hear the boys play). How can two such brainy broads also be so good at knowing when to hold me up, push me on, make me cry, make me laugh, hold my hand? And to the fabulous formatters, Anderson and Forbat: how did you both manage a thesis without you to help?

I am profoundly grateful to Lily Greenan, Sandy Brindley, Kath Gallagher, Janette deHaan and the other women who work so hard to end violence against women in Scotland. Thank you for sharing your stories, your considerable wit, your remarkable wisdom, and an occasional pint; the sisterhood in Scotland is powerful.

Much love and thanks to those who got me through the darkest times of last summer. Sue, Richard, Kath Davies, Liz, Rach, Julia, Kathryn, my wise and wonderful Martin—you gave me a reason to come home. Euan, my beloved friend, thank you for holding my hand in the darkness and bridging my worlds to take me home—both ways.

To Fran Wasoff and Ian Dey, the best of supervisors, oh how lucky I have been! Thanks for your insight, your wisdom, your enthusiasm. And Fran, special thanks for helping me through last summer and all the hassles that ensued. What a wonderful mentor you have been.

To my beloved Adam, Brandi, John, and the rest of my kids—Alex, Benny, Paul, Marshall, Caitie, Kierstyn, Jenny. For too many reasons to list here, but mostly because for some reason the best of everything I do somehow leads back to you.

Finally, this work is dedicated to the memory of a valiant 14-year-old boy named John who one horrible winter night long ago stepped in front of his mother to protect her. And to the loving and courageous young man he became.
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter One</th>
<th>Partnerships, policy, and power: A case study of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two</td>
<td>Concepts and literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four</td>
<td>Who came to the partnership table</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abstract of Thesis iii  
Acknowledgments and a dedication v  
Chapter one Partnerships, policy, and power: A case study of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse  
The historical context—setting the scene for the Partnership  
Background: Gender and definitions of domestic violence  
Chapter two Concepts and literature  
Social movements and political opportunity structures  
Feminism and the State  
Political agendas and power  
Governance, networks and policy making  
Partnerships  
Conclusions  
Chapter three Methodology  
The research questions  
Why a case study?  
Methods  
Roads not taken  
Chapter four Who came to the partnership table  
A framework for membership and participation  
Membership and successful partnerships
Coming to the table – forming the Partnership
Sorting the initial membership: Who was there?
Who was missing?
Participation
Conclusions

Chapter five

Agendas, problem definition, and (non)decision making: The processes of the Partnership

The meetings
Meetings after the election
The Partnership policy output: The National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse
The Partnership’s working
What is the problem? – Agreeing the definition
The Partnership agenda setting: agendas and the Agenda
Agenda setting and (non)decision making (and “nonagenda setting”?)
Conclusions

Chapter six

The Partnership, Scottish Feminists and the State

Feminists and the State: Emerging issues
Changing the discourse
Conclusions

Chapter seven

Conclusions

Key findings
The critical context of the case
Delivering on domestic violence
Time and outcomes – a look at policy framing
Partnering with the State
To be continued ... implications for the future
Concluding with the questions
Partnerships, policy, and power: a case study of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse

The Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse, originally the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Violence, held its first meeting in December 1998 and its last in September 2000. Its National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse, launched in the Scottish Parliament in November 2000, was welcomed with broad cross-party support, and it is widely considered an exemplar both of partnership working and of policy making to address domestic violence.

For a femal estate experienced in the difficulties and dangers of working for policy change to address gender inequality in general and violence against women in particular, a case study of the Partnership offered a unique opportunity to ask some broad questions about the nature and potential of engagement with the State. Why was this policy making initiative, heavily funded by feminist and non-feminist allies, so successful after 30 years of advocacy that had produced...
Partnerships, policy, and power: a case study of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse

The Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse, originally the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Violence, held its first meeting in November 1998 and its last in September 2000. Its National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse, launched in the Scottish Parliament in November 2000, was welcomed with broad cross-party support, and it is widely considered an exemplar both of partnership working and of policy making to address domestic violence.

For a feminist experienced in the difficulties and dangers of working for policy change to address gender inequality in general and violence against women in particular, a case study of the Partnership offered a fruitful opportunity to ask some broad questions about the nature and potential of engagement with the State. Why was this policy making initiative, broadly lauded by feminists and non-feminists alike, so successful after 30 years of advocacy that had produced...
little response from central government? Was it constitutional change, devolution and the advent of the new Parliament? Was it the product of nearly three decades of campaigning and service development by Scottish feminists? Was it something about the nature of partnerships and the new joined-up working?

The Partnership offered a promising opportunity to address a larger question: How, when, and where can feminists seeking to eliminate gender inequality use policy making processes to effect social change? The story of the Scottish Partnership to Address Domestic Abuse told here is the story of the maturing of a social movement—Scottish feminists (in this case, in the violence against women sector) in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries—and its engagement with the State at a certain historical point.

Placing the Partnership in this context of the emergence and development of social movements raises interesting questions about policy making processes, particularly ones around the penetrability of decision making structures and access to power and influence. Are there structures and processes that are more or less likely to offer access to decision making about policy to those traditionally marginalised? Where and when in the policy making process might feminists look to focus attention and resources, not just to gain access but to exert influence and make real change? Do partnerships offer special opportunities and/or particular dangers to feminists working to end men's violence against women?

Coordination of planning, systematic policymaking, and consistent funding have been identified as key to designing interventions for domestic violence (Hague & Malos 1993:169), and community forums and partnership working have been broadly recommended and widely implemented, particularly at the local level. The Partnership was
established in this context—a proliferation of partnerships at local, regional, and national levels to address some of the so-called “wicked” issues facing communities.

According to Newman (2001) “wicked” problems are:

- Subject to competing definitions about the nature of the problem;
- Complex issues in which the relationship between different factors—say public health and the environment, or crime and unemployment—was hard to assess;
- Issues on which interventions did not fit neatly into single-policy frameworks; and therefore
- Issues for which effective intervention required collaboration in both policy formulation and delivery. (59)

The wicked issues include child abuse, rape, domestic violence, and a number of other intractable social problems that have long been the focus of campaigning, advocacy, and service development by feminist activists working in the voluntary sector and in local authorities.

The expanding role of partnerships and multi-agency bodies in policy creation has raised questions about accountability, potential for social change, and access to decision making. In addition, the demands that partnership working places on activists and voluntary organisations (and other non-established interests) raises important questions about the conditions under which partnerships are likely to succeed and whose interests they are likely to serve.

This case study therefore examines the Scottish Partnership to Address Domestic Abuse in light of those and the following related questions: Do partnerships offer a promising format for policy innovation? For nonestablished interests to access policy and decision making? Can national partnerships deliver joined-up
national policy that addresses complex social problems with broad participation across sectors?

Because partnerships have benefits, presumably, and costs, clearly, these are questions whose answers matter. They matter to women experiencing domestic violence, they matter to the community activists and practitioners working with the smallest of resources to address the largest and most complex of problems, and they matter to those who want to know how to make better policy. And as a feminist researcher and policy officer with a 25-year history of paid and voluntary work in public health and in the violence against women sector, they matter to me. The questions are academic and they are practical, and this study applies a PhD student’s skills and a practitioner’s eye to finding some useful answers.

This chapter provides an overview of the study. This includes an outline of the historical context from which the Partnership emerged and background information on gender and domestic violence. Chapter 2 details the theoretical framework for the research and summarises the literature discussed in more detail where relevant in later chapters. Chapter 3 presents the study’s methodology. Chapter 4 explains who the members of the Partnership were and how they got there and introduces the framework for participation and influence that underpins the analysis in chapters 4 to 6. This framework is used to elucidate the processes of feminist engagement with the State in the Partnership overall and in particular to answer the question of whether the Partnership enabled new voices to participate in policy making and influence policy. Chapter 5 examines in some detail the processes of the Partnership, with a particular focus on agenda setting and decision making in the Partnership meetings. Chapter 6 looks at feminist influence on discourse and policy in the context of feminist theories of the State,
and Chapter 7 presents the conclusions and reviews the story of the Partnership.

**The historical context—setting the scene for the Partnership**

The advent of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse can best be understood in the context of a number of specific political and historic circumstances. The most salient of these include

- The long reign of the Conservative governments and the response in Scotland
- Thirty years of local and regional service provision, campaigning and advocacy by feminist activists and organisations
- The election of Labour in 1997 and the inclusion of women’s issues and equalities in general in a national political agenda
- The referendum on devolution and the election for the first new Scottish Parliament
- Devolution

**Eighteen years of Conservative government**

The period prior to Labour’s victory in 1997—one of domination of British central government by the Tory Party—saw little progress on the national policy front for those working on gender inequality and integrated approaches to violence against women. Support for issues such as expanded child care and support for female labour force participation was limited in the context of a Conservative government
that was "intent on cutting back rather than expanding the role of the state in the state, market, family nexus" (O'Connor et al. 1999: 214). Domination of national policy making by the Tories made feminist activists' jobs that much harder, given the difficult political environment in Britain.

The British unitary governance structure and highly centralised bureaucracy are particularly problematic for those outside the system seeking reform. O'Connor and colleagues (1999: 212) cite Joyce Gelb's comparative research in the 1980s, concluding that British political structures "tended to isolate feminists from the political mainstream and from potential allies". Lovenduski and Randall (1993: 363) describe the British system (when compared with other liberal democracies) as "unusually centralised and difficult to break into". Given a "national policy style" disinclined to "intervene either in the labour market or in the 'private' family sphere" (214), those working for gender equality at the national level grappled with an unfavourable political opportunity structure until the 1997 election.

In Scotland, activists attempting to engage the Scottish Office and civil servants in women's issues encountered similar difficulties. One respondent from this study, who worked in a feminist advocacy organisation, commented:

You'd still have the Conservative central government who were not, not wanting to know basically... We tried on numerous occasions to get meetings with civil servants, you know, at the Scottish, at that time the Scottish Office, and you just got nowhere with them.[HH]

A number of respondents working outside central government in either local authorities or voluntary sector organisations made similar points; they also observed that the unpopularity of the Conservative
government' policies in Scotland provided a fertile ground for
women's activism at the local levels. Women's committees, equalities
committees and other local structures flourished, especially in the
urban local authorities.¹

These observations echo the conclusion of O'Connor and colleagues
(1999) that the barriers to change inherent in the British system and
exacerbated by the policies of the Thatcher period in fact changed the
political opportunity structure:

Yet, while it [the Thatcher period] closed off opportunities
it also changed the political opportunity structure in a
positive way from the point of view of the women's
movement: it made the trade union movement and the
Labour Party more receptive to integrating the demands

The election of the Labour government in 1997 thus came on the
heels of a long period of mobilisation at the local level in Scotland.
(See Chapter 4 also.)

Scottish feminists

Chapter 4 provides a brief description of the key feminist
organisations working chiefly on violence against women issues when
the Partnership was established. All these organisations, and the
women who drove them, operated in the larger context of the Scottish
women's liberation movement dating back to the first and second
waves of feminism. In the 1990s the feminist agenda in Scotland

¹ See further discussion of women's committees in following section. Mackay (1996)
offers a case study of the Zero Tolerance Trust, a feminist anti-violence project that
grew out of work done in the Edinburgh local authority and spread throughout the
UK; Breitenbach and Mackay (2001) contains a chapter on Zero Tolerance.
consisted of a familiar set of women's issues that by 1998 had been prioritised (by the Scottish Women’s Consultative Forum) as representation and participation, violence against women, and women in poverty. Breitenbach and MacKay (2001: 3) comment that the major issues for feminists differ little across the UK and beyond, quoting Yvonne Galligan (writing about Ireland):

The issues of abortion, equal rights, rape, domestic violence, and equal opportunities comprise the common agenda of feminists in every liberal democratic country in which a women’s movement has emerged (1998: 3).

However, although the fundamental issues for UK feminists have remained essentially the same, how and when the issues were tackled in Scotland have differed at times. Breitenbach and MacKay (2001) suggest that the 1990s saw the emergence of a noticeable Scottish feminist identity:

Nevertheless, over time a distinctive Scottish identity has become more pronounced, partly as a result of the growth of feminist research and publications on women in Scotland, both past and present, and because of the existence of Scottish organisations and networks, but also because of the ever widening debate on devolution, independence and political representation, of which the debate on women’s representation has formed a significant part (6).

The authors offer a simple chronology that serves this discussion well: The 1970s women’s movement in Scotland formed a foundation for feminist activity in the 1980s, which largely focused on or grew out of the local authority level.

By the 1990s, national Scottish feminist organisations such as Engender, the Women’s Support Project and Zero Tolerance had joined feminist service providers such as Women’s Aid and Rape
Crisis Centres. Ad hoc and short-life bodies such as 50-50, the Women’s Joint Action Forum and the Scottish Women’s Consultative Forum also emerged during this time. Although a number of important campaigns for equal representation and participation in the structures of the new Scottish Parliament occurred towards the end of the decade, much of the activity centred on issues of violence against women, laying the foundation for the creation of the Partnership.

The new Labour government and constitutional and political change in Scotland

The election of the Labour government in 1997 (for which many activists in Scotland had campaigned long and hard) changed the political landscape for those working on women’s issues. The advent of the new Labour government provided a shift in the political climate that allowed, as Newman puts it, “a new repertoire of policy instruments to be put in play” (2001: 65), including partnership working and a new more inclusive style of policy making. Women and women’s issues were visible on the political agenda, domestic violence in particular (discussed below), and the language of equalities was increasingly evident.

Labour had also committed to constitutional reform, and the government sponsored a referendum in Scotland in September 1997 that proposed a partial transfer of power to a Scottish parliament. This proved to be a common issue around which Scottish feminists could unite:
Women's groups embraced this opportunity. The women's movement became more positive about the opportunities for women and gender equality that devolved government offered, and became closely involved in the pro-devolution campaigns in the period May 1997 to 1999. Many of the women involved were well placed to access senior politicians and decision makers because of their positions in public bodies, universities, trade unions, and other aspects of public life. (McKay 2002: 135-136)

The referendum passed with a comfortable majority, and the stage was set for the new Parliament elections.

The new political opportunity structure was thus created by numerous forces, including a history of local organising, national party politics, and the potential for new power structures raised by the advent of the new Parliament. In an article focusing on gender budgeting in Scotland, Ailsa McKay and colleagues from the Scottish Women's Budget Group comment,

"Although the progress made in Scotland in respect of gender-sensitive budgeting can be clearly linked with the favourable political framework that predated devolution, the influence of external forces at both UK and international level should not be discounted. The beginning of the new millennium marked a period of significant political and economic change in Scotland, which served to present women activists in the country with an opportunity to work together and make a difference (2002: 134)."

In the campaign for the new Parliament elections, Scottish gender equality activists focused on electing significant numbers of women to the new Parliament and on raising the profile of what could loosely be

---

2 O'Connor and colleagues point out that, perhaps because of the hostile political environment for feminists during most of the end of the twentieth century, no strong British anti-feminist movement appeared, and the EU, often seen as the prime mover behind equality policy responses in the UK, was considered "the gender equality force to be challenged" (1999: 214-215).
called the “equality agenda”. In a briefing paper prepared for the Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Group on Women and the Equal Opportunity Commission, Fiona Mackay observes,

In the run-up to devolution in the late 1990s, women’s activism and ideas were crucial in shaping debates about the Scottish parliament. Determined not to be excluded ‘this time round’, women from different backgrounds and organisations, including women in political parties, formed a broad coalition to campaign for ‘50:50’ equality of representation in the Scottish parliament. They also demanded greater opportunities for the voices of women in organisations and communities to be heard in politics and policy making. The elections in 1999 resulted in a gender coup that transformed the face of Scottish politics. (Mackay 2004: 1, emphasis in original)

As is well known, after the 1997 elections, 37.2% of MSPs elected were women; this climbed to 39.5% after the 2003 elections. Increased representation was not the only victory, however. The rules for operation of the new Parliament and related structures—the culture of the new institution—reflected some political wins by women’s advocates, including adoption of family-friendly working hours and school holidays and the set-up of a visitors’ creche in the new Parliament. Perhaps even more important was the establishment of an Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) in the new Parliament and an Equality Unit in the Executive (Mackay 2004: 2).

The equality structures are particularly interesting in that initially equality issues were not devolved to the new Parliament, and the major political party manifestos contained no explicit political commitment to gender issues (McKay 2002). Powers to regulate

---

3 The briefing refers readers to the Gender and Constitutional Change project, which compared developments in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales and was funded under the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Devolution and Constitutional Change Programme (L2192520233). It also refers readers to Breitenbach and Mackay (2001) for detailed accounts of women’s campaigning activities.
equal opportunities and to legislate about discrimination are reserved to Westminster, but women’s movement activists, along with other equalities groups, lobbied for two “exceptions” to be included in the Scotland Act 1998: “the Scottish Parliament has the power to encourage equal opportunities and to impose duties on public bodies to ensure they have due regard to equality legislation” (MacKay 2004: 2). In addition, the new Parliament’s four key principles included equal opportunities, which are also expressed as a government priority. Both the EOC and the Equality Unit have explicitly committed to ‘mainstreaming’ gender equality across legislation and policy making (2004: 2).

As Ailsa McKay of the Scottish Gender Budget Group points out,

Endpoints of the Parliament and Executive represented a window of opportunity for the women’s lobby. The absence of a stated political commitment to gender in election manifestos suggests that the promotion of gender balance and gender mainstreaming in Scotland can be directly attributed to the lobbying and participation of women’s groups throughout the process towards devolution (McKay 2002: 136).

The other key principles are power sharing, accountability, and access and participation, all of which conceivably intersect with a feminist agenda.

The committee structure for the new Parliament also offers the potential for easier access by women to policy discussions and decision making. The committees’ remits include holding the Executive accountable as well as establishing a forum for gathering information, building up MSPs’ knowledge and expertise, and
scrutinising and monitoring policy. Committees hold their own investigations and can initiate their own legislation as well as respond to proposed legislation:

Their membership reflects the party balance in the chamber and Conveners are not always drawn from the executive parties. Thus they provide another forum in which alternative political careers can be developed and in which politicians of all parties can make an impact on policy. (Mackay 2002)

The first committee-sponsored bill was in fact the Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Bill, which emerged from the Justice Committee and was passed in 2001; the bill allowed for attaching a power of arrest to interdicts.

Devolution and the Partnership

The new political climate also created new interest in women’s issues among the Scottish Office civil servants, who were eager to provide the new ministers and MSPs with early policy successes. The metaphor of an opening door came up in numerous interviews for this study:

Then what was interesting was about 3 or 4 months before the election, you suddenly started getting a little bit of interest from the civil servants. Now what that was about was them protecting themselves because it was now looking like the government was going to change. So suddenly what was a closed door was an open door. [HH] (Respondent from the voluntary sector)

... [W]e had just moved into a situation with the new Labour government in the UK and a new government in
Scotland and a new Parliament. So, many of us having worked, you know, for a number of years trying to get the issue of violence against women on the agenda, you felt like you were knocking at a closed door. Suddenly the door was open in a way that it had just not been, you know, before. [IJ] (Service provider)4

Placing the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse into this political and historical context provides some interesting answers to questions about the Partnership. For example, the civil servants’ choices to focus on domestic violence and to form a partnership to address it make sense given that the policy successes for the new politicians had to come in devolved areas and had to reflect the ‘new politics’ of the Scottish Parliament—inclusive, joined-up, accessible.

Civil servants in Criminal Justice felt pressure from above, according an interviewee in the civil service, to focus on a women’s issue and from a persistent and effective women’s lobby with ties to a service provision system (Women’s Aid, Rape Crisis). The focus on domestic violence was at least in part a result of the recommendations of the Scottish Women’s Consultative Forum, which identified three priorities for action on women’s issues: (1) participation/representation, (2) gendered poverty and (3) violence against women. (The policy focus of the Partnership on domestic violence rather than the broader issue of violence against women was problematic for many and will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.)

---

4 Interestingly, these comments strongly echo the comments of long-time feminist activists in Eisenstein’s Inside Agitators: Australian Femocrats and the State: “For the first time in our history we were being offered the opportunity to attempt to implement what for years we had been writing, yelling, marching and working towards” (Eisenstein 1996: 20).
As Mackay (1996) notes, domestic violence (and sexual assault) has several notable features:

[M]en are predominantly the perpetrators of violence and sexual assault; and women and children are predominantly its victims; statistically, women and children are more at risk in their homes from men they know than out of doors from strangers (237).

Social scientists have proffered numerous theoretical explanations for this phenomenon, including the following: violence against women and children in the home is a largely benign function of family systems, is a product of a violent subculture, is learned in childhood, arises from deviant marital relationships (Dobash & Dobash 1979: 21–23). However, as Dobash and Dobash (1979) point out, these explanations ignore the fact that violence has long been a 'normal' feature of our social order:

Seeking the causes and sources of violence and crime through an emphasis on pathological individuals or deviant relationships has been an important activity of those who would ignore the simple fact that violence is endemic to modern Western societies. . . . The use of physical force against wives . . . is primarily purposeful behaviour. . . . (M)en who assault their wives are actually living up to cultural prescriptions that are cherished in Western society—aggressiveness, male dominance, and female subordination—and they are using physical force as a means to enforce that dominance (23–24).

A feminist analysis thus describes domestic violence as an issue of power and the result of the unequal status of women and men in society, positioning the issue in a political framework. This analysis
explains the widespread nature of violence against women and is supported by empirical research. In her conclusion to an empirical study in England, Mooney (2000) comments that

... violence is central to the maintenance of patriarchal order. Violence is seen as a powerful means of subordinating women, thus serving as a key mechanism of social control. This position has been consistently verified by the empirical findings at every stage of the research study. Violence against women is widespread, it exists throughout the class structure and is viewed by both men and women as a means of control. A significant finding was that even in those relationships where violence did not occur, the women were well aware of the types of behaviour which would be likely to evoke violence from their partners. (216)

Domestic violence continues to be one of the most prevalent forms of violence in our communities. In her review of domestic violence studies, Smith (1989:14) describes the difficulty of estimating the extent of a crime that is “by its nature, hidden, minimized and ignored.” She concludes, however, that it is a “pervasive problem” (14). Mooney (2000:160), extrapolating from a survey in North London, states that

violence from a partner is not a rare phenomenon. Whether it is defined as mental cruelty, threats, actual violence with injury or rape, it has occurred to at least a quarter to a third of all women in their lifetime.

Although much debate still rages about prevalence and reporting of domestic violence, that it needs to be addressed has been commonly acknowledged for some time. The UK Home Office, the Scottish Office, and the Scottish Executive have publicly committed to reducing or eliminating domestic violence, and have issued various policy documents targeting domestic violence. They have distributed funding to various government and nongovernment agencies to
implement their policies. Unfortunately, these responses have been fragmented and supported by inconsistent and inadequate funding, and there is little evidence to indicate that these efforts have been particularly effective in preventing violence or in providing adequate services to violence victims:

There have been numerous policies relating to domestic violence, as the issue itself has waxed and waned on the public policy agenda since the 1970s. . . . Nevertheless the continuing demand for refuge space is evidence that this ‘private trouble’ shows no sign of disappearing” (Wasoff & Dey 2000:86).

The formation of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Violence (later renamed the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse) was announced by Henry McLeish at a conference sponsored by the Scottish Office in June 1998, following the publication of several documents highlighting the prevalence of domestic violence and the difficulties experienced by women seeking support services. The Partnership’s remit included the following (Henderson 2000):

- To recommend a strategy on domestic violence within the Government’s overall policy on violence against women, which takes into account the impact of domestic violence on children and young people and the need for effective intervention strategies to prevent male violence against female partners and their children
- To recommend minimum standards and levels of service for women experiencing domestic violence in order to encourage consistent service delivery throughout Scotland, having particular regard to the needs of women from rural areas, women from ethnic minorities and women with disabilities and taking into account the impact on children and young people affected
- To recommend a framework for monitoring progress in dealing with domestic violence

As Chapter 5 explains, this remit was to broaden considerably to include development of a National Strategy, which would become
Scotland’s national policy on domestic violence. The case study described here examines that policy, how it was developed, and by whom—the product and process of the Partnership.

Concepts and literature

This research is embedded in the larger question of how, when, and where feminists seeking to eliminate gender inequalities can use policy-making processes to effect social change. The story of the Scottish Partnership to address Domestic Abuse told here is the story of the maturing of a social movement—Scottish feminists (in this case, in the violence against women sector) in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries—and its engagement with the State at a specific historical point. Initial positioning of the research, chiefly in policy-making literature, served to illuminate the relevant policy processes but in part obscured the answer to a central question: the case study of the Partnership as a case of what? Early findings from this research demonstrated what it was not—it was not a case of policy-making at arm’s length, nor was it a fruitful example of joined-up policy work. It was a case of successful feminist engagement with the State. The conclusion required an exploration of the circumstances and processes of that engagement—social movements and relational and political opportunities, access to power and coalitions to articulate gender sharing it with others, defining the problem...
This research is embedded in the larger question of how, when, and where feminists seeking to eliminate gender inequality can use policy making processes to effect social change. The story of the Scottish Partnership to Address Domestic Abuse told here, is the story of the maturing of a social movement—Scottish feminists (in this case, in the violence against women sector) in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries—and its engagement with the State at a certain historical point. Initial positioning of the research, chiefly in policy-making literature, served to illuminate the relevant policy processes but in part obscured the answer to a central question: the case study of the Partnership as a case of what? Early findings from this research demonstrated what it was not—it was not a case of partnership in action, nor was it a fruitful example of joined-up policy making. It was a case of successful feminist engagement with the State. This conclusion required an exploration of the circumstances and processes of that engagement: social movements and historical and political opportunity; accessing power and exercising it, sharing or not sharing it with allies; defining the problem and the causal
story associated with it; and influencing the various larger and smaller agendas and the strategic processes that shaped them. The dynamics of power and influence emerge as key factors in understanding the political agenda setting and policy making processes of the Partnership. Chapter 2 therefore focuses on these concepts and summarises the literature, most of which is discussed in more depth, where relevant, in later chapters.

Social movements and political opportunity structures

By 1998 and the advent of the Partnership, Scottish feminists had been campaigning about the issue of violence against women for nearly 30 years while building a largely volunteer-based delivery system that offered many survivors of male violence services unavailable through the public sector. Campaigning and advocacy efforts saw successful alliances between voluntary sector feminist organisations and local authorities’ women’s committees, especially those in urban areas. In contrast, central government remained largely unresponsive to feminist demands to address rape and sexual assault, domestic violence, and the other forms of gendered violence. How then do we explain central government’s sponsorship of a national policy making initiative on domestic violence in 1998?

The study of the emergence of new social movements, “set in motion by the turbulence of the 1960s and fuelled by the myriad movements of the last quarter century” according to McAdam and colleagues (1996: 2), offers some insight. McAdam and colleagues comment on an emerging consensus among social movement theorists that identifies three groups of factors central to explaining the rise of new
social movements: “(1) the structure of political opportunities and constraints confronting the movement; (2) the forms of organization (informal as well as formal) available to insurgents; and (3) the collective processes of interpretation, attribution, and social construction that mediate between opportunity and action” (McAdam et al 1996:2).

According to Tarrow (1998), successful mobilization requires favourable political opportunity structures. Tarrow defines the concept of political opportunity as “consistent—but not necessarily formal or permanent—dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for collective action by affecting people’s expectations for success or failure” (1998: 76-77). Expectations for success, according to Tarrow (1996: 54), are generated by four kinds of signals:

1. Increased access to power
2. Changed political alignments
3. Presence and availability of influential allies
4. Divided elites

These “signals” are readily identified in this case study; for example, access to power and decision making (discussed at length in Chapters 4 to 6) was afforded by membership on the Partnership. (Access is identified as a key component in the research’s framework for examining how feminists’ participation in the Partnership may have affected policy on violence against women—see Chapter 4.)

Kreisi (1995: 170-171) expands the concept of political opportunity, relating it to “the formal institutional structure of the political system”, encouraging theorists to consider access as a political input that is more or less open: “Openness implies formal access for outsiders; strength implies the capacity to get things done” (Kreisi 1995: 171). Openness is a function of:
• Centralisation (more centralised systems are less open)
• Degree of functional concentration of state power (more separation of power means greater access)
• Coherence of public administration (more internal coordination and professionalisation results in less access)
• Degree to which direct democratic procedures are institutionalized (more opportunities for direct democratic intervention provide more access) (Kreisi 1995:172)

Dobrowolsky (2003) looks at political opportunities in the context of transformations in the State. She focuses specifically on constitutional reform, particularly relevant for the circumstances of the Partnership, and her analysis highlights the potential for women's movements to shape political opportunities as well as to react to them:

Some reconfigurations that come as a result of constitutional change have provided a window of opportunity for women and other collective actors. Once again, constitutional adaptations may include downloading, offloading, uploading and lateral loading, but in whatever shape or form the changes come, constitutional reform involves some retooling of the political status quo. Hence, women's movements seize the moment, and try to refashion an agenda usually defined and dominated by white men. However, they can do more than react in these situations: Women's movements have also worked proactively to shape and expand political practices and discourses. (Dobrowolsky 2003: 117)

According to Dobrowolsky (2003), Tarrow and other political process theorists describe relationships between movements and political structures as deterministic and "unidirectional":

[I]n the final analysis, the causal arrows still run from a collection of established political considerations onto social movements. . . . The political determinism of this
approach leaves little scope for social movement agency, innovation, and influence. What is more, these models seldom reflect a more expansive notion of what constitutes "the political," whereby formal and informal political domains overlap and influence one another. (2003: 117-118)

Discussion of access and agency rest on an underlying assumption that those feminists seeking social change want access to power and policy making at the centre. The following section discusses that question in the context of the literature on feminism and the State.

**Feminism and the State**

For some feminists, the importance of making social and political change by engaging with the State may seem self-evident. For many, however, it is a highly controversial question, and the potential gains are likely to be outweighed by the likelihood of cooptation and collusion that accompanies engagement with the patriarchal State.

Theorizing by feminists about the State and its role in feminist politics is a relatively recent phenomenon; significant development of feminist theories of the State has occurred chiefly over the last 20 years. Challenging the existing gender-blind theories of the State was the first task. Connell (1990: 510) remarked on the significant flaws that feminists identified in liberal and marxist/socialist theories, noting that "Socialist and anarchist analyses . . . add an account of social context, but only in the form of class; the contending classes seem to be all of the same sex." The concepts of patriarchy and the patriarchal State were developed by radical feminists, and the State operates as an agent and tool for male dominance (Connell 1990: 514). Charles (1995) observes that post-structuralist feminists, heavily influenced by Foucault, suggest that the State has little
strategic importance for feminists because it responds to interests “constituted outside itself” (Charles 1995: 620).

According to Connell (1990), most feminist thinking currently reflects a socialist feminist analysis of class and gender and the radical feminist analysis of the patriarchal State. The operation of the State is a dynamic among family, State, and the capitalist economy. Charles (2000: 21) remarks that through its “monopoly over legitimate violence” the State offers men the right to be violent towards women.

**Political agendas and power**

Defining the priority social problems of the day and setting the public agenda require power and influence. Feminists from the violence against women sector sought to influence the definition of the problem—men’s violence against women—and the national strategy for addressing that violence. Other members of the Partnership brought their own policy agenda. Examining the theoretical framework for exercises of power in political decision making illuminates how issues were defined and aired as public and political goals and then acted on (or not).

Policy agenda setting must look not only at how power operates so that issues make policy agendas but also at how power operates to obstruct discussion of issues or certain problem interpretations. As Stone (1997) says:

> In the polis, controlling the number and kinds of alternative considered is the essence of the political
game. Keeping things off the agenda is a form of power as important as getting them on (1997: 245).

This point is supported by the earlier work of Bachrach and Baratz (1963), who theorised about the nature of power and the importance of differentiating power from “force, influence, and authority” (632). Bachrach and Baratz observed that pluralist researchers assume that power and its correlates are observable only in decision-making situations:

They have overlooked the equally, if not more important area of what might be called “nondecision-making,” i.e., the practice of limiting the scope of actual decision-making to “safe” issues by manipulating the dominant community values, myths, and political institutions and procedures. To pass over this is to neglect one whole “face” of power (1963: 632).

They comment that people or groups who can prevent the airing of public policy conflicts are exercising power (1970: 8).

Lukes (1974: 24) expands on this concept, remarking:

... is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial? To assume that the absence of grievance equals genuine consensus is simply to rule out the possibility of false or manipulated consensus by definitional fiat.

Lukes provides the concept of “latent” conflict—“a contradiction between the interests of those exercising power and the real interests of those they exclude ... were the latter to become aware of their interests” (25) and adds “real interests” to Bachrach and Baratz’s subjective interests as observed in policy preferences or grievances.
This concept of identifying exercises of power through an examination of what is missing from public agendas and policy debates is particularly helpful in analysis of policy making in policy networks and partnerships.

**Governance, networks, and policy making**

Coordination of planning, systematic policymaking, and consistent funding have been identified as key to designing interventions for domestic violence (Hague & Malos 1993: 169), and community forums and partnership working have been broadly recommended and widely implemented. The proliferation of multi-agency bodies to address complex social issues such as child abuse and domestic violence—some of the so-called wicked issues of our day—underscores the need for evidence about the operation and effectiveness of these bodies (or at least regarding the conditions under which they are likely to succeed and whose interests they are likely to serve).

These multi-agency structures, often cited as tools for so-called joined-up working, often take the form of local, regional or national partnerships. Drawing participants from a variety of governmental and community-based organisations, these partnerships address widely diverse objectives over varied time frames.

Partnerships in general and the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse in particular have emerged in the context of an increasingly minimalist, differentiated system of governance. As a consequence, a number of policy processes—those around power, control, and
influence, especially—may be hard to illuminate. Conceptualising the exercises of power and influence by the centre and by partners outwith central government was supported by the more fluid, dynamic processes explored in the governance literature.

The governance literature proved helpful for understanding policy making but was less illuminating for analysing the processes of the Partnership. This is in large part because, as will be argued in Chapters 4 and 5, the Partnership was created and functioned more like a government committee than like a partnership as depicted in the literature. The language of partnership was used throughout the documents and accounts of the Partnership, but reference to the literature on governance and partnerships suggests that it lacked many of the key features of partnerships. In that context, assessment of how the Partnership operated as a partnership was not particularly illuminating. The literature on feminist theories of the State discussed here and in Chapter 6 proved more helpful for looking at issues of power and control in partnering with government-led bodies.

**Governance and networks**

Rhodes (1997) uses the word *governance* to describe the new structure and functions of government, providing an illuminating look at shifts in government function and structure and settling on “self-organizing, *interorganizational* networks” as a useful description of governance. The shift from *Government* with a capital G to *governing* and *governance* communicates the reduction in the State’s role as ‘owner’ and provider of services and, by extension, as the entity primarily responsible for public welfare. Indeed, the new usage describes the shift from government as institution to government as
function or process—from service provider to payer. Privatisation of services, use of markets and quasi-markets for provision of ‘public’ services, and establishment of agencies and other nongovernmental bodies for overseeing and regulating service provision reduce the government’s direct involvement in serving the public. Service provision by non-government agencies and networks ("alternative delivery systems") distances policymakers from involvement with and accountability for program management through emphasis on increased political rather than administrative control.

Another important aspect of governance as distinguished from government is the increased role of networks of public and private sector organizations in provision of services and therefore to an extent in implementing policy. According to Rhodes (1997: 51), “[i]nterorganizational linkages are a defining characteristic of service delivery,” and these networks form and operate in relative independence from the government.

Rhodes and Marsh (1992) argue that networks affect policy outcomes: “The existence of a policy network, or more particularly, a policy community, constrains the policy agenda and shapes the policy outcomes. Policy communities, in particular, are associated with policy continuity . . . there is ample evidence from the case studies that the existence of a policy/network/community is a key cause of that continuity. . . . In brief, policy networks foster incremental outcomes, thereby favouring the status-quo or the existing balance of interests in the network.” Lowi (1969) and MacFarland (1987) in particular take a jaundiced view of policy networks, seeing them as conservative “privileged oligarchies” with no accountability to non-established interests (cited in Rhodes & Marsh 1992: 199–200).
Governance and policy making

Governance may be most helpful, however, when we move beyond the government's responsibility for service delivery to look at agenda setting and policy making. Rhodes uses "socio-cybernetic system" to describe governance as a decentralized socio-political process encompassing many non-government actors and interventions making policy. The usefulness of the concept of governance is that it shifts our focus from government as a centralized and relatively monolithic agent to an interactive, multiagent process of great complexity and fluidity. Policy "emerges" from the interactions of the many parties in the community: "There is order in the policy area, but it is not imposed from on high but emerges from the negotiations of the several affected parties. . . . So, all the actors in a particular policy area need one another. Each can contribute relevant knowledge or other resources" (1997: 50).

This concept of policy making as a non-linear, dynamic process better incorporates the enormous complexity of modern political and social systems than traditional definitions of government, allowing for feedback, negotiation, and other interactions among players and institutions. As John (1998) points out, students of public policy "must accept the rapidly changing, flexible and chaotic nature of decision making. . . . The linear model is more relevant for elucidating the presentation of policy than in detecting the reality of bargaining. It is the shell of policy presented for public and media consumption" (John 1998: 27).

Stone (1997), in Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making, makes an interesting argument that all this policy modelling can be
characterised as an "enterprise of extricating policy from politics . . .

inspired by a vague sense that reason is clean and politics is dirty" (373). She quotes Lindblom (1980), who described the difference between politics and analysis this way:

When we say that policies are decided by analysis, we mean that an investigation of the merits of various possible actions has disclosed reasons for choosing one policy over others. When we say that politics rather than analysis determines policy, we mean that policy is set by the various ways in which people exert control, influence, or power over each other (6). (Cited in Stone 1997: 373.)

