Surveillance, in/visibility, resistance:

Searching for beauty in Scottish feminist campaigns to end men's violence against women

A thesis submitted to the University of Stirling Faculty of Arts and Humanities,
Department of Communications, Media, and Culture
in fulfilment of requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

I wish to submit this thesis in accordance with the research degree regulations of my primary research institution, the University of Stirling. I am also registered at the University of Strathclyde.

I declare that the thesis embodies the results of my own research and was composed by me.

Data collection and analysis produced for this thesis has informed a chapter submitted for publication to forthcoming *The Routledge Companion to Gender, Sexuality and Culture*. Where relevant, I have provided citations to the Routledge chapter, most notably in Section 5.05 and Section 5.06 of the Zero Tolerance chapter of this thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the visual construction of campaigns addressing men's violence against women. The analysis focuses on how an expansive notion of beauty operates in the public facing campaign materials produced by three Scottish feminist organisations: Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid. The work is informed by the premise that all representational decisions involve trade-offs and compromises, which are useful to identify and problematise.

This work is located within the feminist media studies tradition of exploring how gender norms and hierarchies are constructed, mediated, consumed, and resisted (Harvey, 2020, p. 5). It is additionally informed by a wide range of interdisciplinary sources from the fields of cultural studies and strategic communications. The analysis draws from a history of feminist critiques to interrogate the representation of people in these campaigns. The analysis also draws from literature on visual communication to investigate how elements of form and style construct beautiful (or unbeautiful) imagery and contribute to meaning-making.

The methodology is informed by social semiotics as formulated in the work of Hodge, Kress, and van Leeuwen (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006; van Leeuwen, 2005). It relies heavily on Kress and van Leeuwen's *visual grammar* framework to interpret how these campaigns construct meaningful images within specific organisational and cultural contexts. Social semiotic meaning-making is theorised as an inherently fluid and relational process.

This visual grammar was used to produce close text readings of the campaigns. These readings were contextualised and supplemented with archival and interview research with feminist campaigners who were involved in the campaign production. An array of visual and narrative themes emerged from this process which can be aligned to three overarching and interrelated concepts relevant to both visual beauty and male violence: surveillance, in/visibility, and resistance.

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Huge credit is also due to the Glasgow Women's Library – and especially Nicola – for all your help with the archives. Thanks as well to all the folk like Stephen who helped me find materials. Special thanks to Laura T. from Zero Tolerance for your early encouragement.

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Finally, I want to thank two people who have shown me in so many ways that no matter what the world tries to tell us, men have so much capacity to be kind, gentle, supportive, and infinitely loving. Wherever you are in the universe, Dad (Big Ed), I hope I make you proud. Thank you for nurturing my sense of wonder and curiosity. I so very much miss our long talks at the kitchen table. And thank you Bruce – for everything. There's no number – real or imaginary – big enough to measure how important you are to me. Is that the kind of thing you can illustrate with an Euler chart?

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Table of Figures[1]

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[1] As this thesis focuses on the visual construction of the campaigns, it includes many pictures. Some of these images are included for context, with footnotes indicating their source. Others are part of the key corpus subject to close readings using the methodology outlined in Chapter 4. Not all corpus images are reproduced in this thesis. A list of all items analysed can be found in Appendix A.

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Chapter 1. Introduction: Why beauty, why violence, why Scotland?

Section 1.01 Violence and beauty

Domestic abuse. Rape and sexual assault. Child sexual abuse. Image-based sexual abuse. Coercive control. Female genital mutilation (FGM). Commercial sexual exploitation. Femicide. The best way to represent and communicate the complexities of violence against women (and children) is a fraught issue. This thesis explores a specific aspect of that issue – the role of Western ideas of beauty in Scottish feminist campaigns against these forms of violence. The analysis draws from a wide range of disciplinary sources, but is primarily informed by the feminist media studies tradition, which is focused on how gender norms and hierarchies are constructed, mediated, consumed, and resisted (Harvey, 2020, p. 5). Jane Stokes identifies three potential foci of media study: industry, texts, and audiences (2013, p. xv). My attention is largely on the texts themselves, with complementary integration of the "industry" context of Scottish feminist organisations, via data gathered from desk-based, archival, and interview research. The first part of this introductory chapter explains the rationale for this research while outlining the structure of this thesis. The second part, Section 1.02, describes the organisational, social, and political contexts of the campaigns under analysis.

Crafting effective communication campaigns around an ideologically contentious and theoretically complicated problem is inevitably challenging. Even organisations with presumably good intentions can reproduce deeply harmful narratives such as in Figure 1.1, a 2015 poster from the West Yorkshire police (Senior, 2019). Although this precise image is no longer featured, as of July 2021, there is still similar messaging and imagery on the force's website (West Yorkshire Police, n.d.).[2] The problems with such victim-blaming will be revisited throughout

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[2] https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/party

the thesis. Suffice to say, I wholeheartedly reject the idea that women should ever expect rape as the "price" for their choices.

Figure 1.1: West Yorkshire Police "Party Animals"[3]

The messaging of Figure 1.1 stands in stark contrast to the materials analysed in this thesis, which all come from one of three Scottish feminist

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[3] Source: https://www.leeds-live.co.uk/news/leeds-news/west-yorkshire-police-poster-rape-15978244

Image credit: Fair dealing / West Yorkshire Police.

organisations: Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid. The next section, Section 1.02, provides more information about the histories and missions of these organisations. I want to transparently acknowledge that my approach is that of a critical friend who has great respect for the women and the organisations that produced these campaigns. I am operating from the premise that the 16 campaigns that I analyse are "good" campaigns. I make no claims about campaign effectiveness – the difficulty of determining how campaigns influence behaviour or attitudes in the long term is addressed in Section 3.05. I do claim that the materials analysed in this thesis powerfully communicate the complexities of men's violence against women and children in innovative, insightful, and socially responsible ways. As will be explored in the relevant chapters, they also have limitations. For instance, they may subtly reinforce existing structures of exclusion or reproduce problematic tropes.

Such limitations point to the central premise of this thesis: that using the tools of a hegemonic representational landscape to advance counter-hegemonic goals inevitably necessitates compromises or trade-offs. This dynamic came to my attention through professional experience. From 2008 to 2016, I worked in several public facing fundraising and communications roles for Scottish third sector organisations. These organisations supported or advocated for a range of groups, including children, learning disabled adults, migrant women, and women in general. One dilemma that I regularly encountered was how to communicate in a way that was compelling, but also resisted the pressures to sensationalise the issues in order to attract attention, sympathy, or funds. A pitiable photo of a pretty young woman with a black eye might attract attention and inspire sympathy, but it implies that abuse is necessarily, or only, physical. Furthermore, there are profound ethical concerns around imagery that represents people as passive objects of pity, rather than as agentic subjects with the right to live with dignity regardless of whether they are sympathetic. Conversely, a reluctance to represent the physical effects of abuse could be seen as shying away from the extreme brutality of men's violence against women and children. Every decision to represent one truth is a decision not to represent others. Organisations must also wrestle with the challenges of inclusive representation. As will be discussed throughout this thesis, the inclusion of marginalised or under-represented groups

in campaigning material may subtly reproduce some of the same socio-cultural dynamics that underpin their marginalisation. If representational decisions inevitably involve compromise, it is useful to identify and problematise these compromises to help address the risk of unintended meanings and consequences. The texts in my corpus are rich resources for exploring the representational conundrums that feminist campaigns may encounter when challenging men's violence against women.

Challenging male violence is an essential mission in the struggle for women's liberation. The 2011 Council of Europe's "Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence" is more commonly known as the *Istanbul Convention*. Scottish Women's Aid describe the Istanbul Convention as "probably the very best piece of violence against women policy that has been written ever" (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-e). As yet unratified by the United Kingdom, this European treaty defines violence against women as "a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women" (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 3). The global scourge of men's violence against women denies us our basic human right "to live free from violence in both the public and the private sphere" (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 3). According to a 2020 report from "Scotland's feminist policy and advocacy organisation," Engender, that scourge means at "least one in five women in Scotland will experience domestic abuse in her lifetime and an average of 3 rapes is reported per day" (Engender, n.d., 2020, p. 32).

Violence is an overwhelmingly gendered phenomenon. Men constitute the majority of perpetrators of violence, irrespective of the identities of the victims and/or survivors (Walby et al., 2017). This gendered phenomenon must be understood within broader socio-cultural structures, so I subscribe to a *feminist analysis* of men's violence against women which links it to gender inequality (Engender, 2017, p. 87). While I understand that violence is both a "cause and consequence" of gender inequality (Jahan, 2018), I remain mindful that too restrictive a focus on gender may reinforce heteronormative and essentialised gender constructions, while obscuring the experiences of those who fall outside such narrow constructions. Such mindfulness to how different marginalised

groups experience the world is a feature of an *intersectional* feminist lens, as explained in Section 2.04 of Chapter 2: "Theory and language: Making meaning and troubling terms." This chapter outlines the important theoretical assumptions underpinning my analysis. In addition to introducing intersectionality, Chapter 2 details how I defined a "campaign" and explains how *social semiotics* provides a toolkit for exploring how campaigning materials enacted an interactive process of meaning-making (Section 2.03).

Two sections of Chapter 2 explore the troublesome terminology around male violence (Section 2.05) and feminine beauty (Section 2.06). The gendered nature of violence connects it to beauty, which is also a heavily gendered phenomenon. I initially envisioned this project as positioned within a long history of feminist interrogations of the role of beauty in the oppression of women. In her famous 1792 work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Mary Wollstonecraft wrote that: "Taught from their infancy, that beauty is woman's sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body, and, roaming round its gilt cage, only seeks to adorn its prison" (1792/1999, Chapter 3). The patriarchal expectations of feminine beauty can still trap women into a narrow focus on their bodies, while men are freer to think, explore, and be active agents in the world. Eventually, my conceptual understanding of beauty evolved beyond just the beauty of the woman, to encompass the beauty of images and ideas. Section 2.06 tracks this conceptual evolution.

Chapter 2 culminates with the theoretical framework laid out in Section 2.07 that connects violence and beauty through the three subordinate concepts of *surveillance, in/visibility,* and *resistance.* These are useful concepts because each can be related to both beauty and violence, and thus help reveal the links between these two overarching cultural forces. "Surveillance" refers to the ways in which women's bodies and behaviours are regulated by both beauty norms and violence. "In/visibility" refers to the complicated ways that women negotiate this surveillance, as well as to how this surveillance renders different women more or less visible in different circumstances. The slash in the middle of in/visibility indicates the instability of this dynamic. "Resistance" refers to the ways in which

campaigners can exploit semiotic resources and instabilities to resist hegemonic norms of beauty and violence.

This is fundamentally a project about representation. Chapter 3: "Literature review: Representation and resistance" draws from a wide range of interdisciplinary sources to explore how feminine beauty (Section 3.02) and male violence (Section 3.03) meet (Section 3.04) on the representational landscape. As both male violence and feminine beauty are so deeply interwoven in the patriarchy, it is little surprise that these two concepts frequently intersect in popular representations in troubling ways. My most recent third sector post was from 2014 to 2016 at Zero Tolerance, one of the three organisations that produced the campaigns I analysed. Zero Tolerance is a Scottish feminist education, policy, and advocacy charity working to end men's violence against women (Zero Tolerance, n.d.-a). During my time at Zero Tolerance, I led on the *Write to End Violence Against Women Awards*, a project that aimed to improve reporting of violence against women in the Scottish media by highlighting good practice (Zero Tolerance, n.d.-d). While researching media stories for the awards, I observed that in addition to blatant problems of sensationalism and victim-blaming, it seemed that the stories of young and conventionally attractive women were more likely to attract media attention. I am far from the first to observe this phenomenon, and Section 3.04 discusses how some violent experiences receive more media attention than others. The interplay of beauty and representation can render some women's experiences less visible and can produce dangerous normative framings of male violence as affecting only certain types of women. One such framing is a myth that only conventionally attractive women are harassed or raped. This myth reared its head when former US president Donald Trump infamously countered accusations of sexual assault with insults about the accusers' appearance (Nguyen, 2015). The final section in the body of Chapter 3 (Section 3.05), positions the work in this thesis within the relevant literature looking at similar types of campaigning or activist projects, especially those with a gender dimension.

As discussed in Chapter 4: "Methods of making meaning," this project uses a mix of desk-based, archival, and interview data collection and generation

methods. Section 4.05 outlines the three main analytical methodologies: mapping the representational subjects against Western beauty norms; close text social semiotic readings; and coding of interview transcripts. I use feminist critiques to investigate how these campaigns engage with normative beauty standards. I also rely heavily on Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's *visual grammar* framework to explore how these campaigns construct meaningful images within specific cultural contexts (1996/2006). My methodological approach was flexible and allowed for adjustment as I encountered new ideas or different types of media.

My research questions also underwent refinement as I moved through the research journey. The initial question driving my research was very general: "how do feminist campaigns to end men's violence against women engage with Western beauty norms?" It soon became clear that there was a more interesting question hiding behind this general one. Recalling the representational conundrums that I had encountered in my professional career, my inquiry became focused around the tensions, trade-offs, and compromises involved in the ways that these campaigns engage with beauty. The final version of my research questions is presented in the next paragraph, and Research Question 1 (RQ1) is the overarching query. The rest add details, context, and depth to my social semiotic analysis. I will return to the research questions again in Section 4.05 to look closely at how specific methods address each question. The final questions are:

1.   How do the campaign materials engage with the wider system of Western beauty norms, and what trade-offs or compromises are involved?
2.   How do the visible human subjects map against Western beauty ideals?
3.   How does the aesthetic construction of the campaigns engage with notions of beauty, i.e., are they constructed to be beautiful images in some way?
4.   How did norms of beauty feed into the representational decisions of the feminist professionals that developed the campaigns?
5.   What other factors (e.g., ideological, budgetary, availability of models, etc.) influenced the design or aesthetics of the campaigns?

The next three chapters constitute the analysis section of the thesis. For reasons that will be discussed in Section 3.05 of the literature review, the earliest campaign in the corpus is the original ground-breaking Zero Tolerance *Prevalence* campaign. Chapter 5: "Zero Tolerance: Vision and Impact" considers the work of Zero Tolerance from its 1992 beginnings as an Edinburgh District Council Women's Unit initiative to its 2018 travelling photography exhibition, *Violence Unseen*. From the start, Zero Tolerance has been committed to making visible the patriarchal links between different forms of male violence against women and children. This chapter begins to dig into the central tension that informs the analysis of the campaigns from all three organisations: what are the complications of trying to enact a counter-hegemonic project within a hegemonic representational landscape?

A feminist analysis presumes all forms of men's violence against women and children are linked, but there remains a need for interventions targeted to specific forms of violence. While Zero Tolerance addresses men's violence generally, Rape Crisis Scotland focuses on more explicitly sexual violence. Like Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland also uses the tools of the dominant culture against itself by subverting familiar visual conventions. However, there is a more overtly sexualised aesthetic to many of the Rape Crisis Scotland materials. Chapter 6: "Rape Crisis Scotland: Colour and motion" explores how that aesthetic interacts with cultural discourses of beauty, violence, and rape culture.

Scottish Women's Aid also looks at a more targeted area of men's violence against women and children: domestic abuse. Chapter 7: "Scottish Women's Aid: Sketches and Shadows" explores how the organisation constructs domestic abuse as both an ordinary occurrence and an often invisible one, especially within a coercively controlling relationship. Chapter 7 also addresses the growing problem of image-based sexual abuse. The final section of this chapter ends with hopeful reflections about the possibilities of new ways of representing the complexities of men's violence against women by centring narratives on the beauty of survivorship.

Finally, Chapter 8: "Surveillance, in/visibility, and the future of resistance" briefly reviews five of the semiotic trade-offs identified in this thesis, by

considering how campaigns were able to enact resistance despite the need to navigate the dynamics of surveillance and in/visibility. The thesis then closes with a final section that reflects on future areas for campaigns or research.

Before moving onto the literature, methodology, and analysis, I draw from feminist scholars of Scottish history and politics to build an account of the semiotic "conditions surrounding the production" of the texts I analysed (Hodge & Kress, 1988, p. 8). Section 1.02 outlines the history of the three organisations and where they sit in the context of Scottish feminist activism and politics. The order in which I introduce the organisations in Section 1.02 differs from the order in which I present my analytical chapters. I conducted the Zero Tolerance research and analysis first, and the insights that I gleaned in that process inevitably informed my later analysis. The order of the analytical chapters reflects that process: Zero Tolerance, Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland. However, Section 1.02 is ordered to best track the chronological development of the work that eventually led to these three organisations: Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Zero Tolerance. All three organisations grew from earlier work of the grassroots women's liberation movement, but this was not a straightforward chronological process. For instance, Rape Crisis Scotland was the final of the three to become officially constituted even though the rape crisis movement in Scotland pre-dates Zero Tolerance.

Section 1.02   Scotland's politics and the violence against women sector

I chose Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Zero Tolerance as they share three features that make them a coherent and unique set. I outline those features here, while in Chapter 4, I discuss my methodological approach to choosing which specific campaigns and campaign materials to analyse. First, all three organisations operate at the Scottish national level. What qualifies as "national level" can be ambiguous, especially in Scotland where constitutional questions often dominate public discourse. For my purposes, "Scottish national level" means that the bulk of these organisations' advocacy, communications, and policy work will be aimed at the Scottish population and/or Scottish institutions such as the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood. "National" also indicates that these organisations run campaigns that reach communities throughout Scotland, in

contrast to the more limited reach of local activist or service delivery organisations. Second, these feminist organisations exist *specifically* to address gendered forms of violence, such as domestic abuse or rape. As inequality and violence are linked, feminist organisations that focus on other aspects of gender inequality may address male violence as part of their own missions. For instance, YWCA Scotland, which advocates for the equality and human rights of young women, published a 2018 report on sexual harassment in schools (Young Women Lead Committee, 2018). Conversely, Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Zero Tolerance do produce some work aimed less directly at violence per se and more at breaking down the gendered norms that sustain male violence. The size and nature of the Scottish feminist sector means that feminist organisations often work together. For example, Zero Tolerance and Scottish Women's Aid partnered to produce a series of domestic abuse stock images, *one thousand words* (Scottish Women's Aid, 2017c). This joint project is discussed further in both the Zero Tolerance (Section 5.04) and Scottish Women's Aid (Section 7.03) analysis chapters. Indeed, the third and final key commonality is that the ambitions and histories of the three organisations are intimately entwined.

In the 1970s, Scottish politics and the separate Scottish legal system[4] lagged behind other parts of the UK around issues like divorce and domestic abuse – a lag which helped drive a perception of Scotland being backwards when it came to women's rights (Breitenbach, 1990, pp. 216–217; Browne, 2014, p. 154). The country has undergone a transformation since then, and contemporary Scotland is home to much more progressive gender politics and policies. The first female First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, maintains popularity over six years after taking office (Malik, 2021). Scotland's recent coercive control and domestic abuse legislation is a global "gold standard," according to the academic who coined the term *coercive control,* Evan Stark (L. Brooks, 2018). Coercive control refers to a sustained pattern of intimidating, isolating, and controlling behaviours through

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[4] From the Act of Union of 1707 until the establishment of the devolved Scottish Parliament in 1999, Scotland did not have its own Parliament. However, Scotland did retain a separate legal system ('Act of Union: Great Britain [1707]', n.d.).

which a perpetrator exerts power and control over another person (Stark, 2009, p. 5).

Despite undeniable progress, the position of women in modern Scotland is more complicated than exceptionalist narratives portray it as. Comparisons of the 2014 and 2019 *Attitudes to violence against women in Scotland* surveys show positive attitudinal changes towards some forms of violence, but those changes are not universal (Reid et al., 2020, p. 77). Writing about the creation of the new coercive control offense, Michele Burman and Oona Brooks-Hay raise concerns about the capacity of the Scottish criminal justice system to serve women. Violence against women in Scotland is "enduring and endemic, and the law continues to fail many women" (Burman & Brooks-Hay, 2018, p. 71). The chance of someone who has been raped receiving justice through the court system remains stubbornly low. According to Rape Crisis Scotland, in 2019_2020, there were "2,343 rapes and attempted rapes reported to the police, but only 300 prosecutions and just 130 convictions" (2021). The handling of sexual violence allegations against Sturgeon's predecessor, Alex Salmond, was a low point in Scotland's political culture.[5] According to a reporter who has extensively covered the story's many twists and turns, Dani Garavelli, the complainers were "failed in every conceivable way" – from the government's initial mishandling of the allegations to misogynistic vitriol on Twitter (2021). Scotland may have experienced a laudable transformation since the 1970s, but there is still work to do.

All three organisations have played – and continue to play – roles in this transformational process. All three sprung from the grassroots women's liberation movement, although, as will be seen, Zero Tolerance was a later development. By the mid-1970s, men's violence against women emerged as a key strand of activism for the international women's liberation movement (Browne, 2014, p. 140). While Sarah Browne writes that more research is needed to map the

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[5] Salmond was acquitted in March 2020. He was found not guilty on 11 charges, and the Scots Law verdict of "not proven" was applied on one sexual assault charge (Sim, 2020).

international movement "to the British Isles," there was an unquestionably vibrant women's liberation movement in 1970s Scotland (2014, pp. 16–18). The movement was heavily influenced by the 1970s work of the then-University of Stirling researchers Rebecca Emerson Dobash and Russell P. Dobash which highlighted the prevalence of male violence in the home (Browne, 2014, p. 141). In a later book, Dobash and Dobash argue that the traditional public / private model of the state placed the private domestic sphere as beyond the reach of legitimate state intervention (1992, p. 76). Women's liberation activism against male violence challenged this model and reframed the problem "within a political context rather than as a private problem or a social welfare issue" (F. Mackay, 1996, p. 208). This framing implicates male violence as part of broader structures of gender inequality and legitimates activist demands for public interventions to address it.

The Scottish women's aid movement arose to address the problem of domestic abuse. Inspired by refuges in England for women and children fleeing abuse, Scottish feminists agitated for similar provision in Scotland, and safe houses were opened in Edinburgh in 1973 and Glasgow in 1974 (Orr et al., 2018, p. 15). By the mid-1970s, the number of local women's aid groups offering refuge and other support in Scotland had grown to 15 (Orr et al., 2018, p. 5). In 1976, the national Scottish Women's Aid organisation was established as a centralised hub for co-ordinating and supporting existing and new groups of this burgeoning network (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-f). Scottish Women's Aid is analogous to – but distinct from – Women's Aid Federation of England, Welsh Women's Aid, and Women's Aid Federation of Northern Ireland.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Scottish women's aid movement was underpinned by a collective ethos which replaced "traditional patriarchal hierarchies" with flat power structures (Orr et al., 2018, p. 19). This radical, egalitarian, and consensus-driven approach had advantages and disadvantages. It fostered teamwork, solidarity, and empowerment, but it also led to "factions and heated debates" (Orr et al., 2018, p. 19). In the 1990s, pressure by voluntary and statutory funders led to greater hierarchical professionalisation of the women's aid movement (Orr et al., 2018, p. 19). Most affiliates and the central Scottish

Women's Aid today have hierarchical management structures. Not everyone approves of this shift, and "the tension between principles and pragmatism remains a contentious issue within the movement" (Orr et al., 2018, pp. 19–20).

The local women's aid groups in Scotland remain independently constituted and autonomous, but they can choose to affiliate with the national Scottish Women's Aid organisation based in Edinburgh. As of 2021, Scottish Women's Aid provides training and support to a network of 36 affiliated Women's Aid groups (Scottish Women's Aid, personal communication, 16 April 2021). These groups include specialist services for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic women, such as Glasgow's Hemat Gryffe and Edinburgh's Shakti Women's Aid (Hemat Gryffe / Women's Aid Glasgow, n.d.; Shakti Women's Aid, n.d.). The national organisation manages the centralised 24/7 Scottish Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage helpline. Outside of the helpline, most direct support is delivered by the local groups. These local groups provide refuge and other specialised support to women experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse. In addition to managing the central helpline and co-ordinating the network, the national Scottish Women's Aid "plays a vital role at a national level, campaigning and lobbying for effective policy and practice response to domestic abuse and associated legislative changes" (Scottish Women's Aid Limited, 2018, p. 1). The local groups may produce campaigning material for local audiences, but it is the centralised, national level campaigning work that I focus on in this thesis.

The work of the Scottish women's aid movement inspired women to address another aspect of male violence via the provision of rape crisis support (Browne, 2014, p. 156). The first two Scottish rape crisis centres opened in Glasgow and Edinburgh, in 1976 and 1978 respectively (Rape Crisis Scotland, n.d.-b). According to Lily Greenan, although there had been an early divergence between Scottish feminist work dealing with domestic violence / abuse[6] and work dealing with rape, both strands continued to make "links between different forms

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[6] In Section 2.03, there is further discussion about the difference between the language of *domestic violence* and *domestic abuse.*

of abuse" (2005, p. 8).[7] Indeed, Esther Breitenbach writes that it was the section of the movement focused on violence against women that worked most cohesively throughout the 1980s (1990, p. 221).

As early as 1981, organisers from the growing network of independent rape crisis centres would meet, support one another, and campaign jointly on issues such as the courtroom practice of querying a rape complainer's sexual history (Maitland, 2009, p. 169).[8] In 1994, Scottish rape crisis centres decided against joining a new federation with English and Welsh rape crisis centres, on the basis that joining made little sense because of the substantially different legal and social service systems in Scotland (Maitland, 2009, p. 169). As with the women's aid movement, the early days of the Scottish rape crisis movement were marked by a collective ethos that fostered solidarity and empowerment. There were also disadvantages arising from practical aspects such as efficiency and personality clashes, as well as from ideological tensions around issues such as class and power dynamics (Maitland, 2009, pp. 101–109).

The Scottish Rape Crisis Network became a registered charity in 1996, and a national office under a new name, Rape Crisis Scotland, was set up in 2003 (Brindley, 2003; OSCR, n.d.-a).[9] Like Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland operates independently from analogous services in the other UK nations. Based in Glasgow, Rape Crisis Scotland: runs the national rape crisis hotline; delivers national education and campaigning projects on sexual violence prevention; and coordinates a national advocacy project that supports people who have been assaulted or raped to navigate the criminal justice system (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2018, p. 1). Rape Crisis Scotland also operates as a national hub that, as of October 2021, supports 17 independent local centres (Rape Crisis Scotland, n.d.-

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[7] Greenan is also one of my interview participants, but here I am citing a literature review she wrote.

[8] Maitland is another of my interview participants.

[9] The office was briefly in Edinburgh before Glasgow premises were found. Although archival documents indicate the national Rape Crisis Scotland office was set up in 2003, Companies House records 2006 as when the name was formally changed from the Scottish Rape Crisis Network to Rape Crisis Scotland (Companies House, n.d.).

b). It has a special focus on establishing new centres where there is an identified gap in service provision (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2018, p. 1). The services provided by the autonomous local Rape Crisis centres vary, but they normally include direct practical and emotional support, as well as prevention programmes in local communities.

One area that has long been contentious in the Scottish rape crisis movement is the provision of support to male victims or survivors of sexual violence. While some early rape crisis centres wanted to work with men, others expressed concerns that their inclusion would undermine the feminist approach to the work; reproduce patriarchal dynamics which privilege men's experiences over women's; demand women care for the emotional needs of men; or simply overwhelm the support capacity (Maitland, 2009, pp. 171–172). The national Rape Crisis Scotland and some local services do currently offer some support to males. One of the Rape Crisis campaigns I analysed, *I Just Froze*, makes explicit reference to male victims or survivors of sexual violence (Section 6.05). In Section 2.05, I discuss moving away from consistently referring to "men's violence against women" to adopting a more flexible linguistic approach. This was one of the materials that compelled that shift.

The work of Scottish feminists meant that by the late 1980s, there was an established network of activists, practitioners, and campaigners in Scotland. In 1987, these activists revived the Women's Liberation Conferences of the 1970s to organise a "Working Against Violence Against Women" conference in Glasgow that was attended by over 260 women and 150 children (Breitenbach, 1990, p. 221; Greenan, 2005, p. 8). In 1992, the collective knowledge and experience gained from "twenty years of groundwork by the women's movement" would inform an innovative new campaign launched in Edinburgh (F. Mackay, 1996, p. 208).

The Zero Tolerance campaign[10] was conceived and led not by a feminist activist organisation, but by the Edinburgh District Council Women's Unit (Zero Tolerance, n.d.-b). According to two early Zero Tolerance campaigners, Evelyn Gillan and Elaine Samson,[11] in the early 1990s, front-line women's services "found themselves operating in an increasingly hostile policy environment" (2000, p. 343). Gillan and Samson do not speculate on the drivers of this increased hostility, but Sue Innes and Jane Rendall's description of the same time period suggests that it was at least in part symptomatic of wider political struggles: "Scottish feminism survived the Thatcher years from 1976 to 1990 as an eroded but identifiable movement, part of Scotland's oppositional culture" (2006, p. 73). The early 1990s also saw the emergence of other feminist organisations such as Engender (1993) and the Glasgow Women's Library (1991) (Armour, 2018; Glasgow Women's Library, n.d.).

This time period also coincided with the increased pressures from funding and statutory bodies and agencies on service delivery organisations to move towards more professional and hierarchal organisational structures (Orr et al., 2018, p. 19). By the early 1990s, services were overstretched, underfunded, and needed to prioritise front-line service delivery. Unlike third sector services, the Edinburgh District Council Women's Unit had the (admittedly limited) funds and operational capacity to develop and run a campaign (Gillan & Samson, 2000, p. 343). In fact, the Zero Tolerance campaign was the most "high profile" example of a late 1980s and early 1990s shift in local authority agencies moving beyond direct service provision to playing a greater role in raising awareness and preventing violence against women (Greenan, 2005, p. 10).

The Edinburgh District Council Women's Unit itself was part of another significant development of the 1980s. Local authority women's committees and women's units were first established in London before spreading to other parts of

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[10] The early Zero Tolerance campaign(s) consisted of different phases which I analysed as discrete campaigns, as outlined Section 5.02 of the Zero Tolerance chapter.

[11] Samson is another of my interview participants.

the United Kingdom (Lieberman, 1989, pp. 246–251). By the late 1980s, Edinburgh council had a women's committee, as well as a women's unit with staff who carried out the directives of the committee (Lieberman, 1989, p. 250). The committee was chaired by Councillor Margaret McGregor who would become a long-standing champion of the Zero Tolerance campaign (Gillan & Samson, 2000, p. 344). Women's committees were intended as a remedy to the male dominated committees that traditionally set local priorities and agendas, and too often neglected important issues that disproportionately affected women (Lieberman, 1989, pp. 251–252). Women's committees tackled a range of issues relevant to women's lives, such as "childcare, health, violence, low pay, employment, training and leisure facilities" (Breitenbach, 1990, p. 220). Although not without challenges, Breitenbach claims that women's committees and equal opportunities committees in Scottish local authorities "made gains for women" (1990, p. 220).

Local authority women's committees and women's units could be means through which feminist activists could gain and maintain "leverage from their intervention in the state" (F. Mackay, 1996, p. 218). Despite its genesis as a local authority initiative, Zero Tolerance has always been intimately connected with Scotland's women's aid and rape crisis movements. Consultation with women's organisations was an essential part of the planning process of the original campaign, "particularly Women's Aid and Rape Crisis" (Cosgrove, 1996, p. 190). This consultation process highlighted understandable concerns that the campaign would create increased demand for overstretched front-line services. Before launching "awareness-raising" campaigns, best ethical practice is to ensure that appropriate support provision is in place to cope with the increased service demands generated by heightened awareness (Raab & Rocha, 2011, p. 11). Cognisant of this potential problem, the Women's Unit worked with the local rape crisis service to secure funding to increase the service's support capacity (Gillan & Samson, 2000, pp. 344–345).

The Zero Tolerance campaign birthed the Zero Tolerance organisation. The Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust was registered in 1994[12] and changed its registration to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2014 (OSCR, n.d.-b). The Trust undertook control of the campaign activities and materials (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 1996, Section 2). Based in Edinburgh, Zero Tolerance today works with a range of partners – from other women's organisations to schools to media outlets – on a variety of educational, campaigning, and training projects to end men's violence against women.[13] Unlike Scottish Women's Aid and Rape Crisis Scotland which run national helplines, Zero Tolerance does not provide any direct support. As will be returned to in Section 3.05 of the literature review, the Zero Tolerance campaign is an elegant chronological milestone from which to compile a corpus of Scottish feminist campaigns tackling men's violence against women and children.

The 1999 establishment of the new devolved Scottish Parliament is another important milestone in relation to contemporary Scottish gender policy. There has long been diverse feminist opinions on devolution and what it could and does mean for women in Scotland (Breitenbach, 1990, p. 216). In light of the aforementioned "backwardness" of much Scottish society and politics, some 1970s feminists worried that a Scottish legislative body would be more regressive around issues such as abortion, divorce, and domestic abuse than its UK equivalent (Breitenbach, 1990, pp. 216–217). However, some felt that "Scottish issues" were neglected by a UK Parliament which did not make time for them (Breitenbach, 1990, pp. 216–217). The ability to make such legislation closer to home became, for some, a rationale for devolution (Browne, 2014, p. 155). There was also a feeling in the Scottish Women's Liberation movement that their sisters in England were not speaking to their needs. For example, legal advice that came

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[12] There is discrepancy between archival documents and official records about when the Zero Tolerance campaign officially became the Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust. A 1997 City of Edinburgh Council press release dates the establishment of the Trust to 1996 (*Justice Press Release*, 1997). I use the "Constitutional Form Date 1" of 21 November 1994 in the organisation's OSCR record (OSCR, n.d.-b).

[13] I worked for Zero Tolerance from 2014 to 2016, although not on any of the campaigns that I analysed. I discuss the epistemological implications of this relationship in Chapter 4.

from campaigners in the south of England may not apply under the separate Scottish legal system (Browne, 2014, p. 164).

The early 1990s and "the prospect of a new Scottish parliament" ushered in a renewed feminist engagement with the state (Innes & Rendall, 2006, p. 73). Devolution came to pass in 1999 after a 1997 referendum in which the people of Scotland voted for it (Delivering for Scotland / UK Government, n.d.). The newly devolved political terrain was shaped by the feminist activists who had "successfully managed to engender narratives of a 'new' Scottish politics" (M. Kenny & Mackay, 2020, p. 60). From the earliest days of the Scottish parliament, there were politicians – particularly from the Labour party – that were deeply invested in the violence against women agenda, through their: professional experience; links with women's organisations; or possibly even personal lived experience (F. Mackay, 2010, p. 376). Fiona Mackay convincingly argues that it is the Scottish political landscape enabled by devolution, not UK-level politics, "that accounts for the trajectory of policy in Scotland" (2010, p. 382). The post-devolution political landscape provides opportunities for the established network of feminist activists to shape policy and practice (M. Kenny & Mackay, 2020, p. 68; F. Mackay, 2010, p. 377). For example, Nancy Lombard and Nel Whiting argue that Scotland is unique in the UK in that feminists have been the "driving force" both to getting domestic abuse on the agenda and to a policy approach that recognises it as a gendered harm (2018, p. 28). According to Meryl Kenny and Mackay, this "feminist approach" to tackling men's violence against women of post-devolution Scotland is unusual (2020, p. 67).

Section 1.03   Chapter conclusion

Through years of dedication and hard graft, campaigners and activists have contributed to a contemporary Scotland that is home to much policy and politics rooted in a feminist analysis. Progressive policy is a necessary but not sufficient condition to liberate women and children from male violence. The problematic social attitudes that support that violence must also be addressed, and public-facing communications campaigns are a method for doing that. However, feminists wanting to communicate with the public must use the tools of a dominant representational landscape that is deeply influenced by patriarchal imperatives.

This raises questions about the extent to which the tools of that representational culture can break down patriarchal norms. For instance, as will be explored more deeply in the next two chapters, both violence (Section 2.05) and feminine beauty (Section 2.06) function as mechanisms of social control. Given the role that those norms place in enforcing the patriarchal order, what are the limits of the liberatory potential of deploying those norms? This thesis explores this central tension by using three broad themes that emerged during my work: surveillance, in/visibility, and resistance. I use these concepts to make the connections between beauty and violence in the texts that I analysed from Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid.

In the second chapter, I describe how my evolving struggles with language fed into a theoretical framework that both influenced and was influenced by my journey through the research process. I present these discussions early in the thesis because they set the terms for the reader, but Chapter 2: "Theory and language: Making meaning and troubling terms" was written *alongside*, not before, the analytical chapters. I regularly encountered new conceptual challenges posed by the materials under analysis, and I found myself revisiting my existing assumptions and biases. In a real sense, the following chapter is an output of the research process.

Chapter 2. Theory and language: Making meaning and troubling terms

Section 2.01   *Chapter introduction*

Liz Kelly et al. write that the "politics of naming" is a "central principle of feminism" (1996, p. 77). The process of naming can be ideologically, conceptually, and practically troublesome. As my work developed, I would often get bogged down in theory and terminology around campaigns, meaning, identity, beauty, and violence. This chapter outlines the conceptual structure I built to grapple with these disciplinary and ideological difficulties. This process challenged me to think about what biases I was bringing to the project. It also prompted me to adopt a more open-minded linguistic flexibility that resists simplistic categories, as well as, paradoxically, a more careful linguistic specificity that does not obscure individual experiences under generalising terminology.

Section 2.02 addresses the deceptively simple question of what constitutes a campaign against, or to end, men's violence against women. Section 2.03 introduces the social semiotic theory that drives my textual analyses. Section 2.04 addresses an essential consideration in a project about representation: how to refer to different groups of people. Section 2.05 and Section 2.06 outline my fluid conceptualisations of violence and beauty, respectively. Section 2.07 pulls all these concepts together into a theoretical framework which outlines how the themes of surveillance, in/visibility, and resistance can make visible the connections between violence and beauty.

Section 2.02   *What is a campaign?*

The key texts that I consider are public-facing communications materials. Communication is "the very essence of campaigning, and a decisive element in any successful campaign on VAW"[14] (Raab & Rocha, 2011, p. 6). These materials

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[14] VAW is a commonly used abbreviation for violence against women.

include posters, postcards, flyers, videos, websites, social media objects, and merchandise such as tote bags. Section 4.03 of the methodology chapter explains the process for choosing specific materials. While compiling the corpus, I also struggled with the more fundamental issue of settling on a definition of "campaign." Writing in a guide aimed at the charitable sector and produced by the UK National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), Lamb defines campaigning as "the mobilising of forces by organisations or individuals to influence others to effect an identified and desired social, economic, environmental or political change" (2011, p. 4). Such a generic definition is of limited utility, as it is too narrow in some respects and too broad in others. Much campaigning is about creating change, but campaigning activity could also be directed towards shoring up the status quo or it can come about as a backlash to perceived social change. In relation to my more narrow focus on communications materials, however, the tactics and activities encompassed in the NCVO definition are overly broad, as those range from direct lobbying of government officials, to boycotting private companies, to staging public stunts or demonstrations (Lamb, 2011, p. 94, 102, 122–123).

The NCVO guide divides campaigns into two general categories of those aimed at public attitudinal or behaviour change and those aimed at stakeholders with the power to effect policy or legal change (Lamb, 2011, p. 93). The blurred lines between these categories means it is more helpful to conceptualise it as a spectrum. A campaign may encourage grassroots lobbying by the public to put direct pressure on governmental officials over specific policy issues, such as the *IC Change* campaign, supported by Zero Tolerance and Scottish Women's Aid, which lobbies the UK government to ratify the Istanbul Convention (IC Change, n.d.). In the longer term, laying the groundwork of social change can generate greater public acceptance of radical policies. Early Zero Tolerance campaigners describe the initial campaign strategy as designed to directly gain public support in order to "go over the heads of politicians and policy makers and build a consensus for change" (Gillan & Samson 2000, p. 344).

The task of settling on a consistent definition of "campaign" was complicated by the fact that the language used to refer to "campaigns" of the kind

that I am interested in shifts across the literature. Some writers refer to "awareness campaigns," (O'Brien, 2013) "public awareness campaigns," or "advertising campaigns" (Kitzinger, 1994). Others discuss "social advertising" (Magaraggia & Cherubini, 2017) or a "media campaign" (Arthurs, 2009; Goehring et al., 2017). Robert Donovan and Rodney Vlais survey "social marketing / public education" campaigns – this dual framing reflects the language used by campaign originators to describe their work (2005). Writers may refer simply to "campaigns," prefixed with the particular issue they are intended to address, e.g., "anti-trafficking campaigns" (Andrijasevic & Anderson, 2009). There is also useful literature looking at other types of related campaigning with targeted remits such as "fundraising appeals" (Dogra, 2007; Dyck & Coldevin, 1992) or "educational campaigns" aimed at young people (Zauner, 2021). Researchers may also analyse more organic, grassroots-led "activist campaigns" (Weaver, 2013).

I eventually settled on the term "campaigns" without a qualifier, which reflects the wide range of disciplinary sources and perspectives that inform my analysis. I did establish three criteria to compile my corpus. First, while I do note where the campaigns had some elements of partnership working – which is common practice in the Scottish women's sector – all the campaigns in the corpus were primarily delivered by one of the three Scottish organisations introduced in Section -1206108864.462(): Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid. Second, the target of all the campaigns is broad and general. Campaigners may have had specific publics in mind, such as men, and I did ask about such targeting during the interviews. However, campaigning materials aimed at specialist groups such as policymakers or materials meant to be used only in educational settings are not included in the corpus. A meaningful social semiotic analysis of more specialist campaigns would require a detailed understanding of their context, and what specialist discourses, knowledge, and practices that their communication materials would presuppose. My analysis focuses not on how campaigns operate within specialist arenas, but within the broader representational landscape and socio-cultural norms of gender, violence, and beauty. The third, and final, criterion is related to the second. The campaigns target the social attitudes that underpin men's violence against women, thus campaigns narrowly aimed on regulatory change or service provision are not

included in my analysis. These criteria provided parameters for compiling the corpus of 16 campaigns listed in Appendix A. In practice, there were challenges to applying these criteria; these challenges will be returned to when I discuss my methods in more depth in Chapter 4.