Models of decision making using policy cycles and networks (distinctly 'untidy' in practice) is a further attempt, according to Stone, to transform politics and policy making into analysis and away from the messy considerations of power. Stone's point is that whether portrayed as analysis or politics, the process of policy making is political:

The categories of thought behind reasoned analysis . . . are themselves constructed in political struggle, and non-violent political conflict is conducted primarily through reasoned analysis. It is not simply, therefore, a matter that sometimes analysis is used in partisan fashion or for political purposes. Reasoned analysis is necessarily political. It always involves choice to include some things and exclude others and to view the world in a particular way when other visions are possible. Policy analysis is political argument, and vice versa (1997: 375).

**Policy feedback**

Work on the concept of policy feedback provides a slightly more empirical approach to this shifting, nonlinear process of policy making. Policy feedback theorists hope to describe the process in which public policies are not only outputs into political processes but
also inputs that can and do change conditions of policy making.\(^1\) Pierson (1993) reviews the work of a number of researchers (G Esping-Anderson, P Hall, D North, T Skocpol) whose studies cover Civil War pensions in the United States, labour force issues in the United States, Sweden, and Germany, technological innovation in the United States, and the adoption of Keynesian economics across a number of nations.

Two issues raised in Pierson’s review have particular relevance here. First, Skocpol’s focus on “transformation of state capacities” reflects identifiable effects of the Partnership on the Scottish Executive. According to Skocpol (1992):

> Because of the official efforts made to implement new policies using new or existing administrative arrangements, policies transform or expand the capacities of the state. They therefore change the administrative possibilities for official initiatives in the future, and affect later prospects for policy implementation. (58)

The Partnership was officially initiated by civil servants in the Scottish Office and taken forward by civil servants in the Scottish Executive. Although, as will be shown later in this chapter, those civil servants evidenced little understanding of or experience with either partnerships or violence against women, their use of the Partnership format allowed them to tap into expertise outside the civil service. As will be described in Chapter 5, this meant that Partnership members with experience of partnership working (according to interviews, mostly those from the voluntary sector) were able to make the Partnership work—establishing small groups,

\(^1\) This is asserted from a discourse perspective by Stone (1997) who describes policies as “interventions”. See Chapter 5.
forging consensus on decisions, producing outputs for group approval. In addition, two substantive ‘transformations’ occurred:

1. Feminists from the violence against women sector were absorbed into the civil service in a number of roles (a researcher and a policy officer seconded from Women’s Aid) and later into implementation subgroups.

2. The Partnership created a structure for implementing the National Strategy that normalised the presence of the outside expert in formulating policy and programme strategies. The National Group, set up to oversee implementation, established numerous subgroups (for example, the Prevention Strategy Group, the Training Group, the Expert Group on Violence Against Women), all of which included feminists from the sector.

Pierson (1993) queries the “significance” of some feedback on administrative capacities, suggesting that investigations should focus on “relatively specialized but important administrative skills” (618); important to whom seems the relevant question, however. The movement of feminist activists into the insider role in the civil service would be important to feminists in the violence against women sector but perhaps not to a broader audience.

The second issue of relevance in Pierson’s review relates to the policy process. Here Douglass North’s work on path dependency (1990) and, specifically, lock-in of particular policy choices offers a useful way to describe the policy choices made by the government and the Partnership. Specifically, lock-in is a helpful characterisation of the constricted set of ‘solutions’ considered by the Partnership. Chapter 5 analyses the National Strategy and its addressing of the 3 P’s of prevention, protection, and provision, concluding that the Partnership significantly privileged provision, and refuge provision in particular, in its policy making. According to respondents in the
government (see Chapter 5), that prioritising reflected the existence of a national service system to which additional resources could easily be directed, offering politicians a “quick win” and a real service expansion at the same time. However, given the wide range of services needed to support women experiencing domestic violence, the Partnership’s channelling of resources—and policy attention—almost exclusively to refuge provision had wide implications for future planning. As Pierson points out,

Policies may create incentives that encourage the emergence of elaborate social and economic networks, greatly increasing the cost of adopting once-possible alternatives and inhibiting exit from a current policy path. Major policy initiatives have major social consequences (1993: 608).

Significant State investment in refuge services (£10 million, announced at the launch of the National Strategy) made establishing a different service priority a much more problematic decision.

In addition, as will be explored in Chapter 5, the proposed strategies to address “prevention” were constrained by definitions of primary and secondary prevention that failed to reflect the broader implications of the Partnership’s gendered definition of domestic violence. The paucity of Partnership discussions about alternative service priorities or about systemic prevention initiatives support conclusions in Chapters 4 and 5 that nondecision making was a feature of the exercise of power in Partnership processes. A question worth asking over a longer time in this context is just what aspects of policy were locked in—the gendered definition and the solutions appropriate to it, the privileging of service provision over prevention and protection, and/or the prioritisation of refuges and the network supporting refuge (Women’s Aid and local authority housing provision)?

33
The concept of lock-in reflects our practical experiences of policy and politics—investments of political credibility and funds in certain solutions or interventions create obvious disincentives for alternative solutions. As such the concept is a helpful characterisation but offers little new insight to current notions of policy processes. However, Pierson's analysis of when and where lock-in is more likely to occur extends the analysis in a direction that is particularly germane to partnerships. According to Pierson, certain policy solutions are vulnerable to lock-in, including those requiring "coordination" or the organisational investment of numerous actors: "Policies that involve high levels of interdependence and where intervention stretches over long periods are particularly likely sites for lock-in effects" (1993: 610). Both these characteristics are reflected in the Partnership studied here, and two consequences seem worth noting for feminist activists and others contemplating the costs and benefits of a particular partnership: First, negotiation of complex relationships to deliver implementation embeds organisations in decision making and political compromise that have longer-term effects than might be initially evident. Arguments about feminist theories of and relationships with the State, discussed in Chapter 6, become especially relevant in this context. Second, as Pierson notes:

feedback effects of this type have a tendency to depoliticize issues. . . . The result is often not conflict over the foregone alternative . . . but the absence of conflict. In Bachrach and Baratz's terms, lock-in leads to non-decisions" (1993: 610).

Nondecision making (see Chapter 5) requires the exercise of power in a policy context that obscures whose interests are being served by the failure to discuss, debate, or even identify policy dilemmas or
solutions. Partnerships of diverse actors devoted to addressing complicated social problems readily provide that context.

Thinking about lock-in as a particularly likely effect for certain kinds of partnership working thus provides some insight into some potential dangers of participation, particularly for less powerful partners. However, the likely exercise of power and influence—explicit or not—and the opportunity to 'lock in' policy solutions could be considered incentives as well as disincentives for feminists and others who bring experience with partnership working (and what one respondent from the voluntary sector called a practical "process analysis") to the policy table.

**Agenda setting**

What is still murky in governance discussions is the dynamic that drives the setting of agendas and policy priorities. And here the concept of governance seems less helpful, as the focus on the extensive interactions and networking of modern politics obscures sources of power and interest. Answering the question of how issues 'make it' to the political agenda and then result in certain policy outputs is even more confusing when government policy making is embedded in the 'governance' world of "the total effects of social-political-administrative interventions and interactions" (John 1998: 50). Do power and interest drive these interactions? Glendinning and Clarke (2002) comment that

[M]uch of the discussion of new governance arrangements has tended to divert attention away from the state and state power (or, at least, away from the making and remaking of the state and state power). Where the state is considered, it is typically described as shrinking; surrendering power (to social partners); or being 'hollowed out' by a combination of globalising and
localising tendencies (see Rhodes 1997). In contrast, we think it is worth considering how the changing processes of governance involve the remaking of state power and its extension through new means (see Clarke and Newman, 1997). This perspective enables us to view New Labour’s compulsory partnerships as an attempt to recruit subordinate partners into the project of modernising government. . . . The challenge of analysing partnerships as part of the new governance is precisely the question of how to understand them as compound, contingent and potentially contradictory sites of power (Glendinning & Clarke 2002: 45-46).

Newman echoes this concern: “Much of the work on governance tends to dissolve notions of power and agency. . . . While it is helpful to highlight the dispersal and fragmentation of power, this does not mean that it should disappear from the analysis” (2001: 20). To what extent ‘governing’ through networks and interorganisational policy making changes—or maintains—central control over resources and policy development and implementation is therefore a key question.

Missing also, perhaps, from the work on governance is the role of leadership—political and otherwise—in the system. In governance-defined policy making, British government, for example, is not necessarily either the leader of or the source of policy making. If policy outcomes are not the result of government actions, who is left to be responsible for policy agenda setting, and how does ‘the State’ figure in the public policy equation? How do the interactions of networks and policy communities, central control and decentralized implementation, partnerships and joined-up work affect leadership and accountability for public policy?
**Partnerships**

The creation of the Partnership by civil servants in the Scottish Office occurred in the context of New Labour’s commitments to modernisation and joined-up government and, particularly, to working in partnership with the voluntary and public sectors to address difficult social problems, including domestic violence. What are the attributes of partnerships that make them such attractive policy-making tools for ‘wicked’ issues, what are the characteristics of successful partnerships, and how did the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse measure up?

**Why a partnership?**

As mentioned, coordination of planning and service delivery, systematic policy making, and consistent funding have been identified as key to designing interventions for domestic abuse (Hague & Malos 1993: 169). However, “the long search for coordination”, as Powell and Glendinning call it, is no new phenomenon (2002: 5). According to Perri 6, “[u]nder every government since the beginning of the century at least, ministers have called for more cross-departmental working and announced grand reform projects” Powell and Glendinning 2002: 5). Because working ‘in partnership’ seems unlikely to be an automatic fix for chaotic and inefficient service provision and inadequate resourcing, several interesting questions follow:
1. Why use a partnership format?
2. What do successful partnerships look like and how do they work?

The Audit Commission, in *A Fruitful Partnership: Effective Partnership Working*, a widely disseminated document published in 1998, offered these reasons to use partnership formats:

- To deliver coordinated services
- To tackle ‘wicked issues’ or interconnected problems
- To reduce the impact of organisational fragmentation and minimise the impact of any perverse incentives that result from it
- To bid for, or gain access to, new resources
- To meet a statutory requirement

Powell and Exworthy (2002), in a cross-discipline review of network literature, also note the use of partnerships to address ‘wicked’ problems and identify “some agreement on the importance of reducing transaction costs through developing trusting, long-term, embedded, obligatory relationships” (21).

Powell and Glendinning (Powell & Glendinning 2002) discuss some of what they call partnership ‘models’—and their rationales—found in the literature (although given the lack of information available about the set-up, structure or operation of these ‘models’, they might better be considered desired outcomes). All three could have been rationales for establishing the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse:

1. Synergy or added value model—increase the value created by combining assets and powers of separate organisations
2. Transformation model—change the aims and cultures of the partner organisations with the degree and direction of change dependant on the power of the organisations
3. Budget enlargement model—more resources can be brought to a policy or welfare issue

If, as the authors comment, different "models may be appropriate in different contexts" (5), partnerships set up in hopes of achieving all three outcomes may face a considerable challenge. However, domestic violence in Scotland clearly would qualify as an appropriate policy problem to address with a partnership under these and the Audit Commission's guidelines.

What is a partnership?

What is a partnership? Powell and Glendinning (2002: 2) remark that the concept "risks becoming a 'Humpty Dumpty' term (when I call something a partnership, by definition it is one . . .)" and that "simply terming a relationship a 'partnership' does not make it so". They go on to cite Ling (2000, 82), who "claims that the partnership literature amounts to 'methodological anarchy and definitional chaos' (3)."

The Audit Commission (1998: 8) described the working of a partnership as one in which the members:

- Are otherwise independent bodies;
- Agree to cooperate to achieve a common goal;
- Create a new organisational structure or process to achieve this goal;
- Plan and implement a joint programme;
- Share relevant information, risks and rewards.

Lowndes and Skelcher (1998) are convinced that it is important to distinguish partnership—an organisational structure—from modes of governance. Partnerships can reflect several modes of governance
depending on their stage of development and the particular activity involved. After a review of urban regeneration partnerships, they commented that *market*, *hierarchical*, and *network* modes are identifiable and that “multi-organisational partnerships have a particular affinity with network modes of governance.” They suggest that there are four stages of a partnership life cycle:

1. Prepartnership collaboration (network governance)
2. Partnership creation and consolidation (hierarchical governance)
3. Partnership programme delivery (market governance)
4. Partnership termination (network governance)

This analysis offers some insight into the multiple stages and objectives (strategic and operational) of partnerships, adding to the complexity of assessing them. However, how assignments of “modes of governance” help us understand how partnerships operate in shifting political and historical contexts is hard to identify. Focussing on governance structures and labels (and using a linear, chronological model of policy progression) may make the questions of who decides and who benefits harder rather than easier to address. Confusing terminology makes the utility of this literature even less clear. Regarding the use of governance terminology, Powell and Exworthy point out (2002: 16, citing Huxham) that numerous terms are used to describe governance structures that work across organisations and that no particular usage has been clearly defined or used consistently. (They define a partnership as a “quasi-network or intermediate form of organisation that is distinctive from both hierarchies and markets”.)

Analysing partnerships as *modes of governance* sited in the theories of governance and networks is helpful for understanding the policy making process as a dynamic of networks and players,
understanding governance may not much illuminate these questions of who decides and who benefits. As Lowndes and Skelcher point out about the governance literature:

> What remains unanswered—and, to some extent, unasked—are the conventional questions of pluralist debate: who has power, who gains and who loses as the policy makers' obsession with networks and partnerships grows? (1998: 331)

**Paradigm of a successful partnership**

Analysis of the Partnership initially focused on the extent to which it was a “good” partnership—was it set up using standards of good practice, did the civil servants taking the lead set the stage for the Partnership to succeed? If the Partnership is a critical case as a government-initiated and -supported partnership formed expressly to address the complex social problem of domestic violence in Scotland, how much did the Partnership set up by the Scottish Office reflect what government and policy makers knew about making partnerships work? Initial analysis of the Partnership addressed these questions through the framework of literature on “successful” partnerships and on guidance for “doing” partnerships; both are briefly described below.

A number of common themes run through the literature regarding the ideal characteristics of successful partnerships, although *successful* is rarely defined. Those themes include the following:

1. The partners share a vision of the problem and the task.
2. Resources, in numerous forms, are available.
3. The partnership can operate with some significant autonomy, and its work carries some authority.
4. The partners exhibit substantial trust in each other.
5. Partners understand that they all operate in an interdependent context.
6. Information gathering and decision making happen in a relatively transparent process.

"Success" in this literature is largely based on models looking to generate outcomes relating to services and provider relations. (Success for whom and to do what is not much addressed, an omission that will be discussed below.) Hudson and Hardy (2002) discuss the task of defining and measuring the success of a partnership, proposing criteria taken from "extensive empirical research carried out over two decades, principally in the fields of health and social care" (52). They suggest six principles of partnership:

1. Acknowledgment of the need for partnership
2. Clarity and realism of purpose
3. Commitment and ownership
4. Development and maintenance of trust
5. Establishment of clear and robust partnership arrangements
6. Monitoring, review and organisational learning

Evaluations of partnerships, they comment, can look at first-order and second-order outcomes. First-order outcomes are "better coordinated, better-integrated (more 'joined-up') services delivered to end users", and second-order ones are "perceived changes to intersectoral, inter-organisational, inter-governmental, inter-professional working" (62).

Despite its service focus, this literature offers a widely accepted set of assumptions about the character of effective partnerships. In addition, as a number of authors note, partnerships have been a
feature of policy making for many years, and there is a substantive literature providing guidance about the process, the “doing” of partnerships. As Ling (2000) points out and Powell and Exworthy (2002) echo, “There is no shortage of advice on how to ‘do partnerships’”. The latter cite numerous examples in the academic and public sector literature, including an Audit Commission (1998) checklist for how to set up and operate a partnership, Department of Health documents (1998), and Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions documents (2000) (Powell & Exworthy 2002: 22-23). In addition, in 1996 Hague and colleagues had published a study of multi-agency work on domestic violence, and in 1998 CoSLA published its Guidance on Preparing and Implementing a Multi-agency Strategy to Tackle Violence against Women. Nineteen local violence-against-women or domestic violence multi-agency groups were in place in Scotland when the Partnership was established in 1998.

Interviews with civil servants involved in setting up the Partnership and with initial members sitting on it indicate that the civil servants involved in the Scottish Office had little or no experience working with partnerships. A number of civil servants were asked to describe the planning and recruitment for the Partnership. One, when asked why a partnership format was chosen, remarked that the answer to that was “simply” because a multi-agency group was recommended in the recent report on service provision that had come out (Henderson 1997). She indicated that she and other civil servants had not felt the need for guidance on partnerships, commenting that they just “invited the usual suspects”. Another civil servant remarked that the “push” to do something about women’s issues had come from civil servants higher up:
And these two people [senior civil servants], you know, were under great pressure, and you know, with the consent of the, of the head of the department, they came to me and said, would you help us with this. They said to just set it up as a committee, and so you know, it was my idea right from the start to describe this as a "partnership" and that was accepted inside the Scottish Office, that that was good word. (GH)

When asked if they had consulted with any of the existing multi-agency groups, they indicated that they had not known about them.

One senior civil servant was asked to comment on the fact that a number of members from the voluntary sector had complained in interviews that most of the civil servants and other members of the Partnership knew little about domestic violence. She replied that "we already knew what most of the answers were" and explained that they just wanted people to come to the table with resources and the ability to make decisions for their organisations. (She went on to comment that they had not entirely succeeded at that.)

Thus the Partnership seems to have started out as a committee that was called a partnership—quite reminiscent of the Humpty Dumpty effect alluded to above. Those responsible for setting up the Partnership saw themselves as responding to political imperatives—the need to "do something on women" was how one civil servant put it—as a result of new policy priorities coming from Westminster and in anticipation of new policy priorities from MSPs- and ministers-to-be. The process for setting up the Partnership for those working inside the Scottish Office was a simple and pragmatic one—form a committee. Consulting guidelines for an effective partnership, exploring questions of process, commitment of resources, creating a

---

2 As will be discussed in Chapter 4, Edinburgh and Glasgow were working on or had produced strategies on violence against women.
shared vision, trust, and so on, or even establishing desired outcomes beyond responding to the political imperatives were simply not seen as their tasks.

**Conclusions**

An early theoretical challenge in the research was to identify the significance of the Partnership to feminist goals and to isolate what was telling about the phenomenon rather than what was just interesting. What became increasing clear as the research progressed was that the most salient findings related to the interaction of Scottish feminists in the violence against women sector—with each other and with the State. Understanding how feminists' exploited the intersection of a favourable political opportunity structure (in part created by feminist activists' own organising) with the constitutional and institutional changes emerging from devolution demanded a theoretical context that explored concepts of power, influence, political opportunity, and policy making processes within the frame of a maturing social movement.

The governance literature offered a helpful model of policy making as a dynamic process involving a shifting set of networks and policy communities with shifting relationships to each other and to the formal institutions of the State. The concept of policy feedback and its links with policy lock-in and nondecision making are especially useful and will support discussion of a number of findings in later chapters.
The governance literature also offered a helpful theoretical frame for looking at some of the assumptions of partnership; this was instrumental to the early finding that the Partnership bore little resemblance to a partnership. The difficulty of assembling a “successful” partnership across disciplines and service sectors to create and/or implement policy within a discrete time frame confronts substantial systemic barriers, as the analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 discuss. A partnership, strategic or operational, needs decision makers to take forward joined-up planning or provision, but as governance predicts and Chapter 4 will illustrate, decision makers do not exist at the same levels in all sectors at all times. The Partnership was able to identify and attract only a very few members who brought the ability to make decisions for their sector or group. In some cases this was the product of having invited the “wrong” representative, but in most cases it was because the role did not exist at national level. For example, policy-level authority, decision making and resource distribution for police do not practically happen at a national level in Scotland, and including one police officer from Strathclyde to sit on the Partnership established the police input as advisory only. (Chapter 4 will discuss these issues in more detail.) This has important implications for designing partnerships and for establishing when and where they are appropriate formats for policy making.

The governance literature is less helpful with illuminating how power and influence operate in the new networks and policy communities. In addition, the partnership literature establishes a theoretical framework for characterising effective partnerships that in the context of the Partnership proved largely irrelevant. The civil servants engaged in setting up the Partnership knew little or nothing about the guidance regarding what the new partnership should look like because their desired outcomes were about political imperatives
rather than policy. Addressing domestic violence was not their focus, establishing a political initiative that seemed to be addressing domestic violence was. This recalls Stone’s point about policy analysis trying to move away from the messy issues of power. The establishment of the Partnership was an essentially political decision, and meaningful conclusions about its success seem more likely to come from considerations of who wielded influence and exercised power in whose name. The partnership literature provides abundant guidance on how to do partnerships, but without the context of questions about who decides and who benefits, the framework illuminates little. Instead, models for identifying the more and less explicit exercises of power provided in the agenda setting and decision making literature proved helpful (Bachrach & Baratz 1963; Lukes 1974; Stone 1997). This framework provided the foundation for Chapter 4’s proposed model for looking at how influence and participation are defined and identified.
This work reports the findings of a single case study of a policy-making process: the two-year life of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse (1998 to 2000). The findings are based on analysis of data collected through documents and interviews conducted from 2001 to 2004.

Despite—or maybe because of—six postgraduate research courses, two years of tutoring for a postgraduate research design course, and the successful design and delivery of several pieces of contracted research during my postgraduate career, largely theoretical discussions of research methodology are difficult to come to grips with. Largely abstract theoretical discussions of research methodology that are not grounded in the particular detail and requirements of the study are not especially helpful. Abstract questions about quantitative versus qualitative, deductive versus inductive, ideographic versus nomothetic, and so on always seem to require the same, undoubtedly simplistic, response: What is the best
way to answer the question, given the time and resources available? The design and processes of this study are my answer to that question, and Chapter 2 traces the choices and development involved.

The initial task of course was defining the research question or questions and deciding if they were answerable, given the available skills and resources. Gender inequality and violence against women had been issues central to the work, paid and voluntary, that I had done for almost 25 years. My research interests were widely distributed over health, education, and criminal justice sectors; how to focus on a topic relating to violence against women within a specific area was the first problem.

I called a number of voluntary organisations in the violence against women sector and arranged visits, asking staff members at Zero Tolerance and Scottish Women’s Aid to tell me about their work. I explained that I was a student researcher with a practitioner’s background and that I was looking for a research topic. Did they have suggestions for a small piece of research that they or their organisations would find useful? Women’s Aid sent a note from me out through their network of organisations. Our conversations were congenial, but no suggestions emerged.

Accounts from both Women’s Aid and Zero Tolerance had touched on the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse, and I became interested in it as a piece of policy making. I had participated (in various roles as advocate, service provider, or bureaucrat) on dozens of multi-agency bodies in the US over the years, at community, regional, and state levels. The proliferation of partnerships (in my experience as a practitioner) was a sensible response to fragmented, inadequate service systems designed and managed at arm’s length from the
communities they purported to serve. Partnerships offered a prospect for new, better ways of working that had the potential to create change beyond the margins—to innovate. Investigating their potential through a look at the Partnership was suggested by my supervisor. The following sections of this chapter describe the choices and processes that followed.

It may be worth noting that over the four years of the research, my non-student roles affected not only my role and performance as researcher but also my depth of understanding of Scottish policy, politics and culture. During the period, I joined Engender’s management committee (a feminist information, research and advocacy organisation), I was the primary researcher on a study on older women and domestic violence in Scotland (Scott et al 2004) and worked on an audit of child protection services in a local authority, I joined the Scottish Parliament’s Cross-Party Group on Men’s Violence against Women, and I took a seat on the Violence against Women subgroup of the Women’s National Commission as a representative of the UK Joint Committee on Women. These roles broadened the perspectives I brought to analysing the data, deepened my understanding of the political contexts that the Partnership emerged from, and informed my understanding of the events that followed the Partnership.

The research questions

The overarching theme of the research was the potential for partnerships to support innovation in policy making for domestic violence (and other complex social problems) by providing joined-up
policy and implementation and by opening access to policy making to nonestablished interests.

The study’s primary research questions were:

1. What did agenda setting look like in the Partnership? In the context of prevention, protection, and provision, how did issues appear on the Partnership agenda, how did they evolve, and what survived the process?

2. To what extent did the Partnership foster policy innovation for addressing domestic violence? Did the Partnership encourage participation in policy formation by those who traditionally have little access to the policy-making process? Should those usually outside the process consider partnerships a likely site for gaining better access?

3. Did the Scottish Partnership produce joined-up policy on domestic violence?

4. Are there lessons from the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse to guide consideration of partnerships as tools for making policy in other contexts?

Understanding the historical context of the Partnership, in general, and the historical role of women in Scottish policy making, in particular, is crucial to any explication of the Partnership. The following questions were expected to inform the work as contextual issues:

- Is the current visibility of domestic violence issues in the Scottish Parliament driven by/dependent on the high proportion of women in the Scottish Parliament?
- How is the history of the Partnership related to events surrounding devolution and the structures of the new Scottish Parliament—including its commitment to inclusiveness, equality, transparency, and its current
practices of substantive consultation, consensus-building, and mainstreaming?

As Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate, these proved to be crucial to explaining the establishment of the Partnership and to widening access to the policy process through the Partnership. A case study was chosen as the best approach for answering these questions.

Why a case study?

A case study allows data gathering in a number of ways from a number of sources to study a phenomenon that is inextricable from its context. Yin (1989: 33) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when
- boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and
- multiple sources of evidence are used.

Unlike a survey or experiment, a case study of the Partnership allows description and explanation of complex causal links that can be understood only within the real-life context in which the phenomenon occurred. In addition, a case study is preferred for phenomena with no clear, single set of outcomes, certainly the case for the Partnership.

The Partnership represented a case of a government-sponsored multi-agency body established to address a complex social problem which by its nature was not resolvable through categorical approaches. What made the Partnership a good choice for a case study was its character as a critical or crucial case based on these attributes:
• The Partnership happened in Scotland, where “Women have an unprecedented voice and a place in Scottish politics with the advent of the new Scottish parliament. . . . As such Scotland is arguably at the cutting edge of gender politics and democratic practice”. (Breitenbach & Mackay 2001: 1).
• The Partnership represented a highly visible commitment by both MSPs and Scottish Executive to address domestic violence at the policy level.
• New resources were to be made available.
• Domestic violence has been identified by the government as a complex, difficult social problem—a “wicked” issue.
• Multi-agency partnerships have been identified as the appropriate policy-making response in many settings, including domestic violence (Hague & Malos 1996).

Thus, it seemed as if there were minimal barriers and a maximal political opportunity structure.

According to Patton (1987),

A clue to the existence of a critical case is a statement to the effect that ‘if it happens there, it will happen anywhere,’ or vice versa, ‘if it doesn’t happen there, it won’t happen anywhere’. . . it makes strategic sense to pick the site that would yield the most information and have the greatest impact in the development of knowledge.

Hakim (1987) refers to the “strategic” case study, “which assesses the evidence for a conclusion or explanation by looking at the most favourable illustration of it”. A strategic case study is one example of focused sampling. Thus the Partnership represents a case of “if it doesn’t happen here, it won’t happen anywhere.”

Finally, I wanted to know the following about the Scottish Partnership: (1) whether and how the Partnership was an effective structure for improving domestic violence policy for Scotland and (2) how the Partnership as multiagent organization functioned to support (or not) policy innovation. Many of the “how” answers to
these questions would be embedded in the processes of the Partnership and may be context-specific. Nevertheless the underlying intent was to look for lessons/observations useful both for those working to end violence against women and for policy makers looking for political and social mechanisms to make policy making more accessible. And here, although I use the word cautiously, was the potential for theoretical generalisation about the potential of partnerships—generalising in the broadest meaning of the word. Seale (1999) calls this analytic induction, referring to inferences made from one particular context to other comparable contexts. Indeed, Platt (1988: 18) argues that there is "no reason to except case studies from the normal assumption that one can reasonably make generalisations from what one knows already until information inconsistent with this becomes available." Walton (1992: 122) describes this process:

Cases come wrapped in theories. They are cases because they embody causal processes operating in microcosm. At bottom, the logic of the case study is to demonstrate a causal argument about how general social forces take shape and produce results in specific settings. That demonstration in turn is intended to provide at least one anchor that steadies the ship of generalization until more anchors can be fixed for eventual boarding. . . . In the logic of research we endeavour to find fertile cases, measure their fundamental aspects, demonstrate causal connections among those elements, and suggest something about the potential generality of the results. However gingerly, we try to make an argument about both the particular circumstances and the universe. . . .

The Partnership represented a very "fertile" case whose examination did lead to theorising—suggested however "gingerly"—about structures appropriate (and not) for joining up policy across complex policy networks.
Why a single case?

Options for comparative work—including the multi-agency bodies addressing domestic violence in Northern Ireland and Wales, for example—were considered. For a number of reasons, the decision was to focus on the single case of the Partnership in Scotland:

1. The development of national strategies was in different stages in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.
2. The research questions were already ambitious, and including the additional cases seemed likely to require too much time and to provide material that was not readily comparable.
3. The cost of researching outwith Scotland was prohibitive, and the study was time limited.

Other considerations that supported a single-case focus were that (1) the Partnership had a discrete start and finish; (2) the documents were available (there were two written products from the Partnership—the *Report* and the *National Strategy*, and I had gained access to Partnership minutes, see appendix); and (3) most of the actors involved were still in the area and accessible for interviews.

Time

The launch of the Partnership and the launch of its National Strategy seemed logical start and end dates for the study. That was intended to be interpreted with some flexibility as it was clearly important to contextualise the set-up of the Partnership. Staying focused on the “end” of the Partnership was more difficult, however. As events unfolded around the implementation phase, particularly the ongoing work of the National Group and its shift of the national policy focus from domestic violence to the broader violence against women, maintaining a strict focus on events through 2000 became less and
less useful. However, the primary focus of the research remained on the 1998-2000 period of the Partnership.

Methods

As is becoming evident, the research was carried out as an iterative process. It proceeded from a set of questions and was carried out within an increasingly explicit feminist perspective, but examination of documents and conducting of interviews were all opportunities to reflect on and re-examine the questions and assumptions of the research.

Some observations regarding "a feminist perspective" seem relevant. First, at the beginning of the research, I was an experienced feminist practitioner with many years of work in the world of policy and service provision for women and children. I was also a novice researcher intimidated by academic discussions of theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and competing epistemologies. If I declared this work as "feminist research", what did that mean? Would I need to change how I thought about and engaged in the research? Would academia change how it valued the findings? I knew what "feminist" meant in my personal and professional lives; from those experiences, I was deeply suspicious of what it might signal in the academic world.

As the research progressed and I increased my exposure to the practice of feminists who research, I came to a number of conclusions. First, as was said so succinctly in a lecture on "feminist" research design, feminist research methodology simply assumes that "gender matters". The main useful lesson I drew from debates about whether there is a distinctive feminist methodology for
research is that I was committed to doing research where ‘gender matters’. I would add to that Cynthia Cockburn’s (1991) observation that feminists assume that women’s subordination is systemic.

**Data gathering**

Answering the research questions required data about both the processes of the Partnership, the effects of participation, and Partnership policy outputs. A number of methods for gathering the data were considered:

- interviews with Partnership members
- interviews with key stakeholders who were not members
- interviews with women MSPs
- interviews with survivors of domestic violence
- surveys sent to organisations working in the violence against women sector
- surveys sent to members of the Partnership
- analysis of Partnership papers—meeting notes, briefing papers, etc
- analysis of media accounts and press releases regarding violence against women during the life of the Partnership
- analysis of consultation responses to Partnership draft documents

Given the time available and the analytic focus on policy products and Partnership processes, the following methods were chosen:

- Interviews with selected members of the Partnership
- Interviews with civil servants and politicians involved in the Partnership but not sitting as members on it
- Interviews with respondents across selected sectors who were outside the Partnership process but working on violence against women in their sector (health, voluntary sector services, etc)
- Documentary analysis of:
Surveys were reconsidered several times during the research process—for example, at one point when gathering opinions and accounts about trust building in the Partnership (a theme in the partnership literature) seemed important but was not emerging in a useful way in the interviews. (As it turned out, early in the analysis it became clear that the Partnership was not a partnership in any sense but name only, and the issue of trust became minor rather than primary.) Each time, however, the usefulness of gathering additional input in this manner was outweighed by the investment of time and the uncertainty about how much the results would tell us.

**Interviewing**

A total of 28 interviews were carried out with 24 respondents (follow-up interviews were conducted with 4 respondents). Nine of the respondents were not members of the Partnership. Respondents were chosen based on a number of thematic strands, some of which changed as the research progressed. For instance, choices of some of the early interviewees were based on the assumption that the concept of insiders and outsiders to the Partnership would be germane. As will be mentioned in the discussion of coding, those categories became less germane as other themes emerged. Analysis of the policy looked for initiatives in the major sectors—health, justice, social work—and respondents were identified according to their sector. One of the most fruitful sources for respondents came from examining the consultation responses and identifying individuals and organisations with particular perspectives.
Interviews were pursued until the information coming in added little new data to the picture. Two potential interviewees were pursued over 2 years but could not be interviewed. One was a health representative, who agreed to an interview but then was unavailable in subsequent contacts, and the other was the representative from the Crown Office, who on two occasions was refused permission to participate by her managers.

The interviews were semi-structured, and respondents were sent an outline of the topics prior to the interviews. All but two of the respondents gave permission for their interviews to be taped and transcribed. Interviews ranged in length from half an hour to 2 ½ hours; most were about 90 minutes.

**Ethics**

Ethical issues for this research revolved chiefly around protecting respondents' identities, as some of the material addressed sensitive political decisions. All respondents were promised that no direct quotes with names attributed would be used in the thesis without a request for their permission first. In the write up, interviewees have been assigned random codes in the form of two initials. When a quote is in a sensitive area and the speaker's identity could be deduced from other quotes used, those initials have been left out.

Much of the Partnership work is in the public domain, and statements or discussions that were already part of a public record were considered less problematic.

**Analysis**

Interviews were transcribed and coded using Nvivo (see appendix). The Partnership meeting notes and papers and lengthy notes from the consultation responses were scanned into files along with most of
the National Strategy. The interviews were all coded, and the documents were partially coded so that relevant themes appearing both in the documents and interviews could be sorted and retrieved together. What Fielding and Lee (1998) call “analytic memos” were used to document what the codes indicated and speculations about connections and meanings associated with some of the coding.

Some thought went into establishing a coding structure that would both (1) allow identification of material with meaning for a theme and (2) allow new or contradictory themes emerge. Fielding and Lee’s advice on coding was particularly helpful:

An ‘analytic theme’ is no more than an idea relating to the social phenomenon upon which data has been collected and which one wishes to discuss in interpreting the phenomenon. What is the relationship between a theme and a ‘code’ (or ‘category’)? It is often the case that a theme draws on several ideas, each of which is represented by a code. Sometimes a theme is fully represented by a single code. . . . While some segments might exactly represent the sense of the code term the researcher is using, it is more likely that the segment will represent only an aspect or shade of meaning of the code. This is helpful to the researcher because it offers an agenda of nuances within the code which can be developed in writing up. Indeed it is this which lends qualitative analysis its richness, its ability to represent social phenomena from several angles. (1998: 86-87)

The plan for analysis was to code the data and then look across categories and codes to identify conclusions. The process in reality was far different and more protracted—an interesting lesson for me as a researcher. Analysis did happen during the coding stage. An initial set of about 20 codes were identified—some hierarchical, some independent—that reflected the search for data needed to answer the research questions. As the material was coded, numerous thoughts for more codes occurred, sometimes refinements of existing codes,
sometimes new categories that seemed to be emerging. At the same
time some of the original codes became less and less relevant as little
or no data seemed to fit them. The process of coding was also the
process of analysis. And the coding structure was created both from
the themes established prior to data gathering and from examination
of the data for meaning. Thus the codes became "an artful
construction", created from work with the data and from the
researcher’s own perspective (Fielding & Lee 1998).

Writing up the findings and creating a story of the Partnership was
another step in the analysis. Connecting the findings across
categories (for example, the Partnership’s effect on relationships
between feminist organisations with the movement of feminist
activists into the policy network) to draw a bigger picture was
particularly challenging and meant that conclusions drawn months
before often had to be reconsidered and rearticulated. Some of the
most interesting insights from the research did not become visible
until late in the writing. It was hard to predict when or how the
conclusions could finally be considered final. This challenge was
exacerbated of course by the realities of time pressures and
submission dates.

Roads not taken

A number of decisions regarding design and methodology were
sensible at the time but with hindsight might have been made
differently. First, I had not predicted the difficulty I would have
working from a number of quite diverse literatures that were all new
to me. For instance, the governance and partnership literature was
important for understanding the models of policy making with which
I was working. However, identifying that the literature was not adequate to explain the Partnership as a response to a political problem rather than a social problem was delayed by the assumption that I needed to understand the literature better rather than because it was not that helpful.

Second, the nature of a case study seemed to bias the perspective towards the status quo. The consideration and discussion so focused on an existing phenomenon makes constructing alternative possibilities less likely, and many of the respondents seem to struggle when asked to think about and suggest ways that a partnership to make policy on domestic violence could have been better. Other less traditional techniques for the interviews, such as creating a fantasy partnership or a fictional account that respondents could have responded to (as well as addressing the issues of what actually happened), could perhaps have made responses more illuminating.