Section 2.03   *Theoretical foundations of meaning-making*

The campaign analyses in this thesis draw from the methodological tradition of *social semiotics* as formulated by Robert Hodge, Kress, and van Leeuwen (and further explained by Rose, and Aiello and Parry) (Aiello & Parry, 2019, pp. 27–29; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006; Rose, 2016, pp. 136–142; van Leeuwen, 2005). This section briefly introduces some basic terminology and theoretical foundations of a social semiotics approach, while Chapter 4 discusses the concrete adaption and application of a social semiotic methodology to the corpus texts.

At the foundation of traditional *semiotics* is Ferdinand de Saussure's canonical formulation of the "linguistic sign," which consists of two "intimately united" parts: the signifier (the form or "sound-image" which can be perceived by the senses) and the signified (the meaning of the concept or thing being referred to) (1916/1966, p. 66). Signs are not restricted to verbal language. As Stuart Hall explains, the signifier is the "actual word, image, photo, etc." and the signified is the "corresponding concept triggered off in your head" (1997/2013, p. 31). A *social semiotic* analysis diverges from Saussure's emphasis on the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign and assumes that signs sit on a continuum between arbitrary and "motivated," i.e., "connected in some rational, 'natural' way to their meaning" (Hodge & Kress, 1988, p. 21). Whereas the word "girl" may or may not have a self-evident link with the concept of a girl, a sketch or photo of a girl certainly does.

For social semiotic approaches, Van Leeuwen re-conceptualises the traditional semiotic *sign* with the term *semiotic resources* (2005, p. 4-5). He defines semiotic resources "as the actions and artefacts we use to communicate;" these can be produced physiologically (e.g., a frown) or technologically (e.g. red ink) (2005, p. 3). All semiotic resources have the potential to make meaning, or do

what Aiello and Parry call *semiotic work* (2019, p. 27)*.* A significant advantage of the "semiotic resource" term is that it "avoids the impression that 'what a sign stands for' is somehow pre-given, and not affected by its use" (van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 3). An important feature that sets social semiotics apart from more traditional semiotics is the focus "on sign-*making* rather than sign *use*," thus conceptualising sign-makers as an integral and agentive part of a socially informed and interactive process of negotiation between producers, viewers, and texts [emphasis in original] (Kress, 2010, p. 54). This process is both culturally reactive and culturally generative, and meaning-makers can use existing semiotic resources to shape new ones (Kress, 2010, p. 69). The processual nature of meaning-making implies that meaning is not static. If meanings are not static, then conceptual space is opened for hegemonic meanings to be renegotiated. This thesis aims to explore that space.

Organised systems of semiotic resources are *modes*. Kress lists the following modes: "*Image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, soundtrack and 3D objects*" [emphasis in original] (2010, p. 79). Kress and van Leeuwen also explore if, how, and when colour can function as a distinct semiotic mode (1996/2006, pp. 225–238; 2002). The texts in my corpus are *multimodal*, i.e., they incorporate different modes working together to create meaning. It is not always clear where a semiotic resource ends and a semiotic mode begins, but it is clear that both are socially, culturally, and historically contextual. Kress and van Leeuwen refer to a *semiotic landscape* to describe the context which consists both of the semiotic resources available and how they are used (1996/2006, p. 35). As I broadly situate my work in the discipline of feminist media studies, I tend to use the term *representational landscape* to draw attention to how those resources are deployed through our mediated (and gendered) means of cultural representation, such as journalism, film, magazines, or television.

My analyses focus heavily on the first mode Kress lists: visual *images*. Although his *Ways of Seeing* television programme and book was produced in the early 1970s, John Berger's observations about the *language of images* remain highly relevant for this project –perhaps even more so as digital technologies have enabled an extraordinary expansion of the means of image production. Berger

argues that modern means of reproduction have transformed the traditional cultural position and authority of visual arts, while unmooring images from physical locations such as caves and buildings "in which, or for which, the work was made" (Berger et al., 1972/1977, p. 32). Instead, modern society is left with a more mainstreamed yet ephemeral "language of images" that can be wielded to "confer a new kind of power" (Berger et al., 1972/1977, p. 33). He writes that "What matters now is who uses that language for what purpose" (Berger et al., 1972/1977, p. 33). This highlights a theoretical assumption of my own work: images can be potent mechanisms for reproducing or resisting established dynamics of power. Visual images are not neutral. They can "reveal latent values" (Aiello & Parry, 2019, p. 4) or even "hide ideologies, values, interests and intentions" more effectively than words (Dimitrov, 2017, p. 73).

Elements of *form* – such as Kress's "layout" – can also be effective tools for constructing or conveying such values and ideology. Indeed, Judith Williamson claims that "the ideology embedded in *form* is the hardest of all to see" [emphasis in original] (1978, p. 29). Her 1978 *Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising* is a landmark contribution to a rich tradition of scholarship that explores how advertising materials can communicate gendered ideologies, myths, and assumptions (Gill, 2007, pp. 73–112; Goffman, 1976/1987; Jhally, 1987, pp. 132–139; Leiss et al., 2018). J. Williamson claims that advertising has a function beyond the obvious one of selling us products: "It creates structures of meaning" (Williamson, 1978, p. 12). Through close textual analysis, informed by semiotic, psychoanalytic, and Marxist theory, she suggests there are underlying mechanisms through which structures of meaning are created.

My analysis does not consider *only* pictorial and formal elements, while discounting textual (or audio-visual) messages. As Rose points out "nothing is ever just visual, and that all visual images are accompanied by other kinds of semiotic resources that are integral to their meaning" (2016, p. 138). To account for such multimodality, where appropriate, I follow the example of Charles Goehring et al. in using W.J.T. Mitchell's term *imagetext*. They use the term to decipher how a Hungarian domestic abuse campaign employs a "complex and complementary synthesis of visual and textual elements" (Goehring et al., 2017, p.

440). "Imagetext" describes the "composite, synthetic works (or concepts) that combine image and text" (Mitchell, 1994, p. 89). Some materials I analysed feature only artfully arranged text and no photographs, but Mitchell's term still applies. He argues that "all media are mixed media" and that even "pure" texts "incorporate visuality quite literally the moment they are written or printed in visible form" (1994, p. 95). Kress and van Leeuwen make an important observation regarding imagetexts: "the writing may carry one set of meanings and the images carry another" (1996/2006, p. 20). The dissonant interaction between text and image has been remarked upon as a particularly impactful feature of the early Zero Tolerance campaign (Cosgrove, 1996, p. 191; Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993, pp. 40–41) (see also Section 5.04, Section 5.05).

Many of the campaigns I analyse feature the same or similar imagetexts reproduced in varied formats like postcards, posters, websites, social media, or large panels for public exhibitions. Mitchell's imagetext term provides the language to make observations that apply across iterations of the same image and text combination. In other places, it was more appropriate to consider individual uses of imagetexts to reveal how materiality and context may influence the process of meaning-making. Kress and van Leeuwen suggest that meaning can be embedded in the materiality of texts, and that material production – whether using hand tools, recording tools, or digital tools – can function as semiotic resources (1996/2006, pp. 215–238). The interactive process of meaning-making can also be profoundly influenced by the "social context in which semiotic work is taking place" (Rose, 2016, p. 138). Hodge and Kress devote a chapter of *Social Semiotics to* "context as meaning" (1988, pp. 38–78). A social semiotic approach requires thinking beyond a "naïve text-context dichotomy" (Hodge & Kress, 1988, p. 8). For example, walking past a Zero Tolerance poster at a public bus shelter (Figure 2.1) would be a markedly different semiotic interaction than inspecting a two-sided postcard in the privacy of one's home, not least of all because the postcard format allows for more information to be included (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.1: Prevalence "Businessman" poster on bus shelter[15]

Figure 2.2: Prevalence "Businessman" on two-sided postcard[16]
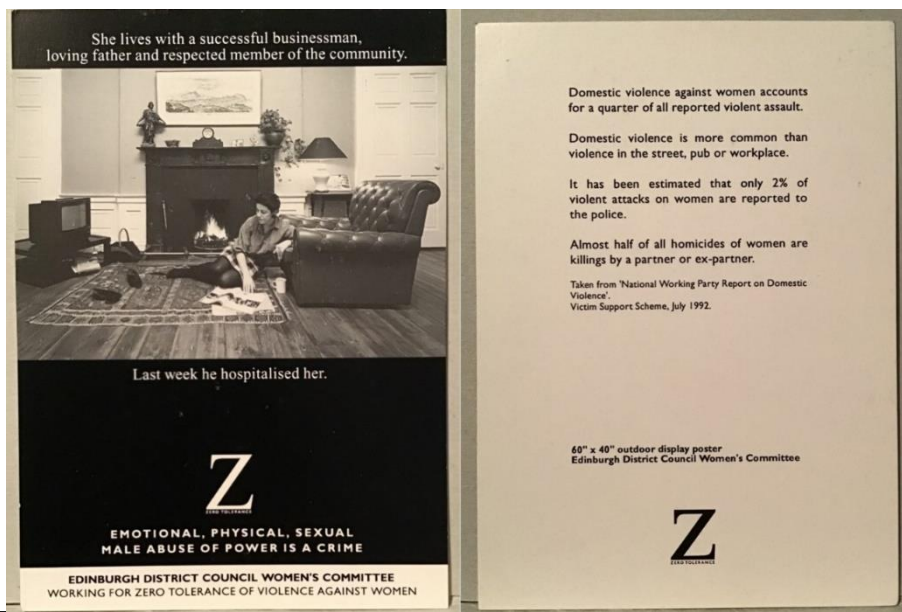
The use of certain materials may also be related to intended *distribution* channels. In fact, methods of distribution and channels of communication proved more prominent in my analysis than anticipated, particularly in respect to RQ5 which pertains to production factors that may have influenced the development of the campaigns. One area which Edwards suggests is under-researched in public relations scholarship is how the choice of communication channels can "reflect ideological beliefs about the right messages, audiences and forms of communication" (2018, p. 34). She points to the example of digital communications that privilege access for younger and wealthier audiences (Edwards, 2018, p. 34). A fruitful complementary project might be to take a more functionalist and/or quantitative approach to discover who campaigns reach and engage, and how the nature of that engagement serves organisational aims and objectives. An interrogation of such findings could further reveal the social, cultural, ideological, and ethical implications of decisions around distribution channels.

My social semiotic analysis took a different path to theorise the impact of distribution channels. Insights found in archival and interview data suggested that decisions around the design and aesthetics of a campaign could be driven by practicalities of distribution. These findings somewhat complicate Kress and van Leeuwen's suggestion that "Whether images are distributed via electrical wires, optical fibres or the airwaves is irrelevant, semiotically, at the level of representation" (1996/2006, p. 220). They claim that transmission methods are semiotically relevant insofar as they create potential for meanings to be transposed across different mediums. While transpositions between mediums certainly did feature in the campaigns in this thesis, I found that the impact of distribution methods went beyond the potential for semiotic transposition between production and reception. The affordances and constraints of dissemination methods materially affected campaign aesthetics in semiotically significant ways. For instance, the powerful and memorable black and white branding of Zero Tolerance was in part due to financial constraints which made distribution of colourful materials less feasible (Section 5.04).

To make sense of how images, form, text, materiality, context, and distribution channels semiotically construct meanings and ideologies, I turned to Kress and van Leeuwen's *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* which aims to "provide usable descriptions of major compositional structures" through which meaning is made in Western visual imagery (1996/2006, p. 1) – including via moving images (1996/2006, pp. 258–259). *Reading Images* provides a social semiotic *visual grammar* toolkit for producing close readings of the campaign materials. Their approach is not prescriptive. It does not identify "rules" for visual communication, but suggests how factors such as composition, perspective, and materiality can function as semiotic resources in different forms and mediums. This close reading process is addressed in more detail in Section 4.05 of the methodology chapter.

Of particular interest in my work is how the language or grammar of images can be deployed to resist patriarchal structures that sustain male violence against women and children. The archival and interview data shed light on how the image-makers / producers understood these semiotic deployments. This interactive process of meaning making fundamentally depends on viewers being able to interpret these campaigns because of shared "cultural knowledge" (Stokes, 2013, p. 124) or what Goffman characterises as "acquired interpretative competence" (1976/1987, p. 12). I therefore cannot discount viewer reception altogether, despite my greater focus on production. I draw from existing evaluations of some of the campaigns to contextualise how contemporaneous image-interpreters / viewers understood the materials, with the important caveat that this approach does not allow for *original* claims about the viewer reception or impact of these campaigns.

According to Rose, our shared culture banks – or "wider systems of meanings" – have been theorised in different ways: Stuart Hall's "codes" (1980) Judith Williamson's "referent systems" (1978), or Roland Barthes' "mythologies" (1973) (Rose, 2016, pp. 127–128). As Edwards points out, the repetition of representations can lead to them becoming "part of a normative landscape that allows us to decode communication materials in a patterned and relatively predictable way" (2018, p. 37). This communicative reliance on a shared culture of

meanings highlights a central tension that campaigners must navigate. The campaigns take aim at the hegemonic ideologies that perpetuate gendered violence, but the shared meanings of the representational landscape are heavily influenced by patriarchal imperatives. How can these campaigns achieve counter-hegemonic goals using the tools of a hegemonic representational culture? It is worth remembering that we also know that audiences are not passive receptacles, and a social semiotic approach does not require "any assumption that any act of semiotic design is necessarily successful, in the sense that the same meaning is shared by both the producer and the interpreter of semiotic resources" (Rose, 2013, p. 141). As will be seen in the next three sections, semiotic fluidity and contestation also features in the language used to talk about structural oppression, male violence, and feminine beauty. A meaning that is not fixed is a meaning that can be changed.

Section 2.04   *An intersectional language and lens*

Structures of patriarchal power and control affect all women's lives, but not uniformly so. *Intersectionality* provides a lens for unpicking how various aspects of identity such as race, ability, size, age, sexuality, or class can affect how women's lives are experienced and represented. African American legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined "intersectionality" in the late 1980s as a way of making visible experiences that might otherwise be obscured (1989). Crenshaw writes that her efforts to obtain police statistics about domestic violence in heavily African American Los Angeles communities were hindered both by domestic violence activists who were concerned that these "statistics might permit opponents to dismiss domestic violence as a minority problem" as well as anti-racist groups concerned about reinforcing dangerous stereotypes of violent black men (1991, p. 1253). The lack of an intersectional lens can also result in an individualising of inequality. For example, Lee Edwards problematises American Heart Association campaign messaging that frames African American women's increased rates of heart disease in terms of individual lifestyles rather than structural inequalities (2018, p. 174).

The concept of intersectionality has increased in prominence over the past three decades and with that prominence has come what Crenshaw refers to as

"distortion;" intersectionality is not "identity politics on steroids" (Steinmetz, 2020). Intersectionality is not about constructing a hierachy of oppressions. It is a conceptual "lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersect" (Columbia Law School, 2017).

There may be justification to criticisms that claim that women's liberation era – or second wave – feminists tended to treat women as a "homogenous group" (Munro, 2013, p. 23). It is also the case that Crenshaw's pivotal work on intersectionality is rooted in a long tradition of feminist scholarship and social movement politics – much of it led by women of colour (Eddo-Lodge, 2018, pp. 156–160; Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016, Chapter 3). Speaking at the 1996 Scottish Women's Aid Conference, Kelly recalled that, contrary to some flattened historical narratives of feminism, "conflicts and struggles about race, class and sexuality were commonplace" in the women's liberation movement of the 1970s (Kelly, Winter 1997_1998, p. 3). She also rejected characterisations of feminism as a "western, white middle class preoccupation" and pointed to the existence of radical women's movements in many countries (Kelly, Winter 1997_1998, p. 3).

Bearing in mind Greenan's warning that "risk factors are not the same as causes," it is clear that intersectional axes of oppression can render people more structurally vulnerable to male violence (2005, p. 80). "Black and minority ethnic" women face multi-layered barriers to support, which Hannana Siddiqui argues is a critical factor in explaining their higher rates of "domestic homicide, so-called 'honour' killings, and abuse driven suicide" (2018, pp. 362–364). A 2015 Public Health England report references multiple studies and meta-analyses that show that disabled people are significantly more likely to "experience physical, sexual, emotional and financial domestic abuse than people without disabilities" (Dockerty et al., 2015, p. 9). A 2015 study from the US suggests a correlation between obesity and domestic abuse (Davies et al., 2015). There is a growing body of UK and US research that suggests that domestic abuse against older women is under-recognised and under-resourced (Bows, 2018; Crockett et al., 2015). There may also be increased risks towards the other end of the age spectrum. Scotland's violence against women and girls strategy, *Equally Safe,* cites *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey* data which indicates young women are at a heightened

risk of intimate partner violence (Scottish Government, 2018, p. 16). Finally, a 2010 survey administered by Scottish equality organisations, an alarming 80% of transgender respondents, albeit from a small sample size, reported that they had experienced some form of "emotionally, sexually, or physically abusive behaviour by a partner or ex-partner" (Roch et al., 2010, p. 5).

My purpose here is not to produce in-depth analysis of these studies, their complexities, and their shortcomings. Sylvia Walby et al. demonstrate that reliable statistics of violence against women of any type except homicide can be difficult to obtain and compare with consistency, with reasons ranging from under-reporting to different jurisdictional definitions of what constitutes violence or abuse (2017). Moreover, cause and correlation can be difficult to untangle. What is relevant to my own interest in the Western beauty norms to be discussed in Section 2.06, is that being a woman of colour, a disabled woman, a fat woman, an older woman, a very young woman, or a transgender woman is unequivocally not protection from male violence.

An intersectional lens also demands attentiveness to the ways that one representational subject can occupy many identity positions at the same time, and how they all might interact with representations of social class. Class can be constructed through *mise en scène,* as with the early Zero Tolerance photographs which were deliberately taken in what one of my interview participants, Elaine Samson,[17] described as "middle-class settings," in order to dispel "the myth that somehow domestic violence, family violence, only happens in working-class households." Class may also be connoted via the bodies of the subjects, through signifiers such as hairstyle, makeup, clothing, or tattoos. As with all marginalised groups, it is important to be ever mindful of how representations can reveal, reinforce, or resist classist stereotypes. Bodies that are coded as working-class are often represented as sinfully excessive: too loud, too fat, too fertile (Skeggs, 2005, pp. 967–968). Young working-class mothers are often constructed as both physically and morally unattractive. The caricature of the "pramface girl," a young

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[17] Samson is another interview participant who has published work that I cite.

single mother on benefits, is both "not sufficiently attractive and presentable to attract a long-term partner" (McRobbie, 2009, p. 118) and "an immoral, filthy, ignorant, vulgar, tasteless, working-class wh*re" (Tyler, 2008, p. 26). The conflation of working-class feminine bodies with immorality and fecklessness suggests that class is an important consideration in whether a woman's experiences are deemed worthy of visibility or invisibility, and sympathy or blame.

Language around intersectional categories is not politically neutral; thus, language choices can signal ideological positions. As I wrestled with my own language choices, I found myself increasingly forced into a paradoxical specificity around language that makes space for the fluid and relational natures of intersectional categories. Returning to Crenshaw's focus on making visible racialised lives and experiences, there are significant debates around the language of race and ethnicity. In order to make visible representational practices and stereotypes, I aim to use the most precise language available, e.g., "a woman who appears to be of East Asian descent" – when describing representations of people from racially minoritised groups. At times, this means using language that is specific to national contexts, such as *African American*. Unless echoing the language of others, I avoid the bureaucratic acronyms "Black and minority ethnic" (BME) or "Black, Asian and minority ethnic" (BAME). These terms are increasingly being critiqued and/or rejected for many reasons, including the tendency to erase differences between diverse groups (Fakim & Macaulay, 2020; Khunti et al., 2020; Young, 2018, p. 189). However, there is activist precedent for collapsing disparate racialised groups together; in some British racial discourse "Black" is a political identity which encompasses people of African and Asian descent (Eddo-Lodge, 2018, p. 8; Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016, Chapter 3: "Multiple narratives. . ."; Okolosie, 1985/2018, p. xi). I reserve *Black* to refer to women who appear to be of southern African descent while recognising that too can collapse different groups together. I also follow the practice of capitalising the "B" in Black (though not the "w" in *white*) to recognise that Black denotes "a specific cultural group" and thus is a "proper noun" (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1244). This practice has been recently adopted by the Associated Press, although debate remains whether the continued use of lowercase "w" reinforces normative whiteness (Associated Press, 2020).

When a collective or more generic term is necessary, I use *women / men / people of colour.* "Non-white" is unacceptable because it positions white people as the norm, thereby othering people of colour. People of colour is not unproblematic – both because of the aforementioned conflating of disparate communities and because it excludes white women marginalised on the basis of their ethnic identity, e.g., Eastern European immigrants or white Travellers. Yet, the emphasis on skin colour is apposite for a project dealing with "visibility" in visual representations, whereas a project focused on "inclusion" may require an approach that digs more deeply to ascertain the racial or ethnic identity of representational subjects (Yaqoob et al., n.d.). It is important to observe how skin colour – as well as other phenotypic characteristics and contextual clues – act as visual signifiers for subjects that deviate from dominant norms of whiteness. Conversely, it is also important to bear in mind that constructing racial difference through such physical signifiers can help perpetuate fictitious notions of race as based in biology rather than as socially constructed (Murphy, 2009, p. 122).

As with race and ethnicity, the language around disability can also be ideologically fraught. In most cases, I prefer *identity-first language* over *person-first language*, i.e., "disabled person" rather than "person with a disability." This is consistent with the social model of disability which holds that it is not an individual's impairments or differences that is disabling, but society's inability or unwillingness to accommodate them (L. Kenny et al., 2016, p. 459; Liebowitz, 2015). Although well-meaning, person-first language can position disabilities and differences as pathologies to be removed (i.e., woman with a tumour) rather than as natural expressions of human difference (Botha et al., 2021, p. 2). Identity-first language rejects the stigmatisation of disability. As with language related to race, it is important to be mindful of contexts and specificities. Experiences of disability vary widely, and as is especially relevant for this project, there are gradients of visibility – from someone living with chronic, but invisible, pain to someone who uses a wheelchair. Different groups or individuals may prefer different terms. Thus, I am mindful of Rosemarie Garland-Thomson's call for potentially awkward but precise language in feminist disability studies, such as "bodies that violate the normative standards and expectations of bodily form and function" (2005, p. 1558). This approach requires careful consideration of how disabled bodies are

being represented or configured, and what cultural meanings are being brought to bear (Garland-Thomson, 2005, p. 1559).

Fat bodies also violate normative standards. Garland-Thomson claims that fatness is an "appearance impairment" and thus, under the social model, is a disability (2005, pp. 1581–1582). Paralleling the logic of disability liberation, the rejection of shame and stigma is why fat is my preferred descriptor over medicalising terms such as obese or overweight. This is in keeping with the fat studies approach, which advocates reclaiming the word fat as a "preferred neutral adjective" and "preferred term of political identity" (Wann, 2009, p. xii). What constitutes a representation of a fat body is not straightforward. Fat is a "malleable construct," which can be deployed to oppress all people (LeBesco & Braziel, 2001, p. 3). Thin women are not free from the cultural "tyranny of slenderness" (Bartky, 1990, p. 66). There is also a continuum of fat experiences and representations. Roxane Gay eloquently writes about her experience of living in a body that is fat enough to be classified in medical terms as "super morbidly obese" (2017, pp. 9–10). She points out that even most plus size retailers do not sell beautiful clothes designed for bodies like hers (Gay, 2017, pp. 163–170).

The language around age is perhaps less contentious than other identity markers, but *young* and *old* can be just as ambiguous – especially "as age compression demands that 6-year-olds look like 12-year-olds and 70-year-olds like 40-year-olds" (Orbach, 2017, p. viii). I aim to be as specific as possible when describing the apparent age of the subjects in the campaign materials. I also try to keep in focus the relational nature of different age groups and how these interact with gendered constructs of beauty and desirability. In her classic essay, *The Double Standard of Aging,* Susan Sontag draws attention to this relationality by making a rhetorical distinction between *age* and *ageing*. The former is related to the biological processes of growing older which affect men and women, whereas *ageing* is a gendered social phenomenon which is less about chronological age and more about a "humiliating process of gradual sexual disqualification" (Sontag, 1972, p. 32).

Another age group that may be generally understood as outside the parameters of sexual desirability is very young children, yet very young children

are not immune from sexual and gendered violence. Thus, another aspect of this project that demands linguistic flexibility is the inclusion of children and young people. Where appropriate, I use terminology such as *men's violence against women and children,* while being mindful of the drawbacks. Child-inclusive terminology may elide the distinctive vulnerabilities of childhood in favour of an analysis focused on structures of gender inequality. Conversely, including children may also obscure gender dynamics by basing analysis on an "assumed shared vulnerability," especially if that inclusion is de-gendered, e.g., *violence against women and children* rather than *violence against women and girls* (K. Boyle, 2018, p. 26). However, children and young people were present from the earliest campaign in my corpus – Zero Tolerance's *Prevalence.* One unsettling Zero Tolerance message stresses that even pre-school girls can be raped (Figure 5.2). It does not make sense to only talk about adult women when children were always in the materials. As children mature into teenagers and young adults (i.e., young people), they may experience gendered violence in more social and romantic contexts. The extent of the problem of image-based sexual abuse (e.g., so-called "revenge porn") came to the attention of Scottish Women's Aid through their work with young people, as noted in Section 7.04. Finally, Scottish Women's Aid asserts that children can be victimised by domestic abuse even when they do not directly witness any violence: "Children and young people pick up on the fear, and they don't just witness domestic abuse, they experience it in their own right" (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-c).

The linguistic inclusion of children and young people can also make visible representational tropes referenced in campaigns, such as those that pertain to the cultural entwinement of women and children. Ann Oakley writes about a "myth of motherhood" which pre-supposes that the only avenue to fulfilment for women (and their children) is via a Western model of maternity in which mothers are the primary caregivers (1974/1990, pp. 186–221). The myth of motherhood is a "political weapon designed to keep women in their place" (Oakley, 1974/1990, p. 209). Of course, mothers can and do feel profound love and responsibility for their children – this can also be used against women. Abusers may use children as part of a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour, e.g., by denigrating a mother's

parenting ability, threatening to hurt her children, or legally challenging her for child contact (K. Mackay, 2018; Stark, 2018).

Just as there are weighty expectations and contestations about what it means to be a mother, there are expectations and contestations about what it means to be a *woman*: between anatomical *sex* (biology) and *gender* (social construction). The so-called "sex vs gender" distinction has been a locus of feminist theory and debate since the second wave foment in the 1960s (Harrison, 2006). Judith Butler has influentially problematised this distinction. A fundamental challenge for feminism is the perceived necessity of identifying a universal subject marked woman / women (1990/2007, pp. 1–8). Rather than being a "stable signifier," however, *women* is a "troublesome term" that is brought into being through discourse (Butler, 1990/2007, p. 4). The discursive nature of gender implies that it could be differently constituted within different historical or intersectional contexts (1990/2007, p. 4). Butler further argues that the sex / gender distinction logically leads to a "radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders" (1990/2007, p. 9). Sex can also be discursively constructed and even biological sex does not neatly divide humans into dimorphic categories (Butler, 1990/2007, pp. 8–10; Hines, 2020, pp. 702-705;708-710; Pearce et al., 2020, pp. 687–689).

Butler claims that gender is *performative.* Gender is brought into being through gendered "repetition and ritual" – there is no essential gendered self that exists prior to this "gendered stylization of the body" (1990/2007, p. xv). Triangulating a precise definition of woman as ontological subject is a project far beyond my scope here. I simply attempt to be mindful that neither sex nor gender are stable categories on the representational landscape. This is a useful awareness when asking how women pictured in campaign materials are being constructed to represent gendered norms of womanhood, in particular "beautiful" womanhood. The norms of *femininity* play a role here. Susan Brownmiller's book, *Femininity,* covers topics ranging from body, to voice, to ambition (1984/1986). I use the word as shorthand for general ability and/or willingness to conform to a heteronormative performance of womanhood. The cultural norms around masculinity and femininity impact all people, but they will have distinct implications

for women perceived to be "masculine" in some way, such as trans women, butch lesbians, or heavily muscled women.

Like gender, *sexuality* is an unstable concept. When an umbrella term is necessary for representations of people of non-normative genders and/or sexualities, I adopt *LGBTQ+* (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning, plus other sexual and gender identities). This initialism encompasses many *queer* identities, while tacitly acknowledging that many LGBT people still consider queer a pejorative label. Other people embrace the queer term as it connotes an expansive and malleable identity outside of traditional binaries (Stonewall, 2020). Making queer-ness visible can resist the "totalizing tendency" of heteronormativity (M. Warner, 1991, p. 8). Asserting queerness implies a desire not to claim space for LGBTQ+ people within narrow cisnormative and heteronormative structures, but to reject those structural confines altogether. There are other umbrella terms under the larger LGBTQ+ umbrella, and each carries their own complexities. I follow the practice suggested in multiple media guidelines of adopting *transgender*, or its abbreviation *trans*, to refer to people whose gender presentation or identity is different than that assigned to them at birth (GLAAD, n.d.; *Media Style Guide*, 2010/2015). It is worth bearing in mind that, as Jack Halberstam explores, the expansiveness and complexity of transgender – or in their term *trans** – bodies and lives resists rigid classificatory systems of naming (2018, pp. 1–21). I aim for specificity that exposes the connotations of both text and context. There is actually only one item in my corpus that features a woman overtly represented as LGBTQ+, and the specific experiences being represented are that of a South Asian transgender woman who is a migrant to Scotland (Figure 5.17).

Since the aforementioned 2010 survey about transgender people's experiences of domestic abuse in Scotland, gender identity has become a fractious battlefront in the so-called culture wars (Ferber, 2020; Hines, 2020). In February 2018, Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid were among a group of Scottish women's sector organisations that produced a joint consultation response broadly in support of the reforms to the 2004 Gender Recognition Act in Scotland that were being campaigned for by transgender rights

organisations (*Review of the GRA Consultation Response*, 2018). Not all feminists are so inclusive of transgender people, including some writers cited in this thesis. Karen Ingala Smith excludes transgender women, who she describes as "trans-identified males," from her annual *Counting Dead Women* census of women killed by men in the UK (2019). Sheila Jeffreys's analysis of harmful beauty practices is undermined by her stereotyping of "transvestites/transsexuals" as driven by fetishistic urges and who are "invested in an old-fashioned, uncomfortable and degrading idea of femininity" (2005, p. 57).

I profoundly disagree with the suggestion that a heavily marginalised minority group are uniquely responsible for perpetuating old-fashioned ideas of femininity, but I do agree with Jeffreys's underlying proposition that traditional constructions of femininity can facilitate abuse and violence. Heteronormative patriarchal systems "provide opportunities for coercive control" (C. Donovan & Barnes, 2019, p. 8). Gendered expectations of beauty and presentation can be weaponised by perpetrators. A common way to abuse women online is "in the form of hurtful, appearance-related judgements that fall back on narrow beauty norms, and sexual shaming" (Mendes et al., 2019, p. 14). The weaponisation of beauty norms occurs in intimate relationships as well. An abuser may exert control over, or be hyper-critical of, a partner's appearance. In an essay calling for more quantitative and qualitative research on "the intersection between fat oppression and violence against women," Tracy Royce argues both that fatness itself makes women targets and that they can experience violence in specific ways (2009, p. 151). Abusers may use anti-fat insults as a way of controlling a partner and undermining her self-esteem to make it more difficult to leave (Royce, 2009, p. 153). LGBTQ+ relationships may feature "identity abuse" – an area which Catherine Donovan and Rebecca Barnes claim is under-researched. Abusers may: threaten to publicly out their partners; isolate them from supportive LGBTQI+ spaces; or make disparaging and/or misgendering comments about their bodies or gender presentations (C. Donovan & Barnes, 2019, p. 8). The specific ways that LGBTQ+ people can experience violence reveals the importance of an intersectional lens, and hints at a limitation of the gendered feminist approach to ending men's violence against women outlined in the next section (Section 2.05).

Section 2.05   Conceptualising violence

To resist male violence, we must make it visible. This necessity prompted my initial plan to use a consistent umbrella term – *men's violence against women* – to refer to the many forms of violent behaviour addressed in the campaigns, which include rape and sexual assault, domestic abuse, coercive control, FGM, commercial sexual exploitation, and technology-facilitated abuse, such as image-based sexual abuse or online harassment. There are many collective terms for these behaviours, such as "sexual violence," "gender-based violence," and "violence against women." As Karen Boyle explores in depth, each of these has practical and ideological advantages and limitations (2018). She recalls her own careful deliberations to arrive at the term "the feminist anti-violence movement" for a project on Scottish feminist activism around interpersonal violence. That framing was later pointed out by Finn Mackay to logically include feminist peace activism. Boyle's experience reveals that even thoroughly considered attempts to pin down umbrella terms can create "unintended intersections, and new omissions" (2018, p. 20).

As this work developed, I found that "men's violence against women" was not suitably inclusive or accurate for the materials in the corpus. For example, both the Zero Tolerance *Justice* and Rape Crisis Scotland *I Just Froze* campaigns include, albeit briefly, male survivors of rape. In the end, I settled on a more flexible approach, both when talking about violence generally or specific forms of violence. My language choices tend to echo the sources I am writing about, and the point of doing so is not necessarily to position this research on either side of a specific debate, e.g., about whether the commodification of sexual acts is always necessarily violent, as addressed later in this section. Rather, my point is to highlight the policy, practice, and political contexts in which the campaigns are situated. As touched upon throughout this thesis, it is useful to bear in mind that all three organisations have been involved, in varying degrees, with the shaping of these relevant policies, practices, and politics. This section explores some of the tensions that led to my more adaptive approach to terminology.

In their work on challenging rape culture, Nicola Henry and Anastasia Powell identify three broad categories of conceptual frameworks for understanding

sexual violence: *socio-cultural / socio-structural, criminal justice*, and *public health*. Each represent different ways of conceptualising gendered violence and are open to "divergent limitations or critiques" (2014, p. 4). *Socio-cultural / socio-structural* models maintain that male violence is supported by attitudes and structures of gender inequality (Henry & Powell, 2014, pp. 4–7). Such frameworks, particularly early articulations by writers like US feminist journalist Brownmiller, have been critiqued for universalising women's experiences, constructing rape as inevitable, and "positioning women as 'inherently rapeable'" (Henry & Powell, 2014, pp. 5–6). *Criminal justice* approaches tend to focus on "risk management" (Henry & Powell, 2014, pp. 8–9) and thus may put the onus on women to protect themselves from male violence, as seen in "safety advice" campaigns which can further normalise male violence as an "innate aspect of male behaviour" (O. Brooks, 2018, p. 283). The "price you pay could be rape" from the West Yorkshire police's *Party Animals* poster shown in Figure 1.1 is an extreme example of this kind of messaging. Finally, *public health* frameworks that emphasise economic and social costs have been critiqued for being insufficiently attentive to the human rights of women and girls to live free of violence (Henry & Powell, 2014, pp. 9–10).

My conceptual approach most closely aligns with socio-cultural / socio-structural models because I insist on a feminist analysis that male violence operates in a vicious circle with gender inequality. Far from being deviant, male violence is normalised; Section 3.03 of the literature review explores the role of cultural and media representations in this normalisation. Male violence serves a social function by reinforcing structural inequalities which privilege men (as a class) over women (as a class). In her foundational 1975 text, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (1975/1993), Brownmiller convincingly argues that the fear of sexual violence serves a regulating function. Rape is "nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear" [emphasis in original] (Brownmiller, 1975/1993, p. 15). Lucia C. Lykke similarly makes the point that "women are socialized to fear sexual assault" (2016, p. 241). Writing about discourses around serial murder, Boyle argues that they have "specifically gendered functions – to keep women in a state of fear and to consolidate patriarchal control" (2005, p. 80). The fear of male violence is used to keep women "in our place," thus undercutting our capacity to challenge the

patriarchal inequalities and cultural norms which support violent male behaviour. While writers like bell hooks (2004) and Susan Bordo are careful to point out that men are not the enemy, men do have a "higher stake" in perpetuating the patriarchal norms and patterns of masculinity that subjugate women (1993a, p. 192).

My socio-cultural / socio-structural perspective is also rooted in the knowledge that societal violence is gendered, and that men are the majority of perpetrators (Walby et al., 2017). A gendered problem necessitates a *gendered analysis* that draws the connections between individual behaviours and the social, cultural, and economic structures in which power is disproportionally held by men. Therefore, my default approach is to orient my language around male perpetrators, such as *male violence; men's violence against women; patriarchal violence;* or, where appropriate, *men's violence against women and children*. In practice, my language will often echo that of the citation or text under discussion, so as not to incorrectly assign an ideological perspective to others. In general, however, I am averse to constructions such as the passive "violence against women" that do not name men as the primary agents and beneficiaries of violence.

My insistence on making male agents of violence visible is also heavily influenced by Kelly's model of a *continuum of sexual violence.* Kelly's continuum has been enormously influential in feminist academic and activist work. With the exception of violence that results in death, the continuum model does not imply a hierarchy of harm or seriousness. Rather, there are two defining features of a continuum that make it a useful model for conceptualising men's violence against women. First, all points on a continuum share a "common character," which allows us to discern the threads running through all forms of male violence against women: the "*abuse, intimidation, coercion, intrusion, threat and force men use to control women*" [emphasis in original] (Kelly, 1988, p. 76). The continuum connects "the 'horrific' to the 'everyday'" (Kelly & Westmarland, 2016, p. 117). Second, it is not clear where points begin and end – where "'typical' and 'aberrant' male behaviour shade into one another" (Kelly, 1988, p. 75). For clarity, I generally reserve *sexual violence* for those acts that have an explicitly sexual

element, such as rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or childhood sexual abuse. Nevertheless, I recognise that different forms of male violence do not exist, nor are experienced, as discrete categories.

Boyle builds off Kelly's continuum model to argue that multiple continuums, or *continuum thinking,* are needed to understand complex connections such as those "between different acts, between victim / survivors, and among perpetrators" (2019, p. 71). For instance, continuum thinking can help us think beyond persistent binary framings that position rape as *either* violence *or* sex in order to make space for the complex ways women experience sexual violence (Boyle, 2019, pp. 66–70). Nicola Gavey argues that the 1970s second wave feminist insistence that rape was violent was a necessary corrective to the cultural dominance of androcentric discourses of rape that minimised the harm and failed to account for how women actually experienced rape (2019, pp. 29–31). Gavey also convincingly argues, however, that the attribution of a ""rape as violence, not sex" stance as *the* feminist stance on rape has been overstated" [emphasis in original] (2019, p. 31). Similarly, Boyle points out that the rigid "violence, not sex" framing may be more of a convenient media misrepresentation than a meaningful encapsulation of the nuances of second-wave feminist debates (2019, p. 67). Indeed, as early as 1981, Catharine MacKinnon was arguing against an overly reductive "violence, not sex" framing that left unexamined the ways that even consensual heterosexual practices can be implicated in patriarchal power dynamics and harm women; such framings fail to "criticize what has been made of *sex* and what has been done to us *through* sex" (1981/1987, p. 86-87).

This feminist attentive-ness to women's experience of male violence is also revealed in discussions around how to refer to *victims* or *survivors* of violence. As the British rape crisis movement developed their theoretical understanding of rape, they moved towards using "survivor" rather than "victim" in order not to trap women into what Edinburgh rape crisis workers describe as a "passive stereotype" (Browne, 2014, p. 162; Greenan et al., 1990, p. 81). Kelly et al. argue that victim and survivor are often unhelpfully positioned as binary identities "where 'victim' carries all the negative meanings and 'survivor' the positive" (1996, p. 92). "Survivor" may be perceived as offering a "more agentic identity," but positioning

the terms as binaries can compound the stigma of victimisation (Boyle, 2019, p. 15). I would add that many victims do not actually survive male violence. Boyle further argues that the experiences of victimhood and survivorship should be understood as a continuum, and she uses the term *victim / survivor* as a "means of acknowledging that experiences of victimisation and survival are dynamic and contextual" (Boyle, 2019, p. 15). The contextual understandings are highlighted by Kaitlin M. Boyle[18] and Kimberly B. Rogers' work in the United States, which suggests there can be race, class, and gender differences in how people choose to identify as victims or survivors, and this will have implications for their well-being (2020). In their 1996 paper, Kelly et al. refer to people with deliberately humanising terms such as children or adults, reserving "victimization and survival" for "particular events and responses to them" (1996, p. 96). This feminist praxis resists affixing a person's entire identity to their experience of violence. I attempt to follow it when logically and grammatically possible, but I retain the victim / survivor terminology when useful.

However statistically justified, there are inevitably limitations of any approach to conceptualising men's violence against women and children. Gendered activist and scholarly approaches have helped to heteronormatively frame the dominant narratives of rape (Murphy, 2009, p. 126) and domestic abuse Stark, 2009, pp. 391–397). Such heteronormative and cisnormative framings can open space for exclusions for those who fall outside traditional sexual and gender binaries (Barnes & C. Donovan, 2018; C. Donovan & Barnes, 2019; C. Donovan & Hester, 2010). Notably, my corpus selection process described in Section 4.03 did not yield any items that specifically addressed violence within women's same-sex relationships. In Section 8.04 of the thesis conclusion, I suggest this might be an important area for future research and campaigns. It is essential to recognise that despite occasional ideological friction with their heterosexual sisters, lesbians have been central in the Scottish struggle for women's liberation (Browne, 2014, pp. 91–95; Maitland, 2009, pp. 173–174). Furthermore, Zero Tolerance, Rape

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[18] This is the only citation from Kaitlin M. Boyle and Kimberly B. Rogers. Future Boyle citations refer to Karen Boyle.

Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid all have research about or specialist resources for LGBTQ+ people on their websites (Rape Crisis Scotland, n.d.-c; Scottish Women's Aid, 2017b; Zero Tolerance, 2020).

Not all woman-on-woman violence or abuse happens in the context of a romantic or sexual relationship. For instance, women participate in and perpetrate the practices of forced marriage, so-called "honour-based" violence, and FGM. In her explanation on why she includes violence supported and perpetrated by women in her book on "men's violences," Nicole Westmarland writes that these practices are "part of a system that disadvantages, further oppresses and sometimes kills women and girls" (2015, p. xvi). Asking "*who benefits*" can help uncover the underlying patriarchal function of such violence [emphasis in original] (Boyle, 2018, p. 24). The phenomenon of online abuse is another instructive example of how women may perpetrate patriarchal violence or abuse. When a woman receives a deluge of misogynistic vitriol from anonymous Twitter accounts, some of that abuse may well come from other women. Indeed, a woman was one of two people convicted of the 2013 misogynistic and threatening online harassment of feminist campaigner, Caroline Criado Perez (Thomas, 2014). Regardless of the direct perpetrators, online abuse ultimately serves a patriarchal function by making online spaces more dangerous for women than for men, thus curtailing women's rights to speak in the public sphere.

I aim to be mindful of the limitations of the "men's violence against women" framing, but I still choose to adopt it because it openly prioritises the political interests of women and girls. Within and outwith academic settings, I have been repeatedly asked: "What about violence against men?" Gavey recalls experiencing a similar phenomenon in the early 2000s when she would discuss her research on rape of women (2019, pp. 182–183). Such questioning is not without merit. While sceptical of "gender neutral" analyses, Gavey suggests that exploring dynamics around female perpetration and male victimisation might help deconstruct the normative assumptions about male "aggressiveness" and female "passivity" that shape myths of sexual violence (2019, pp. 182–184). Other commentators have highlighted the need for more activist, academic, and practitioner focus on male victims / survivors of both heterosexual and

homosexual violence (Murphy, 2009, p. 126; PettyJohn et al., 2019, p. 9; Zauner, 2021). Research aimed towards such experiences is necessary, but the persistence of this question exposes society's stubborn androcentrism. As a feminist researcher, I believe it is an act of resistance to focus on issues that impact women's lives, irrespective of the impact on men. There are epistemological implications of a feminist ideological position as further discussed in Section 4.02 of the methodology chapter, but it is still legitimate to prioritise women in feminist research which is, after all, "politically *for* women" [emphasis in original] (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 16).

There are two final features that necessitate the centring of women in this project. First, the focus of my research is on campaigns from feminist organisations, which understandably concentrate on the interests of women. Systematically incorporating campaigns designed specifically to address violence against men would have required researching different organisations and profoundly changing the direction of my work. Second, my research is aimed at revealing how gendered norms of beauty operate in these campaigns. As with violence, not only is the socio-cultural operation of beauty heavily gendered, but it also plays a regulating role in the oppression of women. The next section, Section 2.06, delves into what is meant by *beauty, beauty practices,* and *beauty norms* in my work and how they all operate as part of a patriarchal system.

While the victimisation of men and boys are not central to the campaigns I analysed, there actually are some representations of male victims / survivors. Their inclusion in the campaigns prompted me to adopt a more linguistically flexible approach to make some conceptual space for violence against men and boys. The existence of men who experience domestic abuse –from women or men – may superficially seem to undermine a gendered analysis, but Emma Williamson et al. argue the opposite. They conducted research to explore how men understand coercive control and abuse. The majority of their 31 interviewees were heterosexual, and the men had a mix of experiences as perpetrators and victims. E. Williamson et al. claim that the men's experiences of abuse were "influenced by their own gendered self-expectations, by the expectations of other individuals, and by wider society" (2018, p. 54). In other words, men's experiences

of victimisation and survivorship are gendered. For instance, one participant's feelings about the controlling behaviour of a former partner were complicated by his masculine pride in her attractiveness (E. Williamson et al., 2018, p. 59). Gavey highlights another way in which beauty norms can exert pressure on men. Men are supposed to desire sex with beautiful women. Pointing to evidence from a study of men's responses to women's sexual initiation (Fagen & Anderson, 2012), Gavey suggests that the sexual advances of a normatively beautiful woman can be a form of cultural coercion that men may struggle to resist, even when those advances fall far short of sexual violence (2019, p. 246). For some men, "the perceived risk to their masculinity becomes a pressure that constrains their choices" (Gavey, 2019, p. 246). These examples point to the complex and nuanced ways that cultural understandings of gender, beauty, sex, and violence can collide.

All of these feminist debates around the language of male violence reveal how understandings of women's experiences have evolved and been contested over time, even around what counts as *violence* itself. From at least the early 1980s, women's aid workers in Scotland were abandoning the term "battered wives" in favour of "abused women" to recognise the mental and sexual abuse that women were reporting to them (Arnot, 1990, p. 79). "Abused women" now sounds somewhat dated and carries with it the problems identified by Kelly et al. of pinning a woman's identity to her abuse (1996, p. 96). As pointed out by a more recent Ross-shire Women's Aid worker, language such as women who "have experienced domestic abuse" may now be more likely to be used (Orr et al., 2018, p. 26). Such language also has the advantage of recognising that it is not just married women who experience abuse.

Unless I am echoing others, my preference is for the term *domestic abuse* rather than *domestic violence* or even the *domestic violence and abuse (DVA)* used by some experts (C. Donovan & Barnes, 2019; E. Williamson et al., 2018). The use of the "domestic abuse" term is long established practice in Scotland; it features in the earliest National Strategy on Domestic Abuse in Scotland published by the then-Scottish Executive in 2000 (Scottish Executive, 2000). The term's adoption in Scotland was intended to capture abusive behaviours that

might consist of "emotional, psychological and financial tactics" with or without physical violence (Lombard & Whiting, 2018, p. 31). In fact, a coercively controlling relationship may not contain physical violence at all (Scottish Women's Aid, 2017a, p. 1).

Shifting domestic abuse terminology is far from the only, or most contentious, language issue in work to end male violence. Originally published in 2014, *Equally Safe* is Scotland's current national strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls. The *Equally Safe* definition of violence against women and girls "encompasses (but is not limited to): physical, sexual and psychological violence" (Scottish Government, 2018, p. 12). *Equally Safe* lists over 20 different behaviours and phenomena that are considered as violence against women and girls, not all of which may be universally agreed to actually *be* violence. The *Equally Safe* definition of violence includes "commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, lap dancing, stripping, pornography and trafficking," but feminists have widely divergent views on the sex industry which can be revealed by choice of terminology (Scottish Government, 2018, p. 12). *Sex worker* is a political term generally used to indicate "that the speaker thinks that selling sex is or can be work" (Smith & Mac, 2020, p. 1). Whereas the Zero Tolerance position on prostitution and pornography is that they are "exploitation of women, not work" (Zero Tolerance, 2019a, p. 13). The Zero Tolerance media guide suggests journalists use "Woman who sells sex" or "Woman involved in pornography / prostitution" (Zero Tolerance, 2019a, p. 13).

These tensions highlight that the subtilties of women's experiences do not neatly align themselves to analytical categories necessitated by political, policy, or criminal justice concerns. As Kelly points out, the "fundamental building blocks of law and crime sit uneasily with those underpinning the continuum concept" (2011, p. xxii). As my focus is on how these issues are communicated and represented, I tend towards an expansive definition of violence which makes conceptual space for less visible harms such as verbal abuse. There are both qualitative and quantitative implications to restrictive definitions of violence against women, as articulated by Greenan: "It is difficult to count something which has not been named; but until it is counted, how do we know it exists?" (2005, p. 20).

Nevertheless, I remain wary of evacuating all useful meaning from the concept of violence. Walby et al. caution that too broad a definition of violence can inhibit a focused, gendered analysis of how social problems such as economic inequality or gender stereotypes materially interact with physical violence (2017, pp. 7–8). A conception of violence that is "too amorphous to quantify" inhibits our ability to resist it (Boyle, 2018, p. 28).

Section 2.06   Conceptualising beauty

"Beauty" is another semiotically unstable concept. In his sweeping meditation on the history of Western ideas of beauty, Umberto Eco points out that "beauty" is relative and contextual, and "what is considered beautiful depends on the various historical periods and cultures" (2002/2004, p. 14). The texts I analyse were produced from 1992 to 2019; therefore, my analysis was heavily informed by the context of the representational landscape of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The literature review in Chapter 3 explores how this representational landscape portrays beauty and violence. It is first helpful to tease out some links between my initial conception of Western beauty norms and the more expansive notion of beauty that eventually came to inform my analysis. My conceptual understanding of "beauty" evolved and expanded through the research journey, eventually coalescing around three broad strands: *the beauty of the woman,* the *beauty of the image,* and the *beauty of the idea.*

My conceptualisation of the beauty of the woman (or the beautiful woman) stems from an interest in the patriarchal power of *Western* beauty norms. The campaigns I analysed are located in multiple cultural spheres that have overlapping semiotic repertoires: the Scottish feminist sector, Scotland, the United Kingdom, Europe, the global North, and the Western world. What constitutes the Western world or Western culture can be slippery, and the "Western" designation is often used in literature, but rarely – if ever – defined. My interpretation of Western – and Western beauty norms – admittedly replicates the same constructive ambiguity. I broadly conceptualise Western beauty norms as Eurocentric, and part of the global power dynamics that are the ongoing effects of European imperialism. I draw upon literature from across the Anglosphere to make sense of how these amorphously "Western" notions of beauty play out in a

set of Scottish texts. I do recognise that media representations are transnational, especially with the explosion of digital media technologies. The materials I analysed include those with global spread outwards from Scotland (e.g., Zero Tolerance *Prevalence*) and those imported from other locales such as the USA (e.g., Rape Crisis Scotland's *This is not an invitation to rape me).* Although beyond my current scope, an in-depth analysis of how such texts might be produced or read in non-Western cultures could draw upon the thriving contemporary scholarship in transnational beauty studies outlined by Elias et al. (2017a, pp. 10–14). As Kress points out, "all semiotic 'worlds', are rich, if differently so" (2010, p. 12).

In the Western semiotic world, "beauty" may be generally understood to fall within the sphere marked "women." However, as Naomi Wolf writes in her bestselling book, the *Beauty Myth* "is not about women at all. It is about men's institutions and institutional power" (1991/2002, p. 13). Since Wollstonecraft described feminine beauty as adorning a "gilt cage" in 1792, there has come to be a wide consensus amongst Western feminist thinkers that feminine beauty norms function as part of patriarchal control (Bartky, 1990; Bordo, 1993b; Brownmiller, 1984/1986; Davis, 1995; Dworkin, 1974; Engeln, 2017; Faludi, 1991/2006; Jeffreys, 2005; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1987/2014; Wolf, 1991/2002; Wollstonecraft, 1792/1999). Writers often use terminology that emphasises the structural and systemic aspects of feminine beauty: "beauty myth" (Wolf, 1991/2002); "fashion-beauty complex" (Bartky, 1990); "harmful cultural practises" (Jeffreys, 2005); "beauty system" (MacCannell & MacCannell, 1987/2014); and "beauty politics" (Elias et al., 2017a). The feminine beauty system exerts pressures on women to participate in *beauty practices* and aspire to *beauty norms*, and these pressures serve to entrench patriarchal inequalities.

Writers like Engeln (2017, pp. 111-138), Faludi (1991, p. 229), and Wolf (2002/1991, p.113) point to economic data that highlights the staggering resources extracted from women by beauty practices, products, and procedures (in the United States and beyond). Dean MacCannell and Juliet Flower MacCannell identify an exhausting range of standards which demand financial, time, and cognitive resources: " . . .face paint color, body size and weight, breast

shape, upper arm measurement, head and body hair texture, color and visibility, facial expression, garment and accessory selection and co-ordination" (1987/2014, pp. 336–337).

Engeln (2017, pp. 116-124) posits that the "gender gap" in beauty compares to, and compounds, the well-documented gender pay gap (World Economic Forum, 2021). Already earning less money than men, women are expected to devote more of that money on their personal appearance; women overwhelmingly make up the consumer base for the cosmetics, fashion, weight loss, and plastic surgery industries. Women's economic resources are also lost to investments such as retirement savings and career development training. Women also still devote a disproportionate share of their time to unpaid household labour, such as elder care, childcare, and housekeeping (World Economic Forum, 2021, p. 43). Nevertheless, women are expected to devote more of their "free" time to beauty practices. Such pressures are exacerbated by the ubiquitous surveillance of the social media and selfie age (Engeln, 2017, pp. 178-183). Finally, women do not have unlimited mental energy. One of Engeln's interviewees referred to the loss of "brain space" to describe the "limited cognitive resources and the trade-offs we make when so much of our brainpower is dedicated to thinking about how we look" (2017, p. 108). While Engeln's work focuses on the United States, the broader point about the disproportionate gendered costs and expectations certainly apply to wider Western world. Western men are generally not expected to wear cosmetics. Their hairstyles are usually lower maintenance than women's. Men's clothing is more practical, better constructed, less revealing, and far less subject to the whims of fashion. That is not the only way inequality is upheld by the beauty system. It is men, and "notably, white, bourgeois, professional men," who "set the standards, and judge, rather than the ones who are judged against standards that they can never hope to meet" (Davis, 1995, p. 51). It must nevertheless be stressed that women also play a role in the beauty system's enforcement and perpetuation. Beauty can also be a form of "currency" (Wolf, 1991/2002, p. 12) or social capital that some women learn to exploit – although such capital "depreciates with age or weight gain" (Leiss et al., 2018, p. 284).

The heavily gendered pressures exerted on individual women to participate in beauty practices hints at the structural nature of the feminine beauty system. My own inquiry considers a different aspect of that structure: how that system is reproduced by a representational landscape awash with *idealised, homogenised,* and *objectified* images of women. To say that images are *idealised* is to recognise that these images represent a physical appearance which very few – if any – women can achieve. The dominant imagery of beautiful women are constructed and mediated representations, to which a range of manipulations – from makeup to lighting to retouching – may have been applied. Writing about women's magazines in 1990, Gloria Steinem points out that: "Even "real" nonmodel women photographed for a woman's magazine are usually made up, dressed in credited clothes, and retouched out of all reality" (2014, p. 177). In the age of Photoshop, the potential gulf between the corporeal model and the representational image has become even wider. The widespread availability of techniques and tools for producing digital self-portraits feeds into an "online culture of perfectionism" which means that even images that "regular" (i.e. non-model) women share on social media platforms like Instagram may be heavily edited and self-mediated (Kleim et al., 2019, pp. 66–68).

To say that these images of women are *homogenised* is to recognise that the representational landscape is far narrower than the "actual landscape of women's appearance" (Engeln, 2017, p. 145). In addition to advancing unattainable ideals, the representational landscape can have a homogenising effect on perceptions of women's bodies. Even Nancy Etcoff, who does not believe that the demands of beauty inherently impedes women's achievements, concedes that western media: "channel desire and narrow the bandwidth of our preferences" (2000, pp. 4–5). As Bordo observes, our cultural representations of feminine beauty "smooth out all racial, ethnic, and sexual "differences" that disturb Anglo-Saxon, heterosexual expectations and identifications" (1993b, p. 25). The homogenisation of beauty ideals excludes many women. For example, "white skin" is an "essential prerequisite" for what Lola Young calls European ideals of beauty (1996, p. 188).

To say that representations are *objectified* is to recognise that these images treat a woman "*as a body* (or collection of body parts) valued predominantly for its use to (or consumption by) others" [emphasis in original] (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 174). Objectification is often, but not always, closely linked to sexual desirability. Sexual objectification reduces a woman's "sexual parts or sexual function" as "mere instruments, or else regarded as if they were capable of representing her" (Bartky, 1990, p. 35). Such imagery also fails to present women as full human beings, with interior lives, dreams, and agency.

An idealised, homogenised, and objectified feminine beauty does not and cannot exist in corporeal form; she must be constructed representationally. Moreover, what constitutes an ideal beauty can only be made legible in relation to "unbeautiful" women (Garland-Thomson, 1997, pp. 27–29). For instance, disabled bodies can thus function as an embodied abnormal that allows for the construction of an ethereal ideal. Likewise, fat women's bodies are the "abject" which "must be expelled to make all other bodily representations and functions, even life itself, possible" (Kent, 2001, p. 135). Despite this constructed nature of idealised beauty, we must be cautious of "real woman" tropes that advance a naïve and over-simplified ideal / real binary. In the realm of representation, what is "real" is tricky. As Erving Goffman points out in the influential *Gender Advertisements*, even a doctored photo is a real material item, although it does not literally embody the representational subject (1976/1987, p. 12). There are those women who are closer to a contemporary Western beauty ideal – thin, white, young, abled, "feminine," and they are not more or less "real" than any other woman. Regardless of shapes or shades – waif or hourglass, alabaster or sun-kissed – of ideals in a given historical moment, what remains consistent is that they are a "set-up," with requirements so unrealistic and costly in terms of time, money, and labour, that women inevitably fall short (Bartky, 1990, p. 72).

While it is clear that the perceptions and expectations of beauty play a role in maintaining gender inequality, the extent to which beauty norms are "natural" and rooted in biological imperatives (Etcoff, 2000) or are constructs of gendered oppression (Jeffreys, 2005) is contested. As suggested by Richard Klein's celebratory history of "fat beauty," ideals may shift over time (2001). Indeed, as

Wolf points out, the pace of change in feminine beauty ideals far outstrips human evolution, thus challenging assertions that they are born from evolutionary imperatives (1991/2002, p. 12). Regardless of their genesis, as Bordo notes, our most ubiquitous representations of feminine beauty can have a normalising effect, becoming templates against which women are judged (or judge themselves) (1993b, p. 25). These normative templates become naturalised into collective cultural understandings of what constitutes beauty. To claim that they have been "naturalised" is to claim that their hegemonic nature has receded into what Kathy Deliovsky would term a "taken-for-grantedness" (2008, p. 51). Deliovsky uses this insightful phrase in her research of white female identity and women's responses to images of "normative femininity." Given the cultural entwinement of femininity and beauty, it is also applicable to normative beauty. Academic and popular writers on beauty and representation repeatedly identify some combination of "taken-for-granted" norms that dominate Western narrative and visual representations of beauty, such as whiteness, able-bodiedness, slenderness, youth, and stereotypically feminine gender presentation (Bordo, 1993b; Eddo-Lodge, 2018; Engeln, 2017; Goffman, 1976/1987, p. 21; Goodman, 2014; Hill Collins, 2004, p. 205; hooks, 1998; Marshall, 1996).

Ultimately, I am more interested in the function of beauty norms than I am with their origins. To understand that function, we must make visible how patriarchal imperatives perpetuate the beauty system. Berger observes that where a woman may be positioned as an idealised object, the "'ideal' spectator" is assumed to be a man (Berger et al., 1972/1977, p. 64). In her psychoanalytic exploration of the Hollywood filmic practice of presenting women primarily as objects of heterosexual male desire, Laura Mulvey famously refers to this gendered representational asymmetry as the "determining *male gaze*" [emphasis added] (1975/2006, p. 346). The hegemonic nature of the male gaze means that women also perceive images of women through this masculine lens. It is "everyone," after all, that Sontag suggests is "addicted to the visual pleasure that women give by meeting certain esthetic requirements from which men are exempted" (1972, p. 38).

Mulvey's concept of the male gaze has been subject to numerous film and cultural critiques, which Claire Sisco King outlines in a recent chapter on *The Male Gaze in Visual Culture* (2020, pp. 120–135)*.* Such critiques include: that psychoanalytic methods are inaccessible and not intellectually rigorous (King, 2020, pp. 123–124); that the implied binary model of gender does not allow for intersectional differences in spectatorship, agency, desire, subjectivity, or even masculine subjects of the gaze (King, 2020, pp. 123–125); and that the model does not account for evolving patterns of media engagement outwith traditional cinema settings (King, 2020, pp. 128-130). King explains that:

> . . .all of these revisions and extensions of Mulvey's work make clear that no visual encounter is limited to a singular gaze, nor is any gaze all-powerful or all perceiving. Multiple, often conflicting, gazes operate in any given situation. . . (2020, p. 128).

Mulvey has acknowledged such critiques, claiming that the "modes of spectatorship were always more complex that the 'Visual Pleasure' essay allowed" (2015). Reading media texts through queer, disabled, or racialised lenses may produce radically different interpretations, and a contemporary understanding of the gaze should make space for varied intersectional and technological modes of media engagement. Section 2.07 of this chapter returns to another critique of Mulvey's concept – that there is power in the "returned gaze" (King, 2020, pp. 127-128) – to explore how the gaze might allow space for resistance.

Despite critiques, the concept of the male gaze remains useful for exposing the asymmetries of the wider representational landscape and how gendered representations semiotically function. Of particular utility is Mulvey's claim that in "their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*" [emphasis in original] (1975/2006, p. 346). Mulvey's analysis relies on the premise that there is a "primordial wish for pleasurable looking," (1975/2006, p. 345),or what Sigmund Freud termed *scopophilia* (1975/2006, p. 344). Although I do not use a psychoanalytic method, I share the foundational assumption that there is pleasure

to be found in the gaze. The understanding that women are presented "to be looked at" thus becomes a useful way to conceptualise how images of women might be deployed in a media text. It is helpful to ask how women's images were being presented to appeal to the desire for visual pleasure. The idea that women's images "attract" the gaze is also important, because it raises the question if it is only images of conventionally beautiful, or "attractive," women that draw attention? If not, it then might be fruitful to query how other forms of "attractiveness" semiotically function.

Eco reminds us that visual pleasure and attraction is not limited to human subjects. He writes that: "**Beauty is all that pleases,** arouses admiration, or draws the eye. The beautiful object is an object that by virtue of its form delights the senses, especially sight and hearing [bold in original] (Eco, 2002/2004, pp. 39–41). This aspect of beauty was especially relevant as I approached RQ3: "How does the aesthetic construction of the campaigns engage with notions of beauty, i.e., are they constructed to be beautiful images in some way?" A communication text can "delight the senses" or "draw the eye" in ways that may seem to have little relevance to feminine beauty norms. My corpus did not consist only of images of women, and some of the texts do not show images of people at all. These texts can nevertheless attract our gaze and provide visual pleasure. As will be seen in the next section (Section 2.07), this attraction can also provoke semiotically productive discomfort or unease. These textual qualities nudged me into a more expansive conception of beauty that encompasses both the *beauty of the woman* and the *beauty of the image*. While applying the tools of visual grammar to the campaign materials, I also queried how different elements of context, content, and form worked together to connote "to-be-looked-at-ness."

The third strand of my conceptual understanding of beauty is that of the *beauty of the idea*. The aforementioned Eco quote continues on to elaborate that human beauty is not limited to the visual: "an important role is also played by the qualities of the soul and the personality, which are perceived by the mind's eye more than by the eye of the body" (2002/2004, p. 41). Feminine beauty ideals are situated within a long philosophical and cultural tradition that entangles them with philosophies of virtue: from the moral and spiritual ideals of Plato; to the

inspirational symbols for Medieval chivalric heroism; to the divine purity celebrated in the Renaissance; to the beautiful muses of the Romantic poets (Davis, 1995, p. 39).

This conflation of beauty and virtue implies that we can interpret that which is beautiful to be good. It then follows that we can interpret that which is good to be beautiful. This more expansive understanding of beauty was clearly reflected in some responses of my interview participants. When I asked directly about the role of beauty in campaigns, they sometimes interpreted my questions differently than I had expected. For example, I asked Liz Ely about the beauty of either the models or the images used in Zero Tolerance's *Violence Unseen* campaign. She asked me whether I meant "philosophically" or according to "Western notions of what beauty." When I responded, "both," Ely explained that all the models may not be perceived as conforming to Western standards of beauty, but:

> I think that they're beautiful images in that they're beautifully shot. Even though they're about difficult subjects, they show beauty and resilience of women. . .There's a lot of courage in the images, personally, I think [that] is very beautiful thing.

As with my own conceptual journey, Ely's observation moves from Western beauty norms (*beauty of the woman*) to images that are "beautifully shot" (*beauty of the image*) to the idea that resilience and courage have their own type of "philosophical" beauty (*beauty of the idea)*. My analyses found that even a more intangible, philosophical conception of beauty can be powerfully visually expressed, e.g., Section 7.06 on the "beauty of survivorship." On one hand, this more expansive notion of beauty complicated my textual readings as they were built on shifting semiotic sands. On the other hand, the next section begins to explore how this instability can create fertile space for semiotic renegotiation and feminist resistance to the forces of surveillance and in/visibility that support the patriarchal weight of violence and beauty.

Section 2.07   Framework of surveillance, in/visibility, and resistance

As my work progressed, three subordinate concepts emerged which proved to be methodologically and theoretically invaluable: *surveillance,*

in/visibility, and *resistance.* Many of the corpus texts did not reference beauty in an obvious way, whereas one imagetext that directly referenced beauty (specifically, prettiness) did not mention violence at all (Figure 5.8). By looking for these subordinate concepts in the corpus materials, I could link the overarching concepts of beauty and violence even when connections were not immediately apparent in the texts.

Patriarchal *surveillance* plays a key role in the enforcement of feminine beauty practices and norms (Bartky, 1990, pp. 63-82; Brownmiller, 1984/1986, p. 10; Engeln, 2017, pp. 8–9; Giovanelli & Ostertag 2009; Leiss et al., 2018, p. 284; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1987/2014, pp. 336–337). Sandra Lee Bartky uses the work of Michel Foucault to imagine this power as that of a diffuse disciplinarian, who is "everyone and yet no one in particular" (1990, p. 74). As Foucault instructs, power "comes from everywhere" (1976/1978, p. 93). Bartky gives the example of fat women who are often on the receiving end of unsolicited admonitions to diet from friends, acquaintances, and strangers (1990, p. 74-75). The effectiveness of this surveillance depends on women being made acutely aware of it through personal interactions and exposure to cultural influences. This acute awareness of being observed can lead to a merging of the observer and the observed as women learn to self-objectify and "to evaluate themselves first and best" (Bartky, 1990, p. 28). In laying out their psychological framework of "objectification theory," Barbara L. Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts similarly claim that "girls and women are typically acculturated to internalize an observer's perspective as a primary view of their physical selves" – which can have considerable consequences for their mental health (1997, p. 173). More recently, Ana Sofia Elias et al.'s edited volume on "aesthetic labour" explores the convergences of beauty politics and neoliberal demands for self-presentation and marketisation, a phenomenon they call "aesthetic entrepreneurship" (2017b). Such work has heightened urgency in the smart phone and social media age in which our bodies are being subjected to an unprecedented "degree of forensic surveillance" (Elias et al., 2017a, p. 26). Women may invest considerable resources into creating and curating social media images that present them in the most attractive light possible (Engeln, 2017, p.179).

The surveilling gaze is also deployed to perpetuate gendered violence. It is too often women's bodies and behaviours – rather than men's violence – that is presented as a legitimate site for disciplinary control and surveillance. Such attitudes are evident in common myths that claim women "invite" or "provoke" rape when we wear certain clothing (Mendes, 2015, pp. 96-99). The disciplinary gaze implicit in such victim-blaming discourses produces further unequal burdens on women's time, labour, resources, and self-perception. Fiona Vera-Gray and Kelly write about the relentless "safety work" that women feel compelled to perform in order to manage the risk of male violence and harassment in public spaces (2020, p. 266). Even when a woman is rationally aware that clothing does not "invite" sexual violence, she may nevertheless adapt her own attire in an attempt to make herself less visible to the male gaze and less vulnerable to male violence (Vera-Gray, 2018, pp. 90-94). A participant in Asifa Siraj's study of Glaswegian hijab-wearers commented that her modest dress was a form of rape prevention (2011, p. 725). It is important to note that the proliferation of digital public spaces has created new opportunities for the disciplinary surveillance of women's bodies and behaviours (see also Section 3.05) (Mason & Magnet, 2012; Megarry, 2018; Vera-Gray, 2017). My research is focused on the representation rather than the phenomenology of male violence, but the notion that women might try to make themselves less visible to the gaze highlights how the concept of surveillance relates to the concept of *in/visibility*.

Women's embodied experiences of the gaze are not the only expressions of the cultural force of in/visibility. Section 3.04 explores how a woman's perceived attractiveness can influence if, and how, her experience of male violence is made publicly visible. It has been widely noted that there is often disproportionate sympathetic media attention given to more privileged and normatively attractive victims – a phenomenon that Sarah Stillman refers to as the "missing white girl syndrome" (2007). However, visibility does not necessarily confer social power. The murder of a normatively beautiful woman may be highly visible in the media but be sensationalised so much that the woman's personhood and subjectivity is rendered invisible.

The logical converse of this dynamic is that invisibility is not a de facto position of disempowerment. A further critique of the male gaze that King describes was that spectatorship power dynamics are not unidirectional and there is power in the "returned gaze" (2020, pp. 127–128). Garland-Thomson's "theory of the Stare" is helpful for moving beyond the passive watcher / watched assumptions of the gaze. She argues that the visual pull of extraordinary or disabled bodies can invert power relations and disturb "comforting narratives" of "truth, knowledge, certainty, or meaning" (Garland-Thomson, 2006, p. 174). Dyer similarly argues that there is an element of power in preparing oneself to be looked at, and the looker / looked at dynamic involves "shifting relations of activity and passivity" (1982, p. 66). Therefore, I adopted the slash in in/visibility to indicate that invisibility and visibility are unstable, gradated, and relational forces that can empower or disempower in different contexts.

The power dynamics between the surveiller and the surveilled – and the visible and the invisible – should be understood as fluid and relational. Surveillance and in/visibility can therefore function both as mechanisms of oppression and mechanisms of *resistance.* As Foucault famously claims, "Where there is power, there is resistance" (1976/1978, p. 95). Before turning to my core interest in representation, it is helpful to again touch upon the disciplinary role of beauty norms and practices in women's lives. There are disparate feminist opinions on how women can and should engage with or resist the system of feminine beauty. Feminist beauty debates tend to "polarise along well-worn fault lines" (Elias et al., 2017a, p. 9). Some argue that aspects of the beauty system can be subverted and reclaimed for liberatory ends (Baumgardner & Richards, 2004). Others are sympathetic to the nuanced relationship women have with beauty but whose work reveals the impossibilities of disentangling it from patriarchal structures (Bartky, 1990; Bordo, 1993b). Finally, there are those for whom the entire beauty system is itself a form of patriarchal violence inflicted upon women (Jeffreys, 2005).

My own perspective aligns with Elias et al.'s encouragement to resist polarised positions around beauty in favour of a "scholarship that is interested in exploring ambivalence, ambiguity and dissonance" (2017a, pp. 21–22). While I

acknowledge that the beauty system can oppress individually and structurally, I also understand that communicators must use semiotic resources deeply influenced by Western beauty practices, norms, and ideals. As argued in Section 2.03, the discursive and processual nature of meaning-making means that predictable patterns can be redrawn, and meanings change over time (S. Hall, 1997/2013, p. 32). For example, S. Hall famously argues that race is a "floating signifier" without a stable link to biological reality (S. Hall, 1996/1997). This instability can render concepts susceptible to polysemous readings and ideological renegotiation, as with the 1960s emergence in the United States of the "Black is Beautiful" slogan which inverted the traditional Western association of the signifier BLACK "with everything that is dark, evil, forbidding, devilish, dangerous and sinful" (S. Hall, 1997/2013, p. 32). There is no way out of this representational system, but its ambivalences, ambiguities, and dissonances can enable spaces and places for resistance to oppressive ideologies.

Resistance to oppressive ideologies is at the beating heart of the campaigns in this thesis. Driven by a feminist analysis, the campaigners wanted to challenge what Lamb calls "invisible power," i.e., the power of socio-cultural norms and assumptions about "what is 'natural' or 'unchangeable'" (2011, p. 47). Indeed, an original Zero Tolerance campaigner characterises their aim as to "set about building a new set of truths" about male violence (Gillan, 1999/2015, p. 5). This is an ambitious goal, but not a preposterous one. Writing specifically about public relations practitioners, Motion and Leitch claim that "successful discourse strategies" may create hegemonic change "in that it becomes so pervasive that it is perceived as common sense" (2007, p. 266). Throughout this thesis, I will touch upon the ways campaigners leveraged different forms of political, social, and cultural resources to advance their counter-hegemonic goals. Of particular interest in this project is how the campaigners enacted their resistance to male violence by co-opting the semiotic resources of the dominant representational norms of feminine beauty – as well as the compromises that co-option entailed.

Section 2.08   Chapter conclusion

I am informed by the assumption that language choices can reveal, conceal, or even guide ideological and disciplinary perspectives. Accordingly, this

chapter explored some of the terminological challenges I grappled with throughout the research journey. Even what is meant by a "campaign" is far more complicated than it superficially appears. Rather than rigidly align to a disciplinary definition, I identified three criteria for a campaign around which to build my corpus. The campaign must be led by Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, or Scottish Women's Aid. It must be targeted at a broad public. It must address social attitudes. In practice, applying the three campaign criteria was not straightforward, as will be returned to in Section 4.03 of the methodology chapter.

This chapter also introduced the theoretical underpinnings of social semiotics as an analytic methodology for conceptualising how meaning is made. Fundamentally, I understand meaning as fluid and meaning-making as a process – both features allow space for change. Images can be especially powerful tools for conveying or changing dominant ideologies, but other factors such as form, text, context, and even dissemination methods can influence the social semiotic process.

The connotational weight of language means that it is necessary to be careful about terminology. The thorniest language issue I wrestled with is how to refer to the phenomenon at the centre of my research: men's violence against women and children. I believe in the ideological necessity of a gendered and feminist analysis which linguistically names the agent of male violence, but I recognise this can reinforce existing exclusions or problematic heteronormative framings. I do not really resolve this tension, nor do I suspect it is truly resolvable. I attempted to ameliorate it by letting go of my earlier dogmatic consistency and committing instead to an intersectional lens that is sensitive to those exclusions and problematics. An intersectional lens also demands sensitivity to the ideological implications of language around identity. As debates around person-first or identity-first disability language reveal, even word order can be contentious (Botha et al., 2021; L. Kenny et al., 2016, p. 459; Liebowitz, 2015).

Beauty is also a difficult concept to pin down, and this chapter tracked my conceptual evolution from the "beauty of the woman," to the "beauty of the image," to the "beauty of the idea." The body of the chapter culminated with the relevant ideas being pulled together into the theoretical framework laid out in Section 2.07,

which explores how the three subordinate concepts of surveillance, invisibility, and resistance can link beauty and violence. The next chapter, Chapter 3: "Representation and resistance" delves into how meanings of beauty and violence are constructed on the representational landscape, before positioning the work in this thesis in a body of literature around similar campaigns.

Chapter 3. Literature review: Representation and resistance

Section 3.01   Chapter introduction

Stokes stresses that to conduct any semiotic analysis it is essential "to understand what myths are at play in order to appreciate the ideological power of the signs" (2013, p.166). It is necessary to develop an in-depth understanding of the relevant features of the representational landscape on which the campaigns enacted the process of meaning making. My conception of this landscape is broad, and it parallels what Georgia Aiello and Katy Parry call "media culture," which refers to the "sites, technologies and practices where meanings circulate within both traditional 'mass' media and personalized media forms (such as social networks)" (2019, p. 5). Van Leeuwen asserts that a social semiotic approach requires an interdisciplinary engagement with social theory to come "into its own" (2005, p. 1). This chapter draws from a wide range of disciplines to map the representational landscape's relationship to feminine beauty (Section 3.02) and male violence (Section 3.03), as well as where they meet (Section 3.04). While heavily drawing from feminist media studies, this chapter is also deeply indebted to cultural studies fields which explore post structural ambiguities (van Zoonen, 1994, pp. 5–8) and intersectional power dynamics around issues such as race, disability, size, age, sexuality, gender identity, and class (Harvey, 2020, pp. 19–24).

Finally, Section 3.05 considers some existing literature around the campaigns in this corpus and other similar campaigns. Ultimately these campaigns are about the power to fix social and cultural meanings, and the cultural capital to position oneself as an authentically counter-hegemonic voice is itself a form of power. Section 3.05 also draws from strategic communications and public relations literature to unpick these power relationships. Such strategically focused work expands the frame beyond "just" gender dynamics to interrogate the ways in which feminist organisations themselves are privileged or disprivileged actors.

Section 3.02   Representations of (feminine) beauty

The ways in which different bodies are rendered in/visible on the representational landscape is influenced by how closely those bodies conform to normative expectations. This is a patently gendered dynamic that interacts with the concepts of beauty, violence, surveillance, in/visibility, and resistance. Men are the default representational norm, whereas the "feminine body is culturally constructed as the superlative site of alterity" (Bronfen, 1992, p. xi). Media scholars have long been cataloguing and critiquing the over-representation of (some) men as heroic actors in Western media representations, with many 1970s influential works on art, television, and cinema still being referenced in contemporary research (Berger et al., 1972/1977; Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Mulvey, 1975/2006; Tuchman, 1978). Berger's famous formulation elegantly summarises this representational asymmetry: "*men act* and *women appear*" [emphasis in original] (Berger et al., 1972/1977, p. 47). Men are the do-ers and women are the decoration. Even when male bodies are presented as sites of erotic pleasure, as in the the "male pin-ups" that Dyer evaluates, they tend to be positioned as "doing something" or at least with taut muscles that draw "attention to the body's potential for action" (1982, pp. 66–67). By so persistently making women visible primarily as decorative objects for the gaze, the representational landscape legitimates the patriarchal surveillance of women's bodies.

Normative expectations do not only apply to gender differences. In her canonical work in disability studies, Garland-Thomson coined the term *normate* to describe an idealised "social figure through which people can represent themselves as definitive human beings" (1997, p. 8). She invokes one of the most durable Western parables of beauty when she claims that the position of the normate is so powerful "that people often try to fit its description the same way that Cinderella's stepsisters attempted to squeeze their feet into her glass slipper" (Garland-Thomson, 1997, p. 8). An essential feature of the concept is that the subject position of the normate is relational and contingent. The normate figure can be used to deepen understanding of how it mutually constitutes the "cultural other and the cultural self" along intersectional axes beyond "simple dichotomies of male / female, white / black, straight / gay, or able-bodied / disabled" (1997, p.

8). This implies that visibility afforded to bodies in one context may be very different in other contexts.

In many contexts, proximity to normative standards clearly affects which people are deemed worthy of representation. "Women appear," but not all women appear equally. Citing a content analysis of North American fitness and fashion magazines (Wasylkiw et al., 2009), Renee Engeln notes the over-representation of white (91.28%) and young (80.72% between the ages of 21 and 30) models (2017, p. 149). Engeln argues that this is indicative of the ways in which certain groups of women are denied visibility and *symbolically annihilated* from many mainstream media representations (2017, p. 149). In their 1976 study of violence on US television, George Gerbner and Larry Gross coined a term to describe the way that "representation in the fictional world signifies social existence; absence means *symbolic annihilation*" [emphasis added] (1976, p. 182). Symbolic annihilation can be used as Engeln does, to describe the extent to which the dominant media representations erase certain women. The cumulative effect of this erasure is a cultural milieu in which "stories do not happen to women who are not "beautiful"" (Wolf, 1991/2002, p. 61). Writing about what she characterises as the normalisation of the "porn star look," Dines bluntly observes: "the only alternative to looking fuckable is to be invisible" (2010, p. 105). As will be seen later in this section, being perceived as "fuckable" – in opposition to or addition to "beautiful" – can operate very differently along intersectional lines.

The relationship between normative standards and in/visibility is not static, nor straightforward. Normativity can confer a powerful invisibility while visible otherness may attract the disciplinary gaze. Sara Ahmed makes a useful observation about the normative power of whiteness, writing that "Bodies stand out when they are out of place" (2007, p. 159). Royce similarly argues that fat people exist within a paradox of "simultaneous invisibility and *hyper-visibility*," with bodies that draw both erasure in some spheres and overt prejudice in others [emphasis added] (2016, pp. 21–22). This paradox is evident in the "headless fatty" phenomenon, a term coined by Charlotte Cooper to describe the ubiquitous pictures of fat midsections — which usually look non-consensually taken – that accompany almost every news story about the "Global Obesity Epidemic." The

format is ostensibly meant to protect the identity of the subject, but in practice it reduces them to a symbol: "we are there but we have no voice, not even a mouth in a head, no brain, no thoughts or opinions" (Cooper, 2007). This framing of fat bodies as separate from an agentic self makes possible profoundly dehumanising imagery such as produced by a US "anti-obesity" campaign in which fatness is represented by grotesque disembodied "double-chins," "spare tires," and "love handles" (Hardy, 2021). Banet-Weiser also highlights how the visibility that comes with greater representation can be dangerous to marginalised people and communities. She argues the increased visibility of transgender people has come with heavy costs, such as the recent passage of discriminatory "bathroom bills" in the United States that prohibit transgender people access to public toilets that match their gender identity (Banet-Weiser, 2018, p. 26). Banet-Weiser maintains that ". . .subjects of difference, are punished and disciplined precisely *when* the spotlight falls on them" [emphasis in original] (2018, p. 25).