Finally, although a comparative study was not deemed possible with this piece of work, it would be very interesting to look at partnerships in Wales and Northern Ireland, where the political opportunity structures have also been in transition and have become more favourable. If, as Chapter 7 speculates, the innovation identified in the Partnership was linked more to the opportunities offered by the events and structures of devolution rather than to the nature of partnership, an examination of partnerships in Wales and Northern Ireland might be illuminating.
Who came to the Partnership’s table?

One of the central policy questions of this research is whether partnerships encourage new voices to come to the policy table and thereby offer new opportunities to influence policy for those historically outwith the policy process. Chapters 4 through 6 ‘unpick’ this question, using our case of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse. This chapter looks specifically at how the membership of the Partnership was constituted and how members involved themselves in the work: who was invited to join the Partnership and who was not, who participated in substantive ways and who did not.

How to assess access and participation of new voices was an early analytical question, and this chapter introduces a framework for looking at access (or membership) and participation. As the chapter demonstrates, the initial membership of the Partnership—invited by the Scottish Office and self-invited—reflects the presence and
involvement of feminist activists from the violence against women sector.

A Framework for Membership and Participation

Do partnerships for policy making offer opportunities to make better public policy? The proliferation of partnerships seems to indicate that many government and statutory authorities think so. A rigorous definition of "better" policy is outwith the scope of this research, but some assumptions appear routinely in the literature. Drawing in new participants with new expertise to policy making, particularly in the context of addressing 'wicked' issues such as domestic violence, may improve policy. The presence (or absence) of new voices in the Partnership policy process is explored here through membership and participation in the processes of partnership. The simple framework used here for looking at membership and participation assumes a series of dependent processes. The second and third processes each depend on the preceding one but do not automatically follow from it:

Figure 4.1 Framework for membership and participation

The first, access, requires invitation or permission to sit at the policy table, in our case, the Partnership. Getting that access is a function
of numerous possible factors, including publicly acknowledged expertise, influence in networks, ability to offer resources, relationships with gatekeepers, potential for problems caused by no invitation, and so on.

Membership and access were explored in interviews; respondents answered questions about how members got to the Partnership and who was not invited but should have been. Respondents included Partnership members as well as informants inside the policy community but outwith the Partnership (e.g., members of existing domestic violence forums, Women’s Aid workers, feminist health care professionals with high profiles in women’s health issues). How the original members were identified was also explored in interviews with the civil servants involved in setting up the Partnership.

Once access is gained, the next step is making oneself ‘heard’—as evident in substantive participation that is reflected in group agendas, meeting notes, leadership, and decision making. This process was explored chiefly through analysis of meeting notes and Partnership documents and through interviews with members. The analysis and findings are presented here and in Chapter 5.

The final process in our framework is influencing—as reflected in policy outputs and discourse, problem definitions, implementation strategies, and the like. (Again, this does not necessarily follow from being heard.) Chapter 6 presents findings about feminist influence on discourse and policy through the Partnership, placing them in the historical context of feminist organising, political opportunity structures and devolution.

The framework for looking at participation used here closely resembles that of a recent (April 2005) report by Mackay and
colleagues on "Access, voice . . . and influence? Women's organisations in post-devolution Scotland". Their model identifies access, voice and influence as the three key components for looking at the impact of women's groups, although their focus is influence on government and Parliament, rather than influence on policy. They too point out that being a voice at the table does not guarantee being heard nor does being heard guarantee influencing (2005: 9). See Chapter 6 for further discussion.

**Membership and successful partnerships**

As we have seen, one of the primary rationales for using partnership formats is to bring key players in the public and voluntary sectors together to create and implement cross-cutting policy solutions to 'wicked' problems. The process of identifying and gathering the right players to address a problem is therefore crucial to a successful partnership.

Getting the right people to the table of any multi-disciplinary partnership is a balancing of participants' sometimes diverse attributes. Making new policy and developing new services (or services delivered in new ways) require the support and endorsement of decision makers in agencies and government departments, not to mention commitments of resources, human and/or financial. In addition, creating innovative and practical policy and program changes that can and will be successfully implemented may rest on getting partnership members who are close enough to service delivery and users' experiences to understand the nitty-gritty tasks of everyday working and the dynamics of providers' interactions. Hague and colleagues (Hague 1998) identified 'key factors' needed to
accomplish changes in services and in overall agency practice. These factors included the involvement of “senior managers and policymakers”. Their interviewees were convinced that

[t]o be effective in instituting service development, representatives need to be at a senior enough level to be able both to contribute meaningfully to the forum and to initiate changes in their own agency in response to interagency policy initiatives, without losing direct practitioner and activist input (443)

Beyond the issues of decision making authority and familiarity with practice issues is the question of what skills do potential members bring to the processes of partnership? Negotiating new ways of working with colleagues from sectors and organisations with different cultures (e.g., contrast the long-established culture of the Scottish civil service with the equally embedded collectivist practice of Scottish Women’s Aid) and different objectives requires what Powell and Exworthy (2002) refer to as

‘champions of change’—committed and charismatic staff who can drive change. In the case of inter-agency working, those individuals with the relevant networking skills have been termed ‘reticulists’ (Challis et al 1988) or ‘partnership champions’ (Audit Commission, 1998). As Hudson et al (1999, p 251) point out, the characteristics of reticulists are likely to include not only technical or competency-based factors, but also social and interpersonal skills. (19-20)

Recruiting members to a new partnership on domestic violence requires some assessment of the need for expertise on the issue and demonstrated commitment to addressing it. Of course the ideal members will come with all the aforementioned attributes: decision making authority, familiarity with practice issues, commitment to inter-agency working and the related skills, and knowledge and
expertise in the relevant subject. Realistically, however, few professionals will have demonstrable expertise in an issue outside their specific area, in this case, domestic violence. Willingness to address the issue is often considered the most important attribute, and the briefing of the group involves significant learning in the initial stages of a partnership.

There is an inherent dilemma in constituting effective partnerships, both strategic and operational. Making new policy and developing new services (or services delivered in new ways) require the support and endorsement of decision makers in agencies and government departments, not to mention commitments of resources, human and/or financial. However, creating innovative and practical policy and program changes that can and will be successfully implemented may rest on getting partnership members who are close enough to service delivery and users’ experiences to understand the nitty-gritty tasks of everyday working and the dynamics of providers’ interactions. Hague and colleagues (Hague 1998), reporting on their major UK study completed in 1996 that examined multi-agency responses to domestic violence, identified ‘key factors’ needed to accomplish changes in services and in overall agency practice. These factors included the involvement of “senior managers and policymakers”. Their interviewees were convinced that “[t]o be effective in instituting service development, representatives need to be at a senior enough level to be able both to contribute meaningfully to the forum and to initiate changes in their own agency in response to interagency policy initiatives, without losing direct practitioner and activist input” (443).

Beyond the issues of decision making authority and familiarity with practice issues is the question of what skills do potential members bring to the processes of partnership? Negotiating new ways of
working with colleagues from sectors and organisations with different cultures (e.g., contrast the long-established culture of the Scottish civil service with the equally embedded collectivist practice of Scottish Women’s Aid) and different objectives requires what Powell and Exworthy (2002) refer to as

‘champions of change’—committed and charismatic staff who can drive change. In the case of inter-agency working, those individuals with the relevant networking skills have been termed ‘reticulists’ (Challis et al 1988) or ‘partnership champions’ (Audit Commission, 1998). As Hudson et al (1999, p 251) point out, the characteristics of reticulists are likely to include not only technical or competency-based factors, but also social and interpersonal skills (19-20).

Recruiting members to a new partnership on domestic violence would seem to require some assessment of the need for expertise on the issue and demonstrated commitment to addressing it. Of course the ideal members will come with all the aforementioned attributes: decision making authority, familiarity with practice issues, commitment to inter-agency working and the related skills, and knowledge and expertise in the relevant subject. Realistically, however, few professionals will have demonstrable expertise in an issue outside their specific area, in this case, domestic violence, and the initial briefing of the group often involves significant learning for many of the members. (See discussion of what makes a ‘successful’ partnership in Chapter 3.)

Since one of the central questions of this research is whether the Partnership brought new voices—particularly voices of those likely to be affected by domestic violence policy making but unlikely to effect policy—to policy making and service development. This chapter examines the Scottish Office’s process of recruiting Partnership
members and assesses the Partnership’s initial membership in terms of representation by substantive area (e.g., health, criminal justice, education) and sector (public, voluntary, those involved in service provision to women experiencing domestic violence). To what extent did the Scottish Office bring in practitioners and advocates outside the ‘usual suspects’ of policy making?

**Coming to the table—forming the Partnership**

The usual suspects of policy making in the context of violence against women may have been a relatively short list, given the lack of national policy making around the issue in Scotland (and of course fewer mechanisms for national policy prior to devolution). The different government departments (health, education, and so on) and branches (judiciary, policing, local authorities, and so on) and their related civil servants are obvious choices, especially when the issue to be addressed has been identified as cross-cutting.

Prospective members considered ‘unusual’ suspects would almost certainly include the experts on violence against women: voluntary sector organisations providing advocacy and services in the field of violence against women. How plentiful were those organisations and to what extent did the Scottish Office tap their expertise for the Partnership?

**Potential new partners**

A substantial amount of feminist organising in the three decades prior to the Partnership focused on violence against women. (See Chapter 6 for a brief description of feminist organising in the period
prior to the Partnership.) Feminist advocates and service providers campaigned to get the issue of violence against women on political agendas and created a network of service provision. By the time of the Partnership, they controlled at least two important resources for ‘cracking’ the problem of domestic violence: an existing national service system and public credibility. Implementation of any policy or programme initiatives would likely require their support and participation.

Breitenbach and Mackay's *Women and Contemporary Scottish Politics* (2001) provides an overview of women’s work for gender equality in Scotland in the recent past. The following discussion of key organisations and issues is draws from that work and from interviews with feminist activists who worked in a number of the organisations described. Because this research is sited in the work on violence against women, the emphasis here is on the organisations active in that area—Scottish Women’s Aid and its network of local branches, Rape Crisis centres (and the new Rape Crisis Scotland organisation), Zero Tolerance Trust, Women’s Support Project in Glasgow. However, other women’s organisations existed or emerged and were influential in the period prior to the Partnership, for example, Scottish Joint Action Group, Women’s Forum Scotland, Engender, Scottish Convention of Women, Scottish Women’s Coordination Group, the women’s group in the STUC.

**Women’s Aid in Scotland** Women’s Aid in Scotland, like its counterparts in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales, emerged from second-wave feminism in the 1970s and is now a network of probably the best-known and most politically visible women’s organisations at local and national level in Scotland. Consisting of approximately 40 branches and a coordinating national office, the Women’s Aid collectives aim to eradicate domestic abuse in Scotland. Their work
involves service provision (through support and refuge services), training and educational work with service providers, and advocacy with local and national politicians.

Women’s Aid has had a relationship with central government since 1976, when the Scottish Office provided funding to set up a national co-ordination office. Local Women’s Aid branches “negotiate routinely with local authorities for financial support” (Cuthbert & Irving 2001: 55), and most now have service agreements with local councils to provide refuge services.

However, Scottish Women’s Aid until recently has been what Stedward (1987) refers to as a “thresholder” organisation—at the doorway to policy and decision making but never inside. The tension involved in being both a service provider and campaigning organisation as well as the feminist collectivist structure of the local and national offices has meant that Women’s Aid had at best an arm’s-length relationship with the Scottish Office until devolution.

Scottish Women’s Aid was the only women’s organisation on the original invitation list for the Partnership. This was the first time the organisation stepped into the policy making arena, despite a 22-year relationship with the Scottish Office and any number of consultation responses, demonstrations, and lobbying of civil servants in Edinburgh and politicians at Westminster. A respondent working in Women’s Aid commented:

*I think the difference—the willingness to have us participating instead of just commenting after the fact—was due to a number of things. There’s no question in my mind that the rise of women’s committees and women’s units, all of the local campaigning work for women’s issues as well as Women’s Aid always going on about the need for services for children and more refuge spaces, that*
made a big difference, finally, although the new Parliament was coming, and that must have had an impact too. (CD)

The new expectation for partnership working and the need to participate in—and devote time and resources to—multi-agency working at the local level has been a mixed blessing for local groups. The obvious boon of enhanced access to and contact with police, social work, housing and health sectors in the community is balanced—and perhaps in some cases outweighed by—the cost of participation. And, of course, local response differs, even within relatively similar regions, as the following comment from a feminist activist reveals:

So, yeah, and then the Women’s Aids groups all differ from each other as well. A lot in fact. A lot. Particularly different in either ability or willingness to get involved in multi-agency working. And Edinburgh’s not been great, Lothian are brilliant, absolutely fantastic. In there with everything that’s going on and they’re not precious. And not at each other throats. (BA)

By 1998 and the initiation of the Partnership, Women’s Aid was the primary gatekeeper for access to women and children experiencing domestic violence and managed an extensive network of services throughout Scotland.

**Rape crisis centres** Scotland’s first rape crisis centre (RCC) opened in Glasgow in 1977; Edinburgh’s followed in 1978. Since then numbers have risen to 14, and a national office was finally funded by the Scottish Executive (Rape Crisis Scotland) in 2003. The original RCCs were overtly radical feminist organisations, and their structures reflected collectivist working practice modelled in centres in the United States and in London (Christianson & Greenan 2001: 69).
By the early 1980s, many RCCs, in response to the large number of calls they received from adult survivors of child sexual abuse, were providing support groups for incest survivors, and in 1985 phone lines staffed by survivors were opened (Christianson & Greenan 2001: 72).

Although no women's organisation providing services to survivors of male violence can ever said to have had adequate and stable funding, RCCs have suffered especially from lack of consistent and reasonable support. Numbers of local offices have closed from lack of funding, and, as mentioned, central funding for a coordinating office did not appear until 2003.

A representative from Rape Crisis was not on the original list of members for the Partnership, but, as discussed below, one was invited after some lobbying.

**Zero Tolerance** The Zero Tolerance (ZT) campaign is an overtly feminist public awareness initiative that “uses a feminist analysis of violence as a male abuse of power and it links sexual violence, domestic violence and child sexual abuse” and, although it emerged from local government, was “based upon and informed by twenty years of groundwork by the women’s movement” (Mackay 2001: 106). The original campaign in 1992 came out of the Women’s Committee of the Edinburgh District Council; that campaign was soon followed by campaigns in eleven other councils in Scotland as well as elsewhere in London and Australia.

Zero Tolerance promoted the three P’s (prevention, provision and protection), which have come to frame the consideration of violence against women in numerous local domestic violence forums and are
an organising structure for the National Strategy. In contrast to Women’s Aid and Rape Crisis work, the ZT focus was not on service provision but on public awareness and political agendas, and their key priority, according to an early campaigner, was primary prevention:

*And also because the agenda that we were pursuing, the primary prevention agenda, was not being pursued by Rape Crisis or Women’s Aid so we were doing stuff and saying things that in some ways was new to them because they were so, their analysis, you know, they were so geared into doing provision type work and supporting women and children so I think what we said was actually a bit challenging for them as well to be honest. [HH]*

Zero Tolerance was not invited to join the Partnership, despite active and high-profile campaigning on the issue, until an influential MSP insisted a year into the work.

**Women’s Support Project (WSP)** The Women’s Support Project grew out of the Glasgow Rape Crisis Centre and the conviction of a number of its workers that development work to “bridge the gap” between those feminist voluntary organisations working with women and children affected by gendered violence and professionals and service providers was desperately needed. In the underfunded and overstretched environment that was work at the Rape Crisis Centre in 1981, education and development work inevitably took a back seat to direct services. By 1983, WSP opened, funded by Urban Aid, eventually identifying the following as their priorities: “to stimulate the development of services, to produce educational material, and to work at keeping women on the agenda of services which at worst have women-blaming responses [to women experiencing male violence] and at best are prepared to refer women on” (Macleod, Bell & Forman 2001: 36).
No one from WSP was asked to be a member of the Partnership, although the organisation was asked to provide a presentation on its work. (However, two staff members were appointed to the National Group in the implementation phase.)

The Invitations: Recruitment by the Scottish Office

How were the members for the Partnership chosen? A number of approaches were open to the Scottish Office civil servants involved in the task, including the following:

1. **Key sector approach.** Identify key sectors, describe the desirable attributes of a participant, and request names from decision makers in each sector.

2. **Identified experts approach.** Network with professionals working in the field on the issue to identify potential members with a track record of work in the area. Invite members from this pool.


4. **Champions-of-change approach.** Identify potential members using criteria for champions of change, seeking people with networking and collaboration skills as well as substantive expertise. (Powell & Exworthy 2002)

5. **Draw on existing networks.** Invite trusted colleagues, department heads and/or individuals whose work and working style are familiar and reliable. Business-as-usual recruitment.
Recruiting partnership members was the Scottish Office's first key task, and the topic was explored in depth in the interviews. None of the Scottish Office interviewees (civil servants who were involved in the set-up of the Partnership) had participated themselves in multi-agency work, and none had any substantial experience in domestic violence or other issues relating to violence against women. According to their accounts, they neither consulted with existing domestic violence partnerships nor explored the literature available at the time. (At the time there were at least 19 multi-agency partnerships on violence against women or domestic violence in Scotland, including ones in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Fife, and over 200 in the UK according to the mapping exercise done by Hague and colleagues (Hague, Malos & Dear, 2001). The following advice was available from a Home Office document, *Multi-agency Guidance for Addressing Domestic Violence* (Home Office 1998: 43):

3.15 The statutory bodies to which this guidance is addressed should seek to ensure their own involvement, and encourage the full and effective involvement of the local voluntary sector.

3.16 Relevant bodies include:

- Women's Aid and other refuges, helplines, advocacy, support and outreach services
- Specialist domestic violence services including those for women and children from ethnic minorities
- Rape Crisis Centres and other rape and sexual assault services
- Child contact centres
- Victim Support
- Community organisations, including groups representing survivors of domestic violence

It seems clear from their comments that the civil servants were aware that gathering the right participants would be key to the Partnership's success. One of the civil servants drafted to create the Partnership made the following comments:
... [T]here was going to have to be representation from the local authorities, from the police, from the health service, from the criminal justice system, Home Office and from the various protagonists. And so our hearts sank a little bit I think when we realized we were going to have to go to so many doors.

... there was a kind of orthodoxy about that because obviously you knew who had to be there, the representatives, but it’s always difficult with these kinds of bodies to identify individuals who will not just come because they have been nominated by their organization, but because they have got some kind of track record.

MS: So did you invite individuals or did you go to the Health Service and say, will you send a representative?

Well it was a bit of both to be truthful. I mean where we could identify strong individuals that we felt, you know would, given their knowledge base and their involvement in the whole area of policy, that they would make a solid contribution. And it is self-evident that people like Lesley Irving from Women’s Aid, you know, how could you not have someone like that there? You know there were people that we were less sure of who came from, say, Rape Crisis, that were not as, you know, such high-profile figures. ... 

(This civil servant was unaware, even by the time of the interview in 2002, that the Rape Crisis worker who, after some lobbying, was eventually invited to represent the Rape Crisis Network, chaired a major, active multi-agency group on violence against women, Edinburgh’s Promoting Women’s Safety Working Group, established in 1996. In 1997 the Promoting Women’s Safety Working Group published the Hidden Figures research on violence against women and an action plan for Edinburgh. These pieces followed publication of a directory of services. The group then went on to develop its multi-agency strategy on violence against women, starting with a two-stage consultation, including questionnaires to agency staff and a
She had in fact a very “high profile” among those working in the field. The interviewee went on to say:

And so it was, a cross, you know there was a question of bridging sometimes inside a group as well which you need to have competence on service delivery which comes through the people with hands-on experience but also the people who were there to put the resources in place on the inside of the process. You know, because its no good having good people delivering services and coming back saying, you know, we need more money, we need more money, you’re not doing this, this, this. That sets up tension of its own and so we were courageous enough to put the policy heads in play around the table, you know, mixed up with everyone on equal terms, it’s a risky thing to do. (GH)

In their empirical research aimed at defining and measuring success in partnerships, Hudson and Hardy (2002) point out that partners bring a number of resources to the table, including some intangible but no-less desirable contributions such as “knowledge, experience, power and legitimacy.” This provides one explanation for the Scottish Office’s focus on Women’s Aid as the sole representative of organisations working on violence against women: the need for local legitimacy.

Resources also include other potential partnership assets. . . . Community groups, for example, are likely to have few tangible resources, but their involvement can confer a local legitimacy that would otherwise be lacking. (Hudson & Hardy 2002: 61)

In addition, through its system of refuges and support services, Women’s Aid offered a ready-made service system through which to channel resources without providing infrastructure support.

---

1Lily Greenan, personal communication.
Despite the awareness that getting both "policy heads" and "people with hands-on experience" was important, a coherent strategy for getting both is hard to discern. Instead, the initial members of the Partnership it seems were recruited often because one of the civil servants knew them and had worked with them before:

... [And that is true of a lot of the people, they actually were on the Departmental list because, you know, when you are in an office like the Scottish Office, you know the people. I mean [named a civil servant in social work] for example you see had worked as a principal when I was in the social work services, and I knew her very well too. ... [A department head in health services], well, I'd worked with her on a review of mental health. She's a psychiatrist. Very good, terrific character. Also a member of the Scottish Institute. Then there were other people, perhaps, who weren't so critical. [A civil servant in Development] who was doing my old job in Housing because again, housing seems to be an important strand in this whole decision. Yes, we all knew each other, too and if the officials know each other there's not exactly a club but again, it's all about confidence and trust and you know, mutual respect as well. (GH)

Another civil servant, when asked how members were identified, seemed perplexed by the question, stating that she did not remember anyone "suing" to get on or anyone being surprised that they had been asked. According to her, the Scottish Office wanted "the usual suspects", decision makers from agencies and organisations who could bring funding with their decisions. She also observed that they were not entirely successful and that many of the participants who came were not able to commit their organisations or agencies to anything.

Thus despite an explicit awareness that the Partnership needed members who were decision makers and members with ‘hands-on’ experience, the civil servants designing the original membership seem
to have chiefly adopted the traditional approach to recruitment, drawing on existing networks. Within their own sphere (the Scottish Office) they recruited six members of the original twenty members; these six were all known quantities who brought familiar working methods and who were respected in the civil service. Their ability to commit their departments’ resources and policy-making mechanisms to a National Strategy seems to have been problematic, however, and none of them had ‘hands-on experience’ with domestic violence issues. (A more detailed discussion of the role and participation of civil servants on the Partnership follows later in the chapter.)

Although the gender balance and dynamics of the group were considered, the specific concern expressed in the interviews was that men recruited to the Partnership might be unwilling to work with a largely female group:

*So to put everyone there in a sort of, a genuine mix of all the stakeholders, both the policy providers and the service deliverers if you like, that’s a very important part of that dynamic. And again, you know, I was very conscious of gender balance as well. I’m sure you’ve looked at that, I can’t even remember at the time what the gender balance was.]*

MS: I think there were definitely more women than men.

*There were I think, that’s correct. But not by many. I think it might have been 10, 8 or something like that.*

(The actual figures were 15 women and 5 men on the original Partnership.)

*But that was important as well you know because it’s still uncomfortable because a lot of men don’t like that situation. . . . [P]eople are still, they can get quite uptight*
about it, and they would prefer not to be involved if they see women in the majority. (GH)

Gender was also mentioned when civil servants were asked about the process of choosing the Partnership’s Chair: the candidate needed to be a female and a solicitor “with gravitas”.

**Getting to the Partnership from Outside**

While civil servants were making their first efforts to assemble members of the Partnership from the Scottish Office, feminists in the violence against women sector were beginning to seek access. One of these experts was Lesley Irving, a public affairs worker at Scottish Women’s Aid who had had some contact with the Scottish Office; she was invited specifically to join the Partnership and was later seconded to the Scottish Executive to support the Partnership. Women’s Aid then lobbied for and got a place for their children’s worker, on the basis that children’s interests needed their own representation. None of the other feminist voluntary organisations were on the initial invitation list despite their obvious expertise. Notable omissions were the Rape Crisis Network, Women’s Support Project, and the Zero Tolerance Trust. The original Scottish Office list of members included a representative from one (nonfeminist) voluntary organisation other than Women’s Aid: Victim Support Scotland.

From the perspective of feminist service providers and advocates, feminists had managed to finally crack open the door to policy and decision making when Scottish Women’s Aid was invited in, but the Scottish Office was slamming it shut right behind them. Women’s advocates, some of whom eventually sat on the Partnership, saw this
as the government's aversion to their radicalism, especially given that feminists had in every sense 'owned' the issue of violence against women over the years and had provided ongoing critique of government's failure to act to protect women. Although the civil servants involved in setting up the Partnership seemed hardly aware of the sector's existence and may have had little explicit exposure to feminist radicalism in the sector, limiting feminist involvement to a single representative from Women's Aid is not hard to understand. The bureaucratic culture of the Scottish Office civil servants, including working practices that involve trusted colleagues within government, and attitudes toward working with women as manifested in comments above must have made a broader invitation to feminists with a critical stance to government policy and provision seem risky.

This is not an unfamiliar pattern. Feminist service provision over the last 30 years has arisen and developed out of a critique of services provided badly or not at all by the statutory sector:

The development of feminist service provision, therefore, could be clearly differentiated from existing statutory responses. Whilst new feminist models prioritised the needs and experiences of women, statutory agencies continued to provide traditional medico-legal services to all individuals, heavily critiqued by feminists. Feminist agencies developed in clear political opposition to the perceived ineffectiveness and stigmatising nature of statutory service provision to women at this time. As a result, there was often little interaction between the two sectors (Dutton & Cavanagh 2003: 13).

The advent of partnerships formed by the statutory sector (focused sometimes just on sexual assault and rape, sometimes domestic abuse, sometimes the broader context of violence against women) has often come exclusion or token representation of feminist service providers. This can result in an isolated and less powerful voice
inside the process, marginalized organisations, and, often, rifts in relationships among feminist organisations (Mackay et al. 2005). In a discussion of the growth of sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) in the UK, Foley notes that feminist service providers have been deliberately left out of partnerships and their work marginalized based on “professional control and the lack of respect and acknowledgement for the work undertaken by feminist organisations . . . hidden under the rhetoric of multi-agency working” (Foley 1996: 170). She cites as a case in point the work in Manchester to establish an SARC, where several members wrote papers acknowledging the work of rape crisis in service development while questioning whether rape crisis centre staff should provide these services.

After the Scottish Office’s announcement that it would be forming a partnership, a number of feminist voluntary organisations made efforts to find out who would be invited to sit on the Partnership, aware that getting women’s organisations other than Women’s Aid invited might be problematic. One of the key feminist organisations addressing violence against women at the time of the Partnership’s initiation was the Zero Tolerance Trust. According to an interview with a respondent then on staff for Zero Tolerance:

And we didn’t come into it, the partnership had been meeting a year before we got in. We had an issue with that. We had obviously played a crucial part in raising the awareness but we had a number of concerns about how the issue had been taken up in policy terms and you’ve then got all the stuff about when feminist issues get taken up how they get diluted in mainstream policy. And what had happened, what we had concerns about was number 1, the onus was on domestic abuse. So we had been, for years we had been trying to make the links between the different forms of violence and all they seemed to be looking at was domestic abuse.
... So we had a number of concerns about how the issue had been taken up in policy terms. They were only focusing on domestic abuse. We were then concerned that the partnership that they had set up did not have people with expert knowledge on that. So they had a whole load of people who in many ways were kind of safe but who had no real history of working on the issue, quite established figures. (HH)

Rape Crisis was another feminist sector organisation that gained membership through outside lobbying:

And I had been on the phone to the civil servant [setting up the Partnership] a couple of times asking "who's going to be on this Partnership?" And "I think the Rape Crisis Network should have a representative on it" and she went "Oh well, I don't know" and I said "Are you aware of the fact that 50% of the women who contact us have been assaulted by partners and ex-partners?" "Oh well no, I hadn't really thought about that," she said. So it had been that and the hemming and having and 2 days after I spoke at that conference [she was publicly critical of a new Scottish Office document on violence against women], and the day after it hit the front page of the Scotsman I got a letter from Helen Liddell asking me to be the rep for the Rape Crisis Network on the Partnership.

... [T]hey clearly felt that by including Women's Aid because they were the voluntary on domestic abuse, and Victim Support, which I would have to say that at that time would still have been the Scottish Office's pet victim organisation, volunteer organisation. They got quite a large chunk of money from the Scottish Office voluntary sector budget at that time. By including them they thought they had covered the bases in terms of the voluntary sector. (GH)

An interviewee from a different feminist organisation commented:

I think that tension has been heightened by things like Victim Support getting lots and lots of money and Victim Support saying they offer a service to women who have experienced domestic abuse or who have experienced rape without linking in with any specialist organisations. . . .
So I think it was more there was surprise that Victim Support were automatically seen as an organization that should be involved right from the start, which as far as I am aware they were. And as I say [other more relevant organisations] weren’t. (IJ)

The final composition of the Partnership thus was a combination of Scottish Office recruiting and of feminist lobbying. The latter produced four new members, two at the initial set-up (the children’s worker from Women’s Aid and the representative from a Rape Crisis Network) and two a year later (the Zero Tolerance representative and one from Shakti Women’s Aid). Despite the fact that there were still only three (and then five) members from the violence against women sector, they were to have a profound effect on the Partnership’s work, as will be discussed later in the chapter’s discussion of participation and in Chapter 5. The following section looks at who the membership actually included in terms of numbers, expertise, and sector.

**Sorting the initial membership—Who was there?**

As mentioned, the Partnership’s initial membership included 15 women and 5 men:

- Mrs Anne Smith QC – Chair
- Councillor Margaret Smith – Aberdeen City Council
- Mrs Oonagh Aitken – Fife Council
- Mr John Harris – CoSLA
- Dr Carol Tannahill – Greater Glasgow Health Board
- Mr Graeme Pearson – Strathclyde Police
- Mrs Betty Bott – Crown Office for Scotland
- Sheriff Daniel Convery
- Ms Agnes Robertson – HMPI Cornton Vale
- Mrs Caroline Graham – MacLeod and MacCallum (Solicitors)
- Ms Lesley Irving – Scottish Women’s Aid
Tables 4-1 and 4-2 sort the membership in two ways, the first by service area and the second by sector.

**Table 4-1**  
**Original Partnership members, number and role, by service area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service area</th>
<th>No. of members</th>
<th>Role(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 civil servant; 1 Greater Glasgow Health Board employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Deputy chief constable, Strathclyde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judiciary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sheriff, Glasgow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other criminal justice, law</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4 civil servants, 2 solicitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence against women</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Practitioners, 2 from SWA, 1 from RCN (national remit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (local govt, Victim</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 councillor (Aberdeen), 1 local authority employee (Fife), 1 CoSLA employee, 1 director of VSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Services)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**  
20                                                                                                    

Abbreviations: CoSLA, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities; RCN, Rape Crisis Network; SWA, Scottish Women’s Aid; VSS, Victim Support Services.
Table 4-2  Original Partnership members, by sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Number of members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Office</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local govt or services</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary (2 Women’s Aid, 1 Rape Crisis, 1 Victim Support Services)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison Service, Crown Office, Judiciary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector solicitors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at these tables, a number of observations occur:

- Eight of the 20 (40%) were civil servants.
- Seven of the 20 (35%), including the Chair, were involved in law and/or criminal justice areas; none were from Scottish Legal Aid.
- One member had decision-making authority at national level for her service area (director of VSS).
- No social work practitioners participated.
- No politicians were members.
- No national level NHS management was represented.

The high proportion of civil servants and of members from law and criminal justice likely reflect the fact that the civil servants who set up the Partnership were from this area, and, as we have seen, tended to recruit members with whom they had already worked.

No one at the table could be said to have brought significant financial or political clout to creating a national policy; just a few members may have been in a position to make decisions for their professions or to contribute significant new funding (see discussion below). (Although, as mentioned, the civil servants thought new monies
might become available with the advent of the new Parliament, none were on offer at the start of the Partnership.) The civil servants taking the lead, as quoted above, had created a membership for the Partnership that reflected a within-government perspective on policy making with the addition of a few known quantities from outside. One anomaly is notable: The choice to appoint a Chair who was not a high-profile minister or deputy minister and who had no demonstrated interest in domestic violence may have signalled some ambivalence within central government about taking on this issue. Without a commitment of money from within or political support or pressure from outside, the incentives for departmental civil servants to invest in and 'own' a national strategy on domestic violence may well have been few. The low level of participation by departmental civil servants, discussed below, could have reflected this lack of investment.

The resources brought to the Partnership by its initial members, its raw materials so to speak, thus were relatively skewed towards the expertise of those who had some direct experience working in the field. These members included, obviously, the Women's Aid and Rape Crisis representatives. Others with some background in work on domestic violence were relatively few: the police officer (involved in Strathclyde in an initiative to address domestic violence) and the local government representatives. Interestingly, those were also the members on the Partnership with some experience in multi-agency working or, as one interviewee put it, "process analysis":

The Scottish Office officers who were there it was clear didn’t talk to each other. There was very little communication, it became apparent, between the Scottish Office departments. They weren’t used to doing interdepartmental working, never mind multiagency work. They hadn’t got a clue about the rules of engagement. Em, they were very naïve; there was a lot of
naïveté about partnership and about what partnership meant. And it was interesting: In a sense the voluntary sector in that context were the experts on partnership because we'd been working at it for years. We'd been actively seeking partnerships with other voluntaries and with statutory agencies. . . . Yeah, we'd done the process analysis, each of us in our own way at different points in our working lives. And so we, we saw a lot of what was going on. (FF)

Who was missing?

Analysis of the membership also explored the question of who was not at the Partnership table who might have been, using the models for successful partnership and input from interviews with respondents inside and outside the Partnership. Interviews with members of the Partnership explored two areas around this question: (1) who seemed invested and participated substantively and who did not and (2) in their experience inside and outside the Partnership, were there others who might have contributed significantly to work of the Partnership but were not invited to the table? Interviews with respondents with some visibility in the violence against women sector but not involved or invited to the Partnership included questions about (1) what respondents knew about how the Partnership members were identified and how well the membership fit the task and (2) how the products of the Partnership might have looked if membership had been different.

Survivors The most noticeable gap in the membership was the lack of survivor\(^2\) representation on the Partnership.\(^3\) One member of

---

\(^2\) The word *survivor* is used here as the preferred label for women experiencing or having experienced male violence. The term emerged from a critique of labels such as *victim* or *battered woman* that identified women in terms of their victimisation instead of their survival. According to Lewis and colleagues (2001: 105), the term recognises “women as survivors engaged in a process of ‘active negotiation and strategic resistance’ rather than as passive victim’s of men’s violence.”
the Partnership commented that he thought it significant that no survivors were recruited (who were identified as such) but that he suspected that the civil servants were too uncomfortable with the idea. He added that:

*I'm no' sure how well the group would have responded to what survivors might have wanted. . . . I suppose it was one of the first opportunities that the Scottish Executive took in grabbing a problem and saying, let's throw a bit of time at it and see what all the various experts can tell us, and let's design a strategy on the back of it. So, let's no' be small-minded, let's have that as an achievement as itself. (BB)*

The National Strategy makes no references to involving survivors in policy making. In a section on making links between service providers, it does recommend “regular contact”:

>[Services should] undertake initiatives through the group and evaluate the work which is carried out on a regular basis, ensuring that there is regular contact with both women and children who have experienced domestic abuse. *(National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland)*

The *Report of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse* (Henderson 2000) recommends evidence-based work in general and consultation with survivors in particular but does not address their absence from the policy process:

The development of further work should be based upon the continued use of evidence, which should include the development of consultation with both women and

---

3 Given the prevalence of domestic violence, it is highly likely that survivors were there but not identified as such. As Hague and colleagues (2002) point out: "evident throughout the study was the role played by relevant professionals who are themselves survivors of domestic abuse in almost all domestic violence forums and projects. Many have not felt able to be open about their status as survivors . . . [for fear that] they may be regarded negatively if they speak from that experience, rather than solely from professional expertise."
children who have experienced domestic abuse, in order to inform this process.

**Health** Most of the comments on Partnership membership from respondents focused on health sector representation. (The two members from health were a civil servant in the Health Department with a background in forensic psychiatry, and a director of health promotion for the Greater Glasgow Health Board; neither had worked on violence against women projects, and neither brought authority to make national NHS policy decisions.) Two questions emerged. First, where was a high-level NHS decision maker who would champion change and joined-up work within the National Health Service? One respondent who worked in the NHS but was not a member of the Partnership pointed out that what was needed was someone at or close to chief executive level to champion change and someone within the Executive who could get the changes integrated into the accountability structures:

*I think one of my constant concerns was that they really ought to have a Chief Exec from one of the Trusts on the partnership group because the NHS is so enormous. . . . [And then someone has to] get the policy changes written into things like the NHS Performance Assessment framework because that is the framework for the NHS against which they are judged by, the different boards are judged by the Scottish Executive. It's not in there at the moment, there is not a mention of anything remotely related. (II)*

Second, why did the health members not include any of the people from health who had been working on violence against women issues within the NHS and on existing multi-agency groups? Several respondents, members and non-members, referred to the work on violence against women and women's health being done by several feminists in the Greater Glasgow Health Board, indicating that they
would have been logical candidates for the Partnership. One member respondent from the voluntary sector commented that the membership should have included either a decision maker or somebody with experience in the area of violence against women:

Instead we got neither. We got someone who had no background in the subject whatsoever, wasn’t particularly supportive and didn’t contribute very much. And the other health person was a cycle of violence defender who was very hard work. In that initial first meeting discussion about definition she was the one who really hammered away at it wasn’t just about women being victims. Men could be victims. And it was just very, very hard work. Because she was coming at it from—her focus was on individual pathology. (EE)

Appointment of the latter member referred to above was particularly problematic, and the conflict of differing causal explanations at the Partnership’s first meeting “could have been disastrous” according to one respondent from the voluntary sector. Another commented:

That was the bit—it really made us almost come unglued in the first meeting—it was about causes, what was causal. (IJ)

As Chapter 5 recounts, the group finally agreed on a gendered definition that aligned with a feminist analysis of domestic violence, but it was later considered a barely averted disaster.