Returning to symbolic annihilation, it is important to note that it is not just about *who* is portrayed in the media, but also *how* they are portrayed. Writing about women's representations in television, magazines, and newspapers, Gaye Tuchman uses the concept to frame how women are under-represented (or omitted), condemned (e.g., working women consigned to unhappy spinsterhood) or trivialised (e.g., as "child-like adornments" of men) (1978, p. 8). Such omissions, condemnations, and trivialisations can be intersectionally compounded. Cinematic representations of women of East Asian descent often condemn and trivialise them as exotic, submissive objects of white male desire, e.g., "China Dolls" or "Lotus Blossom" (Hagedorn, 1997; Lee, 2013; Tajima, 1989). Similarly, Myra Macdonald claims that "the *harem* of the Western imaginary has left a legacy of mystique and sexual anticipation" that contributes to a Western obsession with the veil [emphasis in original] (2006, p. 11). Siraj's interviews with 30 Glaswegian Muslim women reveal that they have much more nuanced relationships with veiling in terms of purity, modesty, beauty – and even sexual violence (see also Section 2.07) – than popular veil-obsessed narratives allow (2011).

There is a significant body of Black feminist work that addresses the ubiquity of Black feminine bodies constructed as licentious and animalistic in media such as film, fashion magazines, and music videos (Hill Collins, 2004; hooks, 1998; Marshall, 1996; Wallace, 1990/2016). These hyper-sexual tropes are rooted in racist, misogynistic, colonialist dehumanisation, and yet even attempts at feminist resistance can reproduce them. Eddo-Lodge references white British recording artist Lily Allen's 2013 music video for *Hard out Here,* which was intended as an audiovisual polemic against the objectification of women in the male-dominated music industry. The video was widely criticised for the use of "scantily clad" black women "dancing in a parody of misogynistic hip-hop videos as she (Allen) sang about glass ceilings, objectification, and strongly implied that smart girls didn't need to strip to be successful" (Eddo-Lodge, 2018, p. 145). Allen was resisting her own subordinate status as an objectified white woman, but she failed to account for intersections of race, gender, and class. She shored up her subjecthood on the bodies of Black women. The hyper-visible, hyper-sexualised, Black Other takes on the focus of the gaze and is objectified in the service of white subjecthood.

The semiotic connotations applied to different bodies can affect what spaces which bodies are discursively permitted to occupy. Writing about the successful No More Page 3 campaign against The Sun tabloid newspaper's practice of featuring topless glamour models, Reni Eddo-Lodge points out that "black Page 3 girls rarely exist, presumably because some media didn't believe that black and brown women are beautiful enough to bother objectifying" (2018, p. 176). "Page 3 girls" embodied a specific, and highly marketable, Sun branding of wholesome, liberated, and jubilant sexuality that presaged the postfeminist trope of the sexually "up for it" young woman returned to in Section 3.05 (Bingham, 2014, pp. 192–195; Holland, 2019, pp. 182–184). Page 3 girls were represented as "aspirational figures," (Bingham, 2014, p. 193). On the other hand, Black bodies have long connoted danger and sinfulness in the Western imaginary (S. Hall, 1997/2013, p. 32; Marshall, 1996, p. 6). It speaks to the intersectional marginalisation faced by women of colour that Black and brown bodies cannot occupy even this unquestionably problematic position.

Recalling the discussion in Section 2.04 on the conflation of physical and moral unattractiveness in representations of working-class women, the understanding that bodies can be read as signifiers for socio-cultural values informed my social semiotic analyses. Liesbet van Zoonen observes that audiences of Anglo-American cinema and television know to read youth, blondeness, and white attire as signifiers of innocence, whereas "dark haired women tend to signify danger and sexuality" (1994, p. 74). Richard Dyer contends that the symbolic power of "hue" whiteness – i.e., the colour of milk, snow, and wedding gowns – is brought to bear on skin whiteness (1997). Hue whiteness is symbolically imbued with connotations of: "purity, spirituality, transcendence, cleanliness, virtue, simplicity, chastity" (1997, p. 72). In her analysis of those powerful cultural templates of feminine beauty – fairy tale princesses – Andrea Dworkin argues that innocence was one of their definitional hallmarks (as was, not incidentally, their passivity and victimisation) (1974, p. 42). It is also notable that fairy tale princesses are universally young – even Sleeping Beauty remains ageless during her long slumber. The princesses' youthfulness stands in sharp contrast to those most reviled of fairy tale characters, the ageing and aged wicked witches and stepmothers.

Writing about the neoclassical art historian, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Rosalind Galt identifies a conflation of whiteness, beauty, purity, and health in his work: "the beautiful is pure, colorless, not foreign or mixed and thus creates a healthy body" (2011, p. 241). This conflation of virtue, appearance, and health is also present in the pedestalling of thin-ness and able-bodiedness. Building on Kenneth Clark's work on the nude, Klein locates the contemporary hatred of fatness as part of a broader Judeo-Christian loathing of the body: a "hatred of every fleshy thing that prevents the soul from instantly achieving its spiritual destiny" (Clark, 1956; R. Klein, 2001, p. 27). In contemporary culture, fatness, especially in women, is "viewed as a deep character flaw, indicating laziness, gluttony, or lack of discipline" (Engeln, 2017, p. 97). Similarly, Garland-Thomson argues that in Western literature and film, the anomalous bodies of disabled characters, like monsters, their "fantastic cousins," serve as signs of "evil or sin" (1997, p. 36). Such tropes have scientific undertones as well as metaphysical and artistic ones. Juno Mac and Molly Smith write about the alleged gynaecological

abnormalities of marginalised women – including women in prostitution – in Victorian London; for one examiner, "the social and moral degradation they represented became legible in their physical bodies" (2020, p. 24). As suggested both by Garland-Thomson's disability work and by insights from fat studies (Hardy, 2021; Kent, 2001), an un-virtuous body can also be one that is medically pathologised as sick and deviant. A "good body" is a "healthy body." This construction of the body as a reflection of the soul is artificial, because, as Dyer points out: "No amount of looking at someone gives authoritative access to their inner being" (1997, p. 104). Nevertheless, if bodies can be semiotically read as signifiers of socio-cultural virtues, then it becomes necessary to interrogate how the choice of representational subject affects the range of meanings that can be produced via any one image.

This construction of a woman's body as a "window to the individual's interior life" is also a key feature of what Gill calls a *postfeminist sensibility* (2007, p. 256)." She illustrates this point by suggesting that the chain smoking and "excessive" eating of the literary and cinema character, Bridget Jones, were narrative signifiers of her "emotional breakdown" (Gill, 2007, p. 256). This postfeminist sensibility is a feature of the wider *postfeminist media culture* which broadly coincides with the period in which the materials in my corpus were produced (2007, pp. 254–271). Angela McRobbie locates 1990 as the beginning of a period of significant cultural re-alignment (2004, p. 256). She describes a "double-entanglement," in which the normalisation of progressive feminist ideas sits alongside an entrenchment of conservative values and a neoliberal shift in focus from structural power dynamics to individualised notions such as empowerment or choice (McRobbie, 2004, 2009). In Gill's exploration of the representational ramifications of this shift – i.e., the postfeminist media culture – she argues that there is no singular definition of what constitutes *postfeminism*, but that the aforementioned postfeminist sensibility infuses the representational culture (2007, pp. 249–271). The extent to which this sensibility persists in the contemporary mediascape is beyond my scope, but Gill was arguing that it was still an active and relevant cultural dynamic as recently as 2016 (2016). Gill lays out a series of "recurring and relatively stable" characteristics of a postfeminist

sensibility, which includes an "obsessional preoccupation with the body" that reinscribes the ancient trope of virtue made legible on the body (2007, p. 255).

Two of the other features of the postfeminist sensibility are an intensification of "self-surveillance, monitoring and discipline;" and a rhetorical "focus on individualism, choice and empowerment" that re-positions responsibility for structural inequalities on individual subjects (Gill, 2007, p. 255). The deficiencies of a rhetoric that focuses on individualised choice are evidenced in Bordo's analysis of late 1980s / 1990s Evian and Nike advertisements that implied that anyone can choose "any body" they want, as long as they are willing to work hard enough to achieve it. This conceit is prima facie nonsensical; as Bordo points out, it disregards the obvious practical and structural conditions that constrain choices. There is also a disconnect between the "empowering" advertising copy and the accompanying images of slim, normatively attractive people which communicate that not "every body will *do*" [emphasis in original] (Bordo, 1993b, p. 250). In her critique of the 2014 CoverGirl #GirlsCan advertisement, Sarah Banet-Weiser echoes Bordo by pointing out that it is only "*specific* girls who 'can,'" be empowered, i.e., normatively attractive girls (2017, p. 271).

The advertisements that Bordo critiques did little to challenge normative standards of beauty, unlike a more recent trend of media texts that attempt to redefine what is culturally considered to be beautiful. Regardless of any liberatory promise, these too can be steeped with a postfeminist sensibility that glosses over their contradictions. Unilever's Dove *Real Beauty* campaign is a high-profile project aimed at the redefinition of beauty standards. The campaign was launched in England in 2004 and subsequently spread to at least 35 countries in various iterations, generating a body of popular and academic critique (Murray, 2013, pp. 84–85). As mentioned previously, assertions of "real" beauty / women / men are always already problematic in their tendency to construct false essentialised binaries, rather than deal with complexities of human existence. The *Real Beauty* iterations have also been critiqued for: failing to challenge the foundational assumption that beauty should be a "desirable attribute" for women (Edwards, 2018, p. 192); patronisingly ignoring the coercive cultural power of beauty standards (Engeln, 2017, p.223); adding self-esteem and empowerment to

women and girl's already heavy self-regulatory burdens (Mendes et al., 2019, p. 9; Murray, 2013, p. 96); reinforcing a culture of objectification under the guise of social change (Heiss, 2011); and retaining a homogenised definition of real beauty that excludes disabled women (Heiss, 2011). Echoing that final point, a similar homogenisation can be discerned in the recent trend of blogs, documentaries, and photospreads featuring stylish older women. In the ageing "fashionista" imagery that Deborah Jermyn critiques, the women were generally still white, slim, and bore markers of a class privilege that makes maintaining style into older adulthood more attainable (2016, p. 575). She also points out that such imagery can extend the relentless demands of the beauty system to women who once may have found respite in the "invisibility" of older age (Jermyn, 2016, p. 580).

Jennifer Millard's research into the responses of 16 Canadian women to *Real Beauty* materials suggests that they were not cultural dupes and could decode *Real Beauty* messaging in sophisticated ways (2009, pp. 154–166). Nevertheless, there is no escaping the central contradiction of a multinational beauty corporation targeting the same beauty norms that sell so many of their products. Without radical economic grounding, demands for better or more diverse representation are vulnerable to co-option by corporate entities (N. Klein, 2000/2010, pp. 107–124). Similarly, the very strength of activist voices can be co-opted to transform political struggles into "marketable commodities" (Edwards, 2018, p. 28). Banet-Weiser links "corporate confidence campaigns" with the seemingly contradictory trend of beauty vlogging by pointing out that the goal of both is to "discipline girls and women to become better economic subjects" (2017, p. 280). It may be a superficially progressive brand identity, but if women could simply choose to embrace real beauty, they would have little need for Unilever / Dove products such as self-tanner and skin-firming creams.

Section 3.03   Representations of (male) violence

The complexities and contradictions of representations of men's violence against women are typologised in Helen Benedict's analysis of a series of famous US rape (and one murder) cases. While Benedict was specifically looking at press representations of rape, her insights can be used to contextualise representations of male violence against women and girls more generally. She details ten

common "rape myths" that influence the way newspaper reporters wrote about the cases (Benedict, 1993, pp. 14–17). These myths involve the nature of rape itself: (Myth 1) "rape is sex," and perpetrators are (2) "motivated by lust" (1993, p. 14). They also involve characterising assailants as: (3) "perverted or crazy," and/or (4) "usually black or lower class" (Benedict, 1993, pp. 14–15). There are victim-blaming assumptions that women (5) "provoke" or (6) "deserve" rape, and that only (7) "loose women are victimized" (Benedict, 1993, p. 16). The shame of rape is located with victims / survivors, rather than with the rapists. "A sexual attack (8) sullies the victim" (Benedict, 1993, p. 16), and (9) "rape is a punishment for past deeds" (Benedict, 1993, p. 17). Finally, women's intentions are called into question with accusations that (10) "women cry rape for revenge" (Benedict, 1993, p. 17).

In addition to these rape myths, Benedict identifies eight factors of the crime that will determine whether the public will cast a woman into one of two dominant roles: the innocent "virgin" who did not deserve to be attacked or the provocative "vamp" who invited her assault. Women are more likely to be cast into the role of vamp if she: (Factor 1) "knows her assailant," or (2) "no weapon is used;" if she is of the same (3) "race," (4) "class," or (5) "ethnic group as the assailant;" if she is (6) "young" or (7) "pretty," although attractive perpetrators will garner more sympathy; and if (8) "she in any way deviated from the traditional female sex role of being at home with family or children" (Benedict, 1993, p. 19).

Criminologist Nils Christie addresses similar themes with his influential *ideal victim* construct. He defines the "ideal victim" as a "*person or a category of individuals who – when hit by a crime – most readily are given complete and legitimate status of being a victim*" [emphasis in original] (Christie, 1986, p. 18). Christie provides the example of an ideal rape victim as a "young virgin on her way home from visiting sick relatives, severely beaten or threatened before she gives in" (Christie, 1986, p. 19). The use of extreme "extrinsic violence" by a stranger are also characteristics of assaults that are more likely to be treated as *real rape* by the US judicial system (Estrich, 1987, p. 4). Although the characteristics that mark people as "ideal" victims do not correlate with their chance of becoming "real" victims, ideal victims tend to be more frightened of

victimisation (Christie, 1986, p. 27). The discrepancy between perception and risk highlights how the threat and fear of violence can function as a regulating power that circumscribes women's behaviours.

Christie argues that "ideal victims" mutually constitute "ideal offenders" and the two are "interdependent" (1986, p. 25). The perceived blamelessness of the victim relies upon the perceived badness of the perpetrator. This presumed badness is readily apparent in the type of language that frequently features in tabloid headlines: "Sex Beast," "Evil Paedo," or "Monster." Campaigning groups from across the Anglosphere regularly raise concerns about the way that such monstering language inhibits our understanding of male violence (Marhia, 2008; Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Violence, 2013; Sutherland et al., 2016; Zero Tolerance, ca. 2011). "A man who is a "sex-beast" does not warrant further investigation for his evil is inherent and unexplainable; an ordinary man who commits a horrific crime is much more perplexing" (Zero Tolerance, ca. 2011, p. 17).

The history of framing violent men as damaged or deviant is explored in Deborah Cameron and Elizabeth Frazer's study of men who derive sexual gratification from the act of murder (1987). What is known about these "sexual murders" is largely gleaned from interviews with the killers themselves. The authors argue that it was the mid / late 19th century emergence of sexual murder "as a distinctive category" that provided these men with a template for a story they could tell about themselves (D. Cameron & Frazer, 1987, p. 22). The answer(s) to the authors' central question – why are sexual murderers exclusively male – is intimately connected to the wider representational culture in which masculine violence is either mythologised ("The Murderer as Hero") or pathologised ("The Murder as Deviant"). They argue that the Murderer as Hero trope is rooted in a literary tradition of popular and lurid true-crime accounts, in forms such as broadsides, tabloids, and monthlies (D. Cameron & Frazer, 1987, pp. 35–68). This mythologising "heroic" literary tradition sets the foundations for the later representations which characterise sexual murderers as "deviant." Both are framings which focus on the individual actor and situate him as outside the mainstream culture, rather than as a product of it.

Virgins. Vamps. Ideal victims. Real rapes. Deviant monsters. The role that entrenched myths and tropes play in media reporting and public perceptions vary from case to case, depending on the circumstances and identities of the victims / survivors or perpetrators. This flexibility is a feature, not a bug. These myths and tropes provide expedient rationales that can be relied upon to inhibit attempts to make visible the broader cultural context of patriarchal power and control. They shape the public conceptual space for understanding men's violence in problematic, unhelpful, and often counter-intuitive ways. In her analysis of rape humour and #MeToo memes, Maja Andreasen outlines a "rapeability logic" with accusers' credibility resting on, among other factors, her perceived sexual desirability (2020, pp. 106, 108). However, youth (6) and attractiveness (7) are two of Benedict's eight factors that may lead the press and the public to cast victims / survivors as "vamps" who are complicit in their own victimisation, i.e., they were asking for it (1993, p. 19). This highlights a contradiction of "rapeability logic;" a woman who presents as too sexualised or displays too much sexual agency may be considered fuckable but not rapeable. Her appearance is read as "de-facto consent," making it discursively impossible for her to be a credible victim of rape or sexual assault (Andreasen, 2020, p. 108).

The ideological utility of such myths and tropes may partially explain why there was little victim-blaming in media reports of the 2010 assault and attempted rape of a 76-year-old woman in Dunblane, Scotland (O'Hara, 2012, p. 255). An elderly woman in her home is a textbook ideal victim; the perpetrator, Ryan Liddell, was a stranger who entered her home and severely beat her. Furthermore, given our dominant cultural ideals of youth, beauty, and desirability, it is difficult to cast an elderly woman into the role of the vamp who provoked the assailant's lust. We might expect that such cases would pose an existential threat to the myths that rape is motivated by lust or that it is "invited" by victims / survivors, but the hold of rape mythology is strong. When an act of male violence sits outside our cultural expectations, rather than question one predominant rape myth, our cultural representations may invoke another, such as the "assailant is perverted or crazy" (Benedict, 1993, p. 15) or "sick and corrupt" (Bows & Westmarland, 2017, p. 5). Media outlets repeatedly and prominently highlighted the fact that the assailant, Ryan Liddell, was seriously injured in the 1996

Dunblane school massacre. Shannon O'Hara asserts that the "constant reference to the massacre suggested it played a role in Liddell's violent conduct" (2012, p. 251). By framing the perpetrator as damaged, media outlets can make sense of an ostensibly "senseless" crime while sidestepping any serious examination of the patriarchal causes and functions of male violence.

The supposed deviancy of violent men may also be perceived to be inscribed on their bodies. There is a persistent myth that there is an obvious look to violent men and that we "can tell a rapist just by looking at him" (Murphy, 2009, p. 122). Boyle writes that Harvey Weinstein and Jimmy Savile, both normatively unattractive perpetrators, are aesthetically othered in a way that "prettier boys" like Johnny Depp have not been (2019, pp. 117–118). Weinstein's fat body drew special attention and ridicule, which again reveals the way that external fat bodies are read as indicative of internal depravity. Attractive men draw more of what Kate Manne terms *himpathy*, or the pervasive cultural tendency to extend more empathy to male perpetrators than their female victims / survivors (Manne, 2019, p. 197). She unpicks the sympathetic narratives and lenient sentencing directed towards Brock Turner after he sexually assaulted an unconscious woman, Chanel Miller, on the Stanford University campus in 2016. Manne's analysis focuses not on Turner's physical attractiveness necessarily, but on his "golden boy" image of a promising young male athlete at a prestigious university. The strand of himpathic logic working in that case was that because Turner was a "golden boy," he could not possibly be a rapist (Manne, 2019, pp. 196–205). Frustratingly little seems to have changed in the 30 years since the lurid and often himpathic media coverage when young "preppy" Robert Chambers murdered Jennifer Levin in New York City (Benedict, 1993, pp. 147–188).

An especially pernicious trope that imagines that mythologised deviancy is made legible on masculine bodies is that of the *dangerous dark man*. Men of colour obviously also commit violence against women, but representations of such violence have long been infected by racism. Paralleling the hyper-sexualisation of women of African descent, men who are perceived as racialised Others are subject to stereotypes about their hyper-sexual potency and menace. Many writers have commented on both the hyper-sexualised nature of such

representations, as well as the over-representation of men of colour as sexual predators who pose an inordinate threat to the safety of women, and especially white women (Benedict, 1993; Crenshaw, 1991; Dines, 2010; Eddo-Lodge, 2018; Hill Collins, 2004; Mendes, 2015, p. 29; Tufail, 2015). For example, Dines claims that a popular aesthetic and narrative trope of hard-core "gonzo" pornography is that of huge black penises violently violating young, beautiful, white feminine bodies, with little concern about the humanity of any of the participants (2010, pp. 135–140). Far from being "harmless" sexual titillation, perpetuating this trope can be extremely dangerous for men of colour. In places like India, Jamaica, and Australia, the dangerous dark man trope was used to maintain colonial racial hierarchies (Phipps, 2021, p. 6). Australian Aboriginal men have been popularly constructed as exceptionally violent, thus legitimating state surveillance and discipline (Igreja, 2018, p. 25). The US history of allegations of rape being weaponised against Black men is so bloody that Benedict writes that "the history of sex crime coverage in this country. . . is inseparable from the history of lynching" (1993, p. 26). Estrich makes a similar point about the historical imbrications of racism, sexism, and rape (1987, p. 6). In the United Kingdom, contemporary right-wing tabloids whip up frenzies about "Asian sex gangs" (Eddo-Lodge, 2018, p. 175) or "Muslim grooming gangs" (Tufail, 2015).

The rhetorical efficacy of the dangerous dark men trope relies on a complementary construction of white womanhood as inherently delicate and in need of protection – this construction can be used by powerful white men in the "service of domination and control" (Phipps, 2021, p. 10). Dangerous dark or foreign men are expedient targets for public outcry; it is presumed in everyone's interest to "protect females against foreign intruders" and children against "deviant foreign monsters" (Christie, 1986, p. 20). "Everyone" here is not, of course, equally "everyone," but rather those who are most invested in maintaining a social order in which the power of certain identity markers, such as male-ness and whiteness, remains invisible. While our (white women's) relatively privileged status in this social order is conditional and contingent, Alison Phipps argues that white women can also be complicit in reinforcing the trope of white feminine delicacy, e.g., through performative emotional fragility, or "white lady tears," deployed to avoid accountability when challenged by women of colour (2021, pp. 3–5). Finally,

as touched upon in the previous chapter with reference to Crenshaw's difficulties gathering statistics about African American women and domestic abuse (Section 2.04), the dangerous dark man trope can exclude women of colour from important conversations about gendered and racialised violence. In her analysis of race and gender specific magazines, Lykke found that the sexual victimisation of Black women was given far less attention than the sexual victimisation of white women or the racial trauma experienced by Black men (2016, pp. 251–252). The intersectional specificities of how violence is experienced by women of colour is obscured and their identities are relegated "to a location that resists telling" (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1242).

Positioning violent men as monsters outside normative social structures undermines our ability to interrogate how their social locations are implicated in their behaviour. Even those with feminist outlooks can subtly monster perpetrators. Carol Harrington has identified a significant upward trend in use of the term *toxic masculinity* since 2016 in popular and academic writing around male "violence, domination, aggression, misogyny, and homophobia" (2021, p. 349). In their brief essay about the #MasculinitySoFragile hashtag, Banet-Weiser and Kate M. Miltner describe toxic masculinity as a construct of "(heterosexual) masculinity that is threatened by anything associated with femininity (whether that is pink yogurt or emotions)" (2016, p. 171). While toxic masculinity can "summon a recognizable character type," Harrington usefully cautions that the term is vaguely defined, under-theorised, and can be disproportionately assigned to men who are marginalised by race or class (2021, pp. 347,350). Singling out *toxic* expressions of masculinity also creates a moralistic dichotomy between toxic and healthy versions of masculinity, leaving untroubled the ways in which the construct(s) of masculinity itself is implicated in maintaining gender hierarchies. A more helpful analytical concept may be that of the influential, but also contested, social scientific understanding of *hegemonic masculinity*, which dates from the early 1980s (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 830). In their revisitation of the concept in 2005, R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt describe hegemonic masculinity as the "patterns of practice" that "embodied the currently most honored way of being a man" (2005, p. 832).

As with the discussion about what it means to be a woman in Section 2.04, my concern here is not to precisely define a male subject – indeed, Connell and Messerschmidt warn against reifying and essentialising. Rather, I want to acknowledge how hegemonic ideals and patterns of behaviour – both "good" and "bad" – generate templates of what it means to be a man in any given context, but particularly around my central themes of appearance and violence. As with all normative ideals, hegemonic masculinity establishes hierarchies – in relation to other men, as well as to women who are subordinate to men. Idealised notions of masculinity are one of many sociocultural "implements" that Daniela Magaraggia and Sveva Cherubini argue facilitate men's violence against women. These implements also include compulsory heterosexuality; gender inequality; the default male norm (see also Section 3.02); and the structural inferiority of the feminine which is regularly expressed through popular representations of women and their bodies (Magaraggia & Cherubini, 2017, pp. 442–444).

Women's structural inferiority is also revealed via *rape culture*. In her analysis of the global SlutWalk movement against sexual violence, Kaitlynn Mendes describes our embedded rape culture as one in which "sexual violence surrounds us – through images, advertisements, jokes, language and laws" (2015, p. 9). This immersive misogyny is a feature of a culture in which, far from being the unexplainable acts of Others, male violence is normalised and naturalised. Feminists contend male violence is situated within a Western culture in which "aggression is a culturally valued and accepted facet of masculinity" (Boyle, 2005, p. xiii). The heroic templates for stories about men are very often violent and represented in a way that obscures the links between male violence and the constructs of masculinity. Boyle remarks on the media tendency to highlight when a killer is a woman, but not when he is a man, and suggests that by naming the gender of violent men – e.g., a "male killer" – we can "denaturalise male violence" (2018, p. 12).

Where masculine aggression is normalised, so is feminine victimisation. O. Brooks interviewed young, primarily white, heterosexual women about "safety advice" campaigns aimed at helping them to avoid sexual violence in bars and clubs (2018). Some participants expressed resentment of the unfair expectation

that women bore the responsibility to keep themselves safe from men's behaviour, but others had naturalised "essentialist discourses of male sexuality" which position men as predators who just cannot help themselves (O. Brooks, 2018, p. 279). The SlutWalk movement itself was sparked in 2011 in response to a Canadian police officer, Michael Sanguinetti, telling university students: "I've been told I'm not supposed to say this – however, women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimised" (Pilkington, 2011). Like the monstering of sex beasts or dark Others, the re-positioning of the responsibility of men's behaviour onto women serves a critical rhetorical purpose: to shift the focus away from the patriarchal norms that legitimise men's violence against women.

Section 3.04   *Where beauty meets violence*

Feminist organisations have been pointing out for decades that women of all ages, race, sexuality, ability, class, size, and appearance experience male violence. Hannah Bows and Westmarland, whose work focuses on older women's experience of male violence, explicitly mention a Zero Tolerance's 1992 "From 3 to 93" image (Figure 5.2), which aimed at the misconception that rape only happened to young, normatively "attractive" women (2017, p. 3). However, as many writers have pointed out, a woman's appearance can influence whether her experience of male violence is made visible (Benedict, 1993, p. 8; Brownmiller, 1975/1993, pp. 336–341; Ingala Smith, 2018, pp. 163–164; Lykke, 2016, p. 247; Stillman, 2007). Writing about journalistic portrayals more generally, Gill observes, it can be "hard to avoid the conclusion that for much of the press a woman's worth is based entirely upon her sexual attractiveness" (2007, p. 116). Victims who are "white, good-looking and wealthy" are part of a "formula that sells papers" (Benedict, 1993, p. 8). In this constricted representational landscape, male violence may seem to be something that happens mostly to beautiful women. Such erasures also reinforce cultural hierarchies about which women have value. In her critique of the "missing white girl syndrome," Stillman argues that the disproportionate media representation and social resources directed towards more privileged and normatively attractive victims naturalises the victimisation and disposability of others (2007, p. 491).

Ingala Smith's femicide census makes visible stories of many (cisgender) women whose murders may otherwise slip from public notice. As part of the 2014 census, Ingala Smith analysed the press coverage of the murders by men of 14 UK women and girls during a six-week period (2018, pp. 163–164). Of those 14 women and girls, only three cases received significant media attention: Alice Gross (aged 14), Hannah Witheridge (aged 23), and Palmira Silva (aged 82). Ingala Smith points to Gross's and Witheridge's youth, white-ness, and prettiness as some of the key factors that attracted media attention to them as "perfect victims" (2018, pp. 163–164). Not incidentally, attractive victims also "present an opportunity for good pictures" – pictures which then may reinforce stereotypes about what worthy victims look like (Gekoski et al., 2012, p. 1218).

The disproportionate media attention given to the case of 82-year-old Silva is a reminder that representational in/visibility is a more complex dynamic than simple visible beauty versus invisible un-beauty. Another ideal victim archetype Christie presents is a "little old lady," with whom Silva shares five important attributes (1986, pp. 18–19). Silva was (1) "weak" and old (Christie, 1986, p. 19). She was behaving (2) respectably in her own back garden (3) "where she could not possibly be blamed for being" (Christie, 1986, p. 19). Her offender was (4) "big and bad" and had no significant (5) "personal relationship to her" (Christie, 1986, p. 19). Those last two points (4,5) were also highlighted by Ingala Smith as other factors that contributed to the newsworthiness of all three cases. Gross, Witheridge, and Silva were all murdered by men who were perceived as foreign "Others" in some way; the manner of Silva's death, beheading, played into contemporary anxieties about terrorism. All three were murders by strangers or acquaintances, rather than by the far more prosaic, and less newsworthy, murderers of women: intimate partners or family members (Ingala Smith, 2018, pp. 163–164).

Another manifestation of the instability of the in/visibility dynamic is that conforming too well to beauty standards can render a victimised woman hyper-visible to the gaze in a way that is deeply objectifying and dehumanising. Building on Berger's distinction between nudity (which connotes object-ness) and naked-ness (which connotes subject-ness), Roumen Dimitrov describes the

disempowerment and silencing that can accompany hyper-visibility: *"more visibility for the object of representation makes it only more invisible as a subject of representation"* [emphasis in original] (Berger et al., 1972/1977, p. 54; Dimitrov, 2017, p. 76). Returning to *The Sun,* consider the tabloid's infamous 2013 cover regarding the murder of South African model Reeva Steenkamp by her boyfriend, Paralympian Oscar Pistorious. A full-page photo of the slender, blonde, bikini-clad Steenkamp was juxtaposed against text luridly describing her murder (Figure 3.1) (Mirkinson, 2013/2017). The cover "won" Zero Tolerance's inaugural *Write to End Violence Against Women* Wooden Spoon Award by, in part, implying that Steenkamp's murder was "only tragic because she was sexy" (Kemp, 2013).[19] Steenkamp's humanity was crushed under the weight of the tabloid's sexual objectification.

Figure 3.1: The Sun cover of Reeva Steenkamp, 15 February 2013 [20]

The *Sun* cover of Steenkamp is a disturbing example of the objectifying *beautiful brutalised / dead woman* trope which aestheticises or eroticises the abuse or premature death of a beautiful woman. US poet Edgar Allen Poe famously wrote in the mid-19th century that the death of a beautiful woman (by violence or disease) is "unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world" (1846/2017). Many writers have specifically commented on the way that "women are portrayed as an object for violence" (Schroeder & Borgerson, 1998, p. 180), or as expressing "a kind of aesthetic fascination with the macabre" (Magaraggia & Cherubini, 2017, p. 446). Brownmiller details a "myth of glamorous destruction" in reporting of women's untimely deaths in New York tabloids (1975/1993, p. 341). Wolf writes about the "beauty sadomasochism" inherent in advertising photo spreads that depict brutalised women (1991/2002, p. 133), and Susan Faludi notes that the "beaten, bound, or body-bagged woman became a staple of late-'80s fashion ads and editorial photo layouts" (1991/2006, p. 205). Even imagery that is constructed to oppose men's violence against women may aestheticise violence. Stillman argues that artistic responses to femicide in Mexico such as a sculpture of "a murdered Mexican woman with her undergarments pulled down around her legs – veer dangerously close to eroticising violence and indulging voyeurism rather than resisting it" (2007, p. 496).

Elisabeth Bronfen's extensive theorisation of the idea of the beautiful dead woman suggests that it is so common in our Western cultural productions, such as art, film, and literature, that it inevitably tells us something about the positionality of women within that culture (1992, p. xi). She muses on whether every representation of death is inherently violent, told as it is from the safe position of spectator (Bronfen, 1992, pp. 39–56). Bronfen's observations echo a similar one that Susanne Kappeler made about pornography. Kappeler argues that the harm done by the sexual objectification is not primarily about the social attitudes or bad behaviours the content may instigate. Rather, the act of watching and objectifying women is itself the bad behaviour (Kappeler, 1986, pp. 49–62). There is much feminist debate about whether pornography should be conceptualised as intrinsically violent, even before taking into account any industry-associated extrinsic violence (Boyle, 2014, p. 216; 2019, p. 28). Notably, pornography is another popular genre where sexual objectification often meets sexual violence. A

recent content analysis of three mainstream pornographic websites suggests the genre regularly depicts and normalises coercive, deceptive, non-consensual, and criminal acts (Vera-Gray et al., 2021, p. 1244).

Whether it is in mainstream or pornographic media, the aestheticisation and eroticisation of men's violence against women is deeply troubling. As Lisa M. Cuklanz argues, mass media representations of women and girls as "objects to be observed, handled, used, abused, and even discarded" can reinforce dehumanising cultural attitudes that sustain gendered violence (2014, p. 32). However, while there is research aimed at exposing real world links between media objectification and violent attitudes (Wright & Tokunaga, 2016), such links are incredibly difficult to prove (Cuklanz, 2014, p. 33). David Gauntlett is highly dubious of the utility of so-called "media effects" studies, and I share his (and Cuklanz's) perspective on this, if not his certitude (2008, pp. 32–37). My work makes no claims around the causality of the campaigns; rather, I am interested in, as Dines suggests, interrogating "the cumulative effect of the subtextual themes found in the system of images, which together create a particular way of looking at the world" (2010, p. 81-82). The next section positions the work of this thesis within disciplinary and methodologically diverse literature that explores how individuals, groups, and organisations can resist hegemonic power in pursuit of social change.

Section 3.05   *Power and resistance: Situating this work*

Section 2.03 discussed how this work is driven by an interest in the visual imagery of counter-hegemonic campaigns. This focus on the visual aspects attends to a gap identified by Goehring et al. regarding research of domestic abuse campaigns: "few studies have focused on the visual elements of texts seeking to inform the public about domestic violence" (2017, p. 442). Their critique of a Hungarian Amnesty International campaign begins to address this gap (Goehring et al., 2017), as does Magaraggia and Cherubini's observations on how Italian campaigning and popular press imagery reproduces social norms that reinforce men's violence against women (2017). Michael Murphy uses a "lens of feminist visual culture studies" to address what he suggests is a similar lack of visual analyses of anti-rape campaigns aimed at men (2009, pp. 113,118).

Nandita Dogra's observation about the use of images by international development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is useful here: "NGOs, like other socio-cultural institutions of representations, produce, depict, validate and even institutionalise certain discourses and ideologies often reflected in and through the images they use" (2007, pp. 168–169). This thesis aims to make visible the overt and covert "discourses and ideologies" about male violence being reflected "in and through the images" used by Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid. Focusing on the visual also helps to keep in view the cohering concepts of surveillance and in/visibility, as both connote notions of watching and being seen.

Campaigns may be aimed at resisting male violence, but still visually and narratively reinforce structures of surveillance and in/visibility that help perpetuate that violence. Magaraggia and Cherubini found multiple campaigns either erased men as the agents of violence or portray violent men as monsters (2017). Goehring et al. similarly critique the Hungarian Amnesty International campaign for featuring "abusive furniture" as metonyms for abusive men, while also pointing out this visual strategy "avoids stereotypical representations of the abuser as raced, classed, and even gendered" (2017, p. 453). Given the cultural over-representation of some men as perpetrators and the under-representation of some women as victims / survivors, this approach may have some merit. Murphy argues that representations of racially diverse perpetrators and victims / survivors in rape prevention campaigns that do not account for the intersections of "race and sexual violence" are "potentially counter-productive, even dangerous" (2009, p. 124). Campaigns directly targeting men and male spaces do exist (Carline et al., 2018; Igreja, 2018; Murphy, 2009). The deliberate inclusion of men can also be problematic. Men are very present in the *My Strength is Not for Hurting* campaign that Murphy critiques, but the campaign materials, with their textual and visual focus on male "strength," work to "reinscribe heterosexual masculinity within a very familiar and limiting frame" (2009, p. 127). Michael Salter explores similar themes with his problematising of the "real man" trope in anti-violence against women campaigns (2016).

While my focus is on visual meaning production, my social semiotic analysis is also informed by work that attempts to ascertain campaign effects and/or audience reception through methods such as focus groups, surveys, or even – as with Igreja's study of responses to campaign imagery in public places – through ethnographic observation (O. Brooks, 2018; Carline et al., 2018; Gadd et al., 2014; Igreja, 2018; Stanley et al., 2017). As with the media effects studies discussed in the previous section (Section 3.04), this work carries a note of caution about the ability to make claims around long-term campaign efficacy. Fessman argues that strategic communications campaigns aimed at behavioural change have an extra responsibility to undertake good research as such campaigns are at heightened risk to cause harm to the public (2016, pp. 17–18). He points to the example of a high-profile youth drug education programme in the United States (D.A.R.E.) in which participants were *more likely* to go on to use drugs (Fessmann, 2016, p. 18). In the men's violence against women field, however, it is widely acknowledged that an individual intervention's long-term effect on attitudes and behaviour is extremely difficult to evaluate (Carline et al., 2018, p. 306). Citing constrained resources as a potential cause, Greenan identifies a "lack of evaluative research" as a recurring theme in the Scottish violence against women interventions that she looked at (2005, p. 84). There is likewise little existing evidence for the long-term efficacy of media campaigns to combat domestic abuse (Gadd et al., 2014, p. 7; Stanley et al., 2017, p. 648). Similarly, Henry and Powell refer to a paucity of evidence for long-term social change as an "unresolved issue" of *primary prevention* approaches to stopping sexual violence (2014, p. 10). Primary prevention of men's violence against women and children targets the "attitudes, values and structures that sustain inequality and men's violence against women and children" (Lombard & Whiting, 2018, p. 36). Different sources differently locate the lines between *primary*, *secondary*, and *tertiary* prevention, but there is consensus that primary prevention occurs before violence happens (e.g., through public campaigns and education programmes) (VicHealth, 2007, pp. 8–9; Zero Tolerance, 2019b). Secondary prevention is usually early interventions in high-risk circumstances and tertiary prevention might be aimed towards stopping violence from reoccurring (e.g., survivor support or perpetrator programmes). As a criterion for my corpus texts is

that they target social attitudes, these materials fall into the primary prevention category.

In fact, Zero Tolerance today describes itself as "Scotland's national expert on the primary prevention of VAW[21]" (Zero Tolerance SCIO, 2018, p. 3). For that organisation's early campaigns, there is a rich trove of published and unpublished materials that provided background knowledge of the organisational history and informed the semiotic textual analysis. Some material that most heavily informed my understanding of the context and mission of the early campaigns comes from the early campaigners themselves (Gillan, 1999/2015; Gillan & Samson, 2000) – or from those closely affiliated with the campaign, such as Katie Cosgrove who co-ordinated Zero Tolerance's delivery to the Strathclyde Regional Council (Cosgrove, 1996). Jenny Kitzinger, then working with the Glasgow University Media Group, wrote widely about focus groups and street surveys that gauged public reactions to the campaign; some of this work is publicly available (1994, 2004, 2006) and some is in archival documents (1995, Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993, 1994). There are also early reports detailing focus group responses from when the Strathclyde Regional Council adopted the Zero Tolerance campaign; these address the representational implications of the campaign for disabled women (*We're No Exception*, 1995) and rural women (Cosgrove & Forman, 1995). Another report on the Strathclyde Zero Tolerance campaign addresses the difficulties of representing race and class without reinforcing racist or classist stereotypes (Kitzinger, 1995); similar concerns were raised by focus groups in response to the original Zero Tolerance campaign (Kitzinger, 2004, pp. 170–172). The observations around disability and race of these early focus groups particularly enriched the textual analyses of Zero Tolerance materials in Section 5.05.

The ability for individual campaigns to effect long-term attitudinal or behavioural change may be difficult to evidence, but a repeated theme in the literature is that the original Zero Tolerance campaign was widely perceived as

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[21] VAW is a frequently used abbreviation for violence against women.

successful and ground-breaking. Keith Pringle, who spoke at a 1994 Zero Tolerance event, points to Glasgow University research[22] to argue that the campaign had a "considerable impact in making people, of both genders, more aware of the size and nature of the problem" (1995, p. 166). Mackay similarly claims that there are multiple aspects in which this "radical but genuinely popular initiative" was a success, including: public and political engagement; statutory and voluntary support; and design awards (1996, p. 206). As will be returned to in the Zero Tolerance chapter, the campaign was never only about attitudinal change and Mackay argues that Zero Tolerance had a profound effect on the political and policy landscape in Scotland (1996, 2001). The "Zero Tolerance effect" influenced policy and practice in local authorities, public health, and the new Scottish Parliament (Gillan & Samson, 2000, p. 348). The campaign's influence was also geographically wide-reaching. By 1996, Zero Tolerance had spread from Edinburgh to at least 23 other UK local authorities or agencies and beyond to places such as South Australia, South Africa, and New York City (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 1996, p. Appendix 1). The reach of the early Zero Tolerance work is also evidenced by the fact that it is regularly mentioned in wide-ranging reviews that collate and evaluate international campaigns around violence against women. These include reviews produced by: Scottish feminist organisations (Boyle & Macleod, 2005, p. 3); an Australian health promotion agency (R. J. Donovan & Vlais, 2005, pp. 74–79); the Council of Europe (Heisecke, 2014, pp. 22–25); and the United Nations (Drezin, 2001, pp. iv, 62–63; Raab & Rocha, 2011, pp. 8, 15, 79).

The early campaigners marshalled the support of some popular press (West, 1992), while also drawing heavy criticisms from other press commentators (Steiner & Rigby, 1994; G. Warner, 1994). The campaign's media backlash is addressed in Section 5.06 of the Zero Tolerance chapter. Unsurprisingly, the campaign attracted support and praise from feminist periodicals such as *Harpies & Quines* (Zero Tolerance, 1993) and *Trouble & Strife* (Foley, 1993). In the cover

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[22] Although Pringle does not explicitly name the source, this most likely refers to Kitzinger and Hunt, 1993.

story of the Winter 1993 edition of *Trouble & Strife*, Roz Foley recounts returning to Scotland after having left to escape a violent ex-boyfriend. She encountered one of the original Zero Tolerance posters in an Edinburgh pub, writing that it was "difficult to describe how empowering just seeing that poster was" (Foley, 1993, p.16). It was not the content of the campaign that most excited Foley, as these messages were long familiar to feminists. Foley attributed her excitement to the social context of those messages and "the fact that they were being said so loudly, so publicly and that they seemed to have achieved wide public support" (1993, p.16). The socio-cultural significance of the original Zero Tolerance campaign makes it an elegant starting point for a corpus of Scottish feminist campaigns addressing men's violence against women and children.

There is a similar, but smaller, body of work that informed my contextual understanding of Rape Crisis Scotland's *This is Not an Invitation to Rape Me* campaign. My visual analyses were complemented by insights from internal campaign evaluations (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, Progressive, 2009). The campaign has also been subject to or received: academic analysis (Loney-Howes, 2015); positive mention (O. Brooks, 2018; Rentschler, 2015)*;* and citation in international reviews (Raab & Rocha, 2011). As will be further explained in Section 6.04 of the Rape Crisis Chapter, the Scottish *This is Not an Invitation to Rape Me* campaign was inspired by a US campaign of the same name. My analysis drew invaluable insights from Sarah Projansky's comments on the original US campaign in her monograph, *Watching Rape* (2001, pp. 218–219)*.* She argues that the campaign powerfully appropriates aspects of media culture to interrogate the ways that same culture perpetuates rape myths. She also problematises aspects of the campaign, especially in relation to race. Finally, a European Women's Lobby review of "successful" campaigns to end violence against women provides a link to an artefact from another Rape Crisis Scotland campaign – the *Not Ever* television advertisement – but it does not provide commentary (European Women's Lobby, 2014).

I did not find a similar body of campaign analysis for Scottish Women's Aid; however, there is an extensive and well-catalogued Scottish Women's Aid collection at Glasgow Women's Library, as a part of the two-year (2015 to 2017)

40th anniversary project, *Speaking Out: Recalling Women's Aid in Scotland*[23] (Orr et al., 2018). The outputs of this project also include a website, a video, archival records, a publication, learning resources, and an exhibition. The *Speaking Out* publication (Orr et al., 2018) was invaluable for fleshing out the context of the Scottish women's sector in Section 1.02, as were other historical accounts of Scottish women's feminist activism (Breitenbach, 1990; Browne, 2014; Henderson & Mackay, 1990; Maitland, 2009).

An important theme that emerges from the historical literature is that professional activist organisations such as Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid have a fluctuating relationship with power. While they agitate upwards for radical change to dominant norms and structures, they also function at times as privileged actors with special access to social, economic, or political resources. For example, the original Zero Tolerance campaign(s) enjoyed supportive relationships with journalists (Gillan & Samson, 2000, p. 345) and prominent politicians, such as then Labour MP (later Labour MSP) Malcolm Chisholm ('I Could Not Talk', 1997). Such cultural capital can then be leveraged to (re)negotiate hegemonic narratives around male violence but the ability to set the agenda is its own form of power that may come at a cost. Writing about professional communication in humanitarian non-profit organisations (NPOs), Jairo Lugo-Ocando and Manuel Hernández-Toro argue that the "domestication" and "bureacratisation" of NPOs undermines their "transformative potential," by implicating them in neoliberal structures of power (2015, p. 229). There are profound ethical and ideological tensions when organisations work within the system while also trying to transform it. There are likewise significant semiotic implications of being perceived as outwith dominant power structures, e.g., Section 6.03 of the Rape Crisis Scotland chapter explores the circumstances in which low budget campaigning materials can be more semiotically rich than costlier and more highly polished items.

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[23] Partners for this Heritage Lottery Funded project include Glasgow Women's Library, The University of Glasgow Centre for Gender History, and Women's History Scotland (Orr et al., 2018, p. 9).

Power dynamics can also shift across different means of communication. The campaigning materials in the corpus were produced during a period (1992 to 2019) which saw radical changes in the communication tools available to feminist campaigners, as the world embraced digital technologies. Accordingly, the materials in my corpus are incredibly diverse, ranging from black and white text-only postcards (e.g., Figure 5.3) to interactive websites (e.g., Figure 6.16). As introduced in Section 2.03, I attempt to foreground how distribution methods may have factored into the design and aesthetics of a campaign, while remaining attentive to the ways new digital tools have redistributed traditional resources of communicative power. Many feminists have embraced "digitally mediated feminist action," which may also be referred to as #activism (Harvey, 2020, pp. 128–131) or *cyberactivism* (Mendes, 2015, pp. 159–186). There is a rapidly growing body of work looking at feminist digital activism and campaigning through a mix of quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis (Brantner et al., 2020; Mendes et al., 2019; PettyJohn et al., 2019; Subramanian & Weare, 2020). Such analysis has gained even more relevance since the explosion of #MeToo[24] into the public consciousness in 2017 (Andreasen, 2020; Boyle & Rathnayake, 2019; De Benedictis et al., 2019; Mendes et al., 2018, 2019; PettyJohn et al., 2019).

The accessibility and interactivity of digital technology allows for the development of *networked counterpublics,* or online spaces where feminist activists can virtually organise and resist patriarchal imperatives (Mendes, 2015, pp. 159–186). Although not specifically about digital media, relevant here is Alenka Jelen's argument for a participatory understanding of public engagement that moves beyond a traditional (public relations) disciplinary focus on a one-way model (2017). The opportunities for publics to speak back to organisations generates both opportunities and hazards. Edwards et al.'s Rape Crisis England and Wales (RCEW) case study explores how effective social media management can create opportunities for networked counterpublics, but can take an onerous amount of resources and open the organisation to reputational risk (2020).

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[24] Although #MeToo went viral in 2017, the grassroots "me too" Movement was founded by activist Tarana Burke in 2006 (*Get to Know Us | History & Inception*, n.d.).

Recalling the discussion in Section 3.02 around the hazards of visibility, it cannot be assumed that greater virtual visibility for feminist messaging is an unalloyed good. The greater visibility of feminist discourse post #MeToo has generated both optimism and caution about the transformative potential of the increased media visibility of critiques of sexual violence (Boyle, 2019; Gill & Orgad, 2018). Writing before #MeToo, Gill was already problematising the increased popularisation, celebritisation, and visibility of feminism to argue that feminism is often branded as little more than an unthreatening "cheer word" that does not challenge structural power (Gill, 2016, p. 619).

The hindering of structural critique is not the only danger of virtual visibility. As touched upon in the theoretical framework in Section 2.07, opportunities afforded to women by social media can also render them more visible to surveillance, misogynistic abuse, violent threats, and patriarchal control (Megarry, 2018; Mendes, 2015, pp. 172–181). This "dark side" of virtual visibility is evidenced by the racist and misogynistic online harassment experienced by Leslie Jones, a female African American actor who starred in the 2016 all-female Ghostbusters reboot (Amnesty International, 2018, p. 50; Harvey, 2020, pp. 82–83). That Jones experienced such vitriol is sadly no great surprise. A 2018 Amnesty International report found that online spaces can be dangerously toxic for women (Amnesty International, 2018).

The analysis chapters draw from other research around digital activism and digital harms to contextualise and theorise campaigns that specifically addressed technologically facilitated abuse (e.g., Section 5.05, Section 7.04). Digital technologies collapse boundaries between private and public spheres. Women are targeted for being visible, and then can have visibility forced upon them through the non-consensual sharing of intimate photographs, a form of image-based sexual abuse (McGlynn et al., 2017). Julia Zauner's case study of materials aimed at addressing image-based sexual abuse amongst young people suggests the need for a rethink of educational approaches to this growing problem, as existing approaches may reinforce heteronormative and victim-blaming narratives (2021).

Jessica Megarry is interested in the effect that (digital) male surveillance has on online feminist activism (2018). She expresses scepticism about the social media *Free the Nipple* campaign which challenges the censorship of women's breasts. According to Megarry, the campaign actively draws on the "language of pornography" and exhorts women to post topless pictures on social media (2018, p. 1079). I share Megarry's suspicion that the popularity of *Free the Nipple* derives not from a serious structural challenge, but "from its appeal to the male gaze," dressed up in the "rhetoric of post-feminist, neoliberal freedom" (2018, p. 1080).

The Gordian knot of feminine beauty norms and male violence inevitably complicates the possibilities of co-opting the semiotic resources of a representational landscape so heavily invested in making women's bodies visible primarily as objects to be watched. In a discussion of the postfeminist double entanglement, McRobbie provides examples of the re-oriented representational terrain of the 1990s: that of advertisements which "ironically" nod to and co-opt feminist critiques while simultaneously reproducing the same "sexy" (or sexist) imagery that traditionally would be subject to such critiques (2004, pp. 258–259). Gill identifies a post-feminist shift in dominant feminine representation from "sex object to desiring sexual subject" (Gill, 2007, pp. 255, 258–259). She points to the emergence of a new media trope of a "sexually autonomous heterosexual young woman who plays with her sexual power and is forever 'up for it'" (Gill, 2007, p. 258). Writing around the same time, Ariel Levy polemically argues that there is a postfeminist "raunch culture," in which young women enthusiastically embrace self-objectifying behaviours and aesthetics commonly associated with pornography (2006).

A notable feature of Gill's post-feminist "up for it" woman, is that she overwhelmingly tends to be "young, slim and beautiful" and wants to have sex with men (or "perform" sexually with other women for the gratification of men) (2007, p. 259). This postfeminist phenomenon is "about endlessly reiterating one particular – and particularly commercial – shorthand for sexiness" (Levy, 2006, p. 30). The "up for it" woman may or may not be liberated sexually, but she is certainly not liberated from oppressive beauty norms. Therefore, another problematic aspect with sexualised campaigns like *Free the Nipple* is that the representational system

of beauty norms inevitably creates aesthetic hierarchies about which women's nipples are worthy of the "freedom" of being visible.

One area in which aesthetic hierarchies are laid bare is in anti-trafficking campaigns. Both mainstream media representations and specialist "awareness" campaigns tend to focus on the sex trade to the exclusion of other forms of trafficking, creating a misleading picture of both the scale and attributes of the problem (Andrijasevic, 2007; Andrijasevic & Anderson, 2009; Arthurs, 2009; Doezema, 2010; O'Brien, 2013). Jo Doezema argues that the language used in newspaper reports of trafficked people constructs a homogenised, misleading picture of a "typical" trafficked person by emphasising "certain words and phrases: 'young', 'naïve', 'beauty', 'better life', 'lured, deceived and forced into prostitution'" (2010, p. 1). Erin O'Brien claims that the choices of campaigners to construct trafficked people as "typically female, young and vulnerable" are intentional as "these depictions are considered most likely to capture the public's attention and support" (2013, p. 321).

It is not just anti-trafficking campaigns that make certain bodies more visible than others. Mendes observes that the images in news stories about SlutWalk tended to feature "mainly young, white women in various states of undress" (2015, p. 120). Gill and Shani Orgad note similarly exclusionary "*politics and aesthetics*" of the #MeToo movement [emphasis in original] (2018, p. 1319). It is easy to see how the "promise of sexy photo opportunities" could attract mainstream media outlets (Mendes, 2015, p. 122). This imagery was not representative of the majority of actual participants that Mendes saw when she attended the 2012 London SlutWalk. According to Mendes, most SlutWalk participants were not dressed in a particularly "sexy" manner, and included men, people of colour, older people, and disabled people (2015, p. 120).

The "sexy" news coverage of SlutWalk became a bone of contention for organisers who felt that this framing was giving the impression that the movement was more about promoting women's right to revealing clothing and less about its key message of challenging rape culture. Recalling my earlier discussion about the hyper-sexualisation of Black women (Section 3.02), there were also serious concerns about who could safely "reclaim" the title of "slut" (Mendes, 2015, pp.

74–83). In 2011, *An Open Letter from Black Women to the Slutwalk* read that "As Black women, we do not have the privilege or the space to call ourselves "slut" without validating the already historically entrenched ideology and recurring messages about what and who the Black woman is" (Black Women's Blueprint, 2011/2016, p. 10). In a similar vein, C. Kay Weaver describes focus group responses to a New Zealand anti-genetic engineering campaign that powerfully drew both attention and controversy with billboards featuring nude four-breasted women / cow hybrids (2013). As with Black women's disdain for the term "slut," the fact that some indigenous Māori respondents were more likely to be offended by the images than European descended Pākehā people suggests that campaigners need always be mindful of intersectional questions of cultural sensitivity and postcolonial power relations.

I want to close this section by introducing one of the most notable visual themes in my corpus as a means of unpicking issues of power and ideology in relation to feminist communications campaigns. No materials feature familiar clichéd *visual tropes* of "battered women," such as bruised faces or black eyes. Visual tropes are communicatively useful because their meanings are "easily accessible and resonant in people's mind" (Aiello & Parry, 2019, p. 129). This aesthetic choice stretches back to the original *Prevalence* design team, who ruled out "victim imagery" so women could feel "empowered by the campaign" (Gillan & Samson, 2000, p. 346). This aligns with Rutvica Andrijasevic's argument that the "victimizing images of female bodies" of some anti-trafficking campaigns serve to disempower by limiting the conceptual space for women's agency (2007, p. 26). There is another very practical dimension of decisions to avoid such imagery. As Magaraggia and Cherubini point out in their analysis of the "bruised faces" trope, "showing only the 'visible' or physical violence. . .allows other types of violence to be concealed" (2017, p. 448). If abuse is portrayed as only or primarily physical, more subtle forms of abuse may be less visible, and women may not recognise themselves or their experiences in such campaigns.

My theoretical and ethical understanding of campaign imagery – especially around the bruised woman trope – is also informed by related work that addresses campaigns around other issues such as childhood poverty and trauma (Nunn,

2004) and global poverty and humanitarianism (Brough, 2012; Dogra, 2007; Lugo-Ocando & Hernández-Toro, 2015; Torchin, 2016). The choice to eschew brutalised images of women runs counter to a tradition of a "visual culture of Western humanitarianism. . . heavily entrenched in an iconography of suffering" (Brough, 2012, p. 176). As early as 1876, the founder of the Barnardo's children's charity was brought to court for "making capital" out of children's photos – an offence that was exacerbated by the fact that the photos were staged to make the children's circumstances appear worse than they were (Nunn, 2004, pp. 276–277). Heather Nunn argues that there "is violence in such photography – it turns the subject into object" (2004, p. 275). Nunn's claim implies that imagery need not necessarily sexualise the subject in order to objectify them. Regardless of intention, the instrumentalisation of women's bodies for organisational objectives can be a form of objectification which reproduces the very cultural norms that radical feminist campaigns should seek to disrupt and transform.

For those of us invested in a feminist ethics dedicated to breaking down intersectional structures of inequality, there is another important consideration around pitiable imagery. If applying a feminist ethical approach, practices which "other" people should be critiqued (Edwards, 2018, pp. 208–209). Lugo-Ocando and Hernández-Toro argue that public relations practices that provoke pity for subjects "contributes to the 'othering' of those who suffer," thus reproducing asymmetrical power relations and undermining true solidarity (2015, p. 227). They advocate for a more collaborative egalitarian approach to humanitarian communication and one that seeks to redress structural inequalities rooted in Western consumerism and colonialism (Lugo-Ocando & Hernández-Toro, 2015, p. 231). A feminist analysis of the ethics of campaign communications must look beyond the images produced, to the distribution of power in the processes that led to the imagery.

A feminist ethical approach to decision-making is discursive, requiring "self-reflexivity or constant questioning" (Buzzanell, 2010, p. 76). It requires an open-ness to the possibility that even well-intentioned actions might have their own ethical repercussions. For instance, Dogra claims that since the 1990s there has been a new "dogma" that international NGOs eschew the use of "negative"

images of impoverished, pitiable victims, in favour of more "positive" imagery (2007, p. 167). She problematises this positive imagery as a "lazy way out" and potentially little more than a marketing and fundraising strategy that ignores "messy questions of power and ideology" (Dogra, 2007, p. 168). Sliwinski likewise cautions against a blanket disavowal of images of sexual violence, urging us to nurture instead a "courageous kind of looking – indeed, a courageous kind of *imagining* – as the means to defend and protect the idea of a fundamental right to an embodied sense of human dignity" [emphasis in original] (2018, p. 188). I suggest that the work of Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid featured in this thesis does represent this courageous kind of imagining in their insistence on making visible the ugly realities of men's violence against women and children. Nevertheless, as with all radical and risk-taking projects, that courageous imagining inevitably involves compromises and trade-offs.

Section 3.06   Chapter conclusion

In Chapter 2, I outlined my theoretical understanding of key concepts that inform my analysis, including: beauty, violence, surveillance, in/visibility, and resistance. Chapter 3 has expanded that theoretical framework by exploring how intersectional inequalities and gendered violence are reproduced or resisted on the representational landscape. Within this landscape, beauty and violence are often represented in unhelpful ways that constrain the conceptual space for making sense of men's violence against women and children.

Shifting dynamics of meaning and power do create spaces for social change, but these spaces are inevitably constrained by the unavoidability of the dominant representational landscape. Chapter 3 has also explored how campaigners and other agitators for social change might exploit these spaces, and how such projects might be limited. In the analytical chapters, I apply the theory and insights from Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 to a series of campaigning texts from Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid, to uncover how they undertake the ambitious semiotic mission of resisting the cultural norms that perpetuate male violence. Chapter 4: "Methodology: Method of making meaning" discusses how I pull theory and context together. The chapter also

introduces the methods and methodological tools used to decode the semiotic work of the campaigns.

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Chapter 4.   Methodology: Methods of making meaning

Section 4.01   Chapter introduction

This chapter describes my methods and methodologies for making sense of both the primary texts of feminist campaign communications materials and the social modalities in which they were produced. Section 4.03 continues a discussion began in Chapter 2: how I define a "campaign" for the purpose of corpus selection. I also explain how I chose which materials within those campaigns to analyse. Section 4.04 discusses the three main methods I used to collect those materials: desk research, archives, and expert interviews. Finally, Section 4.05 discusses the analytical methodologies that I used to make sense of those materials: cataloguing the representational subjects; interpreting the visual grammar of the images; and coding of interview transcripts. Before turning to those practical considerations, I explain in Section 4.02 the ontological, epistemological, and ethical perspectives that guide my work.

Section 4.02   The positionality of feminist research

As a feminist researcher, my approach is shaped by ontological assumptions, explored in Chapter 2, that both beauty norms and male violence function to uphold patriarchal power structures. My epistemological stance is also informed by feminism, and in particular by feminist *standpoint theory* which holds "that all knowledge claims are socially located" (Harding, 2004, p. 10). I accept that the research process – from material selection to critical analysis – is inevitably influenced by our "beliefs, backgrounds, and feelings," i.e., our positionality (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 129). Garland-Thomson observes that even this language of "standpoint" has normative assumptions embedded in it, and she suggests that *sitpoint* theory may better describe the position from which some disabled women view the world (2005, p. 1570).

Fujii writes that "positionality in the field is relational and context dependent, not fixed or absolute" (2018, p. 19). This aligns with my own experience as both outsider and insider to the research topic. I moved to Scotland in 2006, so I did not experience first-hand all the campaigns I study, nor their contemporaneous

social context. On the other hand, I worked in the Scottish third sector for nearly a decade and most recently at Zero Tolerance. I remain involved in the women's sector through a voluntary position of Chair of the Board of my local women's aid group, Stirling and District Women's Aid. With respect to my interviews, this position allows me to act as my own "informant" (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 655) with some insider knowledge of the culture, language, and jargon of the Scottish women's sector.

My positionality has a more personal dimension. Although I am white and relatively privileged, I have many lived experiences of the intersections of misogyny, ableism, and fatphobia. For instance, early in my PhD, I was approached by police in England regarding historic crimes committed against me and several other women. The perpetrator was ultimately convicted of four counts of "stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm or distress." Furthermore, my passion for the subject means that women in my life regularly disclose their own experiences of male violence to me. As Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss point out, it "is impossible to completely void our minds," so it makes sense to employ our personal experience as an "analytical tool" (2008, p. 80). My research focuses more on text production than reception, but the interactive nature of meaning-making means that my close text readings reflect upon how texts might be read by different viewers. It is relatively easy for me to imagine how a woman who has experienced male violence might encounter the texts. The meanings a man – especially a violent man – might take from the messaging are less accessible to me.

The principle that positionality is something to be acknowledged rather than overcome can leave this kind of feminist work vulnerable to charges of epistemological relativism (Harding, 2004, pp. 10-12). However, as Kress points out in relation to social semiotics, even the choice of theory is ideologically motivated and that social positionality is "impossible to escape" (2010, p. 61). If positionality is inevitable, it is epistemologically and ethically imperative to make it visible. While my personal and professional experiences inevitably coloured the process of knowledge generation, the *lack* of such experiences would also colour that process in different ways.

I tried to account for my positionality by maintaining a reflexive attitude throughout, and by attempting to remain aware that others "could come to different conclusions" (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 116). There are many considerations for reflexive analysis such as identifying and theorising: how power is being exercised; the ethics and interests of the participants and the researchers; and the legitimacy of knowledge claims (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, pp. 105–119). As this chapter progresses, I further discuss how this reflexive approach concretely affected my data gathering (Section 4.04) and analysis (Section 4.05).

An open-ness to reflecting on one's own practices and perspectives is also key for the development of a strong "ethical sensibility" (Fujii, 2018, pp. 1–2). Meeting institutional requirements are an important part of this ethical sensibility. As per the University of Stirling's General University Ethics Panel, I developed stringent procedures for keeping my data safe. The transcript files were password protected and did not contain identifying details. An ethical sensibility does not end with institutional requirements. An ethical commitment – especially to minimising the potential for harm – should be embedded throughout the research process (Fujii, 2018, pp. 6–9). Accordingly, I return to ethical concerns throughout this chapter, including: accurately dealing with conflicting accounts (Section 4.04); mitigating the potential for psychological or professional harm (Section 4.04); and avoiding linguistic gatekeeping (Section 4.05). Section 4.04 also explains my decision to name my research participants. I explore how this decision is intimately tied to my feminist principles and how it concretely affected the production of the interview transcripts.

Section 4.03   *The complications of choosing campaigns and materials*

In Section 2.02 of Chapter 2, I outlined the three main criteria of a campaign: primarily delivered by Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid; aimed at the broad public; and targeted at social attitudes that perpetuate male violence. In practice, the campaign selection process was discursive, rambling, and awkward, as campaigns may have overlapping aims, tactics, and targeted publics. I decided case-by-case which organisational projects

qualified as "campaigns," and the corpus expanded or shrank as I developed new insights or found new information.

The campaign selection process was further complicated by the fact that the organisations themselves did not neatly delineate campaigning work from other projects. For example, I had not originally intended to include the participatory *Recounting Women* work as part of my corpus, as it appears on the "Projects" rather than the "Campaigns" page of the Scottish Women's Aid website (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-g). As I looked more closely at *Recounting Women*, I found that it broadly fit my three criteria of a campaign. It was aimed at the public and social attitudes, and it was led by Scottish Women's Aid, albeit in collaboration with local services and victims / survivors. I return to *Recounting Women* in Section 7.06. Conversely, the "Campaigns" page of the Scottish Women's Aid website includes a link to a 2017 campaign around image-based sexual abuse, *Not Yours to Share*, which I had originally intended to include in my corpus (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-b). After the interviews, it became clear the visual outputs were directed by the advertising agency employed by the Scottish Government. While I eventually chose not to include *Not Yours to Share* in my core corpus, I do discuss the campaign further in Section 7.04.

Once I had decided to include a campaign, I then needed to determine which specific campaign artefacts to analyse using the visual grammar rubric described in Section 4.05 of this chapter.[25] This was an iterative, emergent process, with research-driven insights informing later additions to the corpus. In keeping with this project's focus on visual beauty, all the materials have a strong visual element. Unlike content analyses, semiological studies of visual materials do not require that they are "statistically representative of a wider set of images" (Rose, 2016, p. 110). My text selection is not representative, nor is it exhaustive. I did not closely analyse every bit of material for every campaign, especially where there was significant duplication. Instead, I tried to select materials that could be

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[25] The campaign materials selected for close text readings are listed in Appendix A. I named some of the materials to add clarity to the writing. These are not names assigned to the items by the organisations.

considered as akin to *paradigmatic cases* (Given, 2008, p. 698). In other words, each set of campaign materials draws a broad picture of the aims and aesthetics of the campaigns. The volume and format of individual campaign outputs varied widely. Rape Crisis Scotland's *Pie Chart* consist of only the front and back of a postcard (Figure 6.3*,* Figure 6.4). For the Scottish Women's Aid *Together We Can Stop It (Together We Can)* campaign, I selected a wide range of artefacts to encapsulate the wide range of the campaign's materials and distribution methods. These include videos, social media posts, Flash animations, and photographs of leaflets and other ephemera.

When considering an item for corpus inclusion, I deliberated on whether it could meaningfully add anything to my analysis. For instance, an image in situ on a website might add details or depth that the image alone could not. I included screenshots of the *This is Not an Invitation to Rape (Not an Invitation)* photographs as they appear on the campaign website which has interactive features that invite a certain kind of engagement with the imagery (Figure 6.11) (Section 6.04). This selection process was often guided by one of the data collection methods described in the next section of this chapter. For example, I discovered an archival document produced by Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust with guidance for organisations wanting to license the original campaign. The document lists five original *Prevalence* "creative executions" available for licensing, which I subsequently chose for close analysis (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 1996, pt. Appendix 2). There were inevitably elements of both convenience (choosing samples "according to ease of access") and opportunistic ("taking advantage of unforeseen opportunities") sampling to my material selection (Ritchie et al., 2003, p. 81). As touched upon in the next section about my methods of collection (Section 4.04), access to items was variable.

The corpus selection process was also impacted by my early decision to structure my research and written outputs around the three organisations. While there was overlap, I would generally produce most of the research and analysis for one organisation before moving on to the next. This approach allowed me to fully immerse myself in each organisation to develop a deep understanding of its semiotic practices. Unlike more traditional semiotic approaches which "tend to

concentrate on the *image itself* as the most important site of its meaning," a social semiotic analysis incorporates "social modality at other sites" [emphasis in original] (Rose, 2013, p. 109). While this approach helped me to better understand the social modality of the images, a limitation was that insights sometimes came too late to affect the selection of earlier texts. If I returned to the material selection process with what I have now learned, I might add further texts to my earlier corpus. There was also a more recent Zero Tolerance campaign, *Any Woman, Anywhere,* that may have been useful to include but it began after my initial Zero Tolerance timeframe (Zero Tolerance, ca. 2019).

My understanding of the organisations and the texts was also informed by contextual items such as the aforementioned Zero Tolerance licensing brochure. Other types of contextual materials include organisational websites, Annual Reports and Accounts, and newsletters. These informed my work at different stages throughout the research process, from material selection – as with the Zero Tolerance affiliate brochure – to analysis. For example, I sourced the images for Rape Crisis Scotland's *End Sexual History* postcards (Figure 6.2) from the Rape Crisis Scotland newsletter found online ('Sexual History & Character', Winter 2007_2008). At the analysis stage, I used a Scottish Women's Aid briefing on coercive control to shape both my own understanding of the dynamics of domestic abuse and how are represented in campaign (Section 7.03) (Scottish Women's Aid, 2017a).

Section 4.04   *Types and methods of material collection*

I used three main methods when collecting materials to analyse: desk-based, archival, and expert interviews with women involved with the campaigns. The desk-based research involved searching for, and then downloading or screenshotting, campaign material from organisational websites, campaign-specific websites, social media, or third-party platforms such as YouTube. I accessed archival versions of some websites through the Internet Archive /

Wayback Machine.[26] The desk-based research was integral in building the historical picture of the organisations presented in Section 1.02 of the first chapter. My professional experience was an asset as I knew what information could be found via statutory sources. The narrative introductions of the annual accounts usually provide a summary of an organisation's activity for that year, and, as public documents, these can often be downloaded via the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) or Companies House.[27] These statutory sites may list when organisations made changes to their legal structures or constitutions. Finally, I communicated via email with current or former staff members for information about the organisations.

Some of the campaign items were given to me by organisations, interviewees, or by my supervisor, Karen Boyle. I also acquired materials at women's sector events, or via email requests to organisations. Many of my archival materials were gathered during 11 visits to the Glasgow Women's Library, which holds a significant archival collection of materials related to the Scottish women's liberation movement. There are collections related to Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid, although the size and file organisation of these collections varies widely. The Glasgow Women's Library archives are part of a broader feminist archival movement of "resisting the marked absence of minoritized populations from the historical record" (Cifor & Wood, 2017, p. 5). Part of the archive's feminist approach is the preservation of ephemera such as leaflets and badges, making it a "treasure trove of historical yet often overlooked items" related to women's history (Maxwell, 2013, p. 129).

The "messy, unwieldy, unexpected" process of archival research is inevitably shaped by the researcher's own "selections, omissions, and biases" (Tirabassi, 2009, p. 175). My early archival visits were very open, and I took a more *source-oriented* approach (Stokes, 2013, p. 85). I sifted through piles of materials – much of it was loose in boxes – to familiarise myself with the contents.

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[26] https://www.youtube.com/ ; https://web.archive.org/

[27] https://www.oscr.org.uk/ ; https://www.gov.uk/get-information-about-a-company

As I progressed, my approach to the archives became more *problem-oriented*, as I looked for specific materials that had come to my attention in the desk-based or interview research (Stokes, 2013, p. 85). My access to the archives was unexpectedly constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic. My final visit in October 2020 was extremely targeted, as archival appointments were more restricted than previously. Each organisation presented different opportunities and challenges with respect to gathering materials, which I touch upon in the relevant analytical chapters.

My third method of data collection was nine expert interviews with current or former organisational staff who were involved in the creation or delivery of the Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid campaigns.[28] These interviews provided accounts from the meaning-makers themselves about what they were trying to achieve, or direct evidence about what Kress would call the "interest of the sign-maker" (2010, p. 10). As with the campaign texts, my selection of interview participants was informed by preliminary desk-based and archival research, as well as my professional knowledge of the Scottish women's sector. I also approached current organisational staff to identify the best potential participants. Not everyone I first approached to interview had the time to do so, but in all those instances, I was able to interview another person about the relevant campaigns. I met my goal of speaking to at least one person for every one of the campaigns in the corpus. In practice, this meant that some people spoke to me about multiple campaigns, as can be seen in the table of interview participants in Appendix F. This also meant that some interviews were entirely devoted to one campaign, which inevitably allowed for more time and depth for each question, e.g., with Liz Ely regarding Zero Tolerance's *Violence Unseen.* In other instances, some depth may have been sacrificed to cover a greater breadth of materials, e.g., with Eileen Maitland regarding all of the Rape Crisis Scotland campaigns.

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[28] The interview participants are listed in 0.

Due to the pandemic, only three of my interviews were conducted in person. The rest were conducted on an online platform of the participant's choosing. One of my interviews was conducted online pre-pandemic because the participant was abroad at the time. I either brought to the interview or emailed beforehand a document containing all the materials I wanted to discuss which helped to jog their memories and facilitate conversation. I conducted the interviews using a flexible *Interview Topic Guide*, which I would customise for each participant before their interview with campaign or organisational specific questions that had arisen in my pre-interview desk-based or archival research.[29] The general questions I asked revolved around: the participant's professional background; practical aspects of the campaign; decision-making around message construction; and missing historical gaps in my knowledge. The topic guide also contained the contact information of support services. My participants were generally aware of the support available, but I wanted to have the information to hand should the interview bring up difficult memories or disclosures.

With participants' permission, I recorded all the interviews for transcription.[30] Initially, these transcriptions were significantly edited with false starts and filler words left out, but with some notation of "paralinguistic" features such as laughing (Kowal & O'Connell, 2017). I did not find verbatim transcripts to be necessary, as I was not subjecting the transcripts to highly systemised deep interrogation, as might be done with discourse analysis. However, as the work progressed, I found it more straightforward to produce verbatim transcriptions with the assistance of the embedded transcription tools of the online interviewing platforms. As per my ethical clearance, I shared my transcripts with my participants, highlighting any potentially sensitive content. Although unwieldy at times, this practice was a result of a main ethical concern about the research: anonymity was not practically possible. I was asking them questions about campaigns to which they are publicly and professionally linked. The Scottish

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[29] Appendix G is a pre-customisation template of the guide.

[30] The transcription marks I use for citing transcribed interview material appear in a table in Appendix C.

women's sector is relatively small and collegial; most people working in the sector will be aware of the work that others are doing or have done. Given the relaxed mood of the interviews, I was also aware of the possibility that my interview subjects may disclose something that is professionally or personally uncomfortable for themselves or another person, carrying the possibility of reputational harm. Ensuring that the participants were aware that they could be identifiable even if cited anonymously was embedded into my informed consent procedure. I obliged all requests for transcript redactions or summarisations. In a very concrete sense, therefore, the transcriptions were co-produced documents, and a form of "negotiated, contextually based results" (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 646). All my participants chose to be cited by name, which I am pleased to do in keeping with my feminist belief that women be credited for their work. By naming my interview participants, I am crediting them for the time and labour they generously gave to me, and for the labour they invested in the original campaigns.

My interviewing techniques were epistemologically and ethically informed by the social science tradition of feminist participatory interviewing as pioneered by Oakley (DeVault & Gross, 2012, pp. 7–8; Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 128; Oakley, 1981). Epistemologically, the subject positions – as professionals, as feminists, etc. – of my participants inevitably affected how they reported and understood their knowledge and experiences. They were personally and professionally invested in their campaigning work and may well have been "accustomed to talking about their field of expertise and explaining to others what they know – frequently for strategic purposes" (Littig, 2009, p. 105). Several of the participants also expressed doubt about some of their recollections, which is to be expected given that the earliest campaign was nearly thirty years ago. To meet my ethical obligation to accuracy, where there was confusion or contradiction about details, dates, or sequences of events, I either made note of those issues where relevant in the analysis chapters or I used archival or desk-based sources for verification (such as an organisation's Companies House record).

My own positionality helped me find, approach, communicate, and build rapport with interview participants. I aimed for a "relatively intimate and non-hierarchical relationship" with my interview participants in which there was no

presumption that I was an unbiased party (Oakley, 1981, p. 47). I knew four of my participants beforehand, and all my participants knew that I shared a feminist approach to men's violence against women. However, rapport does not have "magical properties," and does not necessarily lead to in-depth or insightful data generation (Fujii, 2018, p. 14). As my interviewing technique developed, I learned to be more mindful of how rapport and power dynamics might be affecting the knowledge generation process. When transcribing my early interviews, I observed that in my eagerness to connect with the participants that I often interjected in ways that potentially guided the answers. In later interviews, I let them talk for long stretches with little input from me, thus leaving myself open to picking up on promising conversational threads as they arose.

The general interview format can be characterised as that of a *systematizing expert interview* in that "it is not the experts themselves who are the object of the investigation; their function is rather that of informants who provide information about the real objects being investigated" (Bogner & Menz, 2009, pp. 46–47). My overriding aim was to understand the social semiotic work of the communication texts, but our conversations inevitably stretched out from a narrow focus on the campaigning materials. The participants brought a wealth of experience and knowledge, and they did not tend to instinctively centre visual beauty in their recollections. Their more general expert knowledge was invaluable for drawing a detailed contextual map in which to situate my social semiotic analyses. Their contributions encompassed relevant factors related to Scottish politics, policy, law, media, and culture, as well as the professional practices of feminist campaigning in Scotland and beyond.

The open-ended and wide-ranging nature of the conversations generated both difficulties and insights. There were instances where they interpreted questions differently than I expected or they asked for clarifications. Not only did these interactions shape the subsequent direction of the conversation, they also hugely influenced the process of knowledge generation. I was forced to reflect upon my own understanding of key conceptual terms. As described in Section 2.06, this had a particularly significant impact on my conceptual evolution of beauty: from the woman, to the image, to the idea. This expansive conception of

beauty mitigated against another challenge of the project more broadly: the challenge of keeping beauty in the analytic frame. The necessity of keeping beauty in the frame also informed my decision to close the interviews with questions designed to elicit more general thoughts on how beauty might operate in future campaigns (from their current or former organisation or from the women's sector more generally) (Appendix G, Part 5). This tactic helped to bring the wide-ranging interviews full circle back to beauty.

Section 4.05   Three main methods of analysis

Aiello and Parry outline three "interlinked analytical stages" of visual analysis: descriptive, interpretive, and critical (2019, p. 10). My journey through these analytical stages was far from direct – there were considerable detours, dead ends, and re-directions. I used three methods of descriptive and interpretive analysis to inform the critical observations that constitute the main analytical chapters: Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7. The order I list them here is not the order in which they were performed, as it was a meandering process, with different methods happening concurrently and feeding off one another. The methods of analysis were cataloguing the representational subjects; interpreting the visual grammar of the images; and light coding of interview transcripts. The goal of this work was to make the connections between meaning-making and issues of power and ideology.

I attempted to keep my research process flexible, so I could be open to exploring new themes and/or dynamics as they organically arose. All three of my primary analysis methods provided insights into all five of the research questions, but a few of the methods were especially useful for individual questions. Ultimately, the first three research questions really drove my analysis. The last two added depth, interest, and information about the organisational and social contexts in which the campaigns and their meaning-making occurred. For reference, the questions are as follows:

1. How do the campaign materials engage with the wider system of Western beauty norms, and what trade-offs or compromises are involved?
2. How do the visible human subjects map against Western beauty ideals?

3. How does the aesthetic construction of the campaigns engage with notions of beauty, i.e., are they constructed to be beautiful images in some way?

4. How did norms of beauty feed into the representational decisions of the feminist professionals that developed the campaigns?

5. What other factors (e.g., ideological, budgetary, availability of models, etc.) influenced the design or aesthetics of the campaigns?

Early in each campaign analysis, I catalogued the key people featured in the campaigns' photography, videos, illustrations, animations, and voice-overs. This process was most useful for addressing RQ2. I did not include all background characters, especially if they were not crucial to the story the materials were trying to tell. Conversely, multiple images may have used the same models or illustrated characters, so they might be catalogued more than once.

I noted how the subjects' gender was represented / constructed, and how these representations reflected stereotyped markers of idealised feminine beauty such as whiteness, able-bodiedness, thin-ness, youth, and femininity. These observations are necessarily subjective and reliant on my own cultural understanding of how to read the semiotic work being enacted through the materials. As Kristen A. Hardy observes about US anti-obesity campaigns, viewers' perceptions have "been formed and conditioned – and thus oriented – around fatness and thinness as already-existing categories applicable to bodies, and characterized by certain sets of markers" (2021, p. 6). I suggest that there are analogous sets of semiotic markers for bodies in other aspects of identity, such as skin texture or hair colour as indications of age.

I aimed to be as specific as possible in my observations. For example, I used eight different age categories for models where the general age was reasonably apparent via semiotic markers. There were four other "indeterminate" categories where age was not as discernible but fell into general classifications of young child, older child, young person, or adult. In addition to their bodies and/or voices, I observed their attire, hairstyle, and cosmetics. I noted how they were framed (from extreme close shot to very long shot) and if they were making eye contact with the viewer, which proved very useful for illuminating how elements of form helped to connote "to-be-looked-at-ness" in materials such as Rape Crisis

Scotland's *Not Ever* (Section 6.05). I also noted identity or class markers constructed via *mise en scène* elements or through textual information that sits alongside images.[31]

With such a culturally contextual process, there is much space for polysemous readings. The process was not intended to yield observations that could claim to be "accurate" descriptions of the models' identities. Instead, it forced me to look very closely at individual subjects and at small details. For example, it was only upon close scrutiny that I noticed that one of the child models in *Prevalence "By 18"* was a girl of colour (Figure 4.1). When I return to this image in the Zero Tolerance chapter, I discuss how early focus group respondents also missed this detail (Section 5.05) (Kitzinger, 2004, pp. 171–172). This mapping exercise was not designed to make quantitative claims about campaign representativeness. Nevertheless, I was able to discern broad patterns across the texts, which allowed me to reflexively check my own assumptions, as well as identify general trends of intersectional inclusions and exclusions for further reflection and analysis.

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[31] Appendix E contains a table of all the features that I catalogued for each representational subject.

Figure 4.1: Prevalence "By 18"[32]

One of the challenges of this project was the diversity of the texts I was analysing. As introduced in Section 2.03 of the theory and language chapter. Kress and van Leeuwen's *Reading Images* helped me to grapple with their multimodal complexities. Kress and van Leeuwen's writing can be difficult to

follow, and there is a tendency towards over-complication. Yet, the expansiveness of the visual grammar framework makes it uniquely useful for this project, as it can be applied across many formats and materials. For instance, Kress and van Leeuwen maintain that the "representational, interactive and compositional patterns" of the visual grammar of still images remain relevant to moving images, albeit with added semiotic complications of movement, time, and sound (1996/2006, pp. 258–259).

These patterns refer to three aspects of meaning which visual communications produce. Kress and van Leeuwen identify Michael Halliday's systemic functional grammar of linguistics as a foundational influence. They use Halliday's terminology of three semiotic "metafunctions" which they maintain apply similarly to visual design. The "ideational" metafunction refers to the representational function that relates represented objects with the world. The "interpersonal" metafunction refers to the function of constructing interactions between producers, viewers, and represented subjects. The "textual" metafunction refers to the use of "compositional resources" to construct coherent complexes of signs (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 41–44). I attempt to keep my vocabulary accessible, so I do not use the metafunctions term. Nevertheless, an intrinsic part of my analytical process was to reflect upon the ways that a text speaks to the world, the viewer, and itself.