Who is missing from “Who was missing”? Asking interviewees ‘who was missing?’ provoked a wide range of responses, some of which have been quoted above. A few respondents—inside and outside the Partnership—were swift to reply, having an analysis ready about who should have been invited. Most respondents, members and non-members, however, appeared surprised by the question, often seeming to struggle with how to conceive of a
different Partnership; a number of these responded with broad statements about the successes of the Partnership.

Two respondents noted that the education sector lacked representation. (A member was invited from Education but rarely attended; see discussion of participation below.) And one respondent remarked that a minister or deputy minister should have been chair. None of the respondents commented on the lack of a representative from a perpetrators programme, from the Scottish Legal Aid Board, or from a Procurator Fiscal's office.

The difficulty with constructing visions or alternative theories about Partnership structures and outcomes suggest the possibility that nondecision making was occurring, that is, the exercise of power evidenced by the absence of discussion or debate. This process is discussed in detail in Chapter 5, which looks at the processes of the Partnership and draws on literature about agenda setting and decision making.

**Sector membership and national policy making**  If, as mentioned above, successful partnerships need partners with certain attributes, including the right mix of authority and expertise, how did the Partnership as initially constituted measure up? And how might it have been different? The largest representation on the Partnership was from the law and criminal justice sector, so that will serve as the focus for this discussion.

Law and criminal justice encompass a number of very large and very powerful institutions: police, judiciary, the Crown Office and Procurators Fiscal Service (COPFS), and the legal profession. These institutions have fundamental roles in all three P’s of the national framework for addressing domestic violence: *Prevention*, primary
and secondary, requires sanctioning of offenders, sanctioning that sends a cultural message about the unacceptability of violence and that prevents repeat offending through appropriate conviction, sentencing and probation systems. Protection of women experiencing domestic violence requires appropriate and timely interventions by police, successful prosecution and sentencing of offenders by courts and judges, and practical support for getting interdicts and other legal interventions from lawyers and judges. Provision for survivors includes police services such as domestic abuse liaison programmes and legal aid for women involved in court and other legal structures.

The members associated with criminal justice thus had a potentially crucial contribution to make to the work of the Partnership. To what extent did they bring expertise and authority?

- The police representative brought a background of work on domestic violence. He could not make commitments on behalf of any police body other than Strathclyde.
- The sheriff chosen had no particular history of work or commitment to addressing domestic violence (unlike a number of other sheriffs who might have been chosen). He was nominated by the Sheriff's Association, a professional association; as a member of the Council of the Sheriff's Association, his name was passed to the Scottish Office as the sheriff who would participate. His participation was advisory, and he had no authority to make commitments on behalf of sheriffs.
- The representative from the Crown Office brought a background of work on victims' services and may have had experience with specialist work on domestic violence. It is unclear what authority she brought. (Crown Office refused two requests for interviews.)
- The representative from the Prison Service worked at Cornton Vale and had no decision making authority for the Prison Service as a whole.
• The members from the legal system had no specialist background in working on domestic violence. One represented the Law Society of Scotland and was a private solicitor. No one had authority to act on behalf of solicitors as a profession.

How might this line-up have been different? If interest and previous experience working on issues related to violence against women were the chief criterion, it seems likely that expert members from all the legal and criminal justice areas could have been found, given that 19 local multi-agency forums to address domestic violence or violence against women were operating in Scotland at the initiation of the Partnership and that local and national work had been going on for many years.

If decision-making authority were the chief criterion, however, recruiting appropriate members may have been more difficult. The structures of the sectors—and the institutions in them—do not match well with policy making at the national level. Although there are coordination and control functions performed by the Scottish Executive departments (exercised often through rule making for and distribution of funding), police, courts, and judges do not engage in or respond to centralised decision making in a coherent and linear fashion. What police officer could have served on the Partnership and made commitments for policing in all of Scotland? The national body of police chief constables—Association of Chief Police Officers (Scotland), or ACPO(S)—is a professional association, not a decision making body. What sheriff or judge could have decided for judges and sheriff? The national body for sheriffs is the Sheriff's Association, another professional association. The COPFS is the only part of the sector with a centralised structure, and a member from the Crown Office's policy group may well have been able to make
commitments for policy in Procurators Fiscal offices throughout Scotland.

The health sector has centralised and regional policy structures (through NHS national managers), although regional health boards have significant autonomy and independent links with the Scottish Executive Health Department. Health priorities and performance indicators are set by the Scottish Executive and monitored through a performance assessment framework. Education and social work services are locally planned and delivered, although the Scottish Executive establishes guidelines and maintains a degree of control through setting the terms of broad standards inspections.

Health and the prosecution function of the criminal justice sector were thus the only sectors with policy making structures from which decision makers with national influence could be identified and invited to the Partnership. A Partnership membership able to deliver a national strategy for joined-up working on domestic violence is hard to imagine under these circumstances. Devolving the policy making to regional or local authority level would make joining up education, policing, and social work and voluntary sector services more practical but would still face the difficulty of how to get health and prosecution policies, decided at the national level, on the table. Influencing judicial policy and practice appears a challenge at both levels.

No clear set of criteria emerge when one examines the Partnership membership. Some members brought significant background on violence against women, chiefly those from the voluntary sector, local authorities, and police. No members other than those from the voluntary sector carried a clear mandate to make decisions for their organisations or professions. Finally, a number of members brought
a history of having worked with the civil servants setting up the Partnership, chiefly civil servants from Development, Health, Social Work, and Education; their remit would be 'join up' their respective departments with the other sectors at the table.

The following section examines participation in the Partnership to connect the presence and remit of the members with their actual involvement.

**Participation**

Having established who was at the table and speculated about who was not, this section of the chapter looks at who showed up. This will help in considering several issues:

- How successful were the civil servants setting up the Partnership in attracting members who would get involved and stay involved?
- Who attended meetings regularly and from what sectors?

Meeting attendance is one indicator of who participated substantively. (Who influenced agendas and decisions will be taken up in Chapter 5.) A table of attendance was constructed from the records of the meetings. As one can see from the following figures, members’ attendance at meetings varied widely:
The members from the violence against women sector attended the most frequently—89% of the meetings. In fact, the members who attended most were primarily the ones who had brought with them some experience working on violence against women: the members from the violence against women sector and those from local authorities or CoSLA. Members from the law and criminal justice sector also had relatively high attendance, 63% (that figure goes up to 71% if the low attendance from the representative from the prison service is taken out of the calculation).

The civil servants from the Scottish Office attended only 44% of the meetings. An interviewee from criminal justice commented that the civil servants on the Partnership participated in the same way, in his experience, as they often do in multi-agency work—“they show up and say nothing, worried that they might reveal that they know little about the subject under discussion” (BB). The investment of these

---

4 Two people attended 100% of the meetings: Lesley Irving (first from Scottish Women's Aid and then, after her secondment, from the Scottish Executive) and Sheila Henderson (researcher).
participants does not appear substantial, given their attendance (or lack thereof) at Partnership meetings.

Overall meeting attendance tended to decline over the life of the Partnership, as shown in Figure 4.2. Because the members from the violence against women sector attended meetings a high percentage of the time, they formed an increasingly larger percentage of those at the table as attendance fell. This was particularly true when the Partnership resumed meeting after the elections (September 1999) and two new members, were added: Evelyn Gillan from Zero Tolerance and Nabirye Higenyi from Shakti Women’s Aid. Members from the violence against women sector accounted for 36% of the members attending meetings 6 through 13; for meetings 11 through 13, they accounted for 49% of the attendees; at the last meeting, 56% (5 out of 9) of the attending members were from the violence against women sector. (Chapter 5 provides a detailed account of the meetings.)

Thus the members who attended fewest meetings and therefore had the fewest opportunities to affect the Partnership’s work were the civil servants representing Health, Housing, Social Work and Education. A number of circumstances may have contributed to their lack of participation. The absence of a visible ministerial involvement may have signalled that attending Partnership meetings did not need to be made a priority, and no one on the Partnership had the power to hold the Scottish office members accountable. In
addition, none of the civil servants brought a background of work on domestic violence, which might have provided another incentive to participate. It seems fair to say they demonstrated the least investment in the Partnership’s success.

The Partnership members who attended meetings most frequently were feminists from the violence against women sector, members working in various roles in local government, and members from a variety of professions in law and criminal justice. It seems important, however, not to assume that higher rates of meeting attendance reflected investment in the Partnership’s work as defined in its first meetings. Members who attended regularly may have done so out of a desire to promote *or prevent* certain policy responses to domestic violence. The interesting question that follows therefore is how the final policy embodied in the National Strategy reflected the interests of those who were substantively involved in the Partnership’s work? What was in (or not in) the National Strategy for the key participants? These questions are followed up in the following chapters.

**Conclusions**

**The problem of the civil service** One of the civil servants involved in setting up the Partnership remarked that if the Scottish Office officials responsible for setting up the Partnership had had the money that would become available with the opening of the new Parliament, they could have “just skipped the Partnership and given the money to Scottish Women’s Aid”. The comment may be a fair reflection of the attitude towards partnerships that prevailed at the Scottish Office when the Partnership was announced by Henry McLeish. The ‘business-as-usual’ recruitment drew members from a
circle of colleagues within the bureaucracy and from familiar professional networks outwith it. There was no evidence in the data that the civil servants considered or were even acquainted with what was emerging in Scotland and in the UK as best practice for partnerships to address domestic violence. The lack of substantive participation in the Partnership’s work from Health, Education, Housing, and Social Work seems a likely consequence. The gaps in the National Strategy in these areas, with the exception of refuge provision, are evident (see discussion in Chapter 5).

The civil servants represented a very significant portion of the membership, which possibly reflected the conviction on the part of those setting up the Partnership that implementation would be chiefly through their departments (Development, Social Work, Health, and Education). Service development and implementation instead were located chiefly in the voluntary sector and at the community level through Women’s Aid and local domestic violence partnerships. It is hard to know whether that is because of the difficulty of introducing new services or new delivery modes into existing service structures or because service provision through voluntary sector providers was deemed preferable for other reasons. Discussions about introducing new or integrating existing voluntary-sector services into statutory services do not appear in the minutes or Partnership documents, nor did interviewees recall such discussions.

As mentioned, none of the civil servants had a substantive knowledge of or professional experience with domestic violence, either in general or in their specific sectors. That lack was noted by a number of the interviewees, and one commented:

*There was no explanation given of why particular individuals had been invited. Obviously there was*
representation from the key departments and agencies. . . . That was one of the problems, I felt. That the civil servant who had lead on it actually wasn’t someone who’d ever done anything having to do with domestic abuse except in a very remote sense. (CD)

Other problems associated with working with civil servants were cited by respondents. These problems included difficult communications when uninterested civil servants “obstruct access to decision makers”, civil servants unable to “think outside of the Civil Service box” and unwilling to use experts outwith government, civil servants making policy about service delivery with little or no knowledge or experience with service delivery issues, and the generalist model that means civil servants move posts frequently. One respondent within government remarked on this last issue:

I also think it empowers people at the top and destabilises the organisation because, for 6 months, the Policy Officer isn’t terribly good and they become effective and they’re moved on. So I have long believed that that doesn’t work. The Civil Service and Ministers aren’t well served by that . . . But that’s the culture and actually that needs a full-scale revolution to go on, in terms of Civil Service reform, and I don’t think anybody’s brave enough to do it yet. (LL)

According to one informant, a feminist within government, the secondment of Lesley Irving from Scottish Women’s Aid to the Scottish Executive (to support the Partnership) was meant to be a “get around” for the problems with civil servants. The secondment, taken forward by Jackie Baillie in her role as Deputy Minister for Communities, meant that the person managing processes from inside the government’s Partnership support structure was now a feminist with ties to the violence against women sector. (Her vacancy on the Partnership was filled by another woman from Scottish Women’s Aid.) Irving stayed on at the Executive and managed the implementation of the Strategy for several years.
Accessing the Partnership—new voices at the table

Using the framework for participation proposed earlier in the chapter, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Partnership brought new voices to policy making on domestic violence in Scotland—the first process required for influencing policy. It is important to note, however, that those new voices got seats at the table through their own efforts. With the sole exception of Lesley Irving from Scottish Women’s Aid, the other four seats for members from the violence against women sector were created as a result of lobbying and pressure applied to various people at various stages of the Partnership processes.

These new voices brought to Partnership meetings expertise regarding violence against women and experience with service design and delivery as well as experience with multi-agency working. They were the most likely to be the “reticulists” referred to early in the chapter, combining both technical competence and networking skills. They attended meetings consistently and eventually accounted for a substantial proportion of the membership, especially in the later stages of the Partnership. Finally, these new voices would bring other new voices into the policy process: Per recommendations in the National Strategy, the implementation of the Strategy was taken forward by the establishment of the National Group to Address Domestic Abuse. That group set up numerous subgroups (on training and prevention, for example). Each major women’s organisation in the violence against women sector described above had members on the National Group and/or a subgroup or subgroups. And the secondment of Lesley Irving placed a feminist activist from the violence against women sector inside the Scottish Executive to lead on implementation of the National Strategy.
According to Daniels' analysis of feminist activism on violence against women in the US, “The activism of outsiders must be linked to the power of insiders in . . . government” (1997: 90). The positioning in the policy process of these new insiders who are also feminist activists might be considered an early and significant innovation made possible by the Partnership.

Agendas, problem definition, and (non)decision making: the processes of the Partnership

Chapter 4 examined the make-up of the Partnership and concluded that new voices were introduced into the Scottish policy arena through the establishment of the Partnership. New partners getting to the table does not necessarily mean, however, that they can or will make their voices heard. What happened once the new partners arrived at the policy table is the subject of Chapter 6.

The second and third stages of the participation model proposed in Chapter 4 (see Figure 4.1, reproduced as Figure 5.1 below) after these discussions. Did the new voices in the Partnership make themselves heard and was there a discernible impact on policy making as a result?

This chapter argues that the Partnership’s feminist activists, in concert with the influence of Sheila Henderson (the Partnership’s researcher), defined the focus of much of the Partnership’s work. What also emerges from the analysis is what work the Partnership did, producing a national strategy with significant gains.
Agendas, problem definition, and (non)decision making: the processes of the Partnership

Chapter 4 examined the make-up of the Partnership and concluded that new voices were introduced into the Scottish policy arena through the establishment of the Partnership. New partners getting to the table does not necessarily mean, however, that they can or will make their voices heard. What happened once the new partners arrived at the policy table is the subject of Chapter 5.

The second and third stages of the participation model proposed in Chapter 4 (see Figure 4.1, reproduced as Figure 5.1 below) offer these questions: Did the new voices in the Partnership make themselves heard and was there a discernible impact on policy making as a result? This chapter argues that the Partnership’s feminist activists, in concert with the influence of Sheila Henderson (the Partnership’s researcher), defined the focus of much of the Partnership’s work. What also emerges from the analysis is what work the Partnership did not do, producing a national strategy with significant gaps.
Addressing these questions required a close look at the processes of the Partnership and its major output, the National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse. A further set of questions emerged:

- How were the processes of the Partnership set up? How were remit, decision making, and leadership established? To what extent were the new voices identified in Chapter 4 reflected in the Partnership’s work and decision making?

- What issues and whose interests are reflected in the National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse, and what conclusions can be drawn about whose voices were influential in the policy making the document represents?

- How were the Partnership’s agenda items identified, and whose objectives were met by them? Conversely, were issues left off the Partnership’s agendas? Does an analysis of the agendas and agenda-setting processes indicate anything meaningful about whose voices were influential in the Partnership’s policy making?

Data sources included interviews with Partnership members and numerous documentary sources. The latter included the notes from Partnership meetings, consultation responses stored in the Scottish Executive archives from the two Partnership consultation processes, and the Partnership’s National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse.
Theoretical frames for the issues raised here come from several literatures: agenda setting and problem definition; partnerships and governance; and decision making in policy contexts. Discussion of issues raised in the literature is integrated into the analysis of the Partnership's processes, which follows a general recounting of the initial meetings of the Partnership and an examination of the National Strategy.

The meetings

Setting the stage: the five meetings before the election The Partnership held a total of 13 meetings over a period of 22 months. The first 5 meetings took place from November 1998 to March 1999, just before the election of the new Scottish Parliament, and the Partnership resumed meeting in September 1999. The initial meetings of the Partnership are discussed in some detail, particularly the meetings 1 to 3, as it is in these first gatherings that the Partnership processes were established.

Introducing the Partnership: meeting 1 As discussed in the previous chapter, the first meeting of the Partnership brought a sizable group of civil servants—most of whom knew each other—together with a number of voluntary sector and public sector representatives who had never met the other members. Figure 5.2 is the agenda for the first meeting.
The notes from the first meeting\(^1\) indicate that the members were invited to introduce themselves: "Mrs Smith invited members to introduce themselves around the table and to indicate what they considered that they could bring to the work of the Partnership over the months ahead" (m1-1).

The group then reviewed a paper (SPDV 1/98) outlining the Partnership’s remit. This paper was one of four written for the meeting by Dr. Sheila Henderson, the researcher hired to support the work of the Partnership. According to the note of the first meeting, the chair highlighted a number of points from the paper that the Partnership would need to pursue:

1. to propose the development of policy and legislation;
2. to promote education on domestic violence in the broadest sense with an emphasis on increasing awareness among young people;
3. to examine access to services for women and children, particularly those in rural areas, women and children with disabilities, and in ethnic minorities;
4. to consider the measurement of change in service provision and data collection. (M1-2)

Dr. Henderson then presented her next paper (SPDV 2/98), a briefing paper on domestic violence taken at least in part from her previous research for the Scottish Office on gaps in service provision, Service

\(^{1}\) As will be discussed later, the content of the meeting notes was contested several times by voluntary sector members.
The following were referred to in the meeting note as “common conclusions” (m1-3):

1. the overall response both between and within organisations responding to domestic violence is inconsistent and largely uncoordinated; there are examples of good practice which should be carefully considered;
2. there is a lack of shared understanding amongst these organisations as reflected in a lack of shared action at national and local levels;
3. data on domestic violence is not routinely collected in a standard format and so the actual measurement of service provision is patchy;
4. women’s access to services is constrained by a range of factors which include geographical distribution, limited availability of information and confusion over the role of individual service providers.

The members were then asked by the chair to consider who might be key players in a multi-agency approach to addressing domestic violence, and the group generated a list. It is unclear whether this discussion was meant to identify who should be participating in the Partnership itself or in local multi-agency partnerships. Certainly many of those identified on the list were not represented in the national Partnership (e.g., GPs and other health service providers, police from Women and Children Units, front-line staff from social work, housing). However, a number of action points emerged from this discussion, including the identification of a representative from the Schools Inspectorate to join the Partnership.

Dr. Henderson then presented her next paper (SPDV 3/98) on “the relationship between domestic violence and other forms of male violence against women”. Discussion of this paper included a number of topics: domestic violence as a human rights issue (and
the implications under the European Convention on Human Rights), the fact that the preponderance of violence against women is perpetrated by men, and the cycle of violence theory. The final paper was then presented (SPDV 4/98), which addressed work with male perpetrators of domestic violence.

The group was then asked to draft a definition of domestic violence to be used in the Partnership's work. The definition from Dr. Henderson's review paper (SPDV 2/98), with some slight modifications, was adopted by the Partnership. According to the note of the meeting, that definition is:

Domestic violence can be perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and are perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental/emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family or friends). Children are witness to and subject to much of this abuse; there is a correlation between domestic violence and the mental, physical and sexual abuse of children.

Domestic violence is associated with broader inequalities in society, is part of a range of behaviours constituting male abuse of power, and is linked to other forms of male violence such as rape and child abuse. Domestic violence occurs in all social groups, is not caused by stress, unemployment, poverty or mental illness, nor by the women who experience the abuse.

The range of common effects of domestic violence includes physical injury, poor health and a range of psychological difficulties. The effects on children who may witness the abuse, or who may be used in the abuse, are also recognised as including a range of forms of stress or fear, as well as there being an additional correlation between domestic violence and child sexual abuse. (M1-5, M1-6)

---

2 The significance of the definition is examined in more detail below.
The final task of the first meeting was to plan the next meetings. It was decided to invite a number of groups to present for part of the next meetings. In addition, Dr. Henderson was asked to prepare a draft of a workplan, including “main themes and sub-themes identified inside a broad framework” for consideration at the next meeting.

**Focusing on the work: Meetings 2 and 3** The Partnership’s second meeting focused primarily on two activities: three in-depth presentations by invited presenters and discussion of a draft workplan provided by Dr. Henderson. The presenters were Ms. Sue Laughlin from the Greater Glasgow Health Board, describing the Scottish Needs Assessment Programme and response to domestic violence by the health services; Mrs. Elizabeth Foster and Ms. Sandra Farquhar from Family Mediation Scotland, explaining mediation services; and Ms. Moira Andrews and Mr. Rory Macrae from the Edinburgh Domestic Violence Probation Project, outlining their work with perpetrators.

Following the presentations, the members decided that the presentations planned for the next meeting should be reduced from four to two to make more time for the group to work on its tasks. The two presentations chosen for the next meeting were one by Ms. Claire Houghton, a Childcare worker from Scottish Women’s Aid and a Partnership member, to discuss children and domestic violence, and one by Rita MacDonald, from Western Isles Women’s Aid, to discuss provision of services for women living in rural areas. The presenters eliminated from the list were Ms. Frances Love from Marriage Counselling Scotland and a representative from “either Gryffe Women’s Aid or Shakti Women’s Aid”.
Prior to discussing how to progress on the workplan, the group was asked to approve the note from Meeting 1. A discussion ensued, raised by members from the voluntary sector (according to interviewees), about the content of the note. (A senior civil servant from the Home Department was serving as secretary and had written the note for the first meeting.) According to the note from the second meeting:

Members raised questions about the status of the notes of the Partnership meetings. The Home Dept considers that these are open documents available to members of the SP as a record of the exchanges that have taken place. They are not official minutes in the sense that detailed statements or comments are directly attributed to individual members. However, some Partnership members said that they would prefer to have comments attributed to them and would speak 'off the record' if they wanted their remarks not to be formally noted. As many of the organizations represented on the Partnership wished to make the notes and other meeting papers generally available, the Departmental representative was asked to investigate whether the Partnership meeting notes and, provided the authors themselves had no objections, the papers could be made accessible via the official Scottish Office website.

The chair invited members to submit changes to the note from Meeting 1.

The group then reviewed progress on the 'action points' from the previous meeting before moving on to the workplan, at which point Dr. Henderson introduced her draft workplan (SPDV 5/98), which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. She explained that the draft was based on the themes identified in the first meeting (which had been extracted from her research review):

- Policy and legislation
- Education and training
She pointed out that "development of a National Strategy" had been added. According to the note from Meeting 2, this was to "provide both a framework and context for the workplan. This is central to the remit of the Partnership as a whole." (m2-7).

Members decided, in discussion of the draft workplan, that future Partnership meetings needed to be structured differently in order to address the workplan effectively and systematically. A small planning group would meet to plan the structure, and members volunteered at that point. The planning group consisted of the representatives from Women's Aid and Rape Crisis Network, the CoSLA representative, Dr. Henderson, and the civil servant acting as secretary. The group would be convened by the representative from Rape Crisis.

Highlights of the third meeting were a presentation on children and domestic violence, a review of Dr. Henderson's paper on developing a workplan structure (SPDV 1/99), and a small-groups session focused on access to services. The structure of the meeting was provided by the small planning group that had been convened between meetings 2 and 3.

Dr. Henderson's paper outlined these three options for structuring the workplan:

- Area of work: this option corresponded to the areas the group had discussed in the prior two meetings, which included topics from Dr. Henderson's research on gaps in service provision with two additions. The areas were of work identified were policy and legislation, education and training, access to services, information and
measurement of change, development of a national strategy, and ongoing work of the Partnership.

- End goals: this option used the structure of the “3 P’s”—prevention, protection, and provision—with reference to the Scottish Office Action Plan “Preventing Violence Against Women”.

- Remit of the Partnership: this option structured the workplan according to the key issues identified in the original remit of the Partnership: development of a national strategy, development of minimum standards and levels of service, and development of a monitoring framework.

The group chose the first option, as the note of the meeting reported:

After discussion it was agreed that the structure of the draft workplan should be based on the specified “Areas of work needed to address the gaps and variations in service provision”. Dr. Henderson would therefore develop the draft workplan in accordance with this decision.

The meeting then broke up into three small groups, each chaired by a volunteer (the chairs were representatives from Rape Crisis, Women’s Aid and Victim Support) to focus on gaps in services using Dr. Henderson’s paper (SPDV 2/99) as a reference. Each group had two sub-themes to consider; for example, one group considered development of good practice guidelines and development of service standards, another looked at development of service improvements for women and development of services for children and young people.

The final piece of business was to plan for the next meeting, and the group agreed to follow the same format for Meeting 4 as they had used for Meeting 3. Three work groups were proposed to focus on (1) policy and legislation, (2) education and training, and (3) information
gathering and monitoring. Again, the groups were chaired by members from Women's Aid, Rape Crisis, and Victim Support.

In addition, the members asked the Secretary to invite the coordinator of Zero Tolerance Trust to make a presentation to the Partnership. Nothing in the note of the meeting describes the discussion on this item.

Meetings 4 and 5: The Workplan Meetings  Meeting 4 had two focuses: a presentation by two representatives from Zero Tolerance Trust (one of whom would later join the Partnership—after the hiatus for the elections—at the request of a minister) and small-group work on the workplan and on development of a national strategy. The small groups were again facilitated by three members from the voluntary sector, and again each group delivered a summary of its discussion to Dr Henderson for incorporation in the workplan.

In addition, the group was informed by one of the lead civil servants that the meeting notes and relevant papers from the Partnership, as well as the final Partnership workplan and timetable, would be made available on the Scottish Office website. (In fact, no meeting notes nor Partnership papers were ever placed on the website, although later Partnership documents such as the Report of the Partnership and the National Strategy were published on the new Scottish Executive website.)

The last item discussed was the plan for submitting the workplan to 'shadow Ministers' and to the members' organisations for consultation. A possible two-month period of public consultation prior to the meeting of the re-established Partnership in September
was mentioned, assuming that the new Scottish administration was supportive.

The chief item of business for the fifth meeting was consideration of the Partnership workplan and timetable that had been drafted by Dr. Henderson and circulated to the members prior to the meeting. The main issues raised by members included the following:

- **Children and young people in remit.** The original remit’s wording referred to “minimum standards and levels of service to women experiencing domestic violence”; the group chose to add a phrase later in the document that “the remit had been interpreted in the workplan as including children and young people” (M5-2).

- **Women inflicting violence on men in the definition of domestic violence.** The group finally agreed that “this was effectively covered by the opening phrase of the definition, ie, ‘Domestic violence can be perpetrated by partners and ex-partners’” and added a phrase referring to current research showing that domestic violence is commonly perpetrated by men (M5-3).

- **List of main service providers needing to respond to gaps in services.** The group chose to add the list generated at one of the earlier meetings for illustration purposes with the proviso that the list not be considered exhaustive.

The members were requested to send any ‘final drafting points’ to Dr. Henderson. A civil servant speaking on behalf of the Home Department promised to “recommend to the Minister that the workplan should be issued as a consultation paper as soon as possible” so that incoming ministers and other officials in the new administration could consider the consultation responses in July.
Meetings after the Election

The Partnership's formative first five meetings occurred in the months prior to the elections for the Scottish Parliament. The Partnership was reconvened in September of 1999, after the elections, and met eight times until its last meeting in September of 2000. The reconvened group was formally welcomed by Jackie Baillie, the Deputy Minister for Communities. Two new members joined at that time, both replacing colleagues on the Partnership who could no longer participate. At the following meeting, members would be informed that "ministers had invited" (m7-2) two new members to join the Partnership: a representative from Shakti Women's Aid and a representative from the Zero Tolerance Trust.

The notes from meetings 6 to 13 are concise and spare; decisions and actions are recorded, but little of the discussions or negotiation that might have taken place is conveyed. However, according to the notes, and supported by reports from respondents, the pattern of these meetings followed much the same routine as had the first five meetings. The agenda, which had been set by the chair in consultation with the civil servants providing support and with Sheila Henderson, was presented at the meeting outset; the context of discussion and decisions was usually established by a paper prepared and presented by Henderson; group input would be provided to Henderson, who would incorporate it into the document under discussion. Perhaps the most significant difference in the post-election meetings was that at least some of the new ministers—and Jackie Baillie, Deputy Minister for Communities, certainly—were interested and involved both behind the scenes and in public. According to Baillie,
We looked round the Labour group and 50% of us were women. We looked round the parliament chamber, 30% were women. So it looked different. We needed to make sure it felt different too. So there was a huge responsibility to tackle some of the issues that had been left to one side as not political priorities.

[I sat down] with a couple of people from the organisations that were in the Partnership. I don’t think I actually sat down with the Partnership. I sat down with, very quickly, somebody from Women’s Aid, somebody from Rape Crisis, what is the lay of the land? What’s going on here? . . . So it was very important that we signalled, for me, to signal some kind of commitment to the Partnership.

Along with the attention of politicians, the advent of the new Parliament and the new Executive provided new momentum and new resources to the Partnership. Another administrative staff member was hired, and, perhaps most important, Lesley Irving, the Partnership representative from Scottish Women’s Aid, was seconded to the Scottish Executive to support the work of the Partnership.

The Partnership’s chief tasks in the post-election meetings were:

1. Review and respond to consultation responses on workplan.
2. Finish draft of National Strategy and submit for consultation.
3. Review and respond to consultation on National Strategy.

Forty-four responses to the consultation on the workplan were received, and at meeting 6 the group was offered a summary by John Rowell, who had taken over the role of secretary from John Francis. The group was advised that the responses were largely supportive and that “little revision was required”. The group agreed some minor changes and moved on to work on the first draft of the National Strategy.
At the seventh meeting the group was told that Jackie Baillie had endorsed the workplan and presented it to Parliament, which publicly endorsed it at a debate in October 1999. The group was also informed that details of the Domestic Abuse Service Development Fund (DASDF) were announced in Parliament. This is the first mention of DASDF in the Partnership meeting notes.

The eighth and ninth meetings saw the group review two documents prepared by Henderson, a draft of the National Strategy and a draft Good Practice Guidelines and Service Standards document. Both were discussed, and the group decided to send out the National Strategy for consultation. In addition, the members “agreed that the whole issue of prevention should be discussed by the Partnership at a future meeting. It would be important that the Education Department be represented at that meeting”. Prevention was put on the agenda for meeting 11 (although that discussion was postponed until the twelfth meeting).

At meetings 10 and 11, members discussed the consultation responses and the ensuing revisions to the National Strategy. Fifty-seven consultation responses were received, and Henderson provided a summary report that also suggested changes in line with the responses. These changes were structural as well as substantive and included the expansion of the Strategy itself and the addition of an Action Plan. Meeting 12 discussion focused on incorporating further changes to the Strategy, and a presentation on prevention was provided by a Partnership member, Evelyn Gillan, a representative from Zero

![Figure 5.2: Partnership meeting attendance](image)
Tolerance Trust who had joined the Partnership at its eighth meeting. The group agreed that prevention-related text would be added to the National Strategy and delegated the writing to the member and to Henderson. The final meeting involved discussion of the last changes to the Strategy and Partnership approval of the final version, which would then go to ministers and finally to the Parliament. It is worth noting here that, as discussed in Chapter 4, attendance at meetings diminished substantially over the lifetime of the Partnership (see Figure 5.2, adapted from Figure 4.2). Only nine members (plus the researcher and civil servants serving as secretariat) were present at the last meeting.

The Partnership policy output: The National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse

Creating a Scottish national strategy for domestic violence was added to the Partnership’s remit at meeting 2:

In addition the 'Development of a National Strategy' has been added in order to provide both a framework and context for the workplan. This is central to the remit of the Partnership as a whole and will provide a valuable benchmark when the workplan is submitted to the Minister at the end of March 1999 (m2-7,8)

The National Strategy subsequently became the policy output associated with the Partnership. It included a framework, an action plan (added as a response to consultation responses), a review mechanism, good practice guidelines, and service standards.

---

3 All material quoted from the National Strategy in this chapter is extracted from the Scottish Executive website: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/law/stra-00.asp
• The framework provides a definition, a legal and historical context, aims (defined in a text box by the 3 Ps of prevention, provision, and protection), and a structure for implementation.

• The action plan is organised around policy and legislation, access to services, education and training, and data collection and information.

• The review section commits to a review of the Strategy in 2003 and provides a list of potential qualitative and quantitative measures that might be used for that review.

• The good practice guidelines are "aimed at service providers, to assist in developing a consistent approach to domestic abuse in Scotland."

• The service standards "identify the basic aspects of services which should be provided, through services working together, which should be available to women or children who experience domestic abuse.

The following analysis of the National Strategy is organised here around the 3 P's of prevention, protection, and provision, displayed in a text box as the aims of the National Strategy in the framework section:

```
THE AIMS OF THE STRATEGY ARE . . .

Prevention
active prevention of domestic abuse of both women and children;

Protection
appropriate legal protection for women or children who experience domestic abuse;

Provision
adequate provision of support services for women/children.
```

All the 3 P's appear throughout the National Strategy, but it is provision that dominates, both explicitly and implicitly. The following
text appears in the introductory framework's statement of Strategy goals:

The ultimate goal of the strategy is clearly to take all practicable measures towards the elimination of domestic abuse, including a clear acknowledgement that responsibility for abuse lies firmly with the perpetrator. It is essential that action is taken against these perpetrators and that their behaviour is challenged and addressed through a range of means. The main concerns at present, however, must be with meeting the diverse needs of women or children in Scotland who experience abuse and with working towards the development of a society in which domestic abuse will not be tolerated.

The message here is that improving services is the primary object of the National Strategy, and this message is echoed in various places throughout the document. In the discussion of the review procedure set for 2003, the following appears:

In many ways, however, the success of this strategy may be identified, in the shorter term, by an increase in the level of service use, as more women/children become aware of the support which is available and are enabled to use services.

Statements about prevention in the document are often followed by references to service provision. The following are some excerpts from the framework:

The purpose of the strategy is to address and prevent domestic abuse, and to identify the ways in which services should develop, as well as raising awareness of the nature of domestic abuse.

There is a need for political direction to ensure that a clear and consistent message is provided, alongside a consistent approach to prevention of abuse and provision of services to both women and children.
There is an urgent need for effective intervention strategies to prevent male violence against women and their children and to identify the best means of improving the responses of service providers in Scotland to women or children who experience domestic abuse.

This strategy will enable further developments in preventive work and service provision in relation to domestic abuse in the coming years.

This linking of prevention with provision may reflect that much of the prevention-focused material in the National Strategy was added late in the process—just before the last meeting in fact. Revision of the document to include the prevention priorities was undertaken at the urging of the new Partnership member from Zero Tolerance, who joined the Partnership at meeting 8 (although she had presented information on Zero Tolerance campaigns at an early meeting). Gillan presented a paper on primary and secondary prevention at meeting 12. According to the notes from the meeting:

It was agreed that Ms Gillan should use her paper as the basis for an entry into the policy and legislation section of the Action Plan. This new box will distinguish between the primary and secondary prevention, and will be forwarded to Dr. Henderson for inclusion in the revised Plan before it is sent out. Miss Gillan will also liaise with Dr Henderson on input to the Good Practice Guidelines on prevention (m12-3).

Gillan herself commented that:

I got to the partnership when a draft action plan had already been produced. . . . And I was absolutely crystal clear that I had a very specific role in the Partnership to get a number of things agreed and in that policy document, and that was really what I spent my time doing. Prevention was to be at the heart of the strategy. Making the distinction between primary and secondary prevention. That's really what I went in there to do.
The new sections on prevention constitute the bulk of the Education and Training section of the Action Plan and the Preventive Work section of the Good Practice Guidelines. The Partnership appears to have adopted Gillan's definition of primary prevention as chiefly targeting attitudes and young people's attitudes in particular:

Ms Gillan presented her paper on prevention issues, stressing the need to distinguish between primary and secondary prevention strategies. Secondary strategies being those, for example, which target the women and children who have experienced abuse, while primary strategies target young people and attempt to shape their attitude towards domestic abuse. Secondary prevention is therefore centred on the aftermath of abuse, and primary prevention, before abuse begins. (m12-3)

This framing of primary prevention has implications for the solutions or actions considered for preventing domestic violence and will be discussed later in the chapter.

What is noticeable for its absence from the excerpts above—and from much of the Strategy—is protection. Although it is included as one of the overarching aims of the National Strategy, it is mentioned relatively rarely in the overall document. Table 5.1 displays the results of a contextualized analysis of the frequency that references to each P occurred in the main sections of the National Strategy (provisions for Review and Service Standards were not included). No simple relationship is assumed here between numbers of references to prevention, protection, or provision in the document and commitment to work in those areas, but the contrasts among the three areas are stark. The minimal role for protection in the Action Plan, particularly in relation to provision, is marked.