Visual grammar can be a lens for querying a wide variety of texts, but Kress and van Leeuwen do not provide concrete methodological strategies for how to use that lens. To that end, I created an outline of their *Reading Images* in order to develop a rubric with a series of prompts about key visual grammar elements and a column for noting observations (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006). The rubric provided a quasi-consistent structure for interrogating how each text deployed or subverted the conventions of visual grammar. I worked through the same series of prompts for all the texts chosen for close readings, albeit not all prompts provoked responses every time. Figure 4.2 is a compressed illustration of the rubric. When I used the rubric in practice, most of the documents were over 30 pages long.

Figure 4.2: Abbreviated illustration of visual grammar rubric[33]

	Organisation: Zero Tolerance Campaign: *Prevalence* Item(s): *"By 18"*	Column for recording observations, analysis, and reflexive memos about campaign item(s).

Prompts

	"Representation and interaction: designing the position of the viewer" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 114–153)	
"Represented participants" and "interactive participants"		*This is one of those examples. . .*
"The image act and the gaze" (demand & offer)		*The represented participants. . .*
"Size of frame and social distance"		*The subjects are seen. . .*
For objects, landscapes, & buildings (3 significant distances)		
"Perspective and the subjective image" (naturalization of socially determined viewpoint)		*This is a subjective image with a clear central perspective. . .*
"Involvement and the horizontal angle"		*This photo is taken from. . .*
"Power and the vertical image"		*This photo is taken from. . .*
"Narrativization of the subjective image" (attitudinal meanings)		
"Objective images" (special & privileged viewer positions)		
	"The meaning of composition" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 175–214)	
"Composition and the multimodal text"		
"Given and new: information value of left and right"		*Again, it is not immediately. . .*
"Ideal & the real: the information value of top and bottom"		*This dynamic seems much more. . .*
"The information value of centre and margin"		*There might be something. . .*
"Salience"		*The most salient elements. . .*
"Framing"		*In addition to the rug framing. . .*
"Linear and non-linear compositions"		*This is a linear composition.*
	"Materiality and meaning" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 215–238)	
"Material production as a semiotic resource"		
"Production systems and technology" (3 major classes)		*These were analogue images. . .*
"Brushstrokes"		
"The meaning of materiality"		*The "materiality" of these. . .*
"Colour as a semiotic mode"		
"The communicative functions of colour"		
"A distinctive feature approach to the semiotics of colour" ("value," "saturation,"" purity," "modulation," "differentiation," "hue")		*There's no real colour palette – it's black and white. I think this idea. . .*
"Home decoration: Colour, character, and fashion"		*Very homely picture with no. . .*
"Colour schemes"		*The idea that colour. . .*
Adapted from: Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). Reading images: The grammar of visual design (2nd ed.). Routledge. (Original work published 1996))		

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[33] The rubric is reproduced in Appendix B for easy reference.

Working with the rubric was a messy, iterative, reflective, and time-intensive process. It was very much an emergent methodology that demanded flexibility and modifications as the work progressed. When I analysed the Zero Tolerance campaigns, I worked through the rubric prompts one image at a time. As I moved to Rape Crisis Scotland, I found that if I analysed multiple images or variations of images together as a collection, I could discern potentially meaningful differences between them, e.g. the landscape, portrait, and in situ web versions of the *Not an Invitation* photograph in Figure 6.13, Figure 6.15, and Figure 6.16. When I first encountered video content, I opted to use screen grabs and transcriptions to create storyboards, which I analysed using the rubric. This allowed for a more sustained analysis than simply watching the video on loop (which I also did). Aiello and Parry used a similar technique of producing transcripts for their case study analysis of an O2 "Be More Dog" advertisement (2019, pp. 192–199). While I regularly adjusted how I applied the rubric, the method's key strength was that it injected a degree of consistency into my analysis. It was a way for me to ask the same questions of all the materials, even if the questions did not always elicit an answer.

As the process progressed, I learned which aspects of visual grammar I found useful for generating critical observations about beauty and which parts I found less so. Figure 4.2 does not contain every prompt – just the three main parts of the visual grammar that emerged as most useful for my critical analysis. First, the section on "Representation and interaction" probes how techniques such as close-ups, perspective, or eye contact were being used to construct interpersonal relationships (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 114–153). Second, the section on "The meaning of composition" prompts reflections on how meaning was being constructed through placement of visual and textual elements (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 175–214). This section was particularly useful for decoding which elements were being made salient in the image composition. Salience refers to the visual "weight" given to compositional elements, or how a viewer's gaze is being directed to specific aspects of an image. Salience is not "objectively measurable, but results from complex interaction, a complex trading-off relationship between a number of factors" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 202). Finally, the section on "Materiality and

meaning" was particularly relevant for exploring how different media had different semiotic potential (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 215–238).

As with the mapping against beauty norms, this approach facilitated a deep engagement with the texts and pushed me to observe tiny details that might be missed with a cursory glance. The approach allowed me to both incorporate and move beyond the "basic descriptive work" of articulating qualities such as "form, subject, genre, medium, color, light, line, and size" (Schroeder & Borgerson, 1998, p. 166). For example, if I noticed that a model was making eye contact with the viewer, I then asked myself what semiotic work that eye contact was doing and noted these interpretations in the rubric. Although especially fruitful for exploring RQ1 and RQ3, the rubric provided insight into all the research questions.

When working with my rubric, I adapted a qualitative technique detailed by Corbin[34] of writing memos in order to "reflect the mental dialogue occurring between the data and me" (2008, p. 169). Although Caroline Ramazanoglu and Janet Holland contend that reflexivity is essential, they do not provide concrete strategies on how to enact it (2002, pp. 116–117). As I was recording what semiotic work the materials were doing, I also asked why *I* may read the texts in particular ways and how the texts might have been informed by contextual factors that came to my attention via desk-based, archival, or interview research.

Alongside the process of my visual grammar rubric, I used the NVivo software to perform a light coding process on my interview transcripts. This part of the process was especially useful for RQ4 (beauty and representational decisions) and RQ5 (other factors). The interviews provided rich qualitative information that would have been impossible to gather using only the cataloguing process and visual grammar rubric. Gill provides some introductory advice on open coding for critical discourse analysis that was helpful here. She suggests that the initial coding stages should be "done as inclusively as possible" (Gill, 2000, p. 179). My

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[34] This is taken from the third edition of Corbin and Strauss's, Basics of Qualitative Research, which was written and published after Anselm Strauss's death. Some chapters, therefore, were written by Juliet Corbin alone.

coding was not meant to be a prescriptive process, and the list of codes grew as I further engaged with the material.[35] My coding process was a supplementary method of analysis, as the interviews themselves were a supplementary form of data. Thus, my use of coding was relatively basic – as it was intended as simply a strategy to organise Gill's "categories of interest" (2000, p. 179). I did not compare the interviews against each other as might be done in a more systematic discourse analysis approach. My use of coding was more akin to an indexing technique as it allowed me to identify and return to those parts of the interview that could contextualise my close readings and help put the social in my social semiotics as I began the writing process.

These three methodological processes gave me an in-depth understanding of the campaigns, that was complex, messy, and detail rich. Alongside these three processes for each organisation, I began the writing process. This involved synthesising this wealth of information into the critical analyses contained in Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7. My writing process was very much a "continuation of the general process of analysis" (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 116). I often found myself returning to the rubric in particular and re-evaluating my earlier observations. As I worked through the writing process, three main themes emerged that were related to the intersections of beauty and violence: surveillance, in/visibility, and resistance. I try to centre my writing around these three themes as a way of ensuring that feminine beauty and male violence were kept in the picture, even when one or both was not obviously visible.

Part of my feminist ethics is that I believe it is important to avoid linguistic gatekeeping and attempt to make knowledge accessible. A common, and justifiable, criticism of the field of semiotics is that it can tend towards jargon and obscurantism (Rose, 2016, pp. 143–144). While I do adopt some social semiotic terminology where useful, I try to write in reader-friendly language.

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[35] The codes are listed in Appendix D.

There was one aspect of the writing that I found especially difficult. I struggled with how much descriptive detail to include in the critical analysis, especially since I include images for the reader to refer to. Why not just let the reader "see for themselves?" Eventually, I decided that it was essential to include some description alongside interpretation. What I may see in an image may not be what my reader sees, not least of all because my goal was to unearth less visible meanings and contexts of the images. Written descriptions create a shared frame of reference with the readers. For example, in Section 5.04, I characterise a group of young models as "racially diverse," but diversity might not be what springs to other people's minds. In analysis of video materials, I may give extra details to account for the fact that a static image cannot communicate music, voice, or motion.

Section 4.06   Chapter conclusion

This chapter outlined how I chose, collected, and analysed the materials in my corpus. In keeping with my feminist commitment to reflexivity, I have tried to be mindful of both the strengths and limitations of my approach. While I hope that my discoveries could be helpful to future campaigns and campaigners, I recognise my findings are not generalisable beyond the texts in my corpus. I further recognise that my entire research journey – from text selection to critical analysis – was influenced by my positionality. A different researcher, especially using a different lens, could produce very different accounts.

As I noted in the conclusion of Chapter 2, my lens is very much rooted in a feminist, gendered analysis of men's violence against women and children. We cannot be liberated from male violence until we make it visible by naming men as its agents and beneficiaries. However, as Ramazanoglu and Holland point out in their work on feminist methodology, targeting "gender can have the effect of excluding, silencing or marginalizing significant divisions between women, and empowering the researcher to privilege gender over other differences" (2002, p. 107). I attempted to offset this privileging of perspectives through my methodology – specifically by closely noting when and how structural inequalities such as race, dis/ability, size, gender presentation, sexuality, and class are represented in the texts I analysed. I critically interrogated where and why exclusions or problematic

representations might be happening, and what the implications of those exclusions and representations might be. My desk-based, archival, and interview research helped to situate the texts within the time and place in which they were produced and in relation to the semiotic resources that the producers had at their disposal.

Writing about traditional semiotics, Iversen makes an observation that gets to the very heart of what I hoped to achieve. She writes that semiotics is a particularly useful tool to "lay bare the contradictions and prejudices beneath the smooth surface of the beautiful" (Iversen, 1986, p. 84). In the next three chapters I explore a series of texts from Zero Tolerance, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Scottish Women's Aid. Many of these texts can be described as beautiful in some way. By using the methods and methodologies outlined in this chapter, I poke beneath the surfaces of these texts to lay bare not just their "contradictions and prejudices" but also their power and potential for resisting male violence.

Chapter 5. Zero Tolerance: Vision and impact

Section 5.01   Chapter introduction

The original Zero Tolerance campaigns were a radical departure from many campaigns against men's violence against women and children that had come before. Driven by a feminist analysis, Zero Tolerance took aim at the patriarchal norms that support male violence. Section 5.02 introduces the campaigns and situates them in their organisational context. This section also introduces the interview participants and other key figures from Zero Tolerance. Section 5.03 and Section 5.04 both discuss how the campaigners used conventional promotional methods to advance their radical messaging. These means include the visually impactful use of varied distribution channels; the creation of beautiful images; the co-option and subversion of conventions of commercial representation; and the development of a distinctive Zero Tolerance visual brand identity. Section 5.05 addresses a common feature of much of the campaign imagery: women are often shown in domesticated spaces while men are rarely shown at all. This section interrogates how this visual framing might reproduce representational norms that subject women to the perpetual surveillance of the gaze. Section 5.05 also explores which women's experiences are made visible by the Zero Tolerance imagery, and which women's experiences are less visible. The final analytical section, Section 5.06*,* further investigates the dynamics of objectification and surveillance, and how the campaigns resist those dynamics by re-orienting the focus towards male perpetrators

Section 5.02   Overview of campaigns, organisation, and interview participants

I identified five Zero Tolerance campaigns that met the campaign criteria. All the campaigns in Table 1 were primarily led by Zero Tolerance, focused on social attitudes, and had some output aimed at a broad swath of the public. There was other work since 1992 that I considered for inclusion. I ultimately decided to exclude the *Money and Power* (2010) and *Pleasure vs Profit* (2011) projects. Both were in partnership and co-branded with Glasgow's Women's Support Project;

additionally, the latter was more narrowly targeted for use with young people (Zero Tolerance, 2010, 2011).

I interviewed three former Zero Tolerance staff members. I worked alongside Liz Ely at Zero Tolerance, although I left the organisation before she did. She was involved with the most recent campaign, *Violence Unseen.* Although she left Zero Tolerance before *Violence Unseen* was completed, she has a wide-ranging understanding of the campaign's aims and aesthetics. Susan Hart was part of the original Zero Tolerance team at the Edinburgh District Council Women's Unit. Elaine Samson joined the team later, in 1993. There are two other women who must be highlighted as integral to the original campaigns. Evelyn Gillan was the campaigns officer who Elaine Samson described in our August 2019 interview as "just an absolute force to be reckoned with." I refer to Gillan's own analyses of the campaigns to deepen my understanding (1999/2015; Gillan & Samson, 2000). The main artistic force behind the campaign was Franki Raffles, who is described in an Edinburgh Napier University and University of St Andrews Library archival project dedicated to her work as a "feminist social documentary photographer" (Scott, 2016). Sadly, both women died prematurely: Gillan, aged 55 in 2015 and Raffles, aged 39 in late 1994 (Franki Raffles Archive, n.d.; Riddoch, 2015).

I also communicated via email with another former staff member I had worked alongside, Jenny Kemp, to query the 17-year gap between the final two campaigns in my corpus. Kemp worked at Zero Tolerance from 2007 to 2015 in a range of roles, including her final position as Co-Director. I do not have a definitive timeline about the organisation's campaign activities from 2001 until 2007. However, shortly after Kemp started in 2007, it became clear that the organisation had been experiencing financial difficulties that cut into the capacity to deliver campaigns. The situation improved over the ensuing years as Zero Tolerance attracted grant funding.

Table 1: Zero Tolerance campaigns included in analysis

Campaign name	Year launched
Prevalence	*1992*
Excuses	*1994*
Justice	*1997*
Respect	*2001*
Violence Unseen	*2018*

From the five campaigns, I selected key imagetexts for close readings with the visual grammar rubric.[36] There were specific challenges to selecting the Zero Tolerance materials. Especially with the older campaigns, there may be no definitive list of the materials produced. This is further complicated by the fact that the original campaigners ran a programme of providing campaign consultancy and materials to other local authorities, thus generating huge volumes of archival materials – much with unclear provenance. I restricted my close readings to those materials produced by the original Zero Tolerance campaign, and the later Zero Tolerance organisation established in 1994 (OSCR, n.d.-b). Within each campaign the imagetexts were repurposed for different modes of dissemination, such as brochures or social media "shareables" (in contemporary campaigns), and postcards, leaflets, and adshels (in older campaigns). Finally, the Zero Tolerance organisation also produced copious miscellaneous materials outwith larger campaigns for which I did not produce close readings, although many such materials informed my contextual understanding. I collected the materials from the Zero Tolerance archives at Glasgow Women's Library, the Zero Tolerance website,[37] the online Franki Raffles archives,[38] my supervisor, and current and former staff members.

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[36] All of the campaign materials are listed in Appendix A.

[37] https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/

[38] https://www.frankirafflesarchive.org/projects/zero-tolerance/

The early Zero Tolerance campaigners were informed by two pieces of research into Edinburgh attitudes and concerns. A "Women's Consultation Exercise" identified violence against women as a significant area of concern (Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993, p. 3). Additionally, a report into adolescent attitudes highlighted a troubling acceptance of male violence by many young people (Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993, p. 3). The report suggested that there was "a pressing need for educational interventions," and concluded that there was an "argument for a wider public awareness campaign" (*Adolescent's knowledge*, 1992, sec. Recommendations).

To address that need, the original *Zero Tolerance (Prevalence)* campaign launched in December 1992. I produced close text readings for five of these imagetexts. Four were part of the initial launch that was "displayed on billboards and adshell display sites throughout Edinburgh as well as indoor sites such as public houses, libraries, community and recreation centres" (Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993, p. 3). A fifth item featuring teenage girls was launched a short time later (Figure 5.19). As I was analysing these key texts, I reflected upon how they might have worked alongside other supportive campaign materials. In the *Prevalence* campaign, additional materials included postcards, as well as banners and billboards educating viewers with "facts and figures such as: '85% of rapists are men known to their victims' and 'Almost 50% of women murdered are killed by a partner or ex-partner'" (Kitzinger & Hunt, 1994, p. 2).

Affixing the name *Prevalence* to this initial campaign is a useful, but somewhat anachronistic, way to differentiate it from later Zero Tolerance work. In the earlier academic and archival documents, it is referred to simply as *The Zero Tolerance Campaign*, and there are not always clear lines between campaigns, especially between *Prevalence* and the follow-up *Excuses* campaign. Whereas the original Zero Tolerance campaign material "raised awareness about the prevalence of crimes of violence against women and children," the follow-up materials "further challenged myths, explored why the violence happened, raising issues of power and control in relation to male violence" (*Zero Tolerance Justice 'Strategy'*, ca. 1997, p. 1). By 1997, this work had come to be referred to as the "*Excuses*" campaign (*Zero Tolerance Justice 'Strategy'*, ca. 1997, p. 1).

A third Zero Tolerance campaign, *Justice* (1997), took aim at the Scottish criminal justice system as a structural factor that facilitates men's violence against women and children. As one feminist commentator on the campaign wrote, the campaign made "clear the connection between low conviction rates for rape and a justice system designed to protect and promote male power" (Stanhope, 1997, p. 13). The accompanying "Justice Pledge" contained a series of demands to bring about a "more accessible, accountable and representative criminal justice system" (Stanhope, 1997, p. 16). In early 1997, the campaign ran in five local authorities that had affiliated with the Trust (*Justice Press Release*, 1997).

In 1998, a report published by the Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust "documented wide-spread acceptance of forced sex and physical violence against women" among young people (Burton & Kitzinger, 1998, p. 1). Following that research, an "informal youth work programme. . .was piloted in Bristol, West Dunbartonshire and Fife" (Reid Howie Associates, 2001a, p. 3).[39] The Bristol pilot gave the campaign a wider British perspective while countering misperceptions such as the belief that Scotland had an "unusually high incidence" of male violence (E. Samson, personal communication, 07 October 2019). This informal youth work was the precursor for the Scottish Executive funded *Respect* educational programme, which piloted in 2001 in primary schools, secondary schools, and youth groups in Edinburgh and Glasgow (Reid Howie Associates, 2001a, p. i). A vast suite of items was produced for *Respect*, including educational materials and a screensaver (Reid Howie Associates, 2001a, p. i). A CD Rom was also used in secondary schools, although it was not developed specifically for the programme. The targeted educational programme was supported by a more general publicity campaign, consisting of posters and bus side advertisements. My analysis focuses on these more general publicity materials.

The most recent Zero Tolerance campaign, *Violence Unseen,* is still active as of October 2021 (Zero Tolerance, n.d.-c). *Violence Unseen* explicitly addresses

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[39] I cite from two versions of this report. One accessed via an archived link on the Scottish Government website (Reid Howie Associates, 2001a) and the other found in the Glasgow Women's Library archives (Reid Howie Associates, 2001b).

concerns about erasure and in/visibility by depicting types of "unseen" violence (including prostitution and image-based sexual abuse) and "unseen" women (such as transgender women and disabled women). While the project was led and branded by Zero Tolerance, the photographer, Alicia Bruce, worked with specialist organisations and individual women to produce "images reflecting the women's daily lives in their homes, workplaces or leisure spaces" (ca. 2018). The *Violence Unseen* campaign uses a travelling art exhibition to bring its materials and messages to the public. There are eight large "exhibition panels" which can be shipped throughout Scotland for temporary public exhibitions. An online version of the exhibition launched in late 2020 while in-person exhibitions were curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic. There are versions of these *Violence Unseen* imagetexts in different formats with more or less additional information, including exhibition brochures and social media "shareables."

Central to the Zero Tolerance mission is the desire to make visible those social attitudes and structures that normalise male violence. In the exhibition brochure for *Violence Unseen,* photographer Bruce recounts memories of encountering the original campaign as a child: "it really shifted my mindset about things that were normalised that shouldn't be" (ca. 2018). Reflecting on the early Zero Tolerance campaigns, Gillan references Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony – and particularly how hegemony manifests in mass media – as forming a critical part of the theoretical foundation of Zero Tolerance's work (1999/2015, p. 3). The next section explores how the early Zero Tolerance campaigners turned to conventional means to advance their counter-hegemonic feminist vision.

Section 5.03   The importance of the visual

The early Zero Tolerance campaigners wanted to redirect public discourse from female victims to male perpetrators. Gillan was critical of more traditional

violence prevention initiatives from the (now defunct) Scottish Office,[40] community education departments, and the police which advised women on how to keep themselves safe from male violence (2015, p. 4). Such initiatives place the responsibility for prevention of male violence on women and leave unchallenged the gendered ideologies underpinning that violence. As Susan Hart pointed out in our October 2019 interview: the Zero Tolerance messaging was aimed at "men, not women" and thus distinctive even from feminist campaigns that raised awareness about service delivery and support options.

It is important to note that the Zero Tolerance mission and strategy has never been *only* about attitudinal change. From the beginning, campaigners also strove for concrete policy change. Hart described the original Zero Tolerance approach as working backward from the desired end result. She recalled that they wanted a governmental policy that addressed men's violence against women with an "implemented national strategy that was integrated across all the service areas, all the policy areas, and. . . education." Her explanation of what constituted a "national" strategy was fuzzy as there were "bits of policy that were devolved to Scotland and there were bits that were UK-wide."

The campaign did not immediately result in a Scottish or UK strategy, but it did eventually influence devolved Scottish policy. When a National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland was finally launched by the Scottish Executive in 2000 (Scottish Executive, 2000), it was based on the "3 P's" first used in the Zero Tolerance campaign" (Greenan, 2005, p. 11). The 3 P's approach encompasses *Prevention* efforts such as awareness, training, and education programmes which tackle the root causes of both gender inequality and male violence against women and children; *Provision* of front-line specialist services; and appropriate legal, court, and police *Protection* for women and children experiencing male violence.

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[40] "The Scottish Office was a department of the United Kingdom Government from 1885 until 1999, exercising a wide range of government functions in relation to Scotland under the control of the Secretary of State for Scotland" (*Scottish Office*, n.d.).

This long-term strategic focus is evidence of the professional experience and skills that were key to the development of the original campaign. According to Gillan and Samson, such skills included: "visual communication, public relations, media and political lobbying" (2000, p. 344). Hart recounted that in the planning stages of the *Prevalence* campaigns, she and Gillan drew upon their campaigning backgrounds and did "quite a bit of reading on social marketing." R. J. Donovan and Vlais define "social marketing" as "the application of the concepts and tools of commercial marketing to the achievement of socially desirable goals" (2005, p. 4). This chimes with the way that Hart described the Zero Tolerance approach of "using quite traditional marketing strategies to a certain extent." I found a wealth of primary and secondary materials demonstrating how the Zero Tolerance project exploited professional skills in many ways, through commissioning social research; cultivating supportive press contacts; leveraging limited budgetary resources; hiring external creative expertise; and forming professional relationships with powerful people. Each one of these areas could be mined for insights into how campaigners navigated political, social, and media networks of power to – in the words of Hart – "create as much interest and visibility" as possible for their message. As my research interest is visual beauty, this chapter focuses on how that interest and visibility was sought using the first skill named in the previous Gillan and Samson quote: "visual communication" (2000, p. 344).

Pringle describes the early Zero Tolerance campaign as "creative, striking, and compelling" materials "deployed in a very high profile manner in Edinburgh" that used a range of distribution channels (1995, p. 166). Referring to these distribution channels, Gillan described the communication approach as using "the methods of the powerful to communicate the campaign's counter-hegemonic messages" (1999/2015, p. 5). Samson similarly described the early work as "very much a mass media campaign." This use of the phrase "mass media" is ambiguous. Their conceptualisation of mass media seems to mean distribution of the message using a mix of lower cost channels – both above the line (e.g., bus sides, billboards) and below the line (e.g. posters, postcards) – within a geographical area (initially Edinburgh, and later other local authorities) (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 1996, p. Appendix 3). For instance, Samson described the *Excuses* campaign as using a phased "trickle" strategy over a

series of weeks. She recalled that the public was confronted each week with an unfolding visual spectacle as new materials addressing different forms of male violence appeared on "bus advertising, billboards, adshels, posters going out to doctors' surgeries, dentists, all sorts of public places."

As I discuss in a pending publication, another of the main dissemination strategies was to bring campaign imagery to public spaces where it would reach men (McKeown, Forthcoming). As Samson recalled:

It was more about targeting establishments that were dealing with men so that you were actually getting the message to men. They were there standing on the terrace at the football matches and they were seeing Zero Tolerance. And that they get their pies and Bovril, having the Zero Tolerance logo on that.

Hart likewise recounted posters being installed above the urinals in bars, or in cafes or bowling clubs. By targeting masculine – or construed as masculine – spaces, the Zero Tolerance campaigners were, in a very concrete sense, making visible men's role in the gendered violence perpetrated against women.

The pie and Bovril approach was just one of the many creative methods that the campaigners used to make visible the Zero Tolerance message. Both Hart and Samson recalled having to work creatively within a limited budget. According to Samson, Gillan was especially skilled at negotiating deals that leveraged limited resources to generate visual impact. The distribution strategies of the *Prevalence* and *Excuses* campaigns were supplemented by capitalising on unexpected opportunities and serendipities, such as repurposing council-owned "tripod things" normally used for Christmas decorations to serve as banner stands lining Edinburgh's main thoroughfare, Princes Street, with Zero Tolerance messaging. Samson also remembered that bus sides (Figure 5.1) would sometimes remain up longer than paid for, powerfully and economically enhancing the visual effect:

Sometimes there were busses driving around with all the slogans on them at once. At Princes Street, there'd maybe be three lined up together. And it was incredibly impactful.

Figure 5.1: Excuses "Premeditated" on bus[41]
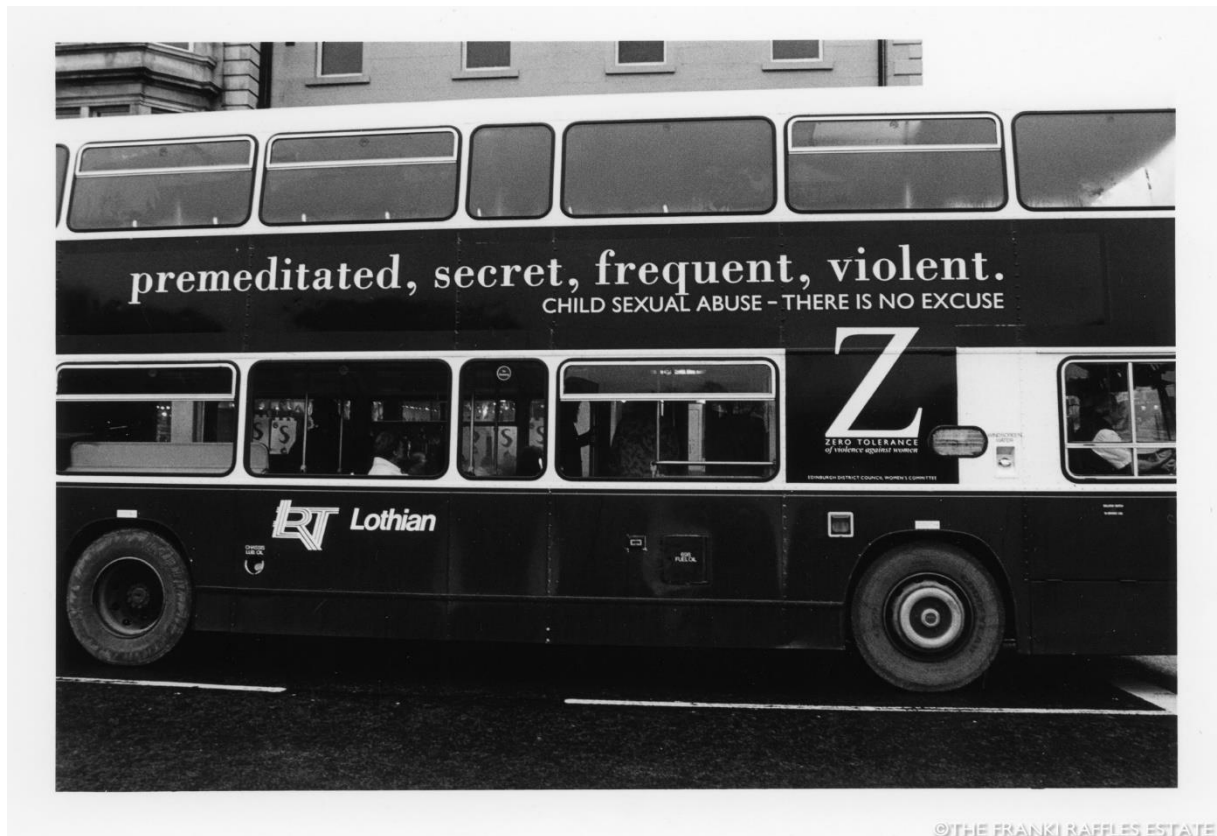
By reading Samson's words alongside contemporaneous accounts of the original *Prevalence* campaign, we can get a sense of just how visually impactful the campaign was in Edinburgh at the time. Writing in Scottish feminist magazine, *Harpies & Quines* in 1993, journalist Lesley Riddoch notes:

It was a bit like I'd died and gone to heaven. There above all the shoppers in Edinburgh's Princes Street ran the bold message, there is never an excuse. There on a grassy bank halfway up the Mound sat a white Z of flowers. There at Hibernian Football ground a huge Z symbol was emblazoned across the nets. Men on the terracing were eating their pies out of cartons and boxes overprinted with Zero Tolerance statistics. . .In

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[41] Source: https://www.frankirafflesarchive.org/projects/zero-tolerance/zerotolerancedocument012-3/#main

Image credit: © Franki Raffles Estate, all rights reserved, for Zero Tolerance campaign(s). Similar images may be available as part of Franki Raffles Photography Collection: University of St Andrews Library and Edinburgh Napier University.

doctor's surgeries patients sat beside posters proclaiming *No Man has the Right*. In swimming pools, school galas splashed off beside the happy image of three young women, and the message, *When They Say No, They Mean No . . .* The campaign for Zero Tolerance of violence is really HAPPENING all over Edinburgh. (cited in Gillan, 1999/2015, pp. 5–6)

The early campaigners were also able to strategically marshal the power of the media to their cause by cultivating valuable working relationships with journalists like Jean West and Nicola Barry. West and Barry persuaded their editor at the *Edinburgh Evening News* to sponsor the campaign and regularly run supportive articles. Gillan and Samson credit the support of the paper and its journalists as "critical factors in the subsequent success of the campaign" (2000, p. 345). *The Edinburgh Evening News* even produced their own tandem campaign led by West, albeit curiously with separate *Free Us From Fear* branding (West, 1992). Samson highlighted the importance of newspaper coverage in helping to get Zero Tolerance's mission onto the public agenda:

And at that point: no internet, no computers [. . .] Everyone was reading the papers. The message was getting through to people in waves as they went around their daily lives.[42]

This image of the message flowing over people in immersive "waves as they went around their daily lives" vividly conveys how the various distribution channels coalesced to create visually impactful campaigns.

This sensitivity to visual impact is evident throughout the materials, from double-decker busses down to pocket-size postcards with statistics about male violence (*Prevalence,* Figure 5.2) or list of common excuses about male violence (*Excuses,* Figure 5.3) on the reverse. As Hart recalled in our interview, the postcards were intentionally designed to be "professional and attractive," made from "really nice quality" glossy paper with "nice texture," and packaged in black cardstock folders sealed with stickers with the Z logo.

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[42] There is a transcription key in Appendix C.

Figure 5.2: Prevalence "3 to 93" on two-sided postcard[43][44]

From three to ninety three,

women are raped.

Z

**HUSBAND, FATHER, STRANGER
MALE ABUSE OF POWER IS A CRIME**

EDINBURGH DISTRICT COUNCIL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE
WORKING FOR ZERO TOLERANCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
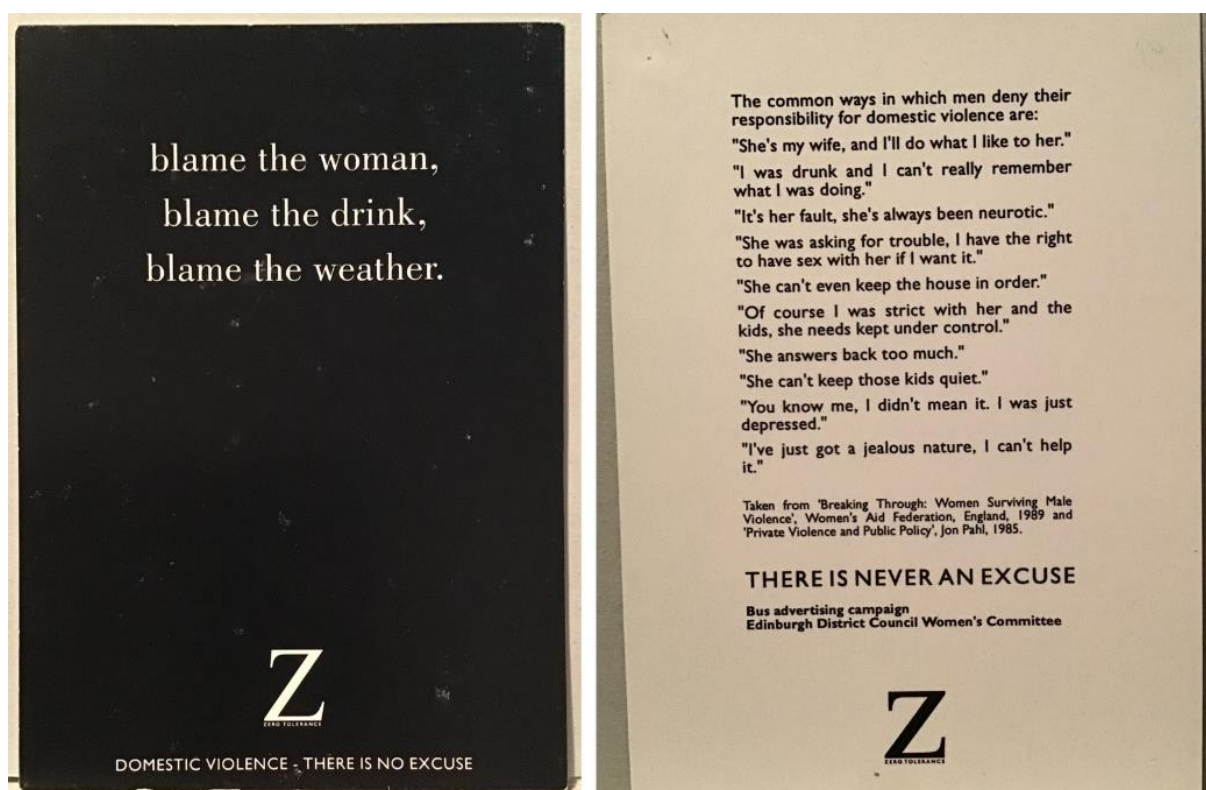
85% of rapists are men known to the victims.[1]

61% of rapes are committed indoors, usually in the victim's home.[2]

The acquittal rate in rape trials is 78%.[3]

1. 'Concerns About Rape'.
Home Office Report on Rape, 1989.

2. As Above.

3. 'Sexual History and Sexual Character Evidence in Scottish Sexual Offence Trials'.
Scottish Office, 1992.

40" x 40" outdoor display poster
Edinburgh District Council Women's Committee

Z

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[43] Source for both *Prevalence "3 to 93"* and *Excuses "Blame"* postcards: My own photographs of items provided by Elaine Samson.

Image credits: © Franki Raffles Estate, all rights reserved, for Zero Tolerance campaign(s). Similar images may be available as part of Franki Raffles Photography Collection: University of St Andrews Library and Edinburgh Napier University.

[44] As was the case with other Prevalence materials, there are multiple versions of this imagetext that feature the same message, but different photographs. The usual reason for this was that the photographs were customised for local audiences. In this case, there was some confusion between sources. One of the interview participants indicated that it was this version that was used in the original Edinburgh campaign, which is different than the one currently featured on the Zero Tolerance website.

blame the woman,
blame the drink,
blame the weather.

Z

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - THERE IS NO EXCUSE

The common ways in which men deny their responsibility for domestic violence are:

"She's my wife, and I'll do what I like to her."

"I was drunk and I can't really remember what I was doing."

"It's her fault, she's always been neurotic."

"She was asking for trouble, I have the right to have sex with her if I want it."

"She can't even keep the house in order."

"Of course I was strict with her and the kids, she needs kept under control."

"She answers back too much."

"She can't keep those kids quiet."

"You know me, I didn't mean it. I was just depressed."

"I've just got a jealous nature, I can't help it."

Taken from 'Breaking Through: Women Surviving Male Violence', Women's Aid Federation, England, 1989 and 'Private Violence and Public Policy', Jon Pahl, 1985.

THERE IS NEVER AN EXCUSE

Bus advertising campaign
Edinburgh District Council Women's Committee

Z

Hart recalled sending the postcards to all kinds of professionals such as politicians, educators, and academics:

> And it was interesting. People kept them. So, you go into somebody's like social work office or – I don't know – into [a] university somewhere and people had them tacked up on their wall, with the slogan or whatever it happened to be. Whichever one they thought was pertinent or important to them.

Hart's comments suggest that the postcards helped extend the campaigns' longevity. Indeed, many copies still survive; I was able to source good condition copies of postcards from multiple places, including my interview participants, my supervisor, and the Glasgow Women's Library archives. In the archives, I also found many Zero Tolerance materials produced between or outwith the larger campaigns. These materials ranged from pin badges to bumper stickers to bookmarks to a ca.1995 cinema advertisement. Hart described the cinema advertisement as a "cheap and cheerful" alternative to television advertising. These materials helped to keep the Zero Tolerance message in the public eye between campaigns, although some of them turned out to be less durable than

the attractive, portable, and tangible postcards. I was unable to find an outlet that could affordably convert the archival format of the cinema advertisement into a viewable copy, nor could I find any copies available via online resources.

The visual impact of their distribution methods was supported by the visually appealing images. According to Hart, Raffles's design pitch for the original Zero Tolerance campaign was one of three considered for the project. Raffles's images did not literally picture violence at all. As Samson recalled, producing beautiful imagery was a deliberate part of the Zero Tolerance strategy:

> It was the whole juxtaposition of people looking at these beautiful black and white images and then reading the text. That's what really worked. People were lulled: "Oh what's that about. Is it about carpets or whatever?" And then: "Oh!" when they actually saw the message and took it in.

I will return to this beautiful image / shocking text juxtaposition again in this chapter, but first it is helpful to explore the origin of those "beautiful black and white images." In addition to photographic and design skills, Raffles brought a passionate interest in the lives and liberation of women. Her professional history involved travelling the world to document the lives of women, and the Zero Tolerance photographs were part of a larger body of work that "reflects the energy and variety of feminist social documentary practice in the 1980s and early 1990s" (Scott, 2017, p. 58). Her involvement with the Scottish Women's Liberation movement stretched back to the 1970s, when she was an integral part of the St Andrew's consciousness raising group (Browne, 2014, pp. 50, 98). Deeply committed to the feminist Zero Tolerance mission, Raffles was the main creative force behind the *Prevalence* and *Excuses* materials*,* despite the latter featuring no photographs. A Samson recalled, Raffles "insisted on always being the one who took the images" for various campaign iterations.

After Raffles's death*,* the Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust commissioned other creative professionals such as photographers and graphic designers to put together the *Justice* and *Respect* materials. According to Samson, the campaigners were not looking for these outside professionals to be as enthusiastically involved and interested in the political project or ideological

messaging of these campaigns as Raffles had been. With the *Violence Unseen* campaign, however, the organisation returned to the original way of working, and sought to commission someone with an ideological investment in the work. The *Violence Unseen* photographer was chosen via a competitive tender process for the project. Another interview participant, Liz Ely, was the co-director when *Violence Unseen* was commissioned. In our September 2019 interview, Ely recalled that the organisation was looking for an arts practitioner who would "really be on board with the project."

The original *Prevalence* and *Violence Unseen* materials deliberately share many visual similarities. When Zero Tolerance was commissioning the arts practitioner for *Violence Unseen*, the advertisement stipulated that the new materials would use "Zero Tolerance's 1992 slogans and posters as a starting point" (Zero Tolerance, ca. 2017). I return to the Zero Tolerance photographs throughout this chapter to examine the ways that they engage with Western beauty norms. It is helpful now to turn to another important visual element of the campaigns: the Zero Tolerance brand identity.

Section 5.04   *Co-opting commercial tools for campaign messaging*

Zero Tolerance came about during an era in which corporate brands were ubiquitous. First published in 1999, Naomi Klein's *No Logo* comprehensively examines the stratospheric rise of global "brand identities" that began in the mid-1980s. Brands can be powerful tools. They are a form of "promotional capital," that "allows organisations to communicate identity and quality" (Edwards, 2018, p. 29). Brands can evoke various "cultural associations" in consumers (Aiello & Parry, 2019, p. 236). In chapter five of *No Logo*, "Patriarchy Gets Funky," Klein argues that such cultural associations can be co-opted by corporate entities. She provides examples of multinational fashion and beauty companies – including Diesel, Nike, Benetton, Calvin Klein, the GAP, the Body Shop, and MAC cosmetics – as branding themselves as progressive or radical in order to accrue the cultural associations that accompany such positioning (N. Klein, 2000/2010, pp. 107–124). Against this branded cultural backdrop, the success and global spread of Zero Tolerance showed that this co-option could work both ways. The tools used to construct brand identities for profit could also be used to promote

radical aims, even though such co-option is inevitably complicated by the norms and values of the dominant representational landscape.