---

4 For example, 'prevention' included such phrases as preventive and to prevent, 'provision' included references to services where they indicated service provision to women experiencing domestic violence or to people providing those services.
The prioritisation of issues in the Strategy included the immediate establishment of three subgroups of the National Group to (1) review current legislation on domestic abuse, (2) to review current CoSLA recommendations on refuge provision, and (3) produce a prevention strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.1 References to 3 P's in National Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the National Strategy was launched in November 2000, an £18.3 million package of funding was announced to support implementation. According to the Scottish Executive’s press release, the funds would be distributed in the following ways:

- **£10 million** to fund 300 new refuge spaces for women and children and improve existing provision, which will ensure enough spaces for everyone who needs one in Scotland;

- **£4.5 million** to take forward national priorities including a prevention strategy that will raise public awareness and educate, improvements in access to services and better data collection; and
• £3 million to fund local services and extend multi-agency work including the provision of specialist staff for children, information in ethnic community languages and surgeries in rural areas.

• £818,000 will allow Women’s Aid to carry out immediate work including improvement of disability access to refuges and offices, and facilities for children and young people.5

The £4.5 million included funds to support the National Group for 3 years and to pilot the RESPECT programme (a Zero Tolerance school-based project aimed at changing attitudes amongst young people). Although the above categories do not break down easily into the 3 P’s, prevention and provision initiatives are easily identified; where these funds would be used to improve protection is hard to discern.

The Partnership’s working

The literature on partnerships, and key aspects of their processes, is plentiful. Much of it was discussed in Chapter 4, so I will touch only briefly here on the points pertinent to establishing the processes of partnerships.

A number of characteristics of effective partnerships (see Chapter 4) have emerged from both the theoretical and empirical literature:

1. The partners share a vision of the problem and the task.
2. Resources, in numerous forms, are available.

3. The partnership can operate with some significant autonomy and its work carries some authority.
4. The partners exhibit substantial trust in each other.
5. Partners understand that they all operate in an interdependent context.
6. Information gathering and decision making happen in a relatively transparent process.

Processes that foster these characteristics might include some of or all the following:

- Members discuss and agree the group’s remit
- Members discuss and agree the decision-making processes that will be used to make the partnership’s decisions.
- Members discuss and agree a shared vision of the problem on the table.
- Members identify the resources that they bring to the partnership, their expectations of the group, and the extent of their decision-making authority.
- In early stages, participants should provide both a detailed explanation of the work of their agency (or department or organisation) and a description of how they address the issue at hand, in this case domestic violence. (“Commitment to partnership working, both formal and informal, requires an understanding of the realities and dynamics of daily life for both [government and voluntary sector] parties” (Alcock & Scott 2002: 121).

These guidelines frame the following discussion about the extent to which the early work of the Partnership involved these processes.

**Forming the group** A number of practices are commonplace when establishing a new group that shares a task or tasks: team building in some form, opportunities for group members to find out about each other, and clarification of the nature of the task are just a few.
As mentioned above, in establishing a cross-sector partnership to address a difficult problem such as domestic violence, a shared understanding of the nature and scope of the problem and likely interventions is important as well as agreement on decision making and leadership.

The initial meetings of the Partnership touched on some of these activities and avoided others completely. The members were invited to introduce themselves at the first meeting:

Mrs Smith invited members to introduce themselves around the table and to indicate what they considered that they could bring to the work of the Partnership over the months ahead. (m1:2.1)

This was a short item on the agenda and was the only time that members were asked to discuss their backgrounds. According to respondents and minutes, at no point during the Partnership were members asked to make explicit commitments of money, time, policy, or services from their respective sectors.

Attention was paid to the issue of providing members with information about domestic violence. After a discussion of the Partnership's remit presented in a paper by Dr. Sheila Henderson, the researcher hired to support the work of the Partnership, the group then went on, according to the minutes, to look at a second paper (SPDV 2/98), which was a briefing paper on domestic violence. As will be discussed below, this was to become the pattern for discussions of substantive issues in the coming months—the parameters of the issues and their implications were established by the Partnership 'papers' prepared for meetings by Dr. Henderson.
Attempting to provide a common understanding of a 'wicked' issue such as domestic violence through a short presentation of a paper at the group's first meeting may have been unrealistic, however. A number of comments from interviewees reflect that differing conceptions of domestic violence and widely varying levels of knowledge were perceived as problems by a number of respondents, particularly those coming in to the Partnership with experience in the field. One member from the voluntary sector commented on both the lack of information about each other and the necessity for training:

*I think one of the difficulties with the Partnership and the people who were on it was there were very ... are very different levels of knowledge and understanding and experience.*

*So all these different things were ... you know, all the peaks and troughs were hitting off each other and creating bigger peaks and lower troughs. And I think maybe it would have been good to have done some kind of sharing of information bit, you know, separate almost from the actual work ... Yes, and you could have taken that right through from the issue basis through to 'this is my organisation', 'this is who I'm representing', 'this is my sector and this is our role in this and this is what we can do and this is what we can do'. ... But there was none of that. No time was ever taken with that.* (LI)

The two senior civil servants taking the Partnership forward at that time had somewhat different opinions about the need for group training when interviewed. When the lead person was asked about the perception by the voluntary sector members that most of the civil servants and other members had little understanding of domestic violence, the response was that the civil servants already knew what most of the answers were for addressing the problem. The other respondent thought there were gaps in people's understandings:
Huge differences. And some quite primitive views. You know, stereotyped views as you'd expect. I mean, not necessarily from the men either. (GH)

Most respondents acknowledged that the representatives from the voluntary sector organisations working on violence against women (three at the beginning, with the addition of a fourth—Evelyn Gillan from Zero Tolerance—a year into the Partnership) spent significant time at meetings explaining the context of issues and implications of decisions for the rest of the Partnership. This seems to indicate that the partnership model was fostering information transfer across sectors and perhaps contributing to policy learning. An important question that follows for the voluntary organisations involved is whether the cost to them of supporting the training of the members from other sectors is worth the learning they manage in that same setting.

**Group decision making** Examination of the meeting minutes and interviews turns up no discussion at the Partnership meetings regarding how decisions would be made (voting, consensus, and so on) or by whom (the chair, representatives from the Executive, ministers not on the Partnership, members). One of the interviewees from the voluntary sector pointed out:

> And an absolutely crucial thing, which wasn't ever sorted out is your decision making process, agree your decision making process and agree everybody's responsibilities and the parameters on these because, as I say, it was quite late on in the process, we discovered that [the chair] had a veto. . . . (EE)

The absence of a process for decision making may have undermined ownership by group members of the partnership process:
I didn’t have a kind of a common sense of agreement around the issues, it was more that it felt to me it was happening more covertly rather than an overt and generally (?) decision making process. And covert has got maybe negative connotations which I don’t know that, maybe I do mean and possibly I don’t. . . . And I think some of the ways that power can be maintained is around decisions being made outwith the working group around what is minuted and what is not minuted, what papers are distributed and what papers are not distributed. [HH]

All the respondents from the voluntary sector expressed the perception that the Partnership’s work was being controlled outside the group and outside the meetings:

I think there definitely was a feeling with members of the Partnership . . . that there was work being done outside the Partnership that was then brought to the Partnership almost as a fait accompli rather than, I suppose, if work had been delegated outwith the meeting it would come to the group, you would have a clear decision about who is taking it on and then a clear decision about accountability about it being brought back for agreement. And it didn’t feel that it was that, that clear decision making around accountability or transparency that you would want if you were having kind of true kind of open Partnership working. [GG]

The lack of a defined decision-making process was less problematic for respondents from law and criminal justice:

. . . I think quite properly they had given some thought to matters so that the whole thing didn’t just go off at random or wallow in or get diverted down all sorts of sidetracks. So debate wasn’t stifled. Outcomes were not generally predetermined. There may have been a degree of ... 'push' is not the right word but there may have been some gentle steering of the kind that is, I think, perfectly appropriate for a good secretariat. (JJ)
Another respondent from the same sector commented, when asked if there was ever an explicit discussion of decision-making processes for the Partnership:

*I think not explicit. It maybe was implicit in the way we worked. From the beginning this was a group that was there to discuss things and everybody had the drafts . . . and a lot of them weren't ... they weren't document people. They weren't words people. [AA]*

When asked to explain what she meant by the above, she indicated that she thought a number of the members from the voluntary sector were not used to “working with papers”.

The comments of the voluntary sector representatives indicate a familiarity with what might be considered good practice for partnership working. They also signal that these respondents seemed less comfortable with being ‘steered’ and occasionally were suspicious of decisions made ‘behind closed doors’.

The voluntary sector interviewees also raised repeatedly the issue of the accuracy of the meeting minutes and the degree to which they reflected the discussions of group members. Their concern was not only establishing a clear historical record but also enabling accountability for members’ participation:

*And agreement about the notes and the action points and so on from the meeting, as I say, in the early stages, the ones that [a civil servant] were doing were much more subjective, which, as I said, was a bit of a difficulty and there was ... there didn’t seem to be any way for those ... these issues were not really addressed by the group as a whole, which they really should have been. I mean they were addressed by us by sending them redraftings, you know. There was one minute that had I think 4 versions of it, basically, before we managed to agree on something.*
The only entry in the meeting notes regarding this issue was:

Members raised questions about the status of the notes of the Partnership meetings. The Home Dept considers that these are open documents available to members of the SP as a record of the exchanges that have taken place. They are not official minutes in the sense that detailed statements or comments are directly attributed to individual members. However, some SP members said that they would prefer to have comments attributed to them. . . . Mrs. Smith then invited members to send in comments, amendments or additions to the note of first meeting. [m2-6]

The issue of the meeting notes may exemplify some of the differences between the members from the voluntary sector and the civil servants involved. All but one of the voluntary sector members came from feminist organisations. Each had participated in partnership or collaborative cross-sector working at the community or regional level, and each had a clear idea of how a successful partnership should be structured and should operate. So in addition to their substantive knowledge about domestic violence, they contributed skills that came from experience with the partnership process. The civil servants (and other members) may have been less concerned about issues around minutes and decision making processes because they were less experienced in partnerships, or they simply may have been less interested in the transparency of the process.
What is the problem? Agreeing the remit and definition

The remit  Perhaps the most basic piece of agreement needed was the group's remit. The initial remit of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Violence (later, "on Domestic Abuse") was announced in a press release from the Scottish Office on 19 June 1998:

The Partnership will:

- carry forward strategic thinking on domestic violence in Scotland;
- seek to ensure that the balance of services available to women experiencing domestic violence is of comparable standard in sub-urban and rural areas to that of the towns and cities of Scotland;
- examine the situation of women in ethnic minority groups and the difficulties of providing services for women with disabilities.

Henry McLeish (then Minister for Women's Issues) announced the Partnership at a conference on domestic violence, saying:

The Partnership will consist of a core group supported by The Scottish Office which will interact with the range of other statutory and voluntary groups. It will seek to ensure that the balance of services available to women experiencing domestic violence is of comparable standard in sub-urban and rural areas to that of the towns and cities of Scotland. The Partnership will also need to examine the situation of women in ethnic minority groups and the difficulties of providing services for women with disabilities. (Scottish Office press release, 19 June 1998)

McLeish's focus was on service provision and on gaps in services in particular. This focus was broadened in the following excerpt from the minutes of the Partnership's first meeting:
3. Partnership remit and timetable (SPDV 1/98)

3.1 The first paper on the agenda outlining the remit of the Partnership was discussed. Mrs Smith pointed to certain aspects of the Partnership which would need to be carried forward in the future meetings:

1. to propose the development of policy and legislation;
2. to promote education on domestic violence in the broadest sense with an emphasis on increasing awareness among young people;
3. to examine access to services for women and children, particularly those in rural areas, women and children with disabilities, and in ethnic minorities;
4. to consider the measurement of change in service provision and data collection.

The group was discussing a paper (SPDV 1/98, prepared by Sheila Henderson) about the Partnership’s remit, and items 1 and 2 above had been added to McLeish’s list. The four “aspects of the Partnership” were based on Henderson’s 1997 report for the Scottish Office, Service Provision to Women Experiencing Domestic Violence in Scotland. The remit had been expanded beyond McLeish’s original definition, but it was still clearly sited in service provision.

The minutes from the next meeting (held 9/2/99) indicate that the scope of the remit was soon expanded again:

5.3 The first draft of the workplan is based on the main areas identified at the first meeting of the Partnership:

- Policy and Legislation;
- Education and Training;
- Access to Services;
- Information and Measurement of Change.

In addition the ‘Development of a National Strategy’ has been added in order to provide both a framework and context for the workplan. This is central to the remit of the Partnership as a whole and will provide a valuable...
The scope of the Partnership's work, originally focused primarily on uneven service provision across Scotland, thus quickly was broadened to include policy and legislation, education, and the creation of a National Strategy. None of the interviewees were able to shed light on the development of the remit, although clearly Sheila Henderson had been asked by the lead civil servants to prepare the initial paper on the Partnership's remit. There is no evidence that these changes—and the implications for the work of the Partnership—were discussed at length in either of the first two meetings.

The structure for the Partnership's Workplan was chosen from three alternatives presented in meeting 3 (as described above), and that structure followed Henderson's report. (Reference was made in the discussion to the 3 P's and the framework adopted in the Scottish Office's draft Preventing Violence against Women, but the group decided on the original designations from the remit.)

**The definition** This process of defining the Partnership's remit and the ensuing discussion of Henderson's background papers on domestic violence were crucial to setting the stage for the work to come. In particular, the establishment of a definition of domestic violence that rested firmly on feminist analysis (see definition, above) was an enormously important feature of this early work and was mentioned by numerous respondents to be the single most important accomplishment of the Partnership. According to the Partnership's definition, domestic violence

is associated with broader inequalities in society, is part of a range of behaviours constituting male abuse of power, and is linked to other forms of male violence such
as rape and child abuse. Domestic violence occurs in all social groups, is not caused by stress, unemployment, poverty or mental illness, nor by the women who experience the abuse.

This declaration—and the supporting text around it—reflects a feminist discourse about domestic violence in Scotland, one that defines domestic violence as a phenomenon committed against women by men, as one of a number of forms of gender-based violence against women and children, and as inextricably linked to the power imbalance between men and women in Scottish society. The problem of domestic violence in this definition is the violence of (some) men and the "male abuse of power".

Current models of policy making—such as policy as increment, bounded rationality, cycle or stage, or practice—present a version of political decision making that includes the identification and definition of a problem, discussion of the problem's causes, and a recommended policy response (sometimes implicit), usually in the form of a particular solution or intervention.6 Along with this identification of a problem come its interpretation and definition in the political discourse and its positioning on policy agendas. According to David Rochefort and Roger Cobb (1994), in The Politics of Problem Definition: Shaping the Policy Agenda:

... In part, government action is a result of institutional structure and formal and informal procedure. The partisan balance of power will also direct decisionmaking. But, according to the problem definition perspective, public policymaking must also be understood as a function of the perceived nature of the problems being dealt with, and the qualities that define this nature are never incontestable (even though they may sometimes be taken for granted).

The Partnership's initial policy making involved defining the problem of domestic violence. According to meeting minutes and the accounts of respondents, Henderson's definition, with some modifications, was accepted by the group after some discussion and eloquent support by the feminists from the violence against women sector. As touched on in Chapter 4, one of the members from the health sector was a proponent of the cycle-of-violence explanation of domestic violence. This was particularly problematic for the members from the violence against women sector, and the discussion came up in several interviews:

It was about causes, what was causal. Alcohol, in the discussion around the role of alcohol, and the cycle of abuse, you know like 'we have to do something about this because these wee boys who are watching their dads beat the crap out of their mums are going to grow up and do the same to their partners.' And we really had problems with that, because Claire was there to represent the views of children and young people. And where I was coming from was not from a cycle of abuse theory type background. And that's about, you know, when you work with abused women, you see very clearly that well actually no, they [the children] don't go on to become perpetrators on the whole. . . . You know, there was quite a polarity between her view and the views of myself and the Women's Aid workers in particular. (IJ)

This discussion about cycle-of-abuse theories and other causal explanations was recounted in the note of the first meeting in the following way:

5.4 There was some discussion of the cycle of violence theory; some members pointed out that it was incorrect, simplistic and damaging. The majority of children do not go on to abuse and the majority of abusers were not abused as children; this is reflected in the views of children, overviews of research and in the latest books on the subject. Dr MacDonald stated that the theory has
some credence in work with abusers but other members of the Partnership took the view that it was the abuser who should accept full responsibility. Finally it was agreed that the Partnership would not label children and young people experiencing abuse as the abused or abusers of tomorrow. (m1-5)

The issues raised by cycle of violence explanations were not unfamiliar to the violence against women sector, and establishing causal explanations that instead reflected a feminist analysis was critical to agreeing a definition of domestic violence.

Why are problem definitions important? The last sentence in the above extract illustrates how problem definition can affect subsequent policy and programming: for those who ascribe to the cycle-of-abuse theory, domestic violence is learned behaviour that should be addressed by therapeutic interventions with families. This clearly is not a good match with the feminist definition that underpins the framework of prevention, protection and provision, and sanctioning or holding perpetrators accountable for their behaviour through criminal and civil justice interventions would not be considered an effective intervention in a therapeutic response.

Defining the problem as pathology or family dysfunction moves the focus from a woman’s rights—a human rights context—and returns it to the family. Thus sited, the cause is no longer women’s inequality, and appropriate interventions will not address that inequality. Similarly, the frame of women’s inequality is the primary casualty of gender neutral definitions of domestic violence. As Charles notes in a discussion of what she calls “issue perversion”.

---

7 A number of interviewees referred to the fact that the minute-taking for the first set of meetings was an issue in itself. According to one respondent, there were four versions of the first meeting’s minute (recorded by one of the civil servants) before members were satisfied.
incorporation and state redefinition of the problem (or issue perversion) can reinstate women as part of the family and redefine the issue of male violence against women as a problem of family violence, thus presenting it in gender neutral terms and robbing the issue of its capacity to challenge oppressive gender relations (2000: 154-155).

The various labels used in policy language to discuss domestic abuse—including *domestic violence*, *wife battering*, *spousal abuse*, *relationship violence*, *family violence*, and *men’s violence against women and children*—are a case in point. Each label offers a particular explanation of the ‘problem’, identifies a particular cause, and posits a concomitant set of solutions.

The discourse around a problem, the assumptions and values of those describing the problem, and the attributions of cause and effect are crucial to potential solutions. Indeed, Bacchi, in her book *Women, Policy and Politics: The Construction of Policy Problems* (1999:2), considers these interpretations as "interventions" themselves:

"It makes no sense to consider the "objects" or targets of policy as existing independently of the way they are spoken about or represented, either in political debate or in policy proposals. Any description of an issue or a "problem" is an interpretation, and interpretations involve judgment and choices. Crucially, we need to realize that interpretations are interventions since they have programmatic outcomes; that is, the interpretation will line up with particular policy recommendations."

The designation of so-called public and private social domains, with public areas deemed appropriate for public intervention and private not, is a helpful example. This distinction has long been identified as problematic by feminists (see, for example, Bacchi 1999, Charles 2000, Dobash & Dobash 1992). The positioning of men’s violence
against women and children in the private domain has effectively shielded abusers from criminal or civil justice intervention and isolated victims from support and protection. As Dobash and Dobash comment in a discussion of state intervention:

[T]he traditional ideas of a strict public/private divide [involve] eschewing state intervention and leaving the family to get on with it. In reality, this means leaving the most powerful to act as they choose with certain confidence that the state will not intervene (1992:106).

Moving the problem to the public sphere—arguably the primary agenda of the Partnership—is a key change to the discourse and linked to the gendered nature of the definition.

Stone (1997) also examines extensively the creation of what she calls "causal stories," constructing a framework that focuses on the distinctions between actions and consequences and between intended and unintended consequences, placing the human need for attribution of cause in the social "realm of control and intent." These are important, according to Stone, because

[t]o identify a cause in the polis is to place burdens on one set of people instead of another. It is also to tell a story in which one set of people are oppressors and another are victims. . . . Causal stories are essential political instruments for shaping alliances and for settling the distribution of benefits and costs" (1997: 189).

Initial discussions about the issues that formed the foundation of the Partnership work and the ensuing National Strategy involved these causal stories, as one of the interviewees identified above. The feminist causal story—the imbalance of power between women and
men—and the definition of the problem—men’s violence—shaped the Partnership’s definition of domestic violence. The causal story came from two sources: the feminists from the violence against women sector and the papers presented by the researcher supporting the Partnership, Sheila Henderson. Discussion and debate on the Partnership’s remit and on the definition of domestic violence were framed by papers prepared and presented by Henderson. Both the remit and the definition were agreed in the first meeting; both closely resembled those in Henderson’s papers.

The initial work of the Partnership thus occurred in this context:

- The group was brought together with little opportunity to explore individual roles and responsibilities and with limited introduction to the issues germane to particular sectors (e.g., support services in the voluntary sector, housing and homelessness problems, medical and health responses, police and court activity). No commitments to contributions of resources or to sector-specific responses (e.g., introducing good practice) were required or requested from members.
- No discussion took place about group decision making, about the power and role of the chair, about conflict resolution.

The civil servants leading the establishment of the Partnership and the Partnership’s chair had little or no experience with cross-sector partnership working, and this inexperience created a leadership opportunity for the more experienced members, particularly for the ones with expertise on domestic violence—those from feminist voluntary organisations. Whereas the latter did not (according to interviews) have direct input to the initial agendas or to the papers prepared by Henderson, they were quick to support the expanded remit and to advocate successfully for the feminist definition of domestic violence. As the work of the Partnership progressed, these
same members, along with a local authority representative (who also had experience with partnerships), volunteered for a number of tasks, which included planning meeting formats and running small-group discussions. These tasks offered opportunities to 'steer' the process to some extent. Precisely how much that steering influenced the Partnership agenda is difficult to quantify, but clearly these members were important voices in the process.

The Partnership agenda setting: agendas and the Agenda

It may be a mistake to assume that there is a single identifiable process or time by which the power wielded by different people at the Partnership table (and behind the scenes) resulted in presentation of some issues and in the absence of others. The appearance of new members at the Partnership table, the disappearance of others, the presence of new political players as a result of the Scottish Parliament elections, and changing relationships between voluntary sector and government bureaucracy as a result of the secondment of Lesley Irving are just some of the events over the life of the Partnership that affected its agenda setting.

The policy context: the big (A)genda

The presence in the political sphere of feminists campaigning on violence against women occurring at the same time as the political will to address women's issues began to change (not unrelated events) clearly affected the policy agenda of leading civil servants in the period preceding the elections for the new Parliament. Scottish feminists had offered a clear, three-priority agenda, and violence against women was one of the items on it.
Considine's findings regarding agenda setting in various Parliamentary governments, describe a similar dynamic:

Politicians and bureaucrats have a highly variable role, depending upon the policy field in which they work. For the most part they do not succeed in sponsoring items very often, even in those fields where they have significant numbers of widely recognized influentials. When outsiders are influential they often appear as initiators of a new item which then spread to the agendas of other groups, including officials. But when insiders succeed in associating themselves with issues which are becoming more and more important, they do it by adopting items already on the agendas of some other group (1998: 299).

Feminists as “influentials” support Mackay’s (1996) discussion of the conditions in which policy agendas can be affected by community-based advocates. Mackay identifies the following “enabling factors” for successful agenda setting (in her context—within local government and for the implementation of the Zero Tolerance campaign):

A complex picture emerges where successful agenda setting and implementation of equalities initiatives is linked to a combination of enabling factors. In particular, the creation and maintenance of equalities structures, women’s and equal opportunities committees, are significant in providing both the organizational space and the political space in which to initiate change. All participating authorities had equalities structures in place, staffed by specialist officers (1996: 1).

The additional support and resources offered the Partnership with the election of the 38% female Parliament and the appointment of a

---

8 The reorganisation of local authorities has by and large replaced committee structures with cabinet-style structures. In that process gender equality has often been absorbed into generic equalities efforts; the old enabling factors may have been largely dismantled in the process. The advent of community planning initiatives in local authorities may provide potential for new enabling factors, but this requires further investigation.
Deputy Minister acquainted with and supportive of feminist community activists may have provided 'enabling factors' at the national level.

**Meeting agendas** It also is useful to note that the process involves the interaction of meeting agendas with the larger agenda—the overall issues and problems tackled (and postponed or ignored) by the Partnership. Interviews with members of the Partnership focused specifically on how and by whom issues were identified for the meeting agendas. Respondents were also asked to assess how their own organisation’s interests were addressed by the Partnership and to comment on the relative importance for them of prevention, protection, and provision. Looking at how agenda setting worked in the Partnership also included examination of the papers associated with the Partnership, analysis of the consultation responses and the meeting notes.

Evidence from interviews and meeting notes indicates that preparing agendas for each Partnership meeting was done between meetings by the civil servants who were supporting the Partnership in consultation with Henderson. One of the civil servants involved in supporting the Partnership described the process:

[The agendas were set], well, behind the scenes. Sheila [researcher], [another civil servant] and I, sort of prepared the meetings basically. That's exactly what happened, you know, three people agreed on how the meeting was going to be framed. (GH)

A workplan was formed in the first meetings, and according to one respondent, the agendas grew out of that:

*We were working in the order that the Work Plan says, as you'll see, and as we got to the next bit that required*
another document to consider, Sheila would produce a draft and we would talk about it. That would be the item for the agenda, once we got to that. (AA)

The reliance of the civil servants and Chair on the work of the researcher in setting—and following—the agendas supports earlier discussion of the key role of Henderson. This issue will be discussed more fully below.

**Agendas as works in progress** As discussed here and in previous chapters, the initial focus of the Partnership—domestic violence—emerged from a number of pressures and incentives on the Scottish Office. The ones identified in the interviews included the following:

1. Sustained pressure on the Scottish Office by feminist community activists to address violence against women, gendered poverty, and lack of representation
2. New Labour’s public commitment to address the women’s rights agenda
3. Likely cross-party support for action on domestic violence in the soon-to-be-elected Scottish Parliament and the desire on the part of civil servants in the Scottish Office to offer new politicians a ‘successful’ policy strategy

The chosen policy mechanism—a cross-sector partnership—had been recommended in Henderson’s report for the Scottish Office on gaps in service provision, and it seems likely that Henderson’s report may have been the Scottish Office’s chief exposure to policy making about violence against women. Its themes are readily identifiable in the initial statements by Henry McLeish about the purposes of the Partnership, and the lead civil servants cited the report as influential without being able to explain why the policy focus was on domestic violence rather than violence against women (as proposed by feminist activists, see Chapter 6).
Given how quickly the remit changed to include broader considerations than gaps in service provision, the initial agenda setting of the Partnership seems best described as a work in progress. The remit took on new components in its redrafting for Henderson’s introductory paper for the first meeting of the Partnership and then in the proposed workplan at the second meeting, when the need for a National Strategy was added (see above). How these changes were introduced into the documents and by whose request was hard to identify, although Henderson’s influence seems undeniable.

Agendas conceived of as works in progress allows for agenda setting as a dynamic process influenced by a number of players and political considerations. According to Deborah Stone (1997), agenda setting and identification of political goals is a complex and nonlinear process:

> The inescapable ambiguity of political goals means that they are more like moving targets than fixed standards. If goals are forever changing as different people read meanings into them, they cannot serve as a stable reference point for evaluating alternative actions. We cannot measure against them (as the rational model would have us do), but through their symbolic meanings we can inspire support or instil hostility. The relationship between goals and actions is interactive (245).

A key to credible explanations of how goals and problems interact seems to be embedded in the initial definitions offered for problems, including who ‘owns’ the problem and what or who ‘caused’ it. Once the Partnership moved the phenomenon of domestic violence out of the private into the public sphere, it could be ‘owned’ by politicians and statutory and public sector providers and was no longer the sole responsibility of survivors and the voluntary sector feminists.
supporting them. Once the Partnership defined domestic violence as gender-based violence, the cause could be identified as male abuse of power and the problem as violent men. Of course the ‘solutions’ were still contestable, and, as will be discussed below, the political will to address the problem of violent men did not necessarily extend to challenging certain powerful sectors.

Agenda setting and nondecision making (and “nonagenda setting”?)

As outlined above, the Partnership’s policy agenda grew out of the political and historical context of its time and the interaction of those factors with the interests and actions of the Partnership’s members from various sectors. How did the problems fare that were aired as public and political goals? The following sections discuss some of the literature on decisionmaking and then use it to look at the Partnership agenda(s) of prevention, protection, and provision. Interesting questions arise about the boundaries around solutions (acceptable versus unacceptable, and, even more revealing, considered versus unconsidered interventions) and about a number of problem characteristics that drive policy decisions.

A credible explanation of policy agenda setting must look not only at how power operates so that issues make policy agendas but also at how power operates to prevent issues or certain problem interpretations from reaching these agendas or even contributing to political discourse. As Stone (1997) says,

---

This is not to say that once agreed the definition and causal story are accepted by all or for all time. According to one interviewee, the Scottish Executive’s decision in 2002 to fund research on men as victims of domestic violence was a response to continued political pressure to adopt a gender-neutral definition: “it boxes these people off firstly, whilst the research is being conducted and secondly, you’re dead confident about what it would show.”
In the polis, controlling the number and kinds of alternative considered is the essence of the political game. Keeping things off the agenda is a form of power as important as getting them on (1997: 245).

Stone’s point about what is not on agendas, “nonagenda setting” even, resonates with the work of Bachrach and Baratz (1963). They created a theoretical framework for consideration of “a rich outpouring of case studies of community decision-making” to facilitate systematic comparison. Developing such a framework was made difficult, they claimed, by confusion in the literature about the nature of power and the importance of differentiating power from “force, influence, and authority” (632). In addition, Bachrach and Baratz claim that pluralist researchers assume that power and its correlates are observable only in decision-making situations:

They have overlooked the equally, if not more important area of what might be called “nondecision-making,” i.e., the practice of limiting the scope of actual decision-making to “safe” issues by manipulating the dominant community values, myths, and political institutions and procedures. To pass over this is to neglect one whole “face” of power (1963: 632).

And

[T]o the extent that a person or group—consciously or unconsciously—creates or reinforces barriers to the public airing of policy conflicts, that person or group has power. (1970: 8)

Bachrach and Baratz suggest that identifying nondecision-making power requires observable conflict and the presence of grievances barred from the political process. Lukes (1974: 24) criticizes this notion:

... is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and
preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial? To assume that the absence of grievance equals genuine consensus is simply to rule out the possibility of false or manipulated consensus by definitional fiat.

Lukes provides the concept of "latent" conflict—"a contradiction between the interests of those exercising power and the real interests of those they exclude . . . were the latter to become aware of their interests" (25) and adds "real interests" to Bachrach and Baratz’s subjective interests as observed in policy preferences or grievances.

Clearly, then, the act of presenting a problem for the public and/or political agenda—much less actually getting the problem acted upon—is an exercise of significant power. What also is clear is that the absence of some agenda items represents a similarly significant exercise of power (what I am calling "nonagenda setting"). The challenge to those investigating agenda setting may well be to understand sufficiently the interests and needs of less powerful groups (empirically identifiable, according to Lukes) to spot these missing issues and discover the dynamic by which they were barred from the public arena. Although this process is fraught with obvious difficulties—defining real interests and needs and unravelling the exercise of power from diverse sources in networks are just a few—such analysis has the potential to shed light on Partnership processes.

**Provision—the privileged P** The skewing of Partnership priorities toward service provision is evident in the Partnership’s policy document, the National Strategy, and in the implementation priorities expressed in the funding package announced with the Strategy. The
privileging of provision was considered a logical response to the service gaps identified in Henderson's report from 1997 by most respondents. The difficulty of finding space in the Partnership's agenda for other needs was also noted by most. One respondent commented that

*I think provision demanded a huge amount of our time. It was bound to. Because people need somewhere to stay, they need support. But it's the heffalump trap, you have to kind of avoid falling into it because it's short-term. It's reactive. And when you're working strategically you need to not, I think you need to balance with the prevention work and the legal protection work.* (GG)

Another respondent, arguing for attention to prevention, suggested that too much focus on provision would lead to a failure to address the causes of domestic violence:

*Our argument was, of course you needed to address lack of refuge provision, lack of support of support services for women who had been raped, there's no question about that. But if ultimately all your energies went into that, then you didn't have the reasons there is abuse and what have you in the first place, and then really you're constantly throwing money into service provision.* (HG)

The common assumption amongst members that provision would be a top priority was supported by a number of influences:

- Four of the five Partnership members from the violence against women sector were from feminist organisations that delivered services as well as advocacy or campaigning activity. The exception was the representative from Zero Tolerance, and she joined the Partnership at meeting 8.

- The original membership roster was constructed with a view to service coordination and implementation.
The workplan was based on the categories for action outlined in Henderson's 1997 report to the Scottish Office. The report focused on service provision to women experiencing domestic violence.

Lesley Irving, seconded to the Scottish Executive to support the Partnership after the elections, came from Scottish Women's Aid, the key voluntary organisation delivering refuge and support services to survivors.

Finally, providing new services—or more or better services—offered the Executive and politicians with the prospect of a quick, visible win. Women's Aid (in conjunction with Scottish Homes and local authority provision) had a national service system that provided refuge, support services and children’s services, and focusing attention and funding on that system could produce relatively speedy results. According to one feminist respondent inside the Executive:

So I had the luxury of knowing here are the 2 or 3 things I need to do to get a hit quickly, to fix some of the institutional problems that there are and move us on a bit so that we’re not debating the same things all over again. So if there were a shortage of refuge places, what’s the shortage? How do we fix it? Put money on the table. Move it. If there’s a shortage of something else, let’s fix that because they were, over and over again, demonstrating need. . . . There were areas of Scotland where there were no refuges. So there was an instant kind of ‘let’s fix the service first’, because that’s immediate.

This respondent considered addressing service provision as a strategic decision. Interestingly, she went on to indicate that the process of prioritising was embedded in considerations of short- and long-term plans:

So that was the short-term. . . . It was a case of how much can we bite off, chew and do something about? And what do we do short-term, medium-term and long-term? So we were very conscious that there was only so much we could
do in the short-term. Let’s do that and then we’ll use the Partnership document, in my view, to start to lever up the debate about the wider systemic changes that were required to happen in the system.

The only serious competition for funding to Women’s Aid (and therefore potential opposition) was local authorities, and they were the recipients of the Domestic Abuse Services Development Funds (£3 million).

Service provision thus was high on the short-term list. Where was prevention?

**Adding an ounce of prevention** As discussed earlier, prevention became a Partnership focus shortly before the final draft version of the National Strategy was completed. Although the notion of prevention as a principle of the Strategy was certainly introduced early in the Partnership’s life through adoption of the 3 P’s, little discussion of what it meant or what appropriate interventions to prevent domestic violence might look like occurred until the Partnership resumed meeting after the elections.

The attention of feminist politicians from the newly elected Parliament resulted in two new members joining the group. A discussion regarding “ministers” insisting on the need for representation from the black and ethnic minority communities was documented in the note from meeting 6. The only reference in notes from meeting 6 or 7 regarding the decision to invite Gillan from Zero Tolerance (who joined the group at meeting 8) is the following:

> Ministers had invited Nabirye Higenyi of Shakti Women's Aid and Evelyn Gillan of the Zero Tolerance Trust to join the Partnership (m7-1).
According to Gillan, her entry to the Partnership came after Zero Tolerance had indicated to a number of politicians that the organisation would not be supporting the National Strategy. The following lengthy excerpt illuminates a number of aspects of the policy process: the challenge of going around uncooperative civil servants, the importance of existing relationships and the public credibility that the organisation had built, access to politicians afforded by the new Parliament structures, and the power of inside allies to contribute timely interventions:

I think the civil servants – and what you also must remember was the Scottish Ministers in Parliament, a lot of them were quite inexperienced so the civil servants initially were still wielding a lot of power in terms of advising the Ministers. . . . We had tried unsuccessfully to make the arguments with the civil servants about prevention, about you know the links between the different forms of violence.

We then started working on the MSPs and committee structure so we went straight to them and said, look we’ve got some concerns about what the Partnership is doing, here’s what they are, went to a number of backbench MSPs. There was nothing really to talk about in [the draft Strategy] about prevention, it was all provision orientated, and they were doing a press launch the next day. So we’d been doing all of this work, and they were due to launch their interim strategy the next day. I made it quite clear to [a supportive Labour MSP] that we would not be, we would be saying what we thought about it. We tried to go through the business, we’d been excluded, so we would be saying what we thought.

So I got a phone call at 6 o clock that night from [a minister] who said, I hear you’re unhappy. And I said, yes we are. I say, we’re not happy with this, this, this, this. She says, right, can we do a deal? She said, why did you not tell me – why did you not write to me? I said, we did write to you. She’d never seen the letter. So that was a lesson for her. We’d written to her saying here are all our concerns, we really welcome your commitment, Parliament’s commitment, but. . . . And it never got past the civil servant’s desk.
Oh dear, she says, right, okay, let's cut a deal because I don't want this to, you know, I don't want this to go down tomorrow. She said, what about either – she said two things – either we give you a seat on the Partnership or I can give you an open line to my private secretary, which will mean that if you ever have any issues you know blah, blah, blah that you talk to me in the first place. . . . I phoned her back and said we want both. We want a seat on the Partnership, and we want an open line to your private secretary, so if we need to by-pass the civil servants we can do it.

Not only did Zero Tolerance negotiate a place at the table and access to the minister, but they also paved the way for essentially uncontested additions to the National Strategy along the lines of the paper offered by Gillan at meeting 12. She was invited to submit amendments to the document that would then be integrated by Henderson before the final meeting of the Partnership. Despite an extensive section in the note from meeting 13 identifying amendments to the Strategy's text, no discussion seems to have taken place regarding the new text from Gillan.

The following are some examples of references to prevention in the document:

(Policy and legislation) The adoption by Ministers and organisations of a primary prevention approach to policy development in recognition of the need to address the root causes of violence against women.

(Education and training)
- The development of a national prevention strategy rooted in primary prevention and making links between different forms of violence against women/children;
- The development of general public awareness-raising through a widespread media campaign and the recognition of the role of the media in the prevention of domestic abuse;
• The development of preventive work with young men and young women;
• The development of preventive work with all men;
• The development of preventive and crisis work with abusive men, reflecting the overall perspective of the strategy that domestic abuse is viewed as criminal behaviour, whether or not it is reported, and is not an illness requiring therapeutic intervention;

(Good practice guidelines)
Services should:
• Undertake primary prevention work which is consistent with the National Strategy and national prevention strategy as this develops;
• Recognise and define male violence as a social problem, rooted in broader gender inequality and linked to male abuse of power and undertake general awareness raising work with children, young people and adults which challenges attitudes which support and perpetuate male violence;
• Examine the structure of the service and seek means of service provision which do not support male violence by perpetrating inequality;
• Consider and address the implications of new policy developments on tackling existing inequality and challenging domestic abuse;
• Address the cultural attitudes amongst staff which support male violence;
• Recognise the links between male violence and other policy areas and recognise the need to work with other services to address the issue.

The gendered nature of the definition and the link to "broader gender inequality" reinforce the feminist message embedded in the definition proffered early in the Strategy. How the Partnership would address that inequality went unmentioned in the Strategy and in the meeting notes. The most closely related references are the calls for "general public awareness-raising through a widespread media campaign" and "awareness raising work with children, young people and adults which challenges attitudes which support and perpetuate male violence". Zero Tolerance was well known for its media campaigns
and was piloting a school-based project aimed at changing young people’s attitudes; these recommendations may have been intended to position the organisation for future work.

The document’s call for a national prevention strategy is the first mention of such an initiative; it became one of the first implementation activities of the National Group.

The ministerial intervention to put Gillan on the Partnership and the adoption of the new prevention language support several conclusions:

- The advent of the new political structure of the Parliament, including the committees and local MSPs with existing ties to the violence against women sector, provided an opportunity for access that was previously unavailable.

- Gillan—Zero Tolerance’s new voice at the table—had an immediate and visible impact on the Partnership’s output.

- The ability of politicians to intervene so decisively in what was advertised as partnership working, imposing new members and new priorities, demonstrates clearly that the control of the Executive was neither diminished nor diffused by the partnership structure of the policy-making body.

The Executive’s ability to intervene so explicitly in the decisions of the Partnership was facilitated by the lack of a defined, agreed decision-making structure in the Partnership. In addition, the members most experienced in partnership working and therefore able to challenge the breach of the group’s authority were the members least likely to object to the intervention—those from the violence against women sector.
Prevention seems to have been a victim of what Bachrach and Baratz's nondecision making throughout most of the Partnership's life—prevention was on the agenda through the 3 P's but received no real attention or resources. The political context and configuration of the policy networks changed with the elections and set-up of the new Parliament structures, and prevention—as defined by Zero Tolerance—moved up the Partnership agenda. Who benefited is identifiable: Zero Tolerance and the politicians who needed the Partnership to be a public success.

What remains difficult to explain is the lack of dissent, discussion, or even comment on the prevention definitions (primary and secondary) supplied by Gillan. Despite its presence in the Partnership's definition of domestic violence, respondents uniformly failed to identify addressing gender inequality as a goal for prevention. Instead, when answering questions about the 3 P's and the spread of attention and resources over them in the Partnership's deliberations and output, prevention interventions were relegated to education, often accompanied by vague references to changing young people's attitudes.

The narrowed definition of primary prevention created a focus on social change at the margins. The object of change was the attitudes of young people, to be tackled in schools and through Education—the Scottish Office department least involved and invested in the Partnership. The call for a national prevention strategy proposed a broader approach, although no framework or purpose was named for the strategy. Creating a prevention strategy may have been identified as a medium-term priority, to be taken up by the National Group.

---

10 One consultation response (from an organisation in the violence against women sector) suggested that programs for perpetrators should appear in the prevention section rather than in the services section.
Tackling the larger, more central question of how to reduce or eliminate gender inequality in order to “take all practicable measures towards the elimination of domestic abuse” (cited above as the Strategy’s “ultimate goal”) appears nowhere in the Partnership documents or in the interviews.

Programmes for perpetrators, the subject of one of the early presentations to the group, were addressed under “Working with men” in the “Education and Training” section of the Strategy. Perpetrator programmes, interestingly, were labelled “services” and never considered in the context of secondary prevention. This point was picked up by a consultation response from a rape crisis centre:

Why were programmes for perpetrators put under ‘Access to Services’, they belong under prevention? It might also be useful to state that work with perpetrators should reflect the perspective of the Partnership strategy e.g. that domestic abuse is viewed as criminal behaviour (whether or not it is reported) and not an illness requiring therapeutic intervention.

The concern expressed here reflects the potential boundary shift if work with abusers is classed as “services”. Moving programmes from the civil/criminal justice sphere (where they have been defined as interventions to prevent reoffending) to counselling and other therapeutic interventions opens the door for redefining domestic violence as a problem of pathological men.

**The missing P—protection** As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the membership of the Partnership was heavily weighted toward the civil and criminal justice sector, contributing 7 of the original 20 members (35% of the original membership). Despite their presence—or perhaps because of it—very little of the Partnership’s debate or output addressed protection of women experiencing domestic
violence. As noted in Table 5.1, protection issues appeared zero times in the action plan of the National Strategy.

A number of civil and criminal justice issues were highlighted in the Zero Tolerance programme presented at meeting 4 by Evelyn Gillan and Elaine Sampson. The meeting note reflects some critical comments:

The ZTT campaigns have revealed deficiencies in the criminal justice system and ZTT therefore advocate mandatory training for all criminal justice practitioners to ensure that women's rights are upheld in practice. . . . On the criminal justice side it was pointed out that the current system does not protect women and children, although there is provision in existing criminal procedure for agreement of evidence and other measures to relieve the pressure on vulnerable witnesses. (m4-2)

No action points emerged from this discussion however.

A general consensus existed among respondents—on the Partnership and outside the process—that police practice had improved significantly in the recent past. (One police professional remarked that those improvements in his area had sprung from the community and the demand by community members that police address domestic violence more effectively.) One respondent who worked for Women's Aid remarked,

I think the police have come a long, long way. . . . The fact is that the police have taken it on; the police have said, "nearly a third of our calls are about domestic abuse, we have to do something. We have to do something. We cannae just keep saying, oh this is taking a third of your job. We got to put something into practice, change things, and make things easier or . . ." And the government again are recognising it as an offence, and there's a new law that's just come out, you know with interdicts and things, the rest, even if you're not married, and things like that. You know, you can now get powers of arrest. Really a
simple interdict is no good—for some men, it might keep them away. Only the woman knows that. If he’s no’ the type of man to be frightened, dinnae bother. (CD)

When asked about the courts, however, she provided a passionate indictment:

That needs to be drastically changed. The money has to go there—the justice system, it doesnae give anybody any trust. Nobody, you can’t possibly trust the system, it just doesn’t work. We’ve never ever been in a case with a woman when everything has gone as it should. Very very basic things like, when the woman comes to court, the police should come into the room so she isnae sitting by herself. So, I ‘ve seen women in some really really dreadful states. And just saying, when we go into court, can we ask for somebody to make sure that the woman is safe. ‘Cause that door is wide open, anyone can walk in.

But the process—women going to court just get ripped apart. It’s just no’ right. There’s a difference between asking a question and demeaning them in court. And I mean it’s just so bad. Something has to change. And they wonder why women dinnae take the men to court! If they dae it once, they’re no’ gonnae dae it again. There’s no way they’ll dae it again. Cause even if the man is found guilty, he gets, I mean down in East Lothian, the judge gave a man good behaviour and said ‘you must give £400 that your lawyer must hold, and if you behave yourself for a year, you’ll get that money back.’ For being a good boy. Honestly. And that was for stabbing a woman. That’s the truth. He stabbed her on the street, and that’s what he got—£400. And he gets it back.

Women say things like ‘We always think these things about the law, and we thought that, you know we brought our children up and our families, and it wasn’t until I was actually part of the process that I thought I have never been treated so badly in all my life.’ Every one of them said, ‘I would never, never go back to court again. Never.’ (CD)
Consultation responses from numerous sources focused on gaps in the National Strategy in the area of civil and criminal justice. The following are some examples:

- **From Edinburgh City Council:** “whilst it is encouraging to note that this section recognises that the responsibility to eliminate domestic abuse lies with the perpetrators, it is disappointing that no criteria to address this issue are contained within the strategy. If the objective is to work ‘towards the development of a society in which domestic abuse will not be tolerated’ challenging male behaviour is fundamental to achieving it.”

- **From Pilton Community Health Project:** [The Strategy needs to] ‘focus on the man’s choice to use violence rather than the woman’s so-called choice to stay or leave. We believe that the whole issue of revoking the perpetrator from the home, rather than the rest of family having to flee should be explored. And we need better protection for women, no matter who stays or leaves.”

- **From Angus Domestic Abuse Forum:** “Objectives that could be included in purpose of the Scottish Partnership strategy: maximise prosecutions of perpetrators; ensure that the COPFS does not routinely downgrade domestic abuse charges (for example from attempted murder to common assault); ensure that programmes are available to deal with perpetrators either as conditions of probation or as part of post custody supervision.”

- Regarding “Who is the strategy aimed at”: ‘feedback from victims indicates that there is not always a sympathetic response from those involved in Court processes and, more surprisingly, from medical staff, including GPs’—explicit reference to these problems is needed. Abusers are able to harass and abuse victims even when on remand in custody; Scottish legislation is needed to deal with stalkers.” Re “Reviewing the Strategy”: ‘missing a key element by not monitoring the most important indicator of positive progress to tackle domestic abuse—an increase in successful prosecutions for the perpetrators.’
Clearly a public critique of the justice system's response to domestic violence was articulated and available outside the Partnership. What about from inside the Partnership?

When asked to reflect on the Partnership's work on protection issues, a number of members from the voluntary sector and local government expressed some dismay that they had not realised that so few protection-related recommendations were in the National Strategy. Several responded that they could not at that time recall discussing what justice issues needed to be covered in the National Strategy, although they could readily identify actions or objectives they would have liked to have seen.

Interviews with members from the legal and judicial professions explored questions about the protection provisions in the Strategy in some depth, with interesting results. When asked about possible gaps in the protection portion of the Strategy, all but one respondent provided similar responses, commenting that criticisms from many lay people reflect a lack of understanding of the law, the courts, and the judicial system. The following response was typical:

*The principal problem is that when the matters come to court, the woman usually, we call the alleged victim, the complainer, the problem for us is the complainer who retracts once it comes to court. That's a very sharp, very difficult problem. They won't speak up. A very high percentage, probably a majority, possibly a large majority but that has to be anecdotal.*

... Part of my function in the Partnership was to remind other participants that the courts required to be utterly impartial and had to have regard to the rights, now including the Human Rights, of the accused as well as of other participants in the process. (JJ)
When asked to comment on another member's observation that the Chair often steered Partnership focus away from court or judicial reforms, the same respondent replied:

People often have difficulty in understanding the concept of judicial independence and why we have judicial independence. We have judicial independence to ensure impartiality between people who appeared before the courts up to and including the government and the citizen and for that reason we ... and we apply only the law, not policies. We apply and, where necessary, interpret the law. So everything we do is according to the name of law and not according to policies, and it is independently administered and for that reason, nobody, other than a higher court, can tell us what to do. It's not a self-indulgence or a perk of the job. It's a fundamental constitutional concept. I think it's not often well understood by people in other agencies who work in very different lines and have a different function and a different agenda. So we're quite used, in a sense, to getting ... that kind of observation or criticism. We always listen to it. Of course, you're not overlooking some genuine, some proper criticism that goes to something else about the way that you do things.

As mentioned, one interviewee on the Partnership from the criminal justice sector offered a contrasting view of the Partnership's work on protection. He made a number of the same points as the critics outside the group. When asked what needed to be done to eliminate domestic violence, he replied:

Now you're asking hard questions eh? It's about education, about socialization, it's about organizations taking it seriously, the proper resourcing of responses, and I think part of it is about making sure, it's largely a man's problem so let's deal with this first. It's about getting to the heart of what makes men do this and ensuring that if they do continue to do it, then we actually respond effectively. So it's about getting them to admit that they are abusers to start with, involving them in education programmes that will hopefully cause them to desist. If
there is an indication that these guys aren’t going to desist, lock them up. And locking them up for periods of time, rather than just, well we’ll give you a fortnight here, 30 days there, probation, sentence deferred, and all the other stuff. Do they actually take it seriously? And I suppose it’s about educating men like us, that other men who do this are bad people. So you don’t get a kind of nudge, nudge, wink, wink, I gave her a clout the other day and she deserved it.

I think the other part of it, it’s a bit again like the drunk drivers, the people who . . . would not like to be identified as domestic abusers. So there’s something about making sure the public know, this man who is an accountant during the day, knocks his wife about at night and seems to enjoy it. He’s not just done it once, he’s had the opportunity to desist, if he continues to do it and the community is saying, he’s no’ a good person, now that it is probably pretty tough.

This respondent pointed out that the Chair and a significant number of the members were from legal professions that might not identify challenges to the status quo as being in their interest. When asked to describe the Partnership’s discussions about civil and criminal justice reforms, the respondent likened the process to a scene from the film Men in Black:

It was like there was one of those black boxes, you know, from the movie, on the table that they pushed the button on and it erased people’s memories of what had just been said. I’d bring up something about judges or the courts or the PFs, and somehow it would disappear. And it would be like I’d no’ even brought it up. So at the end of the day, I just gave up. Nay use.

Attention to the protection P thus seems to have been minimal. The processes of keeping civil and criminal justice issues off the Partnership agenda or eliminating them once there resemble an exercise of power as described both by Bachrach and Baratz (1970) and by Lukes (1974). Using Bachhrach and Baratz’s model, one can readily identify grievances barred from the political process in the
critique of the respondents, but the presence of observable conflict is not apparent. Here Lukes' concept of latent conflict (the operation of the "black box") and the presence of real interests is more helpful. The fact that most of the members who would have liked protection addressed more substantively (real interests) could not identify the decision-making process that eliminated that P from serious consideration is a telling finding.

**Conclusions**

The first and easiest conclusions to draw from this chapter's examination of the Partnership's processes refer to the framework for participation and influence introduced in Chapter 4 and developed further here. Having established that new feminist voices from the violence against women sector joined the Partnership, the next task was to consider the extent to which those voices were heard in the Partnership's policy making.

Evidence of the influence of the new voices on the deliberations and decisions of the Partnership is readily identifiable in a number of processes and products. The processes of partnership were familiar to these members, and they quickly established themselves in leadership positions by volunteering for important structural roles. They accounted for two of the three members of the "small planning group" established at meeting 2 to restructure meetings, and they subsequently facilitated small-group discussions for two of the three subgroups that routinely took up the work after plenary-style presentations. As first suggested in the previous chapter, feminists increased their presence at the Partnership table simply by attending meetings more consistently than other participants. If, as Woody Allen suggests, 80% of life is showing up, in the Partnership context
the other 20% may well consist of providing steer by simply volunteering to do the group's work. The fact that the Chair and the civil servants in the lead failed to propose or impose formal decision-making or leadership structures during the formation of the group created an opportunity that the feminists from the violence against women sector were quick to exploit. The impact of the new voices on the broadened remit and the feminist definition of domestic violence agreed by the Partnership in the first meetings is equally evident.

The effective use of opportunities to assume leadership by feminists inside the Partnership was supported by events and efforts outside the Partnership and must be seen in that context. Credible organisations supplying congruent messages, such as Zero Tolerance and the Domestic Violence Probation Project, and acting as outside experts supported the role of the new voices as inside experts.

The dynamic of inside and outside feminists is an emerging theme that links a number of Partnership processes. First, the role and influence of the researcher Sheila Henderson in the agenda setting and problem definition done by the Partnership are hard to define but undeniable. The remit and definition adopted by the Partnership came out of papers prepared by Henderson, the structure for the workplan was based on her previous research into service provision, even the multi-agency structure of the Partnership was cited by a civil servant as having been taken from Henderson's research for the Scottish Office. Henderson attended 100% of the Partnership meetings and worked closely with the secretariat to plan meetings, summarize consultation responses, and prepare new papers as needed. Henderson was a known and trusted quantity for both the civil servants and the feminists from the violence against women sector. She was perceived by every respondent interviewed as key to the success (however that interviewee defined it) of the Partnership.
The secondment of Lesley Irving to the Scottish Executive to support the Partnership was a more straightforward but nonetheless influential event. Irving was the only other participant to attend every Partnership meeting. Her secondment, facilitated by newly elected feminist politicians (another movement of feminists inside), put an explicitly feminist civil servant in position to lead the Partnership and to oversee the implementation phase. She stayed in that post for several years and then moved to another post within the Scottish Executive. She was instrumental in bringing feminists from numerous sectors into the subgroups of the National Group.11

The presence and influence of Henderson and Irving may have been to some extent products of timing and circumstance, but their roles reflected the flexibility of a partnership format and a willingness to encourage, even to defer to, outside expertise. Although the traditional operation of the Whitehall model civil service dominated the early formation and set-up of the Partnership, the project was increasingly ‘steered’ by the new experts. The shift was enabled by a combination of internal and external forces—the savvy partnership working by feminists within and the political will added by newly elected supporters in the Parliament.

Henderson and Irving were key to the success of the shift and to cementing in some of the changes through increased access to more new voices in the implementation phase. The importance of their role derives at least in part from their positions at the edges of policy structures—in this case the violence against women sector and the

11 As an example, one respondent, a feminist outside the Partnership who works in health, remarked: “I’m on the Prevention Group because I said to Lesley I wanted to be on it. . . . In fact she asked because she quite wanted me to be on it as well, so she asked me. And interestingly, . . . although it was kind of set up as being a Domestic Abuse Prevention Group, right from the start we actually agreed that it had to be a Violence Against Women Prevention Group and that was agreed.” (BA)
civil service. The concept of policy learning has some resonance here—learning by civil servants, by politicians, and by feminist community activists. Pierson (1993), discussing the concept of policy learning in the context of policy feedback and political change, points out that Heclo’s work focuses on the role of civil servants but that other ‘learners’ might be important. Heclo’s description of influential “middlemen” (sic) is particularly apt for Henderson and Irving:

Most influential, (Heclo) adds, are “middlemen at the interfaces of various groups. These have been men with with transcendable group commitments, in but not always of their host body.” . . . However, social groups, like bureaucrats and politicians, may derive lessons from previous initiatives. (614)

I would add community activists to the learner list. The community activists (in our case, women at the interfaces) engaging with the State through the policy making of the Partnership and its implementation seem likely to have been policy learners as well as the politicians and civil servants. To extend Mackay’s point to partnerships, the presence of or potential for establishing feminist “influentials” (to use Considine’s term) inside and outside policy partnerships may be a critical criterion for activists considering whether to participate. How those influentials engage is not unproblematic, however.

The influence of Henderson and Irving is evident in the feminist perspective underpinning the problem definition of the Partnership. Their influence is clear also in the privileging of provision in the Strategy, although clearly the latter emerged as the product of numerous factors, including the need for a quick win by politicians and the existence of a stable service system. Although the importance of improving resources for provision was a generally accepted principle with interviewees inside and outwith the
Partnership, it is interesting to note that little debate occurred around what the provision priorities should be. Stone’s “boundaries” around solutions describes well the assumption that refuge services would be the largest beneficiary of funding.

Other debates that never happened are even more telling: the critique around protection and the need for legal and judicial reform and the addressing gender inequality. It seems fair to conclude that nondecision making and the exercise of power in favour of the status quo can operate within a partnership format as well as other more traditional policy-making structures. Feminist activists on the Partnership—the new voices—do not seem to have been any more alert to that exercise of power than were the other members. Maintaining a critical perspective while debating policy in the company of a powerful partner poised to move resources into the violence against women sector must have been difficult. The dangers of trying to negotiate relationships with more powerful partners (the legal members of the Partnership come to mind as well as the bureaucrats) will be discussed in Chapter 6’s discussion of feminism and the State.
Chapter 4 examined the extent to which the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse attracted new voices to the policy process; Chapter 5 looked at the extent to which those voices affected the decisions and agendas that produced the National Strategy on Domestic Abuse. This chapter continues the analysis of participation and influence of new voices, arguing that influence can be identified in some of the discourse changes that happened over the course of the Partnership.

The chapter also considers the nature of the Partnership’s contribution to bringing those new voices to the table? Was it the nature of partnerships? The victory of New Labour? The campaigning of feminists in the violence against women sector? The findings suggest that the intersection of a favourable political opportunity structure (in part created by feminist activists’ own organising) with the constitutional and institutional changes emerging from devolution were the key.
As discussed in Chapter 1, the very existence of the Partnership grew out of the political context of Scottish devolution, of opposition to Conservative policies within the Labour Party and within local government, and, perhaps most important, of advocacy, campaigning and service provision by feminists and advocates for gender equality in Scotland. To some extent this chapter’s focus follows from the governance questions raised in Chapter 3, given that one of the theoretical frames for this research is the operation of the British welfare state and its related institutions. The new governance—with its ideas of a differentiated, minimalist State characterised by policy networks with shifting relationships and arm’s-length governing—offers particular challenges to those historically outside the policymaking and decision-making communities. Feminist activists have long been ‘outsiders’ to the policy process—sometimes by choice. If, as this study argues, partnerships for policy making at national level are unlikely to offer significant new opportunities for access to policy making for feminist activists, what are the implications of the Partnership for working with the State? The new wave of partnership working has arisen at the same time as the emergence of feminist theories of the State; this chapter looks at the Partnership in that context.

Do partnerships offer feminists opportunities to increase women’s influence in decision making about policy? How would “influence” be identified? Chapters 4 and 5 established that representatives from the violence against women sector were able to gain access to policy discussions through the Partnership and that, once there, played a leading role in Partnership processes. The first two stages of the framework—getting to the table and getting heard—were completed. This chapter carries that discussion forward to look for evidence that those new voices at the table had influence on policy—the third step in the framework:
As discussed in Chapter 4, Mackay and colleagues (2005), grapple with defining influence and model it as a continuum that includes changes in "public and political debate" (2005: 10).

Increased access and enhanced 'voice' may provide opportunities and routes to influence but may not result in the actual exercise of influence. A major problem for the study of the influence of women's groups on parliaments and governments is that there is no clear or agreed definition of what is 'influence'? The task of measuring and qualifying the impact of women's groups within this changed political environment has, as yet, received little attention as compared with the growing literature on the impact of women in elected office. (Mackay et al. 2005: 9)

The authors propose a provisional model for identifying influence, using a "Continuum of Influence" (2005: 10):
Findings from this research, discussed in this chapter, suggest that those voices did have influence on the policy making process, and that evidence of that influence can be identified in the changes to the discourse discussed below. Changes in policy discourse fit nicely in the third box of Mackay and colleagues' model.

**Feminists and the State: Emerging Issues**

A central question of this research is whether partnerships as a policy tool of the State provide increased access to decision making and policy formation for those often marginalized in the policy process, in our case, feminist activists. Clearly an underlying assumption is that those feminists seeking social change want access to policy making at the centre and see working in partnership with government as desirable. For some feminists, particularly those who have worked inside 'the system' for many years, the strategy of making social and political change by engaging with the State may seem self-evident. For many, however, it is a highly controversial question, and the difficulties and dangers of cooptation and collusion that accompany engagement with the patriarchal State outweigh the visible short-term gains available.

Strategic thinking in many feminist circles thus is underpinned by theories about the State and what relationships are possible between it and feminists seeking to change it and society in fundamental ways. The following looks at the Scottish Partnership to Address Domestic Abuse in the context of feminist perspectives on the generic welfare state and of Scottish feminists’ experiences of the British welfare state.
Conceptualising the State

In considering the Partnership and feminist thinking and writing about the role of the State, it may be useful to recall Chapter 3’s discussion of governance. The shift in the discourse to governance instead of government underpins a particular concept of the State and policy making. As mentioned in Chapter 3, this usage conceives of policy making as a non-linear, dynamic process and better incorporates the complexity of modern political and social systems than traditional definitions of government. The concept of governance allows for feedback, negotiation, and other interactions among players and institutions, and the recent work on a feminist conception of the State reflects this more dynamic construction.1

Discussions by feminists of the State and its role in feminist politics have appeared only relatively recently. Perhaps the most memorable comment is Catharine MacKinnon’s (1983) famous although not uncontested statement (Connell 1990) that “Feminism has no theory of the state”. In 1989 Franzway and colleagues remarked that five years later there was still little developed feminist theory on the State:

Indeed, the point can be made more broadly. Gay liberation has no theory of the state and sexuality. Social science has no theory of the state as an institution of gender relations. The whole area of sexual politics and the state is a theoretical dust bowl.

Why should this matter? Principally because there is a great deal of practice in the area. Though neither its rhetoric nor its theory generally acknowledges it, modern

1 It is interesting to note that as early as 1985, Australian feminist Clare Burton wrote about the State thus: “The state is not a thing; it does not exist as a single, monolithic entity. It is a complex of relationships, embodying a certain form of power operating through various institutional arrangements” (1985: 104-5).
feminism has developed in very close relation to the state. . . . For practical politics the state is not just important, it is unavoidable. It matters a great deal to have a clear understanding of what it is, how it works, and how it can be influenced (ix-x)

The 20 years following MacKinnon’s statement have seen significant development of feminist theories of the State. The early challenge for many feminists was to transform traditionally gender-blind theories of the State. Initial theorising focused on:

- Citizenship rights and the rule of law (liberal)
- Economics and class (marxist and neo-marxist, socialist)
- Patriarchy (radical feminists)

Liberal and marxist/socialist theories suffered from some serious flaws from a feminist perspective, as Connell (1990) points out: “The liberal tradition . . . presents the ‘citizen’ as an unsexed individual abstracted from social context. Socialist and anarchist analyses of the state as an agent of domination add an account of social context, but only in the form of class; the contending classes seem to be all of the same sex” (510). Socialist feminists have integrated gender into the marxist class analysis but continue to struggle with the relationship and with a tendency to prioritise class.

Radical feminism, using some of the socialist analysis of class, conceived of the State as patriarchal. Within this context, Connell’s definition of patriarchy is helpful: “‘Patriarchy’ is a serviceable term for historically produced situations in gender relations where men’s domination is institutionalised . . . embedded in face-to-face settings such as the family and the workplace, generated by the functioning of

---

2 This brief discussion of the development of feminist thought about the State was adapted primarily from Charles (2000); Connell (1990); Dobash & Dobash (1992); Franzway, Court & Connell (1989); and a seminar on feminism and the State presented by Dr. Fiona MacKay (University of Edinburgh, 2002).
the economy, reproduced over time by the normal operation of schools, media, and churches” (514). This patriarchal State operates as an agent and tool for male dominance.

Feminists working from a post-structuralist perspective, influenced in large part by Foucault, have criticised both the liberal and the radical feminist analyses, maintaining that the State does not represent intrinsic interests but instead responds to interests “constituted outside itself” (Charles 1995: 620). This critique has been followed by theorising that the State has little or no strategic or political importance for feminists seeking gender equality. As a consequence “all struggles become equally significant in terms of resistance” and feminists need not “confront the state in order to take the feminist struggle forward (Charles 1995: 621). Although the post-structuralists’ arguments about the influence of discourse on the construction and characterisation of interests help expand our notions of how power is expressed and wielded, the notion that the State is not an important site of struggle—and of addressing the discourse—seems less persuasive. (See the discussion below of “Violence versus abuse: What’s in a name?”)

The current line of most feminist thinking reflects an approach based on both the socialist feminist analysis of class and gender and the patriarchal State of the radical feminists. Its foundation is both a critical analysis of liberal feminism’s failure to identify the strength of the relationship between the State and men’s interests and a growing body of empirical research on gender, policy and the welfare state. As Connell points out: “This [research] adds up to a convincing picture of the state as an active player in gender politics. Nobody acquainted with the facts revealed in this research can any longer accept the silence about gender in traditional state theory. . . . The research also
demonstrates that the state is, at the very least, a significant vehicle of sexual and gender oppression and regulation" (1990: 519).

The operation of the State then is a dynamic among family, state and the capitalist economy; changes in one create changes in the others. And at certain times and in certain places state employees can effect policy change through internal activity, often in conjunction with influences and interests outside the State. Male dominance is historically embedded in the State's structures, but agency is possible (although often constrained).

For some feminists, patriarchal power relies on male violence—control of women by men is based on force. The issue of state legitimation of male violence therefore goes to the heart of efforts to eradicate that violence. As Charles remarks, a number of feminists have argued that through its "monopoly over legitimate violence" (2000: 21) the State offers men the right to be violent towards women. (Note that this right, as Charles notes, is offered for certain men to be violent toward certain women, that is, the State's response to violence cannot be isolated from race and class considerations.)

The theoretical questions thus may be thorny, but the practical implications for feminists seem readily identifiable: The problem of violence against women is the problem of a system that privileges men's power, that allows men to enforce that power with violence and that supports institutions such as police and courts that neither protect women nor sanction violent men. Activists challenging violence against women at the causal level have substantial incentive to understand the dynamics of the State. As Franzway and colleagues point out:
First, the state is inescapable for feminism. The accumulated experience of the women’s movement demonstrates this. The feminist project to transform gender relations, to end the oppression of women, requires that the state be challenged, subverted, revolutionised. This does not imply that the state is the only or even the primary focus of feminist strategy. It does imply that in pursuing existing goals the state cannot be avoided or circumvented (1989: 44).

Conceptualising the processes of change—working with(in) and out(with) the State

Feminists have long struggled with the choices about whether and how work to confront gender inequality should involve politicians, governments and their instruments. Can State institutions be used to effect substantive social change that markedly improves women’s lives and position in society or are those institutions inextricably linked to too-costly compromises? These questions have been much discussed in feminist literature over the last 30 years. For example, Eisenstein (1996) describes the appointment of the first women’s adviser to the Prime Minister in Australia in 1973, a position that had been campaigned for by feminists. (Four hundred women applied, and eighteen were short-listed. Many of those short-listed joined the government in other positions and formed part of the first “cadre” of Australian femocrats.) Eisenstein quotes an interview with Elizabeth Reid, the successful applicant:

Some of us in the Women’s Liberation Movement felt that we had been saying for a long time what government should do and what they shouldn’t do. . . . And here was what looked on the surface, a reasonably genuine invitation to really try and get some of those things done. [Others did not agree. They went through] the same process of deliberation and came up with the argument that the price of compromising, cooptation, will be too
great. And that the things that we wanted couldn't be achieved by a sort of Fabian or gradualist or incrementalist approach within an organization but required a very radical restructuring of society. (1996: 20-21)

It seems a given in discussions with interviewees that of course women would work from within the structures—is it significant that most came from local authorities or just a result of the lack of work for feminists in Thatcherite govt until 1997? Australian femocrats provide an interesting account that not only makes explicit the femocrats' conflicts over cooption but also sees femocrats as social change agents rather than bureaucrats who happen to be feminists.

Charles (1995: 623) speculates that feminists working from a liberal feminism perspective tend to make strategic decisions to work within the State, and that those of the socialist or radical feminist persuasion are more likely to "maintain a critical distance". (The latter assume that women's inequality is based on more than a lack of legal or civil rights and therefore cannot be redressed through legal reform.) Of course there may have been little scope for working "within" the State for any feminists during the Thatcher years. This would have been particularly true for Scottish feminists, given the lack of a separate Scottish executive at the time and the consistent lack of support for Conservative policies in Scotland over the period. And indeed the foundation for much of the work of the Partnership was laid at the local authority and community level, in Women's Committees and in the work of activists in Rape Crisis centres, Women's Aid branches, and advocacy organisations such as Zero Tolerance, Engender, and Scottish Joint Action Group (Breitenbach & McKay 2001).
The 1997 election and the victory of the Labour Party in Westminster does not seem to have ameliorated that 'critical distance' in Scotland until after the referendum. An interview with a highly placed civil servant (JI) about the initial rationale for establishing the Partnership describes a relationship with feminists as women outside the policy community. Interestingly, the respondent recounted "endless meetings with NGOs" that always produced the same result: a list of demands that "couldn't be addressed".

The advent of the coming elections for the new Parliament and the desire of certain civil servants to prepare policy responses for potential new ministers seem to have moved feminists' demands up the political agenda. The issues identified at the Women's Consultative Forum—that the government address women's poverty, violence against women, and women's lack of representation) had been reiterated by interviewees in numerous meetings with civil servants. In 1998, the latter acted on them—or at least on the one about violence (redefined as domestic violence in the process). Of course, as discussed in Chapter 4, the government's initial Partnership list included only one of these feminist organisations—Women's Aid. But feminists were pushing on the open door, and soon representatives from Rape Crisis, Zero Tolerance, and a second representative from Women's Aid were on the Partnership. And, perhaps equally important, the secondment of Lesley Irving from Women's Aid to support the Partnership from within the Scottish Executive was accomplished.

It was the advent of devolution in Scotland that saw a sea change in that "critical distance"³, and some of those who had been far outside

³ Not just on violence issues—examples include the work of the Scottish Women's Budget Committee, Engender's gender audit, and most recently, the Executive-sponsored Scottish Women's Convention, housed in Engender.
the policy community in the centre were to become key members of the Partnership. It is clear that the Partnership brought new voices to the policy table, but we cannot assume that the partnership format was the only—or even the critical—factor. It is easy to imagine a partnership established and peopled by civil servants across a number of services and joined by a few representatives from police, the courts, and the NHS. (Something quite like the originally proposed membership of the Partnership—see Chapter 4.) The efforts of feminist activists from Rape Crisis, from Zero Tolerance and from Scottish Women’s Aid to get to the Partnership table, their engagement with the work of the group, and the secondment of a key Women’s Aid member into the Scottish Executive were key. Evidence of their influence can be seen in two crucial (and intertwined) areas of policy making—problem definition and discourse. The adoption of a gendered definition of domestic violence (discussed in Chapter 5) was the first direct impact of this influence. Other changes in the discourse attributable to Partnership feminists (and the work of their organisations) are the subject of the next section.

**Changing the discourse**

As illustrated, the fields of violence against women in general and domestic violence in particular have been the focus of intense activity by feminists in Scotland since the late 1970s, well before the establishment of the Partnership in 1998. An interesting feature of the period from 1998 to 2004 is a number of shifts in the discourse on violence against women, shifts that appear to have been intentional and strategically chosen, although not uncontested. The evidence from policy documents, meeting notes and interviews indicates that for the most part those shifts were nurtured by or supported by Scottish Women’s Aid, and the following section
examines the processes of those shifts and speculates about their impact on feminist agendas on gendered violence in Scotland.

Chapter 5 discussed the significance of the gendered definition of domestic violence in the National Strategy and the interaction among politics, policy making and discourse in the ‘naming’ of the policy problem. Two other processes related to naming emerged from the analysis:

- Changing *domestic violence* to *domestic abuse*
- Adding *and children* to any reference to *violence against women*

**When violence becomes abuse: What’s in a name?**

At the sixth meeting of the Partnership, and the first after the election of the new Parliament, the group agreed to change their name from the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Violence to the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse. This was to align the name of the Partnership with the same substitution in the agreed definition. The meeting note says, in the context of reviewing changes to the Workplan in view of consultation responses, the following:

[Re the definition] 7.2 It was agreed that the term "Domestic Abuse" should be substituted for "Domestic Violence ". It was also agreed that the title of the Partnership should be changed in line. (m6-2)

There is no other mention of this change in the Partnership meeting notes. The only reference to the terminology change in the *Report of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse* is the following:
Following discussion in September 1999, the name of the group was changed to "The Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse" (Henderson 2000).

A number of questions occur: Why was the wording changed? And where is the discussion or debate that must have occurred, at least in some small amount, to effect the change? A respondent from a feminist organisation not on the Partnership gave this explanation:

As you probably know what happened was that Women’s Aid in Scotland made a decision to refer to it as domestic abuse and I mean I understand the reasoning behind that you know to try and make people understand that its not just about hitting, it’s all the other sort of really abusive behaviour and especially the mental abuse and the fear I think. . . .

I remember being at that conference where Henry McLeish was speaking and Lesley Irving spoke first and she still worked at Scottish Women’s Aid at that point and they had, that was the first time they had used it if I remember rightly or they certainly had a huge banner behind the stage saying domestic abuse but nobody told Henry and he was saying ‘domestic violence’. . . .

The other thing that I find just slightly quirky is that Westminster and Women’s Aid in England and Wales and Ireland and in Europe, they still talk about domestic violence.[CC]

A number of respondents outside of Women’s Aid expressed similar reservations with the change of wording, but all indicated that it was “a Women’s Aid thing” and that “everybody just went along—Women’s Aid after all was by far the largest women’s organisation and there was little benefit in challenging them on something like this” (GG). Given that as of 2004, Scotland is the only place that has made this change, but hardly the only organisation to identify that domestic violence extends beyond physical assault, it seemed likely that other
motivations might have contributed to the decision to shift from *domestic violence* to *domestic abuse*.

This change in the discourse emerged at approximately the same time as Scottish Women's Aid began serious efforts to gain public and political recognition of—and funding for—its work with children. Perhaps the shift reflected a strategic decision that the extensive work already done with children by Children's Workers might be the basis for establishing a new and much needed funding stream for national and local work: children's services. And, in fact, according to one respondent who worked briefly for Women's Aid on a funding strategy, the new terminology coincided with a funding brief that identified funding for national-level children's work as one of the few stable and growing pots of money. This new focus and its implications for feminist work is the subject of the following section.