From the start, the Zero Tolerance campaigners purposefully cultivated a recognisable brand that could be carried through to future campaigns. As Samson recalled, they wanted to have "the Z logo on everything, so that it was really branded right from the start." The unambivalent language of "Zero Tolerance" was borrowed from family violence work in Canada, although it was a Scottish innovation to make it the central organising principle of a campaign (Gillan & Samson, 2000, p. 342). Hart recalled bouncing ideas around with Raffles and Gillan in the early stages of *Prevalence*:

> And that's when we came up with the Z. At first, we were looking at zeroes, like round things. And we were looking at all sorts of other ways of integrating words [. . .] into visual images. And then decided actually that the Z was the most powerful thing because it was like really sharp and jagged. . . then we decided it should be a black and white campaign.
>
> Because to us at the time: this is a black and white issue. There is absolutely no tolerance whatsoever of this type of behaviour. We thought the black and white visual imagery would reinforce that.

The Z logo was the feature "most likely to be remembered" by early *Prevalence* focus group participants (Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993, p. 17). It appears in every item in my Zero Tolerance corpus, albeit with some variations as with the *Respect* posters that feature a circle around the Z (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4: Respect "Think Respect" poster[45]
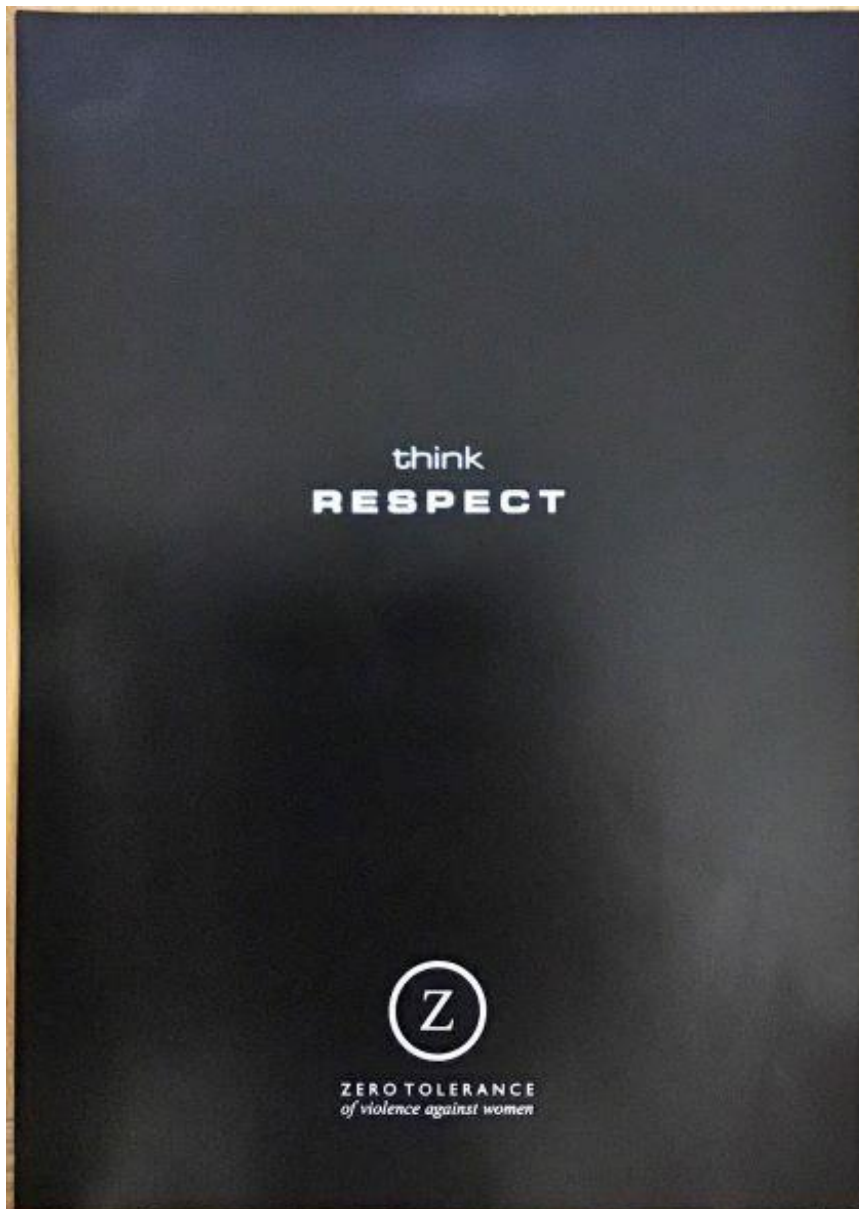
If other organisations wanted to license the campaign, the guidelines stipulated the use of the "corporate Z logo" (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 1996, p. Appendix 4). The later addition of the circle in Figure 5.4 notwithstanding, the campaigners' early preference for angularity over roundness suggests a sensitivity that logos are more than "indexes" of brand quality and authenticity (Aiello & Parry, 2019, p. 238). Logos are also "**iconic**, as they communicate

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[45] Image source and credit: Zero Tolerance archive at Glasgow Women's Library. Location information in references (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 2001).

qualities that are supposed to resemble the brand itself" [bold in original] (Aiello & Parry, 2019, p. 238). Kress and van Leeuwen's insights about the semiotic potential of geometric shapes can shed light on how the Z logo functions as an evocative and effective icon (1996/2006, pp. 53–59). Broadly speaking, round shapes evoke the natural world, whereas angularity signifies the human-made, the technological, and "a world we can, at least in principle, understand fully and rationally" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 55).

The angularity of the Zero Tolerance logo signifies that, contrary to victim-blaming narratives, male violence is not natural or inevitable. Such narratives generally frame men as natural predators, driven by uncontrollable or lustful urges. Women are thus obliged to manage the threat that men supposedly cannot, and the behaviours of women are policed accordingly. The Zero Tolerance *Justice* campaign highlighted how such victim-blaming ideology was embedded in the criminal justice system. One of the campaign's background briefings cites Sue Lees's *Carnal Knowledge: Rape on Trial:* "In court women have been asked whether they 'asked for it by wearing a short skirt or false eyelashes'" (Lees, 1996; cited in *Zero Tolerance Justice 'Rape'*, ca. 1997, p. 2). Hence, we are confronted with one of the many double-binds of patriarchy. Women face intense social and economic pressure to participate in beauty practices, but that same participation can then be used to justify male violence perpetrated against us.

While the angular Z confronts the essentialist idea that men are irredeemably violent, it paradoxically taps into gendered tropes of masculinity and femininity. In her prologue to *Femininity,* Brownmiller describes a childhood game in which a dropped fork or knife portended the unexpected arrival of a male dinner guest, whereas a spoon foresaw a female visitor. She writes that: "Men were straight-edged, sharply pronged and formidable, women were softly curved and held the food in a rounded well" (Brownmiller, 1984/1986, p. 1). This gendered anthropomorphism made "perfect sense" to Brownmiller as a child (1984/1986, p. 1). Shifting beauty norms may alter expectations about how "curvy" an ideal woman's body should be, but curviness is generally read as feminine and angularity is read as masculine. The angular Z semiotically constructs the issue of

"violence against women" as a masculine problem, i.e. it is supported by norms of masculine behaviour, structures of male power, and overwhelmingly perpetrated by men.

The black and white colour scheme is another integral feature of the Zero Tolerance brand. Using standardised colour schemes to signal readily recognisable "unique identities" is a common visual technique employed by organisations ranging from car manufacturers to universities (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 229). All of the Zero Tolerance materials I analysed are black and white. There is work from 1992 to 2018 that uses more colour, but as collaborative and/or educational projects, these were not included in my corpus. For instance, some of the *Respect* resources for use in educational settings use colour, as do the Women's Support Project co-branded *Money and Power* and *Pleasure vs Profit* projects referred to earlier in this chapter (Section 5.02).

Irrespective of ideology, creative decisions are inevitably shaped by material factors, and Samson told me that one rationale for the black and white colour scheme was simply that it was cheaper to reproduce. This need to be frugal enabled the campaign to stand out in a crowded semiotic field, turning a limitation into an advantage. Constraints can provoke creative techniques for attracting the public gaze. As Samson recalled:

> At that time, black and white was really, really rare. You know, colour was where it was at. So, to do something that was black and white was really, really different and was going to catch people's attention.

This statement reveals how the "communicative functions of colour" can generate both interpersonal / interactive and ideational / representational meanings (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 228–232). The visual contrast between the black and white Zero Tolerance materials and the colourful and crowded media marketplace demanded the viewer pay attention. The "really different" look of the campaigns also underlines the really different ideational perspective of Zero Tolerance. By reinforcing the metaphorical black-and-white-ness inherent in the "Zero Tolerance" linguistic message, the black and white colour scheme issues an

interpersonal challenge to re-examine problematic ideational concepts related to men's violence against women and children.

Colour can also be used textually / compositionally. Many of the Zero Tolerance photographs – and *all* the ones from *Prevalence* and *Violence Unseen* – are surrounded by, or positioned against, a heavy black background containing white text.[46] The black and white textual zones create visual coherence by echoing and complementing the black and whiteness of the photographs, yet they also produce a stark contrast between the textual areas and the photographs. Black and white photographs actually consist of a continuum of colours, from brightest white to muted greys to richest black.

The photograph in Figure 5.5 is soft and pleasant. A Black woman, MP Diane Abbott, is professionally groomed and dressed but relaxed and smiling. The washed-out greyscale hue of the Palace of Westminster in the distance makes it look uncharacteristically unimposing. The photograph could easily be used for an aspirational campaign encouraging young women of colour to run for public office. Ely recalled Abbott's participation was not part of the original campaign plan and was driven by the initiative of photographer Bruce; it is worth noting that it would have been impossible to take an analogous photograph in Scotland. At the time, there had never been a woman of colour elected to the Scottish Parliament (*Scottish Election*, 2021). There is a severe visual boundary between the pleasant photograph and the flat, heavy, and unmodulated black of the textual area. This boundary accentuates the dissonance between the pleasant image of Abbott and her deeply unpleasant experience: "I have had death threats, and people tweeting that I should be hung and raped."

As Ely observed, Figure 5.5 communicates that "even women in the highest points of power still face these issues" of male violence. Indeed, the imagetext emphasises that the visibility that comes with political power can be more dangerous for some people. In addition to being targeted by the

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[46] There were some versions of the *Prevalence* materials that featured black-text-on-white background, but the white-text-on-black is the norm.

"characteristically racist and sexist" abuse described in Figure 5.5, Abbott has also been at the sharp end of fatphobic vitriol (Abbott, 2017). The Black female MP is made hyper-visible to patriarchal surveillance and abuse by her distance from the default whiteness and maleness of institutional power, as well as her perceived failure to adequately perform her feminine "duty" of disciplining her body to fit normative standards of size.

Figure 5.5: Violence Unseen "Online" in exhibition panel format[47]

The semiotic potential of the black and white Zero Tolerance branding is especially well exploited in those materials that contain no photographs at all, as was the case in all of the *Excuses* materials such as Figure 5.6. They have no ambiguous shades of grey, only a binary black and white. The bold white text
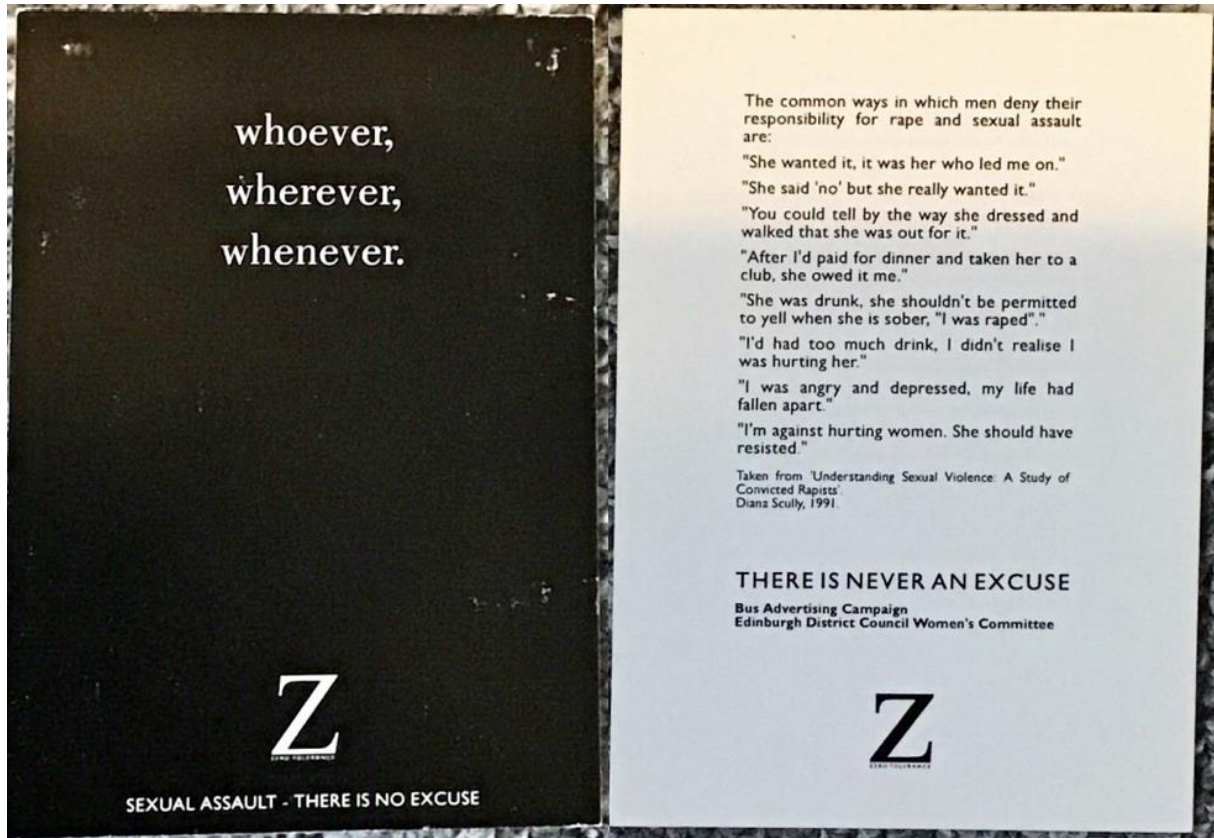
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[47] Source: via email from Zero Tolerance.

Image credit: © Alicia Bruce, commissioned by Zero Tolerance, all rights reserved.

against the deep black background starkly reinforces the black and white visual
"Zero Tolerance" metaphor.

Figure 5.6: Excuses "Whoever" on two-sided postcard[48]

Aiello and Parry write that the purpose of branding is to "foster long-term
engagement and **loyalty** among consumers" [bold in original] (2019, p. 235).
Comments from Hart about the *Excuses* materials reveal that the Z logo and
branding helped with long-term engagement. When I asked Hart about the
decision to move away from using photographs for *Excuses,* she said:

> So, if they saw the Z, they would realise what it was in terms of what was
> the message that is coming with it. And not always in a positive way. But
> anyway, so that's why we didn't feel that we needed images at that stage.

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[48] Source: My own photograph of item provided by Karen Boyle. Image credit: © Franki Raffles
Estate, all rights reserved, for Zero Tolerance campaign(s). Similar images may be available as
part of Franki Raffles Photography Collection: University of St Andrews Library and Edinburgh
Napier University.

Because people recognised what the Z was about and knew what the campaign was about. [. . .] And so we got slightly more cryptic. We felt that we could at that stage to kind of keep the interest going. So, when we came up with the "whoever, wherever, whenever" – that on its own doesn't mean anything. But it does if you understand that it's about Zero Tolerance of violence against women.

"Loyalty" might not have always been the affective reaction to the Zero Tolerance brand. As Hart intimated, the response was not always positive – this will be addressed in Section 5.06. What I want to note here is how the campaigners were able to transform the ubiquitous visual resonance of the early work into a semiotic resource. At first glance, the *Excuses* imagetexts appear sparse and simple, but Hart's recollections highlight the semiotic richness of the campaign. As the photographs in *Prevalence* did not directly reference male violence, neither does the "slightly more cryptic" headline text of the *Excuses* materials: "whoever, wherever, whenever." This cryptic-ness serves as an attention-getting (interpersonal) device that keeps "the interest going." The linguistic ambiguity clashes with the moral clarity signified by the black and white visual metaphor. The *Excuses* visual and rhetorical landscape is one of unstable boundaries: between black and white, and between ambiguity and certainty. I suggest that this semiotic instability can be a generative force. By startling the viewers and challenging them to reconsider comfortable certainties, the materials create the possibility for new meanings to be created between producers, texts, and viewers. Of course, Figure 5.6 does restrict the range of possible meanings. There is a critical question not explicitly asked – *what* is this message about? There is significantly less rhetorical uncertainty about that. At the literal bottom line of the imagetext, the tagline reads: "SEXUAL ASSAULT – THERE IS NO EXCUSE."

Figure 5.6 unequivocally conveys a message that there is never any circumstance in which sexual assault is excusable, but it also subtly de-genders the problem by eliding the particularities of sexual violence. The wording suggests that the *who-*, *where-*, and *when-* do not really matter, even though they clearly do. While sexual assault is never excusable, it is sometimes more likely. *Whoever*

is far more likely to be a man assaulting a woman than vice versa. This subtle de-gendering of the perpetrator is somewhat at odds with Zero Tolerance's commitment to a gendered approach to male violence. When displayed as posters – i.e. without the information on the back of the postcards – none of the *Excuses* imagetexts I analysed mention men at all; this mirrors the wider invisibilisation of male perpetrators discussed further in the next section. It is not that the Zero Tolerance campaigners were inconsistent in their messaging. The reverse side of the postcard version lists "common ways in which men deny their responsibility for rape and sexual assault," clearly communicating the gendered nature of the problem. One of these excuses is particularly relevant to the way that cultural narratives entangle sex, violence, and objectification to justify male sexual violence towards women: "You could tell by the way she dressed and walked that she was out for it." The semiotic complexities of the *Excuses* materials show that there are trade-offs in representational decisions. Every choice to render one reality more visible, renders others less visible.

As mentioned previously, despite Zero Tolerance being about "violence against women," there is no actual violence pictured in the campaign photographs I analysed. The nearest I found to Zero Tolerance materials actually showing men perpetrating violence was in photographs from *one thousand words,* a 2017 partnership project with Scottish Women's Aid (Scottish Women's Aid, 2017c). Storyteller and photographer Laura Dodsworth produced a series of no-fee stock images in consultation with domestic abuse victims / survivors in order to "challenge domestic abuse stereotypes" (Logan, 2017). While four of those photographs picture men behaving in physically menacing ways, they still stop short of depicting explicit physical violence (Figure 5.7). I return to the significance of more explicit violence again in Section 7.03 of the Scottish Women's Aid chapter. As a more targeted intervention for specialised publics, *one thousand words* did not meet my methodological criteria for a "campaign" close text analysis. Furthermore, the producers of *one thousand words* have limited control over how the images will be used. The language that may ultimately accompany these photographs is – at the point of image construction – unknown.

Figure 5.7: one thousand words stock images[49]

In the *Prevalence* materials, the male violence is thrust into "cosy pictures" via a technique described by Kitzinger and Hunt as the: "text / image disjuncture" (1993, pp. 40–41). As shown by the Diane Abbott imagetext (Figure 5.5), this technique also features somewhat less jarringly in the *Violence Unseen* materials. As early evaluations of the *Prevalence* campaign noted, the "photographs remind people of familiar images conventionally used in commercial advertisements for furniture, insurance or fireplaces" (*Zero Tolerance Background Information Pack (Strathclyde)*, ca. 1994). As photographs are inherently polysemous, text can be used to guide viewers towards a particular meaning (Barthes, 1977, pp. 38–39). This relationship is usually one of anchorage that defines or explains the image (Barthes, 1977, pp. 40–41). The *Prevalence* text functions more like what is known as "relay" text which adds "new and different meanings" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 18). Viewers may be accustomed to anchorage texts from familiar forms of communication such as advertisements, whereas relay text is found mostly "in cartoons and comic strips" (Barthes, 1977, p. 41). We are primed to expect more conventional anchorage text, but the "shocking" relay text subverts that expectation. This contravention of the visual expectations of form brings to mind J. Williamson's observations that form can successfully hide ideology (1978, p. 29). In summarising some of the early responses to the *Prevalence* campaign, Kitzinger and Hunt write that this technique "disrupts people's assumptions and can confront them with their own stereotypes about 'the look' of an abused girl or woman" (1993, pp. 40–41). The campaign's counter-hegemonic ideology was baked into the very form of the earliest Zero Tolerance materials.

As the dissonant text subverts familiar expectations about what to expect from the photographs, the photographs themselves subvert traditional ideas around men's violence against women and children. All of the *Prevalence* photographs feature settings full of markers of Scottish, middle-class, cosy domesticity such as a fireplace, Oriental rugs, and plush leather furnishings. As noted in my interviews and in the literature, the "middle-class-ness" of the images was designed to challenge stereotyped notions that men's violence against women and children is a working-class problem (Cosgrove, 1996, p. 191; Gillan & Samson, 2000, p. 346; Kitzinger, 2006, p. 332).

Other Zero Tolerance campaign materials also echo the look of commercial advertisements. Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9 are from the *Respect* campaign. They feature the same photograph, albeit with different cropping, of a mixed gender, racially diverse group of four late teenagers / young adults standing in a line and looking directly at the viewer with unsmiling expressions. The different textual messaging reveals again how important text can be in affixing meaning to images. Here I concentrate on the text of Figure 5.8, which is the item in the Zero Tolerance corpus that most directly refers to feminine beauty or, more precisely, prettiness. The text declares:

Boys must always be tough

Girls just need to be pretty
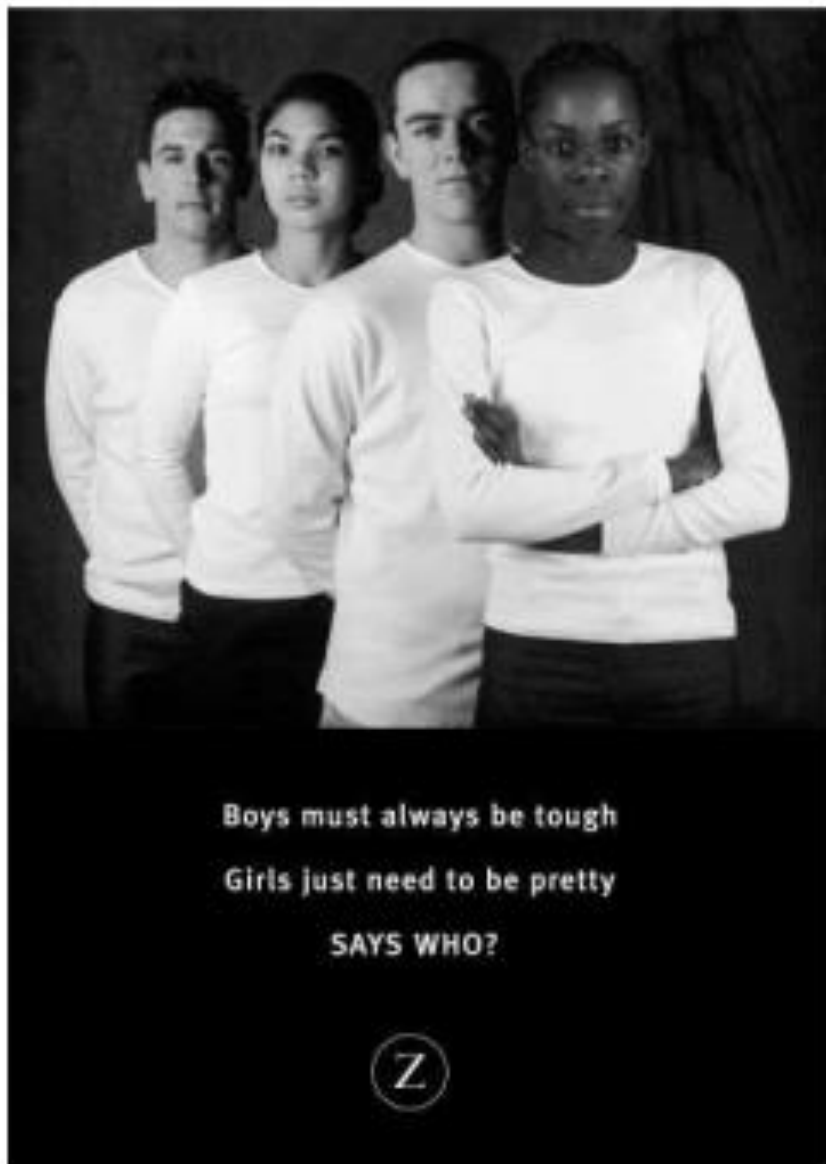
SAYS WHO?

Figure 5.8: Respect "Says Who"

Boys must always be tough

Girls just need to be pretty

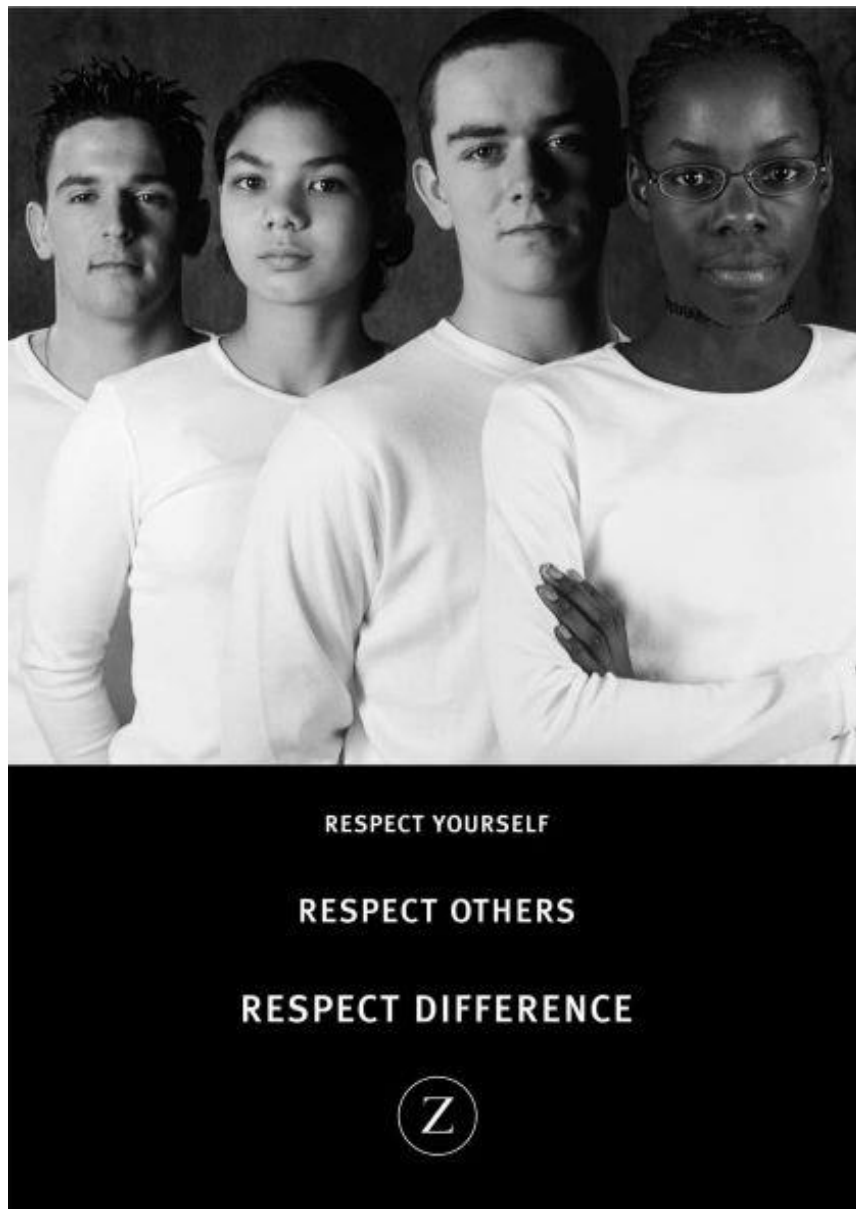SAYS WHO?

Figure 5.9: Respect "Difference" [50]

Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9 are from the more public-facing aspect of the *Respect* programme which used materials such as posters and bus side advertisements as "mechanisms within the integrated programme that involve the whole community in the Respect message" (*Respect Pilot Project Final Report*, 2001). Some of the materials used in educational settings – such as the

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[50] Source for both *Respect* "*Says Who*" and "*Difference*": https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/about-our-prevention-campaign/

Image credit: Zero Tolerance.

accompanying CD Rom – did directly address issues such as "consent, respect, sex, contraception, coercion, sexual harassment and domestic abuse" (Reid Howie Associates, 2001b, p. 13). In contrast, Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9 do not mention violence at all. To theorise how these imagetexts relate to male violence, it is instructive to remember that Zero Tolerance's expertise is in primary prevention. The organisation aims to tackle the underlying attitudes and structures that enable male violence (Zero Tolerance SCIO, 2018, p. 3). If we understand violence as both a "cause and consequence" of gender inequality (Jahan, 2018), then ending that inequality becomes a necessary condition for ending male violence. Furthermore, if we understand compulsory beauty norms as supporting gender inequality, then those norms become a legitimate target in the struggle to end male violence. Therefore, we can understand Figure 5.8 as a primary prevention intervention that addresses male violence by targeting the gendered social expectations that reinforce gender inequality

The wording of Figure 5.8 is evocative as it nods not just to wider beauty culture, but to tensions amongst feminists themselves. Being "tough" implies an active subject. Being "pretty" implies a passive object (the considerable demands of aesthetic labour notwithstanding). The assertion that girls "just need to be pretty" implies that it is less valued than masculine tough-ness ("just"). "Pretty" is a lesser form of beauty, in that it attracts "disapprobation" from many quarters, including feminists who may view a "pretty girl" as "one who accedes to patriarchal standards of behavior and self-presentation" (Galt, 2011, p. 6). This disapprobation evokes frictions within the 1970s Scottish liberation movement and a "judgemental" strand of feminists who "formed idealised versions of what a 'true' feminist should be like" (Browne, 2014, pp. 94–96). Among other factors, wearing cosmetics or having long hair could be disqualifiers. Feminists have long had complicated and contentious relationships with beauty practices and norms. Figure 5.8 suggests that such complications and contentions can semiotically function to add rich layers of meaning to cultural texts.

While Figure 5.8 pushes back at the cultural mandate of prettiness, it is notable that all four *Respect* models are clear-skinned, slender, late teenagers / young adults with no visible disabilities, i.e., they can be read as normatively

attractive. After the *Respect* pilot, the external consultants produced an extensive evaluation report that incorporated feedback from staff and young people who had participated in the educational project. The posters were generally seen as effective by "almost all of the young people of all ages" with specific comments on their clarity of message and racial diversity (Reid Howie Associates Ltd., 2001b, pp. 35–36). Some of the more critical comments highlight again the inevitable tensions of crafting these campaigns. Some youth work staff and young people felt that the black and white was "not sufficiently eye-catching" (Reid Howie Associates Ltd., 2001b, p. 36). In contrast, two youth workers suggested that the models were "too "glamourous"" for local young people to relate to (Reid Howie Associates Ltd., 2001b, p. 36).

It is curious that participants would read the images as glamourous. The models may be attractive, but they are not styled to look obviously glamorous. They all wear a nearly identical gender-neutral casual outfit. The young women both have their hair neatly pulled back in simple styles, and neither appears to be wearing much, if any, cosmetics. The only visible accessories are the glasses and discreet choker on the female model in the front, and what appears to be a thin chain tucked into the shirt of the male model in the back. The impression of glamour is perhaps rooted more in the visual design conventions employed in the image than by the models themselves. As one young person observed: "they were just standing there doing nothing – they looked like a French Connection advert" (Reid Howie Associates Ltd., 2001b, p. 36). French Connection would have had a particular resonance for the young people at the time. From the mid-1990s, the retailer had attracted both high profile controversy and considerable financial success with their "raunchy billboards" and "naughty" "fcuk" branding which targeted the 18 to 30 demographic (Finch, 2001). The young person's observation that the campaign was speaking in the visual language of contemporary fashion advertising was astute. The plain white tee-shirts and almost androgynous presentation of the models were indeed designed to tap into the familiar conventions of a contemporary fashion brand identity. However, it was not French Connection that the photographs were modelled on, but the GAP. By the late 1990s, the GAP company "had pioneered its own aesthetic, which spilled out into music, other advertisements, even films like *The Matrix"* (N. Klein, 2000/2010, p.

46). As Samson told me, by 2001 it had also spilled out into Zero Tolerance's visual imagery, and the photograph was "deliberately taken to look like it was GAP advertising." In keeping with the campaigners' budget-consciousness, the outfits were sourced "by buying a whole load of clothes and returning them after the photoshoot."

The young people in Figure 5.8 are serious and unsmiling. The young Black woman is posed in a way that is particularly commanding. Her body is positioned in front of the others, but also closed off from the viewer by her crossed arms. The image may be pretty, but she is positioned to appear – in the imagetext's vernacular – as "tough." The models all look directly at the camera / viewer. Borrowing from Halliday, Kress and van Leeuwen would characterise this photograph as a "demand" image; the subjects are doing "something to the viewer" who is the object of their gaze (1996/2006, p. 118). The imagetext realises its full semiotic potential in the bottom line which is emphasised by the use of all-capital letters – "SAYS WHO?" This question, along with the body language of the models, is a direct interpersonal challenge to fill in the rhetorical blanks – a markedly different rhetorical strategy than the more unequivocal taglines of *Prevalence* or *Excuses*. What J. Williamson calls the "advertising-work" being demanded of the viewer is different (1978). Figure 5.8 does not tell the viewers what to think about the relative social value of toughness or prettiness. Instead, the imagetext uses a potentially more persuasive strategy of inviting the viewers to draw their own conclusions about whose interests such gendered expectations serve.

The focus on breaking down underlying social norms marks *Respect* as different from campaigns such as the year 2000 US-based *My Strength is Not for Hurting,* which also imitates "the visual aesthetics of commercial advertising" (Murphy, 2009, p. 119). Murphy's analysis of that campaign found that, despite good intentions, it ultimately reified hegemonic norms by valorising masculine "strength," and it reproduced many of advertising's "most durable gender stereotypes" (2009, pp. 114,119). *Respect's* more sophisticated gender analysis notwithstanding, it is impossible to get away from the fact that hegemonic notions of feminine beauty play a significant and complex role in the visual rhetoric of

fashion advertising. In the next chapter on Rape Crisis Scotland, I further explore how feminist campaigns play with glamourous or beautiful design conventions. I want to highlight here that the deliberate deployment in *Respect* of some of these conventions potentially reinforces the very norms they sought to subvert. As I have discussed, the prettiness (or not-ugliness) of the models results as much from the form and style of the materials, as it does from the models' personal appearance or presentation. One young person felt that the *Respect* message "wouldn't have been so effective if they had been ugly people in the poster" (Reid Howie Associates, 2001b, p. 36). Even in response to a campaign text that overtly sent the message that the prettiness of the models did not matter, at least one viewer perceived that the models' "prettiness" mattered very much.

Finally, there is a notable feature that marks the *Respect* photograph in Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9 out from most of the Zero Tolerance photographs: the inclusion of the two male models. Only one other Zero Tolerance photograph in my corpus features a male clearly beyond the age of childhood, and his face is not even visible. The gender of the person in Figure 5.10 is suggested only by text that reads "End the Male Protection Racket." Although the judge in this image is implied to be complicit in the perpetuation of male violence, he is not himself presented as a direct perpetrator. Indeed, there are no perpetrators pictured in any of the Zero Tolerance materials I analysed. In fact, the boys in Figure 5.11 are clearly presented, not as perpetrators, but as victims / survivors of male sexual violence. As discussed previously, *Excuses* does not use photographs at all. In a forthcoming publication, I consider this absence of male perpetrators in relation to traditional notions of the private (feminine) and public (masculine) realms (McKeown, Forthcoming). In the next section I address how the absence of male perpetrators relates to my central interest in feminine beauty and specifically to objectification.
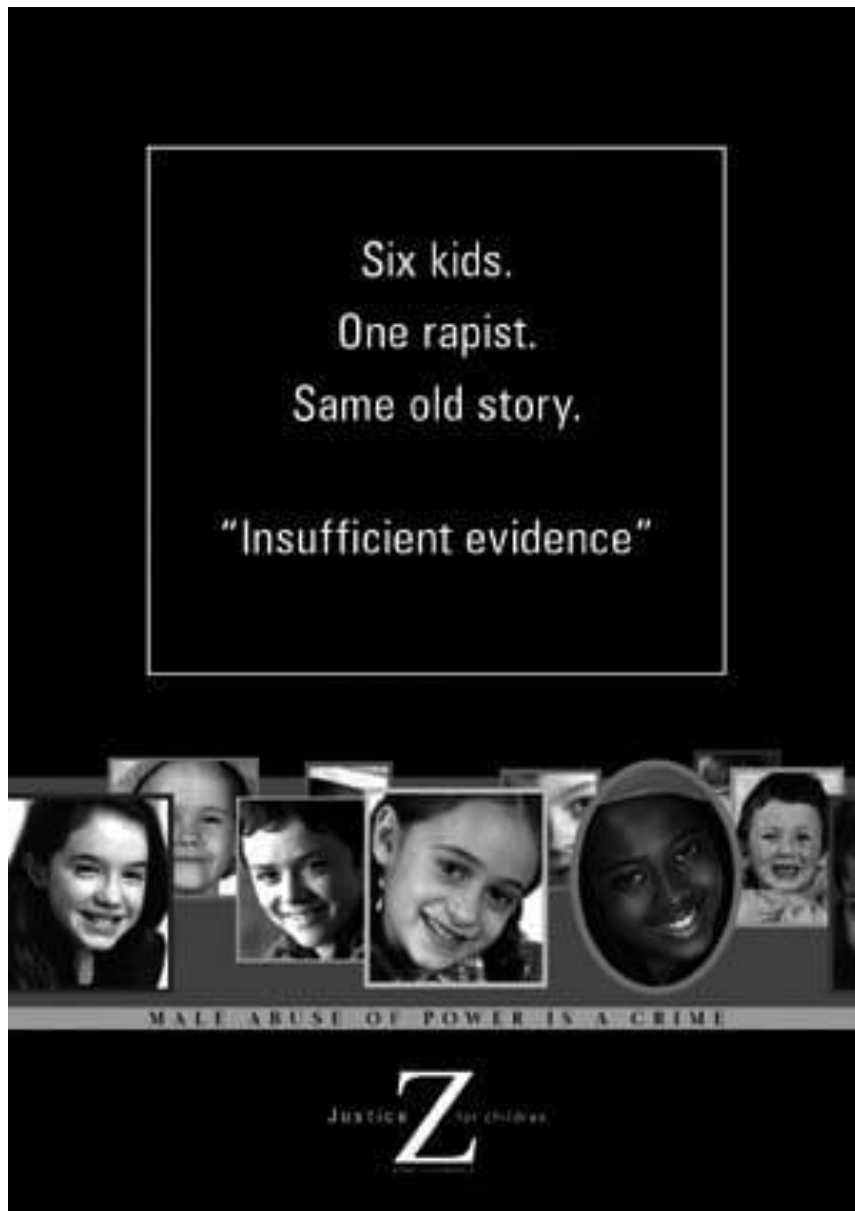
Figure 5.10: Justice "Male Racket"[51]
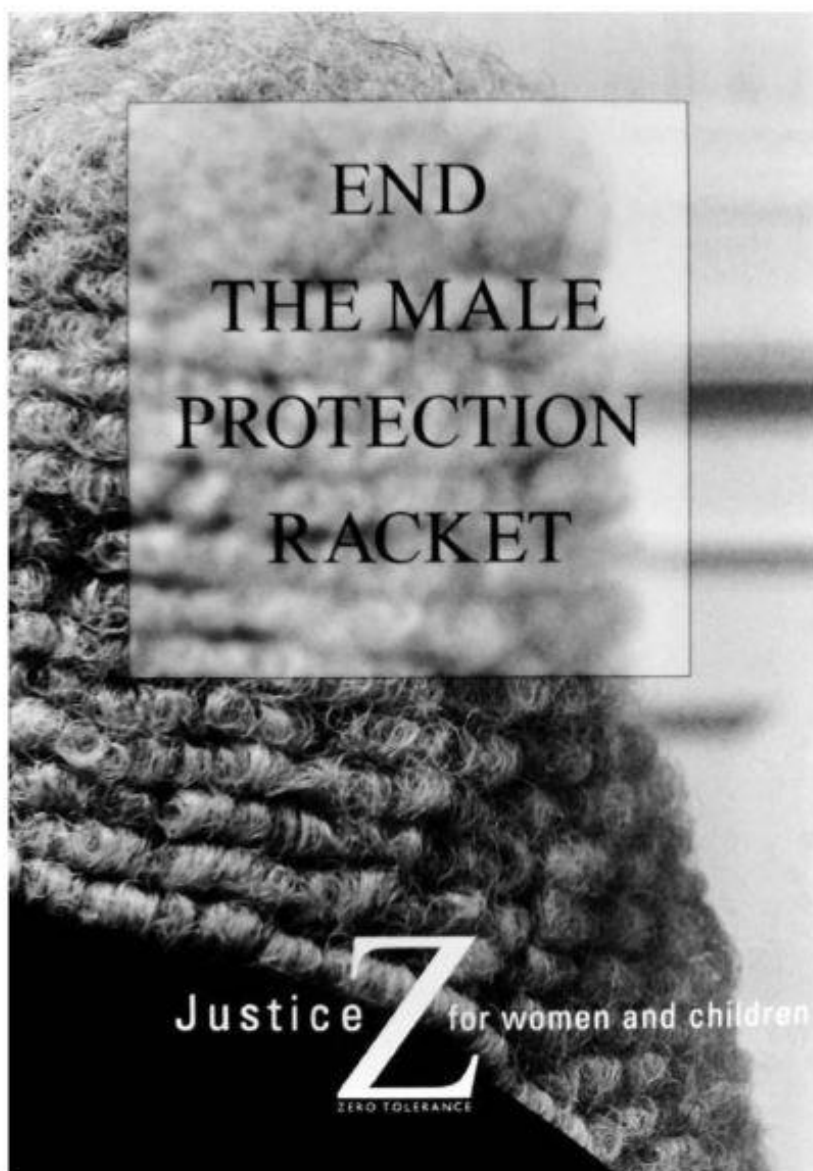
Figure 5.11: Justice "Insufficient"

Section 5.05   *Missing men and watching women*

The use of studio backdrops, framing, and cropping means that the *Justice* and *Respect* photographs do not have visible settings. In contrast, the *Prevalence* photographs were taken inside domestic spaces in order "to challenge the myth that women were more at risk from strangers outdoors" (Gillan & Samson, 2000, p. 346). Three of the *Violence Unseen* photographs also position the models in cosy domestic spaces. By bringing these private domestic spaces into the public gaze, the campaigns challenge the idea that male violence is a private problem (McKeown, Forthcoming). As articulated by the photographer in the exhibition brochure: "men's violence against women is not a private domestic matter, it's a human rights issue" (Bruce, ca. 2018). As a public human rights issue, male violence thus becomes a legitimate site for public interventions.