**Women and children—welfare feminism in action?**

Numerous readings of the Report of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse and the National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland were part of early documentary analysis for this research. One unexpected observation was that the word *women* usually was followed by the words *and children*. Was this a significant change in the discourse? Was it related to the fact that the first question posed to Helen Liddell at the initial meeting of the Partnership, asked by the Women's Aid representative, was the following:

Mrs Liddell was asked whether the remit of the Partnership included 'minimum standards and levels of service' not only for women but also for children and young (Notes of the Partnership meetings, m1-1).
Although the premise that children should be considered victims of domestic violence as well as their mothers is easy to understand and accept, so closely associating the interests and experiences of women with children has implications relating both to how the discourse treats women as mothers and to how feminists theorise the welfare state.

An abbreviated content analysis of the National Strategy’s narrative section revealed that, adjusting for context, the phrases *women and children*, *women or children*, and *women/children* occurred almost three times as often as the word *women* by itself (35:13). At one point, according to a civil servant (KK), those working on the Partnership’s documents were instructed to review and add “and children” in appropriate places throughout.

This phraseology was remarked on also in the consultation response to the National Strategy from the Angus Council (“following consultation with our colleagues in the Angus Partnership on Domestic Abuse, especially Tayside Police, Angus Women’s Aid, and Barnardos”):

> The continued use of ‘women and children’ as a phrase gives the unintended impression that victims of domestic abuse who do not have children are not fully included in the strategy. (Scottish Executive archive, Consultation for the National Strategy on Domestic Abuse)

A number of respondents remarked that the new discourse was fostered by Women’s Aid. One commented,
That’s the Women’s Aid politics. It’s almost like you have to use that, like unilaterally Women’s Aid decided that we should talk about domestic abuse rather than domestic violence.

When an interviewee from Women’s Aid was asked about the new terminology, she commented:

It is certainly true in general, within Women’s Aid we always speak about women and children. . . . Generally we would speak about women and children experiencing domestic abuse and we used to have in our constitution that it [Women’s Aid] was for women and their children if any. It was important because it recognised that many women either by choice or otherwise are not mothers, basically to say that women have to be mothers is to fall into that patriarchal trap. And it does no service to all women to say that part of being a woman is to be a mother. However we overturned that decision and therefore that is why now talk about women and their children. I personally don’t agree with it, because of what I said earlier. But when we are speaking on behalf of Scottish Women’s Aid we are expected to talk about women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. Now, whether once it is more established that children and other people are also affected by domestic abuse and that they are also entitled to service in their own right and the resources are provided for that then we might move towards recognising that. . . . The current position is that we talk about women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. [KL]

This response suggests two interesting possibilities: First that Women’s Aid had a clear analysis of the political implications for other feminists of changing the discourse, and second that a hoped-for outcome was the identification of children’s services as a crucial funding stream for addressing domestic violence.

A number of other feminist respondents, inside and outwith the Partnership, did find the new discourse problematic. One
respondent, working in a voluntary sector organisation not included in the Partnership, focused on the linking of women with the role of mother:

I think the woman becomes very much invisible once she's seen as the mother. That's even more true if there's been actual allegations of harm to the children either in the midst of physical violence or the abusive partner has physically or sexually abused them. There's nobody there looking at the woman. They're looking at the mother. And as soon as you start looking at mothers, you tend to get very judgmental and be stereotyped and that.

And it creates a real barrier for women if there are child protection concerns, because they are being assessed. I mean, there's no way in this world that [she isn't], by social work and the courts, the woman is being assessed. So if she says "Well I'm finding this all terribly difficult to cope with" then she's inadequate. If she keeps all that to herself and is seen to be coping, then she is some sort of supermom and she won't get offered any help and she'll just get told that she's doing absolutely great. (CC)

The Women's Aid insistence on focusing on women and children may have contributed, along with other practices such as rationing of refuge services, to conflation of women and children with women with children. When situated in the context of the Partnership's privileging of the provision "P" of the 3P's, this phenomenon is reminiscent of a version of welfare feminism that might be hard to accept for many of the other feminists working on violence against women in Scotland. This welfare feminism, according to Fiona Williams (1989):

- Protects women but conceptualises them as victims of male power and social injustice
- Makes demands based on women's role in family
- Takes family and its privatisation as given
- Ignores sexual division of labour in the family
Clearly the third item is problematic for feminists advocating that violence against women is a human rights issue that is the State’s responsibility to address.

Likely consequences of policy implementation narrowly focused on women with children are (1) the invisibility of women experiencing domestic violence who do not have dependent children and (2) privileging of women with children in research, service design, and service provision. Research on older women and domestic violence in Scotland\(^4\) provides an example (Scott et al. 2004):

General attitudes tend to view domestic violence as a problem that affects younger women only. As a consequence, much research on domestic violence examines the experiences of women up to age 50 only, and the experiences and specific needs of older women are rarely identified, much less addressed in Scotland, as is evident from the gaps in the Scottish literature regarding the issue.

\[\ldots\] Women without dependent children, usually 50 years old or older, often having experienced long-term abuse from an intimate partner for whom they may be caring, are nearly invisible as a specific group in public policy, data, and service provision (2004: 4, 50).

The benefits of skewing the discourse towards women with children as the primary objects of policy might be identified in the significant increases in research and funding for Women’s Aid children’s workers

\(^4\) Another consequence specific to older women of making *domestic violence* into *domestic abuse* may be the confusion of domestic violence with elder abuse. The latter is securely positioned in a medical model that assumes that “victims” are frail elderly and that the violence is perpetrated by carers, assumptions not supported by the evidence. Confusing domestic violence experienced by older women with elder abuse contributes to the “systematic invisibility of older women” (Scott et al. 2004). (Thanks to Sarah Morton, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, Edinburgh, for first articulating this point.)
announced by the Scottish Executive in the recent past. These include a mapping of services for children experiencing domestic violence done by University of Glasgow’s Glasgow Centre for the Child and Society (Stafford 2004) completed in February 2004 and Malcolm Chisolm’s announcement in November 2004 that the Scottish Executive would provide £6 million to fund children’s workers in refuges that have none.

The changes in the discourse have occurred in the context of a larger discourse dance, that is, the shifts from policy “to address violence against women” to policy “to address domestic violence” to policy “to address domestic abuse”. And, perhaps most interesting, the latest step came after the Partnership’s conclusion—a return to policy “to address violence against women”.

**VAW to domestic violence to domestic abuse to VAW: re-re-re-naming the problem**

As discussed in Chapter 4, the central government’s policy work on violence against women occurred in the context of earlier work done at the local level, most notably in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Strategies on violence against women emerged from both cities in 1998 (within months of each other); the strategies—and the multi-agency work needed to produce them—grew out of organising on women’s issues at the local authority level in both cases. The high-profile Zero Tolerance campaigns began in a Women’s Committee at local authority level (Edinburgh District Council), although they spread across Scotland and into the UK and abroad (Cosgrove 2001; Mackay 1996). As Breitenbach and Mackay assert, “The influence of the women’s movement via local political activists has been the major
thrust behind women’s initiatives” working within local authorities (Breitenbach & Mackay 2001: 152).

At the centre, the Scottish Office, after the Labour victory in 1997, had begun to make violence against women a more visible policy area with the announcement of consultation on the Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan (released November 1998) and the development and delivery of a short media campaign on domestic violence.

The advent of the Partnership began a shift in focus (and discourse) at national government level from violence against women to domestic violence.5

**Violence against Women to Domestic Violence**

The original locus of this shift has been impossible to identify. Conflicting reports in the interviews and a paucity of evidence on the issue in the Partnership documents and meeting notes have prevented any firm conclusions about who and what initiated the change. Several respondents were sure that the insistence on domestic violence had come from one of the civil servants involved in setting up the Partnership. One interviewee, a feminist working in the health sector who had helped organise a conference on domestic violence in Scotland with civil servants from the Scottish Office, HEBS and CoSLA, commented:

---

5 In November 2002, two years after the launch of the National Strategy, Margaret Curran, then Minister for Social Justice, announced in a debate on violence against women in the Scottish Parliament that the National Group to Address Domestic Abuse would be renamed the National Group to Address Violence Against Women. The National Group’s new remit would include all forms of violence against women, despite the fact that the Group had been set up to implement a national strategy on domestic violence. See Chapter 7 for discussion.
A particular civil servant . . . was incredibly resistant to looking at anything beyond domestic abuse. And a lot of us round the table, because we were all there . . . were very very vocal about saying, look we've got to look at the whole spectrum of violence and not start compartmentalizing. Anyway, there was huge resistance at that point. And that seemed to kind of, just then, sort of continue. (BA)

The Partnership was announced at that conference by Henry McLeish, then Scottish Home Affairs Minister. In that announcement, McLeish highlighted that the Partnership should link domestic violence with an upcoming UK Strategy on Violence Against Women (which never materialised):

Today I am setting out a working agenda on domestic violence in Scotland over the next twelve months. We need a new deal for women experiencing domestic violence and their children. As Minister for Women’s Issues at The Scottish Office I want to commit myself and my colleagues to making domestic violence a national priority in our various areas of policy.

It is important that we achieve the development of Scottish policies which are consistent and link with the UK Strategy on Violence Against Women which will be published as a consultation paper in the autumn. (Press release, Scottish Office, 19 June 1998)

None of the civil servants interviewed recalled an explicit decision to move from violence against women to domestic violence, and, interestingly, the lead civil servant referred to above stated categorically that the focus for the Partnership had always been domestic violence. Another respondent (EF), who was a member of the Partnership, thought that the group had debated the issue and decided to focus on domestic violence (although there is no mention
of that debate in the meeting notes). Other respondents on the Partnership thought that the focus had been domestic violence from the start.

This confusion about who made the choice to concentrate on domestic violence (not to mention when and why) is understandable if in fact the decision was not discussed or even acknowledged by the civil servants and politicians setting up the Partnership. The process—or lack thereof—recalls Bachrach and Baratz's (1963) concept of nondecision-making discussed in Chapter 5, in this case an exercise of power by the centre. And the lack of consultation over the issue may have reflected a desire to avoid controversy or, simply, a lack of understanding of the wider implications of singling out domestic violence from the broader spectrum of violence against women. Certainly the discourse around domestic violence was less explicitly gendered and possibly therefore politically more palatable. The civil servants and politicians, perhaps intent on a quick political win on the issue, had little incentive to take the more difficult but, from a feminist standpoint, possibly more strategic road of addressing the broader issues.

The feminists working in the area did take notice of the change. The confusion around the decision to focus on domestic violence only—and the impact of the confusion—was commented on by a respondent outside the Partnership who later worked on one of the National Working Group's subgroups:

One of my major concerns was, was it going to be violence against women or was it going to be domestic violence and that really was all very messy. I'm sure you've heard about the background to it and it caused quite a lot of difficulties you know? Women's Aid in Scotland lobbied long and hard and were led to believe
really that this money [DASDF, new funding from the Scottish Executive, announced during the Partnership] was going to come, most of it, to the Women's Aid network, to boost refuge provision and that. But the Scottish Executive never actually got it clear as to whether we were talking about domestic violence or violence against women. So when the money that was attached to the group became available, there was quite a tension there, sort of. Rape Crisis and Women's Support and multi-agency projects got funded as well, and . . . there was a lot of bad feeling [in] a lot of local authorities, where Women's Aid groups didn't get anything. They applied but the money went instead to multi-agency working, so I think it was just badly handled you know.

I don't think you can say now if it's right or wrong to do it that way, I can very much sympathize with the position of Scottish Women's Aid. So that really was one of the main things. I mean what we'd hoped was that they would look at the whole issue of violence against women rather than breaking it down but you can sort of understand it in some ways why, I mean I don't think its necessarily a bad thing to have decided to focus on domestic abuse initially, although the thing that was bad about it was it was never clearly and honestly spelt out what was happening. (CC)

A member of the Partnership who joined after the election of the Parliament (after five meetings and the creation of the Workplan) did comment that the issue was raised publicly once Jackie Baillie (an explicitly feminist MSP) was brought on board:

When the Parliament was established, it was Jackie Baillie who'd been at a meeting of all the women's groups, to talk about the Partnership I think, and [we made] the argument at that meeting for the need for the Partnership to look at all the different forms of violence, and that was supported I have to say by all the women's organizations there, and also we made the argument that they needed to look at prevention. Jackie Baillie said that she felt the terms had been already agreed but she would go away and think about what we had said. I said
to her in response, you know, if she limited the terms at this stage it would actually limit the ability of the Partnership to be effective in the long term. (HH)

When asked about how the Partnership and the National Strategy might have worked had they been focused more broadly, many respondents seemed to struggle. They often expressed first that the Partnership had been a hugely successful piece of policy work and then found it difficult to speculate about how the work might have been different if it had been focused more widely on violence against women.

A number of respondents (all of whom had been working in the field of violence against women) did express regrets about the shift. One had a particularly clear analysis of why the move to domestic violence was problematic:

What the focus on domestic abuse did was, prior to that Partnership, in Edinburgh there was a Promoting Women's Safety Working Group. And that was broadly about violence against women. And by extension, children and young people. It had links to Promoting the Safety of Children and Young People Working Group. These were all fed into the Community Safety Partnership in Edinburgh. And so there was a broad group in Edinburgh. There was a broad group in Glasgow. Kind of formative, but it was there and they had that broad focus. And the CoSLA document was broad in its focus. The Fife work was broad in its focus. The Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse changed that. Every multiagency partnership that has started since then has been about domestic abuse only. And they are not locating it within the context of violence against women and children. And they are not looking at the links with other forms of violence against women and children.

... If you focus on domestic violence, you can say it is just those bad men who abuse their partners that we're
talking about. You don't have to talk about it being endemic in our society. You don't have to look at the role that all men play, the role that ordinary men play in perpetuating the kind of fear that women live in. (GG)

One long-time activist on violence against women who was not on the Partnership but who has been closely involved in the follow-up work had a more pragmatic observation:

So it has all got very confused, and putting chickens before eggs and so on. It has caused a huge amount of confusion which was just unnecessary, you know, if they'd taken the broader definition from the outset, then everything else would slot in. (BA)

Of course, as noted in Chapter 5, the Partnership did, chiefly through efforts of the feminists in the group, locate domestic violence in a gendered definition that identified male abuse of power as the essential problem. And the National Strategy alluded to links with other forms of violence against women and children. So, at least to some extent, the fears on the part of activists that the exclusive focus on domestic violence would allow issues of structural inequality to be ignored were not realised.

What did the change in focus mean for women's organisations whose remit was not exclusively domestic violence? Although the National Strategy refers to the links between domestic violence and other forms of violence, funding and service standards were clearly targeted to the service network for domestic violence. One respondent remarked:

But what about rape survivors and what about child abuse survivors, and what about prevention programs
that tackle everything in a consistent way from, say, bullying all the way through to sexual abuse by family members? What about all of that? It's not a popular view with politicians, it's not a popular view with civil servants or local authority officials. But it is also, more importantly, not a popular view with some of our peers. And that's what's hard, that a kind of division has happened. (GG)

Another interviewee, a long-time activist in violence against women organizations, commented that she could not say what might have happened if the Partnership had produced a strategy for violence against women. She then went on to say:

I do think that there's something that has slipped away there. And I particularly feel that – I'm very involved in work on prostitution through another partnership, a social inclusion partnership in Glasgow. And one of the things that that partnership has been trying to do is effectively to say that prostitution is not about choice or glamour or work that needs regulated, it's actually about vulnerable women being abused and exploited. And there's not really agreement on that within women's organizations. Scottish Women's Aid for example don't have a position on prostitution, which I find quite surprising. (CC)

It is clear that the primary voluntary sector organisation devoted to serving women and children experiencing domestic violence—Scottish Women's Aid—had much to gain from the focus on domestic violence. A number of respondents remarked that Women's Aid were lobbying the Executive hard during the early days of the Partnership, which would seem a strategic response to a new opportunity.

At least two benefits accrued to Women's Aid as a result of the focus on domestic violence. The first was funding increases across a number of initiatives during the life of the Partnership, including
support for refuges, additional children's support workers as well as an initial one-off payment of £818,000. As the largest voluntary organisation in the violence-against-women sector, with a 30-year history of providing services, Women's Aid was well positioned to use funding quickly and visibly, providing the government with some easily achieved targets and the proverbial quick wins.

The second benefit was entrée into the inner circle of policy discussions, initially through the secondment of Lesley Irving (and later through representation on the National Group). The structure and make-up of the new Parliament was likely a contributor to this unusual move. (One long-time civil servant remarked that the usual pattern of secondments in the Scottish Office had been to send employees out to organisations, not to bring one in—"particularly not from a voluntary organisation like Women's Aid" [KK].) Jackie Baillie, Deputy Minister for Communities, was familiar with the work of Women's Aid, which may have contributed to the Executive's willingness to bring Irving in. According to Baillie:

A number of us, particularly women, who'd come through politics, which was, to all intents and purposes, a man's world, had a very different kind of path through politics. Actually we were rooted very much in the sense of community as well, and for a lot of us that was about . . . broadly speaking, championing the rights of women, very much at a community level. Some of us were fortunate enough to work, be paid to do what we enjoyed, which was to work in the community and in local government, and my background is the voluntary sector and local government.

It was about capacity building with the voluntary sector and doing community economic development and socially economy work very much at a grass roots level. So that brought me into contact with organisations like Women's Aid, who I felt provided a very urgent and desperate service in horrendously awkward circumstances of lack
of funding, lack of staff, relying on volunteers, and I became very impressed with the dedication of the women there. So I was well acquainted with the world of Women’s Aid.

The focus shift to domestic violence occurred before the election and opening of the new Parliament and thus before the advent of Baillie and the other new MSPs. Although Women’s Aid was a highly visible member of the voluntary women’s sector and responded to the new focus with alacrity, it seems unlikely that the organisation’s influence was responsible for the new policy focus.

Fears on the part of those working for other women’s organisations or services—that the funding would go entirely to domestic violence services and specifically to Women’s Aid—were not realised, since the DASDF funds went largely to support multi-agency working in each local authority. All 32 local authorities in Scotland now contain a multi-agency partnership, many of which have full- or part-time staff (usually coordinators) funded through DASDF (now VAWSDF). However, given that only 4 of the 32 partnerships currently focus on aspects of violence against women other than domestic violence (Greenan 2004), it is hard not to conclude that the Partnership narrowed the agenda. In addition, as alluded to above, numerous respondents struggled when asked to speculate about how the focus on domestic violence had affected the National Strategy. For these respondents, some of whom worked in the women’s services sector, the notion of addressing violence against women rather than domestic violence seemed a surprising suggestion. The parameters of ‘the problem’ were constrained by the new discourse, and the policy possibilities were correspondingly transformed. (See discussion of problem identification in Chapter 5.)
This process recalls Bacchi’s (1997) observation that the discourse about a problem is more than the language used to describe an issue or discuss it—the discourse becomes an intervention in itself. Policy is framed not as a response to existing conditions and problems but more as a discourse in which both problems and solutions are created: “. . . ‘discourse’ refers not just to ideas or ways of talking but to practices with material consequences” (Bacchi 1997: 7).

And now back to Violence Against Women
The focus on domestic violence was firmly established by the first meetings of the Partnership. The exchange of violence for abuse occurred at the Partnership’s sixth meeting, in September 1999. The Partnership held its last meeting in October 2000, and the National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland was launched the following month. Conclusions about any long- or even medium-term effects of these changes in the discourse are impossible to draw given the timeframe of this study of the Partnership. (The majority of the interviews for this research took place in 2002-2003, little more than a year or two after the Partnership’s close.)

The discussion above does reveal substantial disquiet on the part of respondents who were feminist activists working outside of Women’s Aid. Their concerns centred both on the difficulties of getting consideration of all the survivors of violence against women onto the national agenda and on the challenges of working on a broader agenda at the local level when the national agenda was restricted to domestic violence:

I value the fact that it’s happening [the work on domestic violence], because 20 years ago it seemed like it might never happen, you know? So I think that in maybe another 3 years’ time or so, there might be more of the
focus on other things. . . . But I think what has happened is that those of us who have worked with survivors of other forms of abuse and those of us who work with perpetrators of other forms of abuse, are, we're like voices in the wilderness just now. And even more than it felt like before, because we are somehow newly marginalised. (IJ)

The interview quoted above took place in February 2002. Just 9 months later, the group set up to monitor implementation of the National Strategy on Domestic Abuse—the National Group to Address Domestic Abuse—was renamed the National Group to Address Violence Against Women. Although the circumstances surrounding this transformation were not part of this research, the implications of the new name and new remit provide much food for thought. They certainly argue against any easy conclusions about the long-term effects of the discourse changes during the Partnership. (Chapter 7 takes up this issue in more depth.)

**Conclusions**

This chapter develops the findings of Chapters 4 and 5—the advent of new feminist voices into the policy process—and looked for evidence that these new voices had some impact on the policy process. Some changes in the discourse around violence against women, attributed in large part to the influence of Women’s Aid, were traced over the Partnership’s lifetime.

The new voices came to the policy table in the interaction of partnership, politics, devolution and the new government structures in devolved Scotland. A number of significant factors contributed to the establishment of this particular Partnership:
• The improved political opportunity structure created by the opposition to Conservative policies in Scotland
• Twenty years of feminist organising around women’s issues at the local level
• Advocacy and service provision at the community level by feminists, notably Women’s Aid and Rape Crisis, creating a service network
• Political demands of the new processes and structures of a devolved Scottish government.

Civil servants chose a partnership structure to take forward a political initiative on violence against women, but the eventual form and functioning of that partnership were influenced significantly by the representatives of feminist organisations sitting on it. (And they and their colleagues have shown up in significant numbers in the bodies convened for implementation by the National Group to Address Violence Against Women.)

**Women’s Aid and the violence against women sector**

The most obvious beneficiary of this new influence was Women’s Aid, and it is clear that feminists from other organisations (inside and outwith the Partnership) supported and advanced that influence. But these new relationships between organisations and with the centre raise new questions, and a closer look at the role of Women’s Aid—with their dual remits of advocacy and service provision and their complicated relationship with government and with other feminist organisations—is beyond the scope of this work but would be worthwhile.

The period of the Partnership saw Women’s Aid move into a closer and perhaps less adversarial relationship with the centre, and the
implications of this new role seem significant for more than just Women’s Aid. This phenomenon has been noted elsewhere, particularly in the new governance literature:

In social security a good deal of public policy has been pursued through nominally ‘private’ bodies, many initially set up as vehicles of charity, and heavily subsidised by the state. They continue in a highly ambiguous relationship with the state directorate, as both agency and lobby group. (Alcock & Scott 2002: 126)

This and previous chapters have explored to some extent what the “highly ambiguous relationship” meant for the Partnership processes, but another question is how Women’s Aid’s participation affected other feminist organisations and their relationships (with each other and with the government)? Respondents described a changing relationship with Women’s Aid over the course of the Partnership; at first it seems to have been collegial and supportive, perhaps based on shared experiences in partnerships:

[We] were the experts on partnership because we’d been actively seeking partnerships with other voluntaries and with statutory agencies . . . we’d done the process analysis, each of us in our own way in our working lives. . . . There was a kind of what do you call that, axis, there was a dynamic that ran across the table between myself and [XX] and [YY] [both from Women’s Aid], mostly singing from the same hymn sheet. [GG]

But when asked about how the Partnership had affected relationships among feminist organisations, the same respondent commented:

You know, it was important from a solidarity point of view, to get in there and support what Women’s Aid were trying to achieve. I had no problem with that at all. But it hasn’t been two-way. And that’s about the priorities of a large organisation. Women’s aid is now a large organisation. If
you were to sit down and add up how much goes into Women's Aid, it's a lot of money!

... I think it's created a division that I don't know if people really see yet... There is a feeling that we [feminist organisations in the sector working on issues other than domestic violence] have to fight a bit harder now to get people to see what our issues are about. If you ask any of the punters out there in Motherwell or Bellshill [what is violence against women about], they'll say domestic abuse. They won't routinely remember that we also work with rape survivors and with survivors of child sexual abuse. More than 40% of our client group. So it has been interesting, but I don't know that it's all been positive.

This interview took place in 2002, and the new direction of national policy on violence against women since—and the involvement of feminists across the sector—may have ameliorated the divisions referred to above. (See Chapter 7.) Investigation of how partnerships affect feminists' capacity to work strategically with the centre for longer-term agendas might define the implications of the widespread use of partnerships for a feminist theory of the State.

**Feminist view as expert view**

The Partnership's gendered definition of *domestic violence* (to become *domestic abuse*, of course) took the violence against women sector in Scotland a giant step forward. (See Chapter 5 for discussion.) The negotiation for that definition and the naming of the problem as one based on the imbalance of power between women and men seems to have created the political space for feminist "experts" within policy circles. The National Group's name change and the refocusing of Scottish policy on the broader issues of violence against women would seem to reflect that the Partnership established widespread acceptance of feminist analysis of violence against women as expert.
This recalls Eisenstein's (1996: 43) observation about the accomplishments of femocrats in Australia; she quotes an interview with Anne Summers, a feminist who served as a high-level advisor on women’s issues:

[W]omen’s policy input and feminist policy input have become utterly synonymous. . . . That is an extraordinary achievement of which we should be extremely proud and which we should make sure we hang onto.

In addition, whatever the long-term outcomes of the changes in discourse discussed above, the fact that they were largely driven by—and problematic for—feminists in the sector seems telling.

**New political machinery around VAW**

Another result of the Partnership seems to be the creation of a women’s policy machinery, for violence against women at least. The DASDF funds have created, and to some extent continue to support, a national network of local partnerships to address domestic violence, and the coordinators of those partnerships have formed their own network. These local networks join the national level through the extensive collection of “expert” groups, populated largely by women from the voluntary sector working on violence against women, that have been set up to develop further the National Strategy. These include groups working on strategies for prevention, for training, and for broadening the national agenda to violence against women.

Examining the extent to which feminists have moved into the civil service and local government bureaucracies was beyond the scope of

---

6 The establishment of the Scottish Women’s Convention in 2004 (hosted in Engender, an explicitly feminist organisation) and undertaking of some feminist budget analysis may reflect the same development in other sectors.
This research. The secondment and/or direct hiring of feminists such as Lesley Irving (from Women’s Aid) into the Scottish Executive (see Chapter 5) seems likely to be a result of the influence of activists in the subgroups of the National Group.

Finally, the fact that the Partnership and the implementation of its strategy are happening in the political context of a Scottish Parliament with a high proportion of women seems noteworthy. As Mackay points out in a briefing on the impact of women in the Parliament for the Scottish Parliament’s Cross-Party Group on Women:

The thesis suggests that careful and selective use of some of these common insights together with empirical evidence suggestive that the presence of women politicians has resulted in ‘woman-friendly’ social policy outcomes may promote reinvigorated discourses and political campaigning around women’s more equal representation. Therefore in terms of political discourse, it would make sense for feminists to make greater strategic use of the argument that we need more women in politics because they do make a difference. Furthermore it indicates that there is common ground between feminists, within and outwith the state, and other women politicians; and that there is potential scope for productive alliance building around gender issues. (2004: 9)

The new feminist influence achieved through the Partnership should increase the potential for “woman-friendly’ social policy outcomes” and for legitimating and mainstreaming violence against women issues on the policy agenda.
Conclusions

A case study tells a story and, like most stories, has an author, a setting, a time, minor and major characters, a plot and subplots, a beginning and an end. This study of the Scottish Partnership to Address Domestic Abuse, like most accounts, tells just one of many possible stories about the Partnership. This story reflects the maturing of a social movement as it engaged with the State at a certain historical point. Exploring the nature of that engagement provided key findings about opportunities for intervention in political processes from those usually marginalised in policy making.

Key findings

Did engaging with the State through the Partnership provide feminists with access to power that they were able to translate into influence and impact? Clearly the answer is a qualified yes: for some feminists working in some policy areas, especially those associated with service provision. Equally clear was the exercise of power by representatives from criminal justice to restrict feminist influence on the policing and court functions within the Partnership’s scope and
by feminists from the violence against women sector to position their organisation for future funding. Investigating the processes that privileged service provision over protection and prevention revealed the limits of feminist success, at least in the short term.

Like in any good story, a number of subplots emerged (the plot 'thickened'), and these would need to be resolved before the story (or its first instalment) could be told:

**Why use a partnership to address the policy problem of domestic violence?**

- Did the Partnership offer access to policy making to feminists working on violence against women?
  - If yes, then did they affect policy? If yes, where and how can we tell?
  - If yes, could access and influence be explained as the sole products of the partnership format? If no, what else was important?

**Did the Partnership improve Scottish policy on domestic violence?**

- Yes or no, did the partnership format contribute?

**Were there benefits of participating in the Partnership for feminists in the violence against women sector? Costs?**

- Are there any lessons in the feminists' experience of the partnership for involvement in future partnership working? For future engagement with the State? With other voluntary sector organisations?

The first part of this chapter weaves the findings from chapters 4 to 6 into the story of the Partnership that grew out of investigating these particular questions. Like the subplots that develop in a story, the questions and answers often did not align in a neat, sequential logic but rather required looping back to re-examine previous conclusions in the light of new questions or even just the impact of time. For example, the preliminary conclusions from early interviews about the
policy shift to domestic violence from violence against women needed to be reconsidered—and re-discussed with particular interviewees—in light of the 2002 announcement by the National Group that it was expanding its remit to violence against women. Although the telling of the story requires a logical ordering from beginning to end, the analysis and meaning, like the policy process, emerged in a much more iterative fashion.

The final section of Chapter 7 speculates on some of those questions, with a particular focus on what the lessons on being a partner in "governance" might be for less powerful partners in general and for Scottish feminists in particular.

The critical context of the case

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Partnership represents a case of successful feminist engagement with the State. How that success was effected and under what circumstances it might or might not be replicable are important and interesting questions for feminist activists in Scotland as well as for students of social movements and policy making. This research illuminates to some extent at least the processes of that engagement. Understanding the importance of the Partnership's historical context and the political opportunity structure that framed the activities of feminists (and was in part produced by their work) provides some clues to the lessons for future engagement. In particular, the dynamics of power and influence emerged as key factors in understanding the political agenda setting and policy making processes of the Partnership and the opportunities and drawbacks that partnership working offers.

Do partnerships offer a promising format for policy innovation? For nonestablished interests to access policy and decision making? How
can we distinguish the opportunities raised by political and historical events from those potentially inherent in partnerships as formats for governance? Addressing the latter question drove two processes in the research: (1) the exploration of the governance and partnership literature for theoretical and empirical explanations about partnerships and policy making, and (2) the positioning of the Partnership in its political and historical context.1

The governance literature provided insights about policy making and how policy networks frame the decision making and development and implementation of policy. However, the choice to use the governance and partnership in the literature as a theoretical framework for assessing the Partnership was quickly challenged by an early finding, that the Partnership was a partnership essentially in name only. This finding highlighted some of the weaknesses of the governance theorising and pushed analysis of the Partnership as a partnership into the frames of feminist theories of the State. These frames were much more sensitive to the issues of influence, power, and processes that were central to the research, and out of this theoretical framework emerged the central importance of the contexts—current and historical—of the Partnership.

The task of sorting out the impact of numerous contexts on the creation and operation of the Partnership suggested the need to construct the “big picture” both analytically and, for telling the story, graphically. Figure 7.1 depicts some of the key circumstances surrounding the Partnership.

---

1 Of course these two processes are not unrelated, and connecting them may contribute to the “bridge discourses” that mediate relations between social movements and the State (Fraser 1989).
The Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse emerged in a specific time and place with particular histories. The anti-Conservative sentiment and related campaigning over the previous 20 years, establishment and expansion of a network of refuge and support services for women experiencing domestic violence, chiefly by Women’s Aid, successful advocacy for women’s issues at regional and local levels for several decades, and the launch and dissemination of the Zero Tolerance campaigns, and the establishment of the UK’s first perpetrator programme were a few of the influential factors reflected in the opportunity structure of the time. In addition, the Partnership was initiated and carried on its work over a 2-year period during which the first modern MSPs were elected and took their seats and the new Scottish Parliament opened its doors. The Partnership was launched by the Scottish Office and its National Strategy was launched by the Scottish Executive.

These events were preceded, surrounded, and followed by social and political discourse, debate, and decision making about the potential forms and meanings of the new institutions to women in particular as well as to the whole country. Thus the Partnership is placed in Figure 7.1 at the intersection of devolution-related events and new parliamentary structures and the historical political opportunity structure. These all are bounded by (and interact with) the larger context of governance structures and policy-making processes.
Figure 7.1 Putting the Partnership in Context

Governance structures and processes

Joined-up government

Labour victory in 1997

Lobbying on VAW at national and local levels

Arm's-length accountability

Policy networks

Referenda

Devolution events

50:50 Campaign

Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse

Political opportunity structure

Anti-Conservative organising

37% MSPs are women

Devolution structures

Parliament Committees

Equality Unit

Governance structures and processes

Policy feedback

Agenda setting

Cross-cutting issues

Politics and policy making, all of which are dynamic, fluid and...
Innovation—from the Partnership structure?

The emergence of partnerships as a ‘natural’ policy response occurred in this same setting and is theoretically entwined with new structures for governance and policy making, all of which are dynamic, fluid and complex. As Clarke and Glendinning (2002) point out:

The challenge of analysing partnerships as part of the new governance is precisely the question of how to understand them as compound, contingent and potentially contradictory sites of power. (45-46)

The Partnership delivered innovation through the involvement of a number of feminist activists from the violence against women sector. Their new access to and influence on policy through engagement with Partnership processes was evident. Feminists from the voluntary sector, experienced in partnership processes and with an established analysis of the problem of male violence against women, were able to lead and influence some of the core work of the Partnership. Perhaps even more important over the long term is the transition from a small representation of feminists on the Partnership to a substantial and ongoing feminist presence in policy making on violence against women as demonstrated in the work of the National Group.

However, as Chapters 4 and 5 indicated, those new voices did not arrive or thrive as a result of the structure, principles, or initial organisation of the Partnership, which very much reflected the usual interests. The critical variables to explain their influence despite their small numbers are instead found in the historical context and political events of the Partnership’s time. Particularly notable are the decades of campaigning, advocacy, and service provision by feminists
in the violence against women sector and the support of feminist MSPs and ministers once the new Parliament was in place.

The partnership working identified in good practice guidelines—shared values, trust building, explicit decision making and consensus forming, to name a few—might in ideal settings allow feminist or other usually disenfranchised voices to participate in policy making more effectively. However, those good practices were not in more than token evidence in the Partnership’s processes, as demonstrated in Chapter 5. In fact, the failure to adopt explicit decision-making procedures and to create a shared agenda probably allowed the small contingent of representatives from the violence against women sector to steer the work simply by showing up and volunteering for the work between meetings.

The support by these “experts” of the feminist theoretical framework provided by the Partnership’s researcher and their ready provision of a “causal story” (Stone 1997) were instrumental in the adoption of the gendered definition of domestic violence by the wider group. Despite some evidence that a number of members were uncomfortable with the definition, which was adopted at the first meeting, the issue was never revisited. Ironically, this lack of visible conflict suggests the possibility of the exercise of power (Bachrach & Baratz 1963; Lukes 1974) by nonestablished interests and resonates with the model of partnerships as “contradictory sites of power” quoted above. The successful adoption of the feminist definition of domestic violence, must, however, be placed alongside subsequent narrow focus on service provision—refuge provision in particular—and the National Strategy’s resulting inadequacies regarding protection and prevention.

---

2 Providing a credible “causal story” links readily with Hall’s (1993) concept of a “coherent policy paradigm”, discussed below.
Power and control

The locus (centre to periphery) of control and the exercise and accumulation or loss of power are not easily identified in the governance models. However, framing the Partnership in its historical context did produce a number of observations pertinent to control and power.

Locating authority in partnerships

First, as discussed in Chapter 2, governing through policy networks is likely to favour the status quo, or as Rhodes and Marsh (1992) put it, “the existing balance of interests”. Little evidence emerged here to indicate that partnerships inherently counteract that bias. In fact, Chapter 4’s analysis of Partnership membership suggests that partnerships may be structurally unsuited for solving complex social problems across policy silos.

The new access to policy making afforded to feminists on the Partnership was initially offered to the partner least likely to challenge the existing interests—Women’s Aid, already heavily invested in service provision and a policy focus on domestic violence rather than violence against women. An early effect of this positioning of Women’s Aid as an insider is that other feminists working on violence against women, Rape Crisis, Zero Tolerance, Women’s Support Project, and perpetrators programmes, for example, were excluded from the Partnership. Given, however, that Rape Crisis Network and Zero Tolerance succeeded in joining the Partnership and that Women’s Support Project as well as feminists from perpetrator programmes and other sector projects have been
involved in subsequent policy making by the National Group on Violence Against Women suggest that this restriction failed.³

As the governance context predicts, policy sectors—and the institutions in them—are increasingly differentiated and do not match well with policy making at the national level. Joint planning and policy making, and implementation in particular, require partners who bring the authority to decide for others with them to the table. As Chapter 4 illustrated, authority is distributed differently across different hierarchies and service levels. In the case of criminal justice for example, although there are coordination and control functions performed by the Scottish Executive departments (exercised often through rule making for and distribution of funding), police, courts, and judges neither engage in nor respond to centralised decision making at the national level. (Only health and the COPFS had policy-making structures from which decision makers with national influence could have been identified and invited to the Partnership.) Partnerships (as currently assembled) able to agree or deliver a national policy that cuts across sectors on any complex social problem are hard to imagine under these circumstances.

**Power in the Partnership**

Exercises of power, at times less or more explicit, emerged from the analysis of Partnership processes and policy outputs. As identified in Chapter 5’s examination of Partnership processes, ministerial interventions placed new members on the Partnership, facilitated late and seemingly non-negotiable amendments (chiefly focusing on

³ This research focused on the time of the Partnership (1998-2000), and thus there is little evidence here about how this occurred. Speculation might suggest that the collective structure and organisational culture of Women’s Aid made them a difficult policy partner, and members from other feminist organisations were quick to offer themselves as plausible and effective substitutes.
to the National Strategy, and offered substantial funding to support a number of initiatives.

Less explicit but nevertheless real exercises of power were evident in the policy making and output addressing civil and criminal justice interventions—the protection $P$. (To a lesser extent, the boundaries constricting the solutions to the problem—the prevention $P$—raise the same issues.) As described in Chapter 5, the minimal presence of protection in the National Strategy and the absence of conflict over what appeared as highly contested issues in the consultation responses provided a strong case for the exercise of power to keep these issues off the Partnership agenda.

The influence of feminist activists on the political discourse around domestic violence could also be interpreted as an exercise of power, although less evidence was available to support that conclusion. The influence of the service providers on the Partnership agenda and the National Strategy were probably significant, but distinguishing the effects of that influence from the behind-the-scenes pressure from politicians for a quick policy fix was difficult. The shifts in discourse discussed in Chapter 6 are easier to attribute and raise interesting points about the exercise of power by less powerful partners in partnerships. It would be interesting to assess whether these changes in the discourse were possible because they did not threaten the interests of the more powerful partners.

The dynamics of power and influence in the Partnership suggest that some exercises of power, the obvious example being the ministerial interventions, may change little in the partnership setting. (There was little evidence in this Partnership to support the notion that partnerships in general devolve power from the centre.) The less explicit exercises of power that kept issues off the Partnership
agenda, although harder to identify, seemed abundant. Again, Clarke and Glendinning's exhortation to explain partnerships in light of their "compound, contingent and potentially contradictory sites of power" (2002) resonates.

Power and influence have appeared in the predictable contexts in Partnership processes and negotiations (all in less-than-explicit transactions). The exercises of power and influence by traditionally less powerful actors—through skilled use of group processes, presentation of a clear analysis, positioning as "expert" voices, and manipulation of the discourse—raise several interesting questions about power and agency in partnerships that merit further investigation.

First, it seems possible that conventional assumptions about who brings power and how power supports policy processes may overlook power demonstrated in different ways by those outside the usual policy-making community. As Cockburn (1991: 240) points out, feminists have produced two insights about power: "The first is that we are all implicated in it. . . . Secondly, we have learned that not all power is negative." Theories of power, she observes, "speak for and about the interests of those who generate them" (241). A closer look at how feminist activists can and do wield power in settings dominated by more powerful partners might be illuminating, including an examination of power exercised to increase their own power or resource base relative to feminists in relatively weaker positions.

Second, do our notions of the politics of power and influence assume a zero-sum game in partnerships? Alcock and Scott (2002) conceive of power in partnerships as "a positional good" that can be only be redistributed in partnerships:
Power differentials are a dimension here. Real power is a positional good and, for partnership working to be based on redistribution of power between partner agencies, then some have got to lose in order for others to gain. This is not easily achieved. As well as requiring changes in attitudes and activities by public sector agencies, it will require a willingness on the part of voluntary sector organisations or other community representatives to enter into partnership activity. (115)

But is “real” power always a positional good? If that is the case, the incentives to participate in partnerships disappear for most partners, and evidence is abundant that partners in both the public and voluntary sectors are participating in droves, happily or not. Granted, one of the questions of this research is whether partnerships actually have the potential capacity to produce access to policy making and joined-up planning and implementation that the governance literature promises. This research indicates that a tentative yes is possible only when the particular partnership is placed in its political and social context and the questions of who decides and who benefits are clearly outlined for prospective partners outside the usual policy community. A more nuanced notion of power might illuminate the question further.

In the case of the Domestic Abuse Service Development Fund, consternation was expressed in interviews and consultation responses regarding the required match at local authority level (not all local authorities applied for the first round of funding as a result). Projects were funded for a maximum of 1 year with options for the Executive to extend funding, an egregious example of short-termism that maintains control firmly in the centre.
Delivering on domestic violence

Can partnerships deliver joined-up policies and implementation for complex social problems? Did the Partnership deliver on domestic violence? There can be little doubt that the Partnership contributed to a number of significant advances in work on domestic violence in Scotland:

- Increased access to policy and decision making for a number of feminists in the violence against women sector
- Government adoption of a gendered definition of domestic violence that locates domestic violence within the broader issue of violence against women
- Improved capacity of the civil service to understand and respond to domestic violence (through the presence of specific feminist experts working as civil servants and through the networks established by the National Group in implementing the National Strategy)
- New funding for support (especially for services for children) and refuge and for local coordination
- High-profile public and political commitment to domestic violence as a national policy priority, including the creation of a Violence Against Women Unit in the Scottish Executive (eventually moved to the Equality Unit)

Three comments on this list are in order. First, it is important to note that these advances (along with progress not accomplished, attempted or possibly even considered) might have occurred in the absence of the Partnership. The critical role of the Partnership’s context suggests that other political initiatives might have occurred if the Partnership had not been set up. Second, these successes are those observed in a relatively short period after the life of the Partnership, between 2000 and early 2005. A number of outcomes (positive or negative) attributable at least in part to the Partnership
would be observable only in the longer term. Third, the Partnership's National Strategy offered the UK's first (and to date only) national policy on domestic violence founded on a gendered, feminist definition of domestic violence. That definition supports progress on a range of other work by feminists in the violence against women sector, and that benefit seems likely to increase as time passes.

What the Partnership did not and could not deliver was a joined-up national strategy. The failure to consider structural problems of cross-sector working, theoretically the problem that partnerships are set up to solve, created a Partnership whose function was entirely advisory. In addition, as Chapter 5 demonstrated, the National Strategy offered little in the way of action on or even political commitment for addressing protection issues, and the recommendations regarding prevention and provision reflected problems and interventions with narrowly drawn boundaries and actions easily linked to existing service delivery systems. This outcome was, as evidence offered here suggests, hardly accidental and in fact was hard won by feminists (and others) representing the interests of Women's Aid. This study, then, is in part a story about the ascendancy of a feminist group and its ability to define a policy problem in order to secure their power and expand their resource base.

Two other observations about the privileging of provision and the nature of refuge are important here. First, promising and providing refuge for women experiencing domestic violence challenges existing social relations by putting a woman's right to be safe above all other considerations:
[R]unning a refuge is about enabling women to challenge the power relations embodied in men’s violence against women in the domestic sphere. And this is contrasted with the role of state agencies which are obliged by statute to maintain those relations. (Charles 1995: 628)

The government’s new public commitment to adequate refuge space, announced during the life of the Partnership, reflects the long struggle by Women’s Aid and other feminists to see women’s safety prioritised above reproduction of the family form. This seems no small thing.

Second, as Charles (1995) notes, reforms fought for by feminists in the seventies and eighties gave women “abstract rights”. Legal protection from domestic violence without adequate welfare provision meant that the right to be safe was a right in name only. Several decades later, the expansion and enhancement of refuge provision transforms those abstractions into real rights for some women in some places.

**Time and outcomes—a look at policy framing**

The shifts in the policy focus from violence against women to domestic violence (then domestic abuse) and back to violence against women (after the end of the Partnership) is a particularly interesting case in point. Interviews with feminists inside and outwith the Partnership carried out early in the study (2001) reflected an almost universal attitude among those respondents that the policy focus on domestic violence was a setback for those working in the violence against women sector to deliver services and to influence local and national decision makers.
In 2002 the Scottish Executive announced that the National Group on Domestic Abuse was renaming itself the National Group on Violence against Women, that a literature review had been commissioned on the links between different forms of violence against women, and that an Expert Group was being formed to advise on broadening the policy focus. A number of interviewees were re-contacted to follow up on how this development was understood by those who had been convinced that the shift to domestic violence had been an unfortunate outcome associated with if not caused by the Partnership. One offered this commentary in an email following the second interview:

The conversation yesterday was quite timely for me, as it reminded me to dig out some of this stuff and have a look at it again. I've spoken before about the role of ZT [Zero Tolerance] in highlighting violence against women, starting with the campaign in Edinburgh which was run as you know by the local authority (Edinburgh District Council as was). And then in about 1994/95, they went to the Scottish Office . . . with a bid to run and develop a national campaign on VAW. My understanding . . . is that the Scottish Office went for a proposal which came from their own civil servants, to go with a TV based domestic violence campaign. . . .

The point about this, for me, is that it represents a watershed in the efforts to tackle violence against women in Scotland, a moment where a decision was made which changed the direction we were heading in.

ZT was a broad based campaign, informed by a feminist analysis of male violence against women . . . and I do believe that if this had been picked up at national level, there would have been a clearer mandate for building the gender analysis into the work from the outset. As it was, I think that was too challenging a prospect for the civil servants in the Scottish Office at the time (and to be fair to them, they knew their politicians!). So the adoption of the domestic violence proposal allowed for a more 'victim oriented' approach, and a blander 'hitting women is wrong' message. . . .
So now we are 10 years down the line, and we are finally getting back to the ‘violence against women as an abuse of male power which both reflects and perpetuates the imbalance in power between the genders’. (GG)

Thus this respondent portrays the shift away from violence against women as a diversion from the progress of work on violence against women. Another commentary, from a feminist within the government, refers to the shift as a strategic move in a feminist agenda that includes short-, medium-, and long-term goals. In her account, a successful initiative on domestic violence (short-term) enabled the conditions for redefining the problem as violence against women later (medium-term). Those conditions would include a more secure political commitment and increased capacity via the new feminists in the policy network (inside and outwith government).

A number of unknowns will remain unknown no matter how much time passes. For instance, would a Zero Tolerance campaign on violence against women have replaced the Partnership? Would a partnership focused on violence against women have succeeded in moving that agenda forward and providing access for feminists to policy making to the same extent as did the Partnership? However, some questions can be investigated, such as the success of the medium-term strategy, but only in a time frame longer than the one for this study.

**Partnering with the State**

**Reform and social change**

Despite the language of the 3 P’s, the National Strategy offered a set of actions and recommendations that might be considered less than
ambitious. The following statement from the National Strategy illustrates this relatively low level of expectation:

The main measures of the success of this strategy will be to reduce the levels of unmet need for services and to improve the experiences of women or children seeking support when they experience domestic abuse and, ultimately, to reduce the incidence of domestic abuse.

Contrast this with the following statement from a Council of Europe (1996: 21) report on violence against women:

. . . [A]ppropriate responses to violence against women will involve action on a range of levels. They must involve fundamentally challenging the nature of existing relationships in the home and workplace. They must also involve challenging existing customs and traditions and addressing inequality throughout society. Finally, they must involve challenging existing approaches within countries to crime, law and justice.

The accomplishments of the Partnership, at least those observable in the time of this study, are by no means trivial. Nevertheless, it seems important that they not obscure the larger questions about what did and did not change as a result. Reforms widely valued and fiercely fought for can become a “problem for feminists”, as Franzway and colleagues (1989) point out in their work on Australian femocrats:

These gains are valued by the whole women’s movement. But they are part of the problem for feminists. They are gains which many fought hard to achieve. Feminists have a vested interest in retaining them. So where is the space to raise political questions about the limits of such reforms? Or to challenge femocrat strategies which contributed to their achievement? (158)

The public successes of the Partnership may have contributed to just such a vested interest in ignoring what the Partnership did not do. All but a handful of interviewees, inside and outside the Partnership’s
membership, were strongly reluctant to criticize the Partnership’s work. Many were, after much reassurance about the interviewer’s positive regard for the Partnership’s accomplishments, able to discuss both the strengths and the weaknesses of the National Strategy. A few simply refused, responding with comments like “I can’t say anything about what other members of the Partnership might have thought” or “I don’t think it is appropriate to speculate about what might have happened”. This reluctance to consider publicly the drawbacks of the Partnership is particularly unfortunate in light of the questions about partnerships raised by this study.

**Counting the costs**

Participating in the Partnership offered significant potential benefits to feminists in the violence against women sector—access to policy making processes, strengthened relationships with representatives from a number of departments in the Scottish Executive, opportunities to position their organisations for much-needed funding. What also emerged clearly were the significant potential costs of participation.

In addition to the readily identified costs of time and other resources, relationships among organisations in the violence against women sector, never easily managed, were made more difficult. As Chapter 6 indicated, an initial united front among feminists on the Partnership was pressured by the position of Women’s Aid, by far the largest provider in the service system, and by the privileging of provision as the National Strategy took shape.
In the larger picture of the overall capacity of the violence against women sector, choices about participation in partnerships have opportunity costs often acknowledged but rarely examined closely. Energy for community work is not an infinite resource. Effort spent on partnership work reduces capacity somewhere else.

The new interface of feminist networks with the Scottish Executive’s Violence against Women Unit, e.g., in the Expert Group on Violence against Women, and the prospect of a feminist presence in parts of the civil service, will change relationships among activists and with allies at national and local levels. The experiences of Australian femocrats suggest the need to consider the implications of these developments. Franzway and colleagues (1989) describe the femocrats in Australia as powerful and pragmatic feminists focused on getting the job done and tending to “substitute organisational know-how for social critique”. The presence of feminists within the State apparatus offers opportunities but carries risks as well. Franzway and colleagues make a strong argument for feminists to think strategically about their new roles:

While we can accept many of the criticisms of radical rhetoric and moralism made by those who have to survive in a bureaucracy, we would argue that holding even a small part of state power increases, rather than decreases, the need for theoretical and strategic clarity. (1989: x)

The imperatives of defending hard-won gains and grasping rare opportunities to advance an agenda—tasks for the near future—will likely mitigate against reflection, debate, and alliances. Scottish feminists in the violence against women sector currently have no formal mechanism for engaging with each other about the potential benefits and possible consequences of partnering with the State and
with each other. How to create the political and personal spaces to do so is worth considering.

**To be continued . . . implications for the future**

Telling the story of the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse has resolved some subplots but leaves some for the next instalment. The research has offered a “thick” description of the Partnership—its emergence, its operation, its outputs—and its contexts and has proposed some conclusions about using partnerships for making policy on domestic violence and other complex social problems.

*Describing* the Partnership and interpreting what was seen has formed the bulk of this study. *Explaining* the Partnership—why it was so fruitful for bringing new voices to the table, what was critical about its nature, time and place that transfer to considerations for other partnerships—is a further piece of research. Some speculations seem worthwhile, however.

As indicated above, the innovative effects of the Partnership—identified largely in the increased involvement and influence of new voices—were hard to associate with its partnership format. Instead, the historical and political contexts were more credible contributors. A number of theoretical discussions help make sense of the Partnership’s successes for feminists in the violence against women sector and provide lessons for the future.

The rapid penetration of the policy community by feminists during and immediately after the Partnership’s time was a hard-to-predict
phenomenon. A number of respondents used the metaphor of a once-locked door suddenly opening, and the opening of the door reflected several circumstances. The most important were probably the following, (in no order of importance):

- The need to solve several political problems\(^4\) by the Scottish Office (the problem of being seen to be doing something “on women” and to respond to perceived priorities of incoming MSPs)
- New Labour’s affinity for partnerships
- The vacuum caused by the Scottish Office’s lack of knowledge about and experience with policy around violence against women in particular and gender in general
- The history of feminist activists pressuring the Scottish Office for action on a number of issues, including violence
- The election of a new Scottish Parliament, processes and structures of devolution, and the 37% women that included feminist-friendly MSPs

The creation of the Partnership swung open the policy door for feminists in the violence against women sector. Will it stay open? Pierson (1993) and Hall (1993) and other theorists suggest that the answer is no. The Partnership occurred during a time of considerable political upheaval in Scotland, and the story of the Partnership reflects the political opportunity structure at the time. Opportunities occur, according to social movement theorists, at the “windows and cracks that appear when political systems change” (Harris & Rochester 2001: 104). Pierson highlights the importance of focusing on the formative moments for institutions and organisations. Even where the influences of policy on social groups seem relatively modest, small effects at crucial junctures may make a profound difference. (1993: 602)

\(^4\) Note that from this perspective, the Partnership was a response to a political problem not a social problem, echoing Stone’s (1997) characterisation of policy analysis as political decision making.
One lesson from this model seems to be that future partnerships are not likely to offer the same opportunities for community activists unless they occur at the times and places of transition. This argues for a strategic approach to participation and a cogent analysis of the costs and potential benefits of involvement. Per Stone's (1997) analysis, State-led partnerships address political problems rather than social problems and could be therefore broadly conceived of as political opportunities. Community activists might want to consider prospective partnerships by asking what the political opportunities are for whom to do what? And what are the risks?

Another enabling factor for the Partnership may have been the civil servants' lack of what Hall (1993) calls a "coherent policy paradigm" regarding violence against women. Extrapolating from his work on British economic policy, Hall suggests that the existence of an accepted policy paradigm for addressing a social (political) problem allows policy makers to resist outside pressure to develop new policies. Applied to the Partnership, it seems that the feminists' readily available social analysis of domestic violence—a relatively coherent paradigm—filled that vacuum. Two consequences might follow: policy makers will be less susceptible to pressure for change from community activists but the policy paradigm adopted should allow progress on the feminist agenda on violence. Considering how to maintain support for that paradigm from activists inside and outwith central government would be worthwhile.
Concluding with the questions

How well did this case study answer its own questions? Convincing findings in the research emerged for a number of the questions: The Partnership did offer a political opportunity for a number of feminist organisations to engage successfully with the state, fostering policy innovation for addressing domestic violence and opening access to policy making for a number of feminists from the violence against women sector. However, evidence indicated that the innovation was more a product of the political opportunity structure of the time than of the nature of partnership working. Partnerships intended to create and implement national policy on complex issues that cut across diverse sectors are unlikely to succeed, given the political nature of their setting, the power and control issues intrinsic to government-led partnerships, and the structural difficulties of diverse locations of authority and resource across sectors. The Partnership therefore did not produce joined-up policy on domestic violence, although it did offer numerous other improvements on current policy, as detailed above.

Examining agenda setting in the Partnership revealed a complex interaction of power, exercised explicitly by the State and implicitly by other interests through nondecision making, and political problem solving. Supportive and committed MSPs and ministers made identifiable contributions to increasing resources for service provision and to raising the profile of the problem of violent men’s violence against women. However, the causal role of gender inequality disappeared from the Partnership agenda almost as quickly as it appeared. The focusing of the policy agenda on provision allowed for some short- and medium-term successes. A longer look is required
to understand what that privileging of provision will mean for the longer term.

Implications from the case study presented here for policy making in other contexts are provisional and tentative. Theoretically, partnerships are a policy tool developed to broaden participation in policy making and implementation and to create cross-cutting policy solutions to cross-cutting policy problems. Creating partnerships that can deliver integrated policy making at the national level will require more sophisticated assessments that reflect where sector decision making authority is located and what outcomes can be delivered at different levels. Creative responses might include staged planning, multi-level partnerships, and other innovative designs.

Finally, the findings cannot offer a definitive answer to the question of whether partnerships are likely to offer improved access to decision making for those traditionally outside policy making. Despite the costs and risks of partnering with powerful entities in government and other large institutions, the potential remains for innovation in certain contexts. Strategic decisions about participating in partnerships may require predicting the "formative moments" described in the social movement literature and thus accurately defining the right contexts.


Tarrow S. 1996. States and opportunities: The political structuring of social movements. In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, edited by McAdam D, J McCarthy, and M Zald. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


# Appendix

## Minutes - thematic analysis of first three meetings

**Initial membership:** 14 women, 5 men:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEETING</th>
<th>PREVENTION</th>
<th>PROTECTION</th>
<th>PROVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 1</td>
<td>Public awareness campaign, changing attitudes [M1-1, 1.1]</td>
<td>Remit of the SP: &quot;... to promote education ... with an emphasis on increasing awareness among young people&quot; [m1-2]</td>
<td>Improvements in service provision [M1-1, 1.1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Nov 1998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Remit of the SP: &quot;... examine access to services ... consider the measurement of change in service provision&quot; [m1-2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strathclyde Business School, Glasgow</td>
<td>In section on work w/male perps: &quot;Further research may also be needed on effective interventions with male children and in particular teenage boys. Dr. Henderson&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>7/8 invited &quot;short presentations by groups who have relevant experience and are able to demonstrate good practice&quot; were provision related. [m1-6]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Issue of protecting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**No mention in opening mtg's discussion of SP remit**

"Action point 2: Mr Pearson [chief constable, Strathclyde police] to provide an up-to-date picture of the working arrangements for dealing with domestic violence within the Scottish police forces." [M1-3] (See m2)
Meeting 2

21 Dec 1998
Scottish Office, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

said she was not aware of any intensive studies with this focus."
[m1-5] What does this imply about causal explanations?
About assumptions about effective prevention? Why boys not men?

0/8 invited presentations were protection related. [m1-6]

At meeting 2, SP watched video of advertisement for "new publicity campaign...
..reflects the build-up of domestic abuse in an apparently normal family and emphasizes the continuing need to maintain public awareness of both the scale and the pervasive nature of the problem. . . . The issue of awareness raising as part of the partnership remit, particularly in relation to Zero Tolerance, was

0/8 invited presentations related to prevention. [m1-6]

“Asst Chief Const Pearson has written to Scottish police forces asking them to provide up-to-date information on their working arrangements for dealing with domestic violence. This information has now been returned and will be passed to Dr. Henderson; Mr. Pearson will provide an executive summary for circulation to members at the next meeting of the Partnership”. [m2-6]

This is the last mention of police working arrangements in the minutes. No evidence of an executive summary in minutes.

“Sheriff Convery reported that the Sheriffs Association Council would be meeting on 14

Meeting 3

25 Jan 1999
Scottish Office, St Andrew’s House, Edinburgh

service provision for women in rural area, to women with disabilities, to women in ethnic minorities—consistent theme.
Janury. He would speak personally to the Director of Judicial Studies and ask him to provide information on continuing education relating to domestic violence." [m2-7] No further mention in minutes of training for judiciary.

SWA recommendations: "a legislative presumption against contact for abusive fathers until and unless it can be proven safe for women and children" [m3-3] Note link between women and children.

From SWA presentation: service provision to children through SWA. Main gaps in funding are for refuge space and children's workers. [m3-3]

Tolerance, was then discussed.” [m2-6]

Edinburgh Domestic Violence Probation Project presentation at meeting 2. “This project is staffed by criminal justice social workers and the work is focused on men who have abused women. The approach has revealed that there may be a need for something other than post-prosecution mandated arrangements to secure the continuing involvement of male perps of domestic violence in rehabilitation programmes.” [m2-4] Further discussion at later meeting of evaluation results, but no evidence that this approach ever made it to short agenda for prevention efforts.

Prevention disappears from
SP agenda in decision to focus workplan on 'areas of work needed to address the gaps and variation in service provision' [m3-6] although ZTT invited to present at next meeting.

"The ZTT campaigns have revealed deficiencies in the criminal justice system and ZTT therefore advocate mandatory training for all criminal justice practitioners" and, later, "On the criminal justice side it was pointed out that the current system does not protect women and children, although there is provision in existing criminal procedure for agreement of evidence and other measures to relieve the pressure on vulnerable witnesses" [m4-2]

From Western Isles Women's Aid: "The introduction of performance indicators linked to the number of refuge places in the area and reflecting a national priority could provide the spur for this purpose [getting the local authority for make additional funds available]." [m3-4]

INTERVIEWEES AND QUERIES

Edinburgh Domestic Violence Probation Project (Moira Andrews and Rory Macrae): “the approach has revealed that there may be a need for something other than post-prosecution mandated arrangements to secure the continuing involvement of male perpetrators of domestic violence in rehabilitation programmes.” [m2-4] what does this mean; who – why is EDVPP not on SP and did they want to be; relationship between courts, lawyers, police around dv; implications of civil versus criminal distinctions vis a vis statement elsewhere in SP that some DV is civil not criminal;
Sheila Henderson: how did she/others perceive her role; discussion around structuring of workplan [m3-5]—what were issues; short agenda and long agenda perceived?

OBSERVATIONS BY THEME

Scottish Office/Scottish Executive

SO/SE reps on SP were 6 out of the 18—33%!

Liddell: SP to provide leadership at the national level; SP consists of representatives from all of the key statutory and voluntary agencies and it is therefore up to the individual members of the Partnership to make an active contribution on behalf of their sectoral or specific policy interests [M1-1:1:2].

Women and children

Ubiquitous phrase. Analysis about implications of link?

Provision and funding implications. SWA resource issues tied to link with women and children “In 1996/97, 3193 women and 4911 children and young people lived in Women’s Aid refuges in Scotland. A further 4024 women and 6062 children and young people could not obtain a refuge space when and where they needed it, due to a severe lack of refuge accommodation. At present Scottish Women’s Aid has only 325 refuge spaces, less than half the number recommended in the 1991 COSLA guidelines.

There are 38 affiliated groups in the network of Scottish Women’s Aid but only 45 paid workers to support the 5000 children and young people who lived in the available refuges in 1996/97. On average they work 24 hours per week and only 16 are full time. A further 9 workers are employed to support children not living in refuge including those families who have been re-housed. There are still 7 Women’s Aid groups in Scotland with no children’s worker; less than half of the existing children’s support workers are fully funded by local authorities.

Gaps in services must be addressed and include children - with provision for all ages, for those in refuge, who have left refuge, who have never been in refuge. The gaps in provision for women already identified also affect children plus the young homeless, ‘looked after’ children, families with young men over 16, and children accessing support independent from their mothers. Recommendations must include housing, space, resources and adequate staffing levels allocated for children’s support work.
Is commitment to funding for services—SWA services in particular—the short agenda rather than the 'decision' that service provision is the most important response to domestic abuse?

ZTT presentation: note theme of 'women and children' throughout. [m4-1]

Domestic violence as male abuse of power

Initial defn taken from S Henderson’s paper (SPDV 2/98:2), seems like with little conflict [m1-5]. Henderson clearly played pivotal role, also authoring most of the documents that SP used as source material.

Role of judiciary and of police

"Points were raised in discussion [about presentation Family Mediation Scotland] about concerns that potential evidence of domestic abuse from mediation sessions was not being produced in court and that women did not perceive mediation as voluntary, often because they were advised by solicitors that t refuse would be interpreted by sheriffs as being obstructive." [m2-4]

No discussion of training re dv or assessment of judiciary performance other than mention at second mtg that Sheriff Convery would pursue info re continuing education. [m2-7]

Training for criminal justice workers proffered as the sole strategy for work with judiciary. ZTT advocated 'mandatory training' [m4-2], suggestion never discussed in minutes. So lack of appropriate support/protection from criminal justice is defined as problem of lack of training. How does this relate to SP problem definitions and causal attributions?

Agendas and voices

"Members raised questions about the status of the notes of the Partnership meetings. The Home Dept considers that these are open documents available to members of the SP as a record of the exchanges that have taken place. They are not official minutes int the sense that detailed statements or comments are directly attributed to individual members. However, some SP members said that they would prefer to have comments attributed to them. . . . Mrs. Smith then invited members to send in comments, amendments or additions to the note of first meeting." [m2-6]

"Small planning group" consisting of Greenan (Rape Crisis), Irving (SWA), Harris (COSLA), Henderson, and Francis (SO/civil law) convened to plan for restructuring mtgs so that areas identified in draft workplan could be addressed "in a more systematic way" (policy and legislation; education and
training, access to services, information and measurement of change). Establishment of 'planning group'—how picked, are these the agenda setters? (Rape Crisis, COSLA, SWA, SO, Henderson):

Structures

Relationship/tension between main areas first identified as SP’s remit-- policy and legislation; education and training, access to services, information and measurement of change—and 3 Ps—prevention, protection, provision

"It would be helpful to structure the workplan in such a way that a hierarchy of programmes and initiatives to be adopted by the various service providers is clearly set out and prioritized. At the same time the responsibilities for carrying forward a particular programme of initiative should be attributed to the appropriate service provider in either the statutory or voluntary sectors. Specific programmes covering rural areas, women with disabilities and women in ethnic minorities would also need to be included in the overall assessment of strategy and priorities." [m2-8] [Why these programs singled out? Who benefits, who is missing, how did that decision get made? Who is in the “statutory or voluntary sectors” and who is missing?]

What were alternative ways to structure processes of SP? How might they have changed results?

Role of chair—agenda?, relationship with SO/SE?

Role of Henderson

Look at SO vs SE

Strategy

Strategic decision: Decision to structure workplan according to “area of work”—“After discussion it was agreed that the structure of the draft workplan should be based on the specified ‘Areas of work needed to address the gaps and variations in service provision’. Dr Henderson would therefore develop the draft workplan in accordance with this decision” rather than according to 3Ps (“end goals”) or to “the remit of the Partnership”—develop a national strategy, minimum standards and levels of service, a monitoring framework—in meeting 3 a nondecision in terms of other options or priorities. Services defined as SWA provided, no discussion of police and legal services in those discussions? [m3-5 to m3-6]

Re development of a national strategy:
5.3 The 1st draft of the workplan is based on the main areas identified at the 1st meeting of the Partnership:

- Policy and Legislation;
- Education and Training;
- Access to Services;
- Information and Measurement of Change.

In addition the 'Development of a National Strategy' has been added in order to provide both a framework and context for the workplan. This is central to the remit of the Partnership as a whole and will provide a valuable benchmark when the workplan is submitted to the Minister at the end of March 1999.

Added by Henderson alone? How did this come about? Input by SO?

From m2-8:

The members of the Partnership then discussed various questions raised by Dr Henderson's draft. Points were raised about the timescales associated with initiatives, the need to clearly identify the specific contributions that should be made by the various service providers listed at the last Partnership meeting, and the need for a clear statement of national strategy as required in the Partnership remit. The latter should consist of high level points which the strategy would need to make and could stand as a preamble to the actual workplan itself.

From m4-4: Group sessions on 'development of national strategy' as part of work on the draft workplan—no description of that discussion.

From m6-2:

Mr Rowell introduced paper SPDV/12/99. Forty-four submissions had been received in response to the consultation process. From them it was clear that there was broad agreement to the Workplan and support for the work of the Partnership. There was also strong support
for a national strategy on domestic abuse. The Partnership was seen as having the dead role in providing good practice guidance; setting standards in relation to service provision and overseeing local implementation of the strategy.

*Did the SP's national strategy never get discussed in the large group, never get recorded in minutes?*

*From m6-3:*

7.9 The proposals to establish a national strategy on domestic abuse had been widely welcomed. No amendment to this section was necessary.

**Who and non-who**

Why no EDVPP or CHANGE members? Conscious choice that mandatory (and other) programmes for batterers not on the 'solution' list?

**Funding and resources**

SWA: refuge space and children's support workers (other solutions?? How well are these linked to problem defn?) [m3-3]

Western Isles Women's Aid: Strategy to get local authorities to cough up funds for refuges to make number of refuge spaces a performance indicator. *From discussion: “a statutory duty to provide services for women [and children therefore] including refuge places, may be the only solution. [m3-4]*

Limited list of solutions? (National funding of refuges; increased funding for council housing; increased efforts to improve safety in their own homes so that batterers are the ones forced to leave . . .)
Nodes in Set: All Free Nodes
Created: 25/05/02 - 12:20:20
Modified: 25/05/02 - 12:20:20
Number of Nodes: 30
1 3 P's
2 Agenda setting
3 Chair
4 civil servants

Description:
Two ideas here: 1. civil servants as impediments to formation and (more particularly) implementation of policy. (Naturally conservative force, preserves status quo and protects interests of insiders.) 2. per EB lack of expertise in govt generally and in civil service particularly on feminist analysis. No gender analysis exacerbates built-in problems with lack of expertise because culture of civil service moves people around and appoints them not for experience with an issue but for political skills.

5 Civil v social rights
6 CJS--police in MAF

Description:
Issues related to role of police in multiagency fora
7 CJS—prosecution
Description:
Issues related to role of criminal justice system and courts

8 Decision-making process
Description:
How were decisions made

9 Disasters averted
Description:
What could have happened, given some of the major mistakes made by the SO/SE

10 Feminist community influence
11 Feminist strategy re VAW
Description:
Siting DV in VAW, larger strategies to address VAW, feminist activity in general

12 Ferns, gender equality etc
13 Funding issues
14 Health—NHS
15 Henderson role
16 Implementation and investment
17 Innovation
18 Irving secondment
Description:
One of the successes perhaps of the P, and a successful strategy for feminists perhaps, is to get feminists inside the govt. See Femocrats book.
19  MAF format
Description:
Issues around MAF—increased or decreased access, etc

20  ministers and politicians
Description:
seems that one key to effective work with civil servants is ministerial involvement in a visible way; JB chairing SP would perhaps have changed outcomes some, for instance

21  Prevention
22  Protection
23  Provision
24  Scottish Parliament
25  SPDA definition of domestic violence
Description:
Feminist defn, explaining dv as gendered, men's violence against women [and children]; how that got adopted by SPDA

26  The State
27  Timing
28  Voices
29  Who is at the table~
Description:
Issues related to access to the process: who was there, who should have been there, how did participants get there

30  women and children
Description:
Fusing of women's and children's interests
Tree Nodes

NVivo revision 1.3.146  Licensee: marsha scott

Project: PhD  User: 0090532

NODE LISTING

Nodes in Set:  All Tree Nodes  
Created:  25/05/02 - 12:20:20  
Modified:  25/05/02 - 12:20:20  
Number of Nodes: 32

1  (1) /Insider
Description:
Someone inside the process--on the SP, planning it, and/or in some decision-making capacity regarding it.

2  (1 1) /Insider/Insider, local gov

3  (1 2) /Insider/Insider, voluntary sector
Description:
Insider in the process, representing or working in the voluntary sector

4  (1 2 3) /Insider/Insider, voluntary sector/Insider, voluntary sector, vaw
Description:
Insider, in voluntary sector, working in a field related to violence against women

5  (1 2 3 4) /Insider/Insider, voluntary sector/Insider, voluntary sector, vaw/Insider, voluntary sector, vaw, da
Description:
Interviewee is an insider from the voluntary sector who is working in domestic abuse field

6 (1 3) /Insider/Insider, cjs
7 (1 3 1) /Insider/Insider, cjs/Police
8 (1 3 2) /Insider/Insider, cjs/Judge, advocate
9 (1 4) /Insider/Insider, central govt
10 (2) /Outsider

Description:
Interviewees outside the SPDA process

11 (2 1) /Outsider/CJS
12 (2 2) /Outsider/VAW
13 (3) /Relationships among fem orgs
14 (4) /Successful partnerships

Description:
According to governance lit (eg, Powell, Glendinning, Rummery), 'successful' partnerships share some characteristics

15 (4 1) /Successful partnerships/Shared vision

Description:
"A shared set of values and a broadly based consensus" about where work needs to go, not necessarily how to get there. Agreement on the ends but not necessarily the means.

16 (4 2) /Successful partnerships/Resources

Description:
Staff time, cash, access to community legitimacy, access to users, expertise. Allocations of cash, staff time can be indicators of how seriously invested the partners are in the p'ship

17 (4 3) /Successful partnerships/Autonomy and power
Somewhat problematic. Does p'ship and members have capacity to take decisions and commit resources? To what extent are partners interdependent? Do they recognise what they need and what they're willing to offer in return?

18 (4 4) /Successful partnerships/Trust
Description:
A difficult concept but apparently a defining characteristic of successful p'ships

19 (4 5) /Successful partnerships/Interdependence
20 (4 6) /Successful partnerships/Process
21 (5) /Central control and networks
Description:
"partnership working appears to be a remarkably effective means of ensuring that the state retains, and in some case strengthens, its powers over some sectors (particularly the voluntary and community sectors). . . . only in some, rare, cases does the state adopt a laissez-faire enabling approach that might signify a true commitment to a 'Third Way' networked governance" (p 243) Powell, Glendinning, Rummery

22 (5 1) /Central control and networks/Increase or maintain control
Description:
Structutre, format, process that increases central control

23 (5 2) /Central control and networks/Control to voluntary-communitysect 2
Description:
Structure/format/process that increases control or decision making by voluntary or community sector; may decrease central (natl govt) control

24  (5 3) /Central control and networks/Unclear effect on central control
   Description:
   Structure/format/process that probably affects centralised control, but unclear whether net effect is positive or negative.

25  (6) /Search Results
26  (6 1) /Search Results/Single Text Lookup
   Description:
   Text Search: text matching the pattern 'women and children'

Scope: { SP minutes rtf }

Result is a node coding all the finds: (6 1) /Search Results/Single Text Lookup (n)
Document finds are spread to (no spread). Node finds are spread to (no spread).

27  (6 2) /Search Results/Single Text Lookup 2
   Description:
   Text Search: text matching the pattern 'women'

Scope: { SP minutes rtf }

Result is a node coding all the finds: (6 1) /Search Results/Single Text Lookup (n)
Document finds are spread to (no spread). Node finds are spread to (no spread).

28 (6 3) /Search Results/Single Text Lookup 3
Description:
Text Search: text matching the pattern 'women or children'
Scope: { SP minutes rtf }
Result is a node coding all the finds: (6 1) /Search Results/Single Text Lookup (n)
Document finds are spread to (no spread). Node finds are spread to (no spread).

29 (1001) /Extracts
Description:
Contains nodes created as extracts from the Node Link dialog.

30 (1001 1) /Extracts/memo--why high level involvement t 2
31 (1001 2) /Extracts/Early MAFS, police, VAW - Extract
32 (1001 3) /Extracts/Jackie Baillie - Extract