Children are an integral part of this domestic framing. Only one *Prevalence* photograph does not feature a child or young person. In that exception, the textual reference to the "loving father" implies that there are children in this home (Figure 5.13). There are children in the foreground of two *Violence Unseen* photographs (Figure 5.12, Figure 5.17). In another, a young girl's reflection is vaguely visible in a mirror in the far corner of the room (Figure 5.14). The inclusion of children was always part of the Zero Tolerance message, because the campaigners understood child abuse as part of Kelly's continuum of male violence rooted in patriarchal power and control. In fact, a *Justice* campaign briefing explicitly credits Kelly for the organisational understanding of child abuse (*Zero Tolerance Justice campaign information briefing—Child abuse*, n.d., p. 1).

The children in these photographs may provoke a whole range of cultural associations: love, care, nurturing, joy, domesticity. There are also more sinister implications of their presence. Both the cultural expectations of motherhood and the intense love mothers may feel for children can be exploited to exert control over women, which was addressed in Section 2.04's discussion about if and when to include children when referring to male violence.

Figure 5.12 illustrates some ways in which women's experiences of motherhood are complicated by the patriarchy. This *Violence Unseen* imagetext quotes FGM survivor and activist, Fatou Baldeh:

> They thought if you weren't cut, you're going to be talked about, you're going to be stigmatised, no-one is going to marry you. And here I was thinking; "Do I care about the marriage part, or do I care about their health? Do I want them to suffer what I've suffered? Do I want them to go through what I go through?" No way.

Figure 5.12: Violence Unseen "FGM" in printed exhibition brochure format [52]

'They thought if you weren't cut, you're going to be talked about, you're going to be stigmatised, no-one is going to marry you. And here I was thinking; "Do I care about the marriage part, or do I care about their health? Do I want them to suffer what I've suffered? Do I want them to go through what I go through?" No way.'

—Fatou Baldeh

As many as **137,000** girls in the UK undergo female genital mutilation (FGM) every year.² FGM is a form of control of women's sexuality and an expression of men's sense of ownership of women. These crimes are neither religious nor culturally specific and anyone, from anywhere, may be affected.

The World Health Organisation estimates that around **140 million** women from 29 countries worldwide have been affected by FGM and that every year another three million girls become at risk of the procedure, which either partially or wholly removes or injures their genitalia, for non-medical reasons.

Picture developed in collaboration with Shakti Women's Aid. In the picture: Fatou Baldeh, FGM survivor and campaigner

Fatou Baldeh is a Gambian-born activist involved in the campaign to end FGM. She has an MSc. in Sexual and Reproductive Health and is the FGM mapping and network coordinator at Waverley Care and a Trustee for Dignity Alert & Research Forum (DARF). She experienced female genital mutilation at the age of 7.

Shakti Women's Aid helps black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) women, children, and young people experiencing, or who have experienced, domestic abuse from a partner, ex-partner, and/or other members of the household. Shakti provides training and consultancy for agencies working with BAME women, children, and young people. www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk

¹ City University London. Prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation Study (2015)

By framing FGM as in a child's best interest – so that she will not be stigmatised – the pressure to participate in the harmful patriarchal practice draws upon expectations of maternal duty. At the same time, Baldeh's words reveal that a mother's sense of duty and love may also provide strength that women can draw upon to resist violence. The gendered expectations of motherhood share this important characteristic with the gendered expectation of beauty: they can function as sites of both oppression and resistance. I return to this dual function of beauty in more depth in Section 7.03 of the Scottish Women's Aid with an analysis of a campaign video set in a beauty salon.

This domestication is not unproblematic – especially with the *Prevalence* photographs which are always and only domestic. As with the *Violence Unseen* imagetext featuring MP Diane Abbott (Figure 5.5) (Section 5.04), the contrast between the harsh black and white textual zones and the softer greyscale generates additional meanings. As I also argue elsewhere, the heavy black background in the domestic *Prevalence* and *Violence Unseen* photographs creates a severe visual boundary which semiotically confines the women and their children to these domestic spaces (McKeown, Forthcoming). Figure 5.13 from *Prevalence* and Figure 5.14 from *Violence Unseen* are useful exemplars of these dynamics. By confining women to domestic spaces, the photographs subtly reinforce some of the same gendered ideologies that they seek to upend. One such ideology is that of "feminine domesticity" which holds that women are more naturally suited to the domestic sphere than the public one (Oakley, 1974/1990, p. 47). A woman's traditional domestic place is replete with stereotyped gender roles – depictions of such roles were a regular feature of the media landscape in the decades preceding the original Zero Tolerance campaign. Numerous studies in the 1970s and 1980s repeatedly found a "pronounced pattern of gender stereotyping in adverts in the US, UK and elsewhere," which included predominantly showing women "in the home, depicted as housewives and mothers" (Gill, 2007, p. 78).

Figure 5.13: Prevalence "Businessman" [53]

Figure 5.14: Violence Unseen "Images" in exhibition panel format[54]

The textual messaging of Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14 makes clear that domestic spaces do not protect women from male violence: one woman is hospitalised by her husband and, as will be returned to, the other experienced a "massive invasion of privacy" via image-based sexual abuse. Yet, we see no male perpetrators in these domestic spaces, and the photographs conform to a "dominant imaginary" where the "male subject exercising violence continues to be unrepresentable" (Magaraggia & Cherubini, 2017, pp. 450–451). In the next section of this chapter, Section 5.06, I return to how this visual elision of men can be reconciled with the campaigners' goal of aiming the messages at male structures of power. First, I want to address how this elision sits within Berger's famous characterisation of the western representational landscape as one in which "*men act* and *women appear*" [emphasis in original] (Berger et al.,

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[54] Source: via email from Zero Tolerance.

1972/1977, p. 47). It would be misleading to argue that women simply "appear" in these photographs. Across all of the *Prevalence* and *Violence Unseen* photographs, the women are engaged in a range of activities such as reading, caring for others, and working on a computer. These actions are ancillary, however, as the purpose of these campaigns is not *about* these activities. As we learn from the accompanying texts, the photographs are *about* male violence against women and children. Ultimately, these photographs use images of women as conduits through which the actions of the invisible, but still agentic, male subject is represented.

The visual focus of the photographs in Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14 is not on the perpetrators at all, but on women and women's bodies. The complication with this approach is that it subtly reproduces a visual rhetoric which positions women's bodies as objects of the gaze. While none of Zero Tolerance photographs are explicitly erotic, the presentation of women in Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14 still imbues the representational subjects with a sense of Mulvey's "to-be-looked-at-ness" (1975/2006, p. 346). Observations I make for the forthcoming Routledge handbook chapter are useful here: there are clear visual echoes of the *Prevalence* photograph in the much later *Violence Unseen* photograph (McKeown, Forthcoming). Both photographs feature a woman sitting alone (or mostly alone)[55] in a sitting room. There are shoes discarded near both women's stockinged feet. The models could both be described as normatively attractive: thin, white, young (20s–30s), and showing no visible disabilities. Both models conform to conventional feminine presentation and attire. The lines of the floorboard and the long camera shot work in concert to extend the perceived distance between viewer and model. From this distance, the effect for the viewer is of a stranger looking in on the models (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 124–129). This distancing is further enhanced by the fact that the models are engaged in their own activities. As with the other *Prevalence* photographs and the *Violence Unseen "FGM"* image, they do not make eye contact with the viewer

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[55] There is a dog sitting on the sofa in the *Violence Unseen* photograph, and a close examination of a mirror reveals a reflection of what appears to be young girl holding a cat.

(Figure 5.2, Figure 5.18, Figure 5.19, Figure 5.12). This lack of eye contact constructs what Kress and van Leeuwen, again borrowing from Halliday, call an "offer" image:

> Here the viewer is not object, but subject of the look, and the represented participant is the object of the viewer's dispassionate scrutiny. No contact is made. The viewer's role is that of an invisible onlooker (1996/2006, p. 119).

The net effect of these shared photographic choices is to position the viewer as the unseen voyeur and the models as the objects to be watched. As a form of objectification, it is a subtle and arguably justifiable one. However, objectification of any degree can never be fully extricated from a representational landscape deeply infused with patriarchal imperatives.

In Figure 5.14, this subtle objectification is being used to draw attention to the much more dangerous manifestation of objectification: the relatively recent phenomena of *image-based sexual abuse*. The viewer does not know what the woman is doing on the laptop, but the reference to "a massive invasion of privacy" hints at an ominous possibility. The caption in the lower left of the image identifies the model as "journalist and feminist activist," Vonny Moyes. Moyes is one of the four named *Violence Unseen* models that have public profiles (as a journalist, as a politician, or as activists). Section 3.02 of the literature review explored how visibility can be a double-edge sword, and how "the spotlight can also become a site of misogyny" (Banet-Weiser, 2018, p. 26). Online spaces, in particular, can provide the means for "digital surveillance" and abuse (Megarry, 2018). Moyes has written about her experience of someone finding nude photographs of her on a pornography site and sharing them to Twitter (Amnesty International, 2018, p. 30; Leclerc, 2016).

It is not made clear how the perpetrator acquired the photographs of Moyes and if their actions were illegal under the *Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016*. By calling it "*so-called* 'revenge porn'" the text alludes to the problems with this term that have been explored by Clare McGlynn et al. [emphasis added] (2017). They propose that "revenge porn" – which is popularly understood as the actions of a malevolent ex-partner – is just one behaviour that

sits both within a "continuum of image-based sexual abuse" and the wider continuum of gendered sexual violence as articulated by Kelly (McGlynn et al., 2017). Other behaviours on the image-based sexual abuse continuum include what McGlynn et al. term "sexualised photoshopping" and "sexual extortion." With sexualised photoshopping, a perpetrator digitally manipulates a non-sexual image of the victim to appear pornographic. With sexual extortion, individuals may be coerced into creating sexualised images or such images might be stolen from data storage services (McGlynn et al., 2017, pp. 33–34). Section 7.04 discusses how this naming problem unfolded around work by Scottish Women's Aid, with differences arising between the preferences of statutory authorities and those of victims / survivors. I generally adopt McGlynn et al.'s terminology of image-based sexual abuse, as it captures a continuum of behaviours that can cause harm even if not reflected in legislation. Not only does image-based sexual abuse harm individual victims / survivors, but it also creates cultural harm by sustaining a "way of thinking that devalues women's sexual autonomy" (McGlynn & Rackley, 2017, p.17).

This disregard for women's bodily autonomy connects image-based sexual abuse to other forms of patriarchal violence such as FGM, which the *Violence Unseen* exhibition brochure describes as a "form of control of women's sexuality and an expression of men's sense of ownership of women" (Figure 5.12) (Zero Tolerance, ca. 2018). This sense of ownership is reinforced by a representational landscape that ubiquitously positions women as beautiful objects of the gaze rather than as agentic subjects. The cultural mandate that a woman's body exists for the pleasure of others – and specifically men – also underpins the pervasive disciplinary surveillance that enforces the feminine beauty system. Under this patriarchal logic, a woman's consent to how her body or images of her body are used is irrelevant, as they were never really "hers" to begin with.

The objectification of women also homogenises the range of representable women and their experiences around idealised norms – not all women equally appear. The foundational, most fundamental, myth about rape is that it is just sex, and by extension, "motivated by lust" (Benedict, 1993, p. 14). Therefore, women who are symbolically annihilated from cultural narratives about beauty and sexual

objectification may also be unrepresented or misrepresented in narratives about sexual violence and men's violence against women more broadly. One way that Zero Tolerance campaigns have, from the start, challenged rape mythology is by using some models that do not fit within conventional parameters of beauty and desirability. The postcard shown in Figure 5.2 is profoundly shocking. An elderly woman reads to a small child and the text says: "From 3 to 93, women are raped." Part of the shock value of this imagetext is from the text / image disjuncture discussed in Section 5.04. The message is also shocking because the old and very young are generally understood as weak, vulnerable, and blameless "ideal victims" who are worthy of protection (Christie, 1986, p. 19). I further suggest that the power of this imagetext is the way in which it sheds lights on the stories of women and girls seen as both too young and too old to be sexually desirable and/or sexually objectified. By disrupting the association between sexual objectification and sexual violence, it strikes at the foundational myth upon which the edifice of rape culture is built.

Prevalence's radical precedent of shedding light on unseen violence carries through to the aptly named *Violence Unseen.* Ely recalled in our interview that they wanted images that reflected the style, aim, and radicalism of the original campaign, but that also "reflected a more modern intersectional vision of feminism [and] that looked at areas that are less well represented in violence against women campaigning." To realise the *Violence Unseen* vision, photographer Bruce worked with organisations and individuals to inform the campaign's understanding of how male violence affects women living with multiple oppressions. Figure 5.15 and Figure 5.16 were produced in collaboration with People First (Scotland), an organisation that "works for the human rights of people who have the label of Learning Disability" (Zero Tolerance, ca. 2018). The woman's disability (or disabilities) in Figure 5.15 is made visible through the visual signifier of the mobility aid, and the accompanying text that references disability. The woman's disability in Figure 5.16 is made visible through accompanying text alone. Disabled women face higher than average rates of male violence (Dockerty et al., 2015, pp. 9-10). However, disabled women may be symbolically annihilated from cultural representations, especially around beauty and desirability. The quotation in Figure 5.16 directly addresses how the perceived undesirability, and

inadequacy, of disabled women inhibits their inclusion in cultural narratives of gendered violence. For a disabled woman "to have problems regarding violence and abuse is as unthinkable as having a relationship at all."

Figure 5.15: Violence Unseen "Saint" in exhibition panel format[56]

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[56] Source for both *Violence Unseen* "*Saint*" and "*Disability*" via email from Zero Tolerance. Image credit: © Alicia Bruce, commissioned by Zero Tolerance, all rights reserved.

Figure 5.16: Violence Unseen "Disability" in exhibition panel format

On one hand, by deliberately including disabled women, *Violence Unseen* makes visible experiences which are all-too-often neglected. On the other hand, the settings of Figure 5.15 and Figure 5.16 mark them out from many of the Zero Tolerance materials in a subtle, but meaningful, way. The background of both photographs is cold and sterile. In addition to the blank white walls, Figure 5.15 shows utilitarian flooring, carpet, and window dressings. These are clearly not the same kinds of cosy domestic spaces that are the hallmark of *Prevalence* (Figure 5.2, Figure 5.13, Figure 5.18, Figure 5.19) and feature in three of the *Violence Unseen* materials (Figure 5.12, Figure 5.14, Figure 5.17). This feminine "domestication" of the photographs potentially reproduces gendered stereotypes and protects the power inherent in men's invisibility, but it also constructs spaces that project care and love. These are feminine spaces where women belong and that belong to women. Although there are two other *Violence Unseen* pictured outside domestic settings (Figure 5.5, Figure 5.21), the sterile and un-beautiful settings of Figure 5.15 and Figure 5.16 subtly reinforce perceptions that disabled women exist outside the realm of femininity, and thus outside of the realm of sexual desire, sexual objectification, and sexual violence. It is important to note here that campaign materials are inevitably shaped not just by ideological factors, but material ones such as location and model availability. Although she was not directly involved with the photoshoot, it was Ely's recollection that these photographs were taken in a café for people with learning disabilities. The intractability of these semiotic tensions reveals just how delicate it is to construct radical messages using the resources of the dominant representational landscape.

Disabled women and their experiences were far less visible in the original *Prevalence* campaign (Cosgrove, 1996, p. 199). Nevertheless, Edinburgh District Council Women's Unit were not insensitive to their experiences, or wider intersectional concerns. Samson recalled that women's units at the time were very interested in making the links between different types of oppressions, like gender, race, and disability. The challenge of representing disabled women's experiences was something they wrestled with, particularly as the campaign grew beyond Edinburgh. According to Samson, one local authority requested Raffles take a customised version of the "*Businessman*" photograph featuring a device for

people with disabilities to access the telephone, but the device was so small that it is difficult to discern it in the photograph. Further difficulties in representing disabled women's experiences were highlighted in a report on "male violence against women with disability" (*We're No Exception*, 1995). The *We're No Exception* report was produced by Glasgow's Women's Support Project and commissioned by the Strathclyde Regional Council's Zero Tolerance Campaign, one of the earliest regions outwith Edinburgh to license the campaign. Their interest was not limited to disabled women – they commissioned other reports on the experiences of rural women (Cosgrove & Forman, 1995) and Black and minority ethnic women (McCrae & Brown, 1995). Despite sensitivity to the issue, however, there are no women with visible disabilities, or references to disability, in the materials I analysed from *Excuses*, *Justice*, or *Respect.*

Even a campaign like *Violence Unseen* that is deliberately focused on inclusion and visibility can still exclude and invisibilise some experiences, and some women. Although several of the *Violence Unseen* models appear to be at least in their 40s or 50s, they are all clearly younger than the elderly "grandmother" figure in *Prevalence* (Figure 5.2). Furthermore, several of the models might be described as plump, but there are none in any of the Zero Tolerance materials I looked at that are semiotically marked as categorically and conspicuously "fat." More to the point, there are no imagetexts where fatness is a central part of the messaging, i.e., where the text or the visuals acknowledge the specific risks faced by fat women that Royce identifies (2009, p. 151). Here it is useful to consider a representational tension that came up either directly or obliquely in all three of my Zero Tolerance interviews – the difficulty of creating diverse representations that do not divert too much attention away from the core issue of men's violence against women and children. As Ely put it:

> . . . I think for example, if you had [a] campaign and a lot of your women in it were quite fat, it might become about the fact that those women were fat. . .

If an image is framed as being "about" a specific group, then it may appear less relevant to women outwith that group. This point was also made in the *We're No Exception* report. Unsurprisingly, the disabled women consulted for the report had

a range of opinions on "the use of disability in visual images" (*We're No Exception*, 1995, p. 13). Disabilities are varied and many are invisible, posing a hurdle to producing imagery that represents a universal experience of disability. Several women pointed out that the ubiquitous visual signifier of disability – the wheelchair – is only relevant to a subset of physically disabled women (*We're No Exception*, 1995, p. 13). One of the disabled women also observed that disabled women were: "used to 'fitting in' with images of able bodied women. But if you had a picture of a woman in a wheelchair, other women would think that it had nothing to do with them" (*We're No Exception*, 1995, p. 13). This highlights the challenge of speaking to the needs of specific groups, without representing them as a homogenised bloc. On the other hand, trying to represent every experience and every woman could lead to an un-representable fractalisation of women's experiences, or as Hart describes: "a schism of a schism and a schism." While the *Violence Unseen* disability imagetexts shed an important light on unseen violence, there is a limit to that light's reach.. There will inevitably be trade-offs between the general and specific.

Images of difference may distract from unifying messages, but they can also demand more engagement from the viewer. Another notable feature of the women with disabilities pictured in Figure 5.15 and Figure 5.16 is that each is looking in the direction of the viewer, albeit not directly. These could be characterised as "demand" images in that they are demanding something of the viewer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 118). Garland-Thomson's concept of the stare is also useful here. She writes that "Feminization prompts the gaze; disability prompts the stare" (1997, p. 28). Her articulation of the concept of the stare is complex, multi-levelled, and nuanced, but the most relevant point here is that the stare is rich with semiotic potential in a way that the more passive gaze is not. The stare makes demands on viewers. A strange face "compels us to make sense of it, to figure out what it means, or to respond to it appropriately" (Garland-Thomson, 2006, p. 177). Figure 5.15 and Figure 5.16 invite the viewers to stare at the women with disabilities, but the women are also empowered to stare back and demand that we reconsider our beliefs about disability, desirability, and male violence.

The semiotic potential of strange-ness is also exploited in Figure 5.17. *Violence Unseen "Outsider"* is one of several of the campaign's imagetexts in which the models speak directly to the viewer via quotations about their experiences and perspectives. These women collaborated with the photographer to "tell a story by adding elements that are important to them culturally and personally, including the choice of settings, gestures and iconography" (Zero Tolerance, ca. 2018). The domestic setting depicted in Figure 5.17 is conspicuously loaded with tiny meaningful details, from the open suitcase on the floor, to the pictures on the wall, to the stack of saris draped over the back of the couch. This imagetext is instructive of how the distractive and attractive potentials of difference can shift across time. Whereas there were no explicitly LGBTQ+ women pictured in the early Zero Tolerance photographs, this *Violence Unseen* photograph features a transgender woman, Indian-born Scottish feminist activist Mridul Wadhwa. In 2018, Zero Tolerance waded into the so-called "culture wars" by supporting reforms advocated by transgender rights organisations (*Review of the GRA Consultation Response*, 2018). The messaging in Figure 5.17 thus summons different meanings in 2018 than it would have in the early 1990s when transgender rights were not so visible in the mainstream cultural landscape or policy agenda.

Figure 5.17: Violence Unseen "Outsider" in exhibition panel format [57]

Despite the hyper-visibility of transgender people in the imagetext's socio-cultural context, it is Wadhwa's Indian-ness, not her trans-ness, that is most visible in the photograph. The viewer only knows Wadhwa is transgender via the accompanying text; her quote highlights her outsider status as "Trans, woman and Migrant." Wadhwa's intersecting outsider categories notionally position her outside normative Western ideals of beauty, but Figure 5.17 still reads as a beautiful image of a beautiful woman. Wadhwa's own words frame her lived experiences as possessing a philosophical beauty; the many layers of her identity are "so beautifully one in me yet so oppressive in the hands of the powerful." The relatively modest and mundane domestic setting of the photograph contrasts with Wadhwa's glamorous styling. She wears a sari and chunky gold jewellery; her thick dark hair falls in waves to her shoulders. Holding a candle or lamp, she

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[57] Source: via email from Zero Tolerance.

walks towards the viewer with a pose mimicking the picture on the wall, which is a reproduction of a famous Indian painting by SL Haldankar called "Lady with the Lamp" or "Glow of Hope" (Mishra, 2017). Like the ethereal glowing woman in the painting, the lightness of Wadhwa's sari contrasts against the darkness of the doorway behind her. The beauty of Figure 5.17 attracts the gaze. The strange contrast between the mundane and the glamourous attracts the stare. Figure 5.17 is a detail-packed evocative imagetext that invites the viewer in to – and rewards them for – a more sustained engagement. This more sustained engagement is highly dependent on the format of the campaign materials. *Violence Unseen's* offline and online exhibitions allow the viewer to take their time with the image, and the companion brochures provides supplementary information about the models and the wider issues being addressed.

Although offset by the presence of Wadhwa's own agentic voice, images like Figure 5.17 risk evoking tropes of Asian exoticism, especially when viewed in a Western context. Race and ethnicity are some of the thorniest areas for navigating the challenges of representation. Across all the Zero Tolerance campaigns, the models are generally more racially diverse than Scottish society. In 2017, only 4.6% of the adult Scottish population was "non-white" "minority ethnic" (Scottish Government, n.d.). Of the female Zero Tolerance models about whom it is possible to make some judgement about race and ethnicity, about half are clearly or likely to be women of colour. For the male models, that figure is either roughly a half or a third, depending on whether the *Justice* photograph in Figure 5.11 is included.[58] This racial diversity is somewhat surprising, as campaigners' have always been cautious about representations of race and their potential to reproduce racist stereotypes. From the very beginning, intersectional tensions around race influenced the representational decisions behind and reactions to Zero Tolerance campaign imagery. There were concerns expressed by "ethnic

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[58] Justice Insufficient (Figure 5.11) skews the count, as it features an unusually high number of models (ten).

minority" women in focus groups that the first four posters of the *Prevalence* campaign were too white (Kitzinger, 2004, pp. 170–172). However, the exclusion of women of colour was deliberate and discussed with specialist organisations that worked with minority groups. The "whiteness" of the early Zero Tolerance campaigns reflects a desire to avoid reinforcing racist stereotypes (Cosgrove, 1996, p. 193). Men of colour are often represented as uniquely menacing, as addressed in Section 3.03's discussion on the troubling ways in which our culture positions male violence. As evidenced by Kitzinger's focus group research in partnership with Kate Hunt, excluding women of colour is an unsatisfactory solution to these tensions (Kitzinger, 2004, pp. 170–172). Representing male violence as a problem exclusive to white women obscures the intersectional specificities of how violence is experienced by women of colour, including that violence may well be perpetrated against them by white men. Yet, simply introducing women of colour does not square the circle. One respondent described the images as "just average: what you see in a magazine, white people, that's it" and thus easy to ignore as irrelevant to her own experiences as a woman of colour (Kitzinger, 2004, p. 172). Kitzinger points out that the perception of whiteness of the original campaign "was not just about the nature of the models, but also the surroundings, decor, the white doll etc." (2004, p. 172). In fact, one of the girls in Figure 5.18 is not actually white, and this was missed both in my own initial analysis and by some white focus group participants. This highlights the hazards of relying on the visual rhetoric of a representational culture that privileges norms of whiteness to such an extent that for many viewers – myself included – it actually erases the racial difference between the young girls.

Figure 5.18: Prevalence "By 18" [59]

Racist stereotypes do not just apply to men of colour; there are also tensions with the representations of racialised feminine bodies. Figure 5.19 was a later addition to the original *Prevalence* campaign, produced "in response to the demand for a poster targeting and featuring young people" (Zero Tolerance, n.d.-b). It is notable that at least one – and possibly all – of the teenage models are girls of colour. At least one of the girls is Black. Unlike the hyper-sexualised representations of women of colour discussed in Section 3.02, the young models are not styled in a sexualised manner. They have baggy clothing, loose casual hairstyles, and are wearing very little, if any, cosmetics. This photograph presents a tableau of innocence and girlish intimacy between good friends, not sexual licentiousness. One girl seems to be gazing down and gently playing with her friend's hair, which points to the pleasures of female bonding and feminine grooming beyond stereotyped performances for the male gaze. The surrounding text reads:

When they say no, they mean no.

Some men don't listen.

Figure 5.19: Prevalence "Men Don't Listen"[60]

When they say no, they mean no.

Some men don't listen.

Z
ZERO TOLERANCE

WHOEVER, WHEREVER, WHENEVER – MALE ABUSE OF POWER IS A CRIME

There is an uneasy dynamic here, which is shared by all of the Zero Tolerance photographs I analysed. None present women or girls in a way that is sexually explicit or even particularly suggestive. Even the *Violence Unseen* image that addresses prostitution eschews what Linda Thompson from Glasgow's

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[60] Source: https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/about-our-prevention-campaign/

Women Support Project calls "reductive" mainstream media stock visuals for women who sell sex (Figure 5.21) (Thompson, n.d.). On one hand, the chaste presentation of the young models in Figure 5.19 disrupts imagined links between sexual desire and sexual violence. On the other hand, the dress and demeanour of the models connote innocence. It is not so difficult to make the imaginative leap that when girls like them say no, they "mean it." As discussed in Section 3.02, the Western representational landscape has long reproduced tropes which presume that virtue can be made legible on the body – and especially on the feminine body. In that semiotic context, is this imaginative leap so easily made about girls who wear short skirts or low-cut blouses? Do they also "mean it" when they say no?

An unintended consequence of this framing is that it can reinforce ideas that provocatively dressed women are "asking for it." Zero Tolerance has always rejected such victim-blaming narratives, as evidenced by the *Justice* campaign briefings that challenged the practice of asking women what they were wearing when assaulted (Section 5.04) (*Zero Tolerance Justice 'Rape'*, ca. 1997, p. 2). Imagetexts like Figure 5.19 sidestep the "sexy clothes mean women are asking for it" myth by representing young girls as unsexy and yet equally vulnerable to sexual violence. As explored in the next chapter, Rape Crisis Scotland takes a different tact and addresses this trope head-on in their *This is Not an Invitation to Rape Me* and *Not Ever* campaigns. However, that approach also involves its own trade-offs and negotiations.

I want to close this section by returning to a point touched upon in Section 5.04 of this chapter regarding the practicalities of the black and white Zero Tolerance brand: representational decisions are guided not just by ideology, but also by what Hart describes as "pragmatic reasons." Hart outlined some of the practical concerns when I asked if they were looking for certain physical types when recruiting models:

Who on Earth in their right minds wants to be in one of those pictures that's plastered everywhere on huge billboards and feel comfortable about it?

. . .

And we just thought: "Who do we know that's kind of young and can look quite professional and successful? And that would be happy to have their image plastered all over this kind of campaign?"

The model they chose for the *"Businessman"* photograph in Figure 5.13 was actually Hart's good friend. Similarly, Samson recalled that from *Prevalence* to *Respect,* the general practice was to recruit the models from wherever they could find them. A very few might have been professional models, but most were friends and family members willing to volunteer as the representative faces of the campaigns. Sometimes they were even the campaigners' own children. As Hart suggested, the search for models was constrained by people's understandable reluctance to be publicly associated with content related to men's violence against women.

Hart's recollections of recruiting the *Prevalence* model in Figure 5.13 are another reminder that wherever there are Zero Tolerance photographic or design elements that conform to hegemonic ideologies there are others that contest them. Despite being positioned as an object in this familiar, domestic, feminine space, the woman in Figure 5.13 is professionally groomed and attired. She looks as if she has kicked off her shoes after a long day at work. As I have also explored elsewhere, this "young" and "professional and successful" presentation suggests a more public role beyond that of the domestic sphere (McKeown, Forthcoming). A close look at Figure 5.14 from *Violence Unseen* reveals personalised elements, which likewise suggest a public life extending far beyond the photograph. There are several feminist posters and signs in the bookshelf. There is even a stack of books containing Brownmiller's foundational feminist text on rape, *Against Our Will.* Even under the relentless surveillance of patriarchy, women find space for resistance.

Section 5.06   Resisting and re-directing the gaze

The spirit of resistance is particularly evident in Figure 5.20, which features a young woman who appears to be of East Asian descent. This photograph is a departure from the early *Prevalence* imagetexts in that the mood is not warm or pleasant. The relationship between the image of the young woman and text is the more conventional one of anchorage, i.e., the text anchors the image to a meaning rather than relaying a new and unexpected one (Barthes, 1977, pp. 40-41). This also contrasts with another *Justice* imagetext that features a series of headshots of happy children underneath a message about sexual violence (Figure 5.11). The young woman's features are accentuated by dark eye shadow and glossy lipstick, but this is not meant to be a "sexy" picture. At the start of the photoshoot, the model was even more heavily made-up, but Samson asked her to remove some of the cosmetics. Samson wanted the image to be "about her looking a bit angry (and) defiant." The model stares at the viewer with a serious unflinching expression. The tight cropping and extreme close-up of the photograph means that there are no extraneous details of setting or even hairstyle. The viewer is confronted with only the woman's face and the text on the side that reads:

> Her boss raped her at knifepoint.

> In court, she was asked if she found him attractive.

The close-ness of the woman's face feels unnatural. Kress and van Leeuwen explain that the choice of camera shot can establish the "social distance" between the model and the viewer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 124–129). In Figure 5.20, the extreme closeup pulls the viewer into the model's close personal space and thrusts the model in the viewer's space. In the "real," i.e., non-representational world, that space would be reserved for those in intimate relationships. The net semiotic effect of all these photographic choices is unsettling.

Figure 5.20: Justice "Boss" [61]
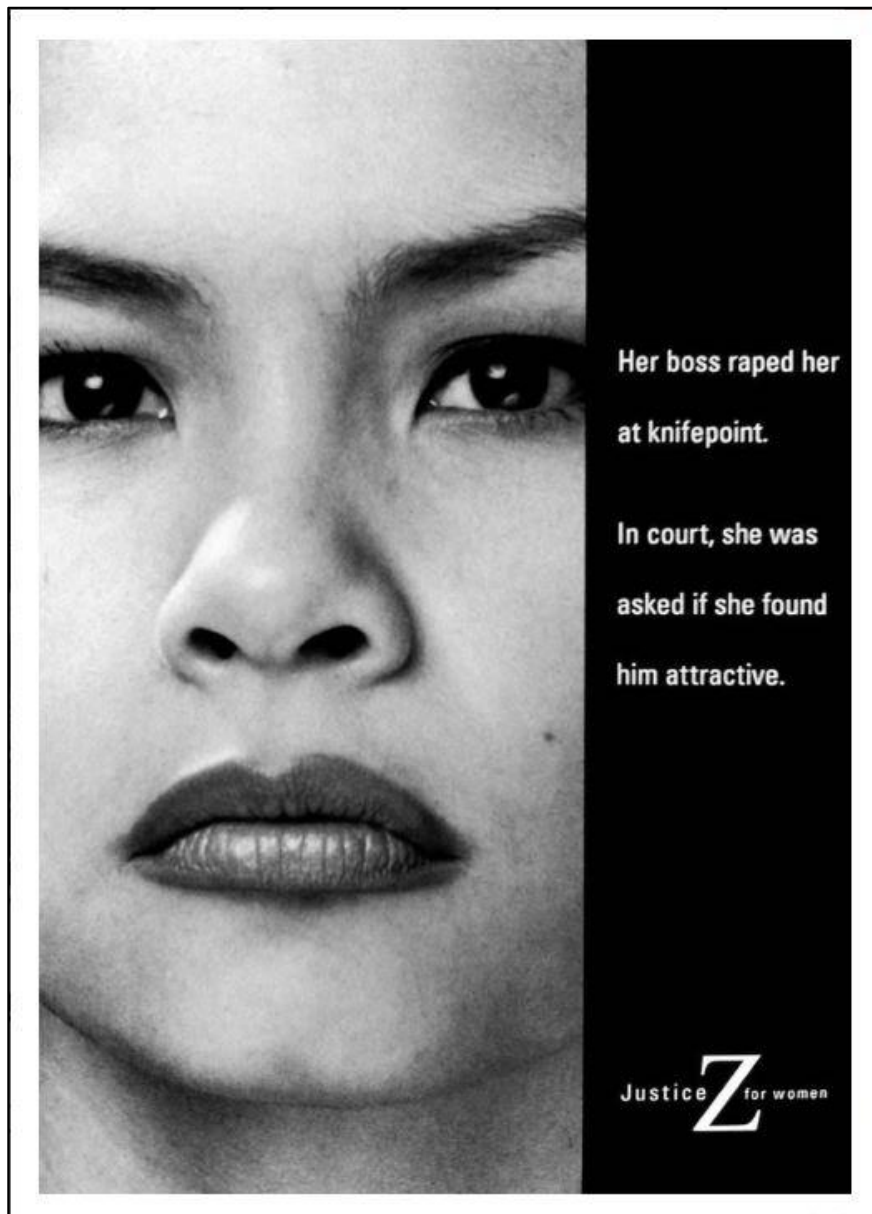
The message of the accompanying text mirrors this unsettling tone. Along with Figure 5.8 from *Respect*, this is one of only two materials in my Zero Tolerance corpus that directly mentions physical beauty, or "attractiveness." Intriguingly, it is the role of men's – not women's – attractiveness in rape culture that is being commented upon. The text highlights a cultural tendency addressed

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[61] Source: https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/about-our-prevention-campaign/
Image credit: Zero Tolerance.

in Section 3.03: attractive perpetrators draw more public sympathy, or himpathy (Benedict, 1993, pp. 147–188; Manne, 2019, pp. 196–205). Figure 5.8 also exposes the impossible contradictions of rape culture. Under traditional patriarchal logic, the perpetrator's use of a knife should mean that a woman's experience is legitimated as "real rape" (Estrich, 1987, p. 4), and that she is less likely to be perceived as a vamp who invites assault (Benedict, 1993, p. 19). However, here we see how the "binary thinking" that positions rape and sex as "mutually exclusive" might colour popular understandings of sexual violence (Boyle, 2019, pp. 66–70). If the woman can be understood to desire her assailant in some way, then the aggravating factor of the knife is rendered irrelevant as there is no conceptual space for a circumstance in which a woman can be raped by a man that she agrees is attractive.

The defiant pose and expression of the model in Figure 5.20 issues a direct challenge both to the practice of directing such grotesque questioning at victims / survivors and the contradictory logics of rape culture that upholds male violence. Some viewers clearly found this challenge uncomfortable. According to Samson, many of the posters – and especially Figure 5.20 – were defaced by vandals who would poke the models' eyes out. It is telling that some people felt that such acts were an appropriate disciplinary response to the model's symbolic defiance. By symbolically disfiguring the woman, the vandals reasserted the "natural" order in which a woman's body and her beauty is constructed to be the property of men.

Those vandals would have found plenty of creative inspiration for their actions in the wider representational culture. Section 3.05 of the literature review explores the common aesthetic trope of disfigured and brutalised images of women. It cannot be overstated the extent to which the original Zero Tolerance campaigners strenuously resisted reproducing tropes of visibly and viscerally battered women – a point I return to in the Routledge chapter (McKeown, Forthcoming). From the beginning, the campaigners had "no wish to provide a voyeuristic spectacle of suffering, or a vision of powerless abused women" (Cosgrove, 1996, p. 191). This point was highlighted by all three of my Zero Tolerance interviewees and was actually mandated by the licensing guidelines (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 2001, p. Appendix 4).

By avoiding visual clichés of battered women, the Zero Tolerance materials also encourage a more expansive understanding of male violence, in keeping with Kelly's continuum model. Many forms of abuse and violence leave no visible physical marks. Even when violence is physically severe enough to require hospitalisation as in Figure 5.13, injuries may not be publicly visible. Nevertheless, some focus group participants from the original *Prevalence* campaign – including abuse survivors – would have liked "stronger images," perhaps, as the report authors opine, "precisely because much of the pain caused by abuse is hidden in everyday life" (Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993, p. 41). We are again confronted with the trade-offs inherent in these projects: in making some women's experiences more visible, these images make others less visible. This dynamic will be returned to in Section 8.02 of the conclusion chapter.

There are deeper semiotic implications of this design mandate. In Magaraggia and Cherubini's 2017 critique of Italian advertising and campaigning imagery, they suggest that "pictures of bruised faces are so familiar and embedded in our everyday imaginary that they are almost invisible" (2017, pp. 452–453). They also argue that the naturalised "familiarity" of such imagery helps to conceal the underlying ideologies (2017, pp. 452–453). If the relationship between our naturalised signs and their referents reinforces or conceals dominant ideologies, deploying these signs can be counter-productive in a counter-hegemonic project, i.e., brutalised women's bodies cannot be used to disrupt the hidden hegemonic ideologies that Zero Tolerance aims to challenge.

When I spoke to Hart about the decision to avoid images of women's victimisation, she connected it with the campaigners' approach of aiming their messages at men and male power:

> . . .there had been lots of campaigns about women, you know, being victims of violence and so all the images were of, you know, bruised faces and people cowering in corners. We didn't present it like that. We wanted a much stronger image of women, and that the messages would actually be aimed at men. Particularly men in positions of power and responsibility.

The implication of Hart's comment is that "by visually locating men's violence on women's bodies, images of bruised and battered women direct the viewer's gaze away from the sources of the violence – men and men's power" (McKeown, Forthcoming).

Violence Unseen carries on the Zero Tolerance tradition of redirecting the gaze at men (McKeown, Forthcoming). Figure 5.21 shows a woman standing on a beach and holding what seems to be a large mirror in front of her face. As touched upon earlier, the model's dress and presentation does not conform to "reductive" stereotypes about women who sell sex (Section 5.05) (Thompson, n.d.). Instead of a miniskirt, fishnet tights, or knee-high boots, the woman in Figure 5.21 wears jeans and baggy shirt with her face obscured. The mirror intervenes in the interaction between the model and viewer, denying the viewer intimate access to the model's personal space or even her identity. Ely's interpretation of the image is that it is about "holding a mirror back to the men."

Figure 5.21: Violence Unseen "Prostitution" in exhibition panel format [62]

While Figure 5.21 is an evocative example of how male perpetrators can be addressed *by* campaign imagery, there are still no male perpetrators featured *in* any of the *Violence Unseen* photographs (Section 5.05). This visual elision sits somewhat uneasily alongside the goal of addressing male power. However, it is worth remembering that while the original *Prevalence* imagetexts do not feature photographs of men, they do use text to bring men and male power into the picture. Four of the items share the tagline: "Male Abuse of Power is a Crime" (Figure 4.1, Figure 5.2, Figure 5.13, Figure 5.19). The other Prevalence item in my corpus does not include a photograph of anyone at all, featuring a version of the Z logo and an all-capital message: NO MAN HAS THE RIGHT (Figure 5.22).

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[62] Source: via email from Zero Tolerance.

Image credit: © Alicia Bruce, commissioned by Zero Tolerance, all rights reserved.

Figure 5.22: Prevalence "No Man"[63]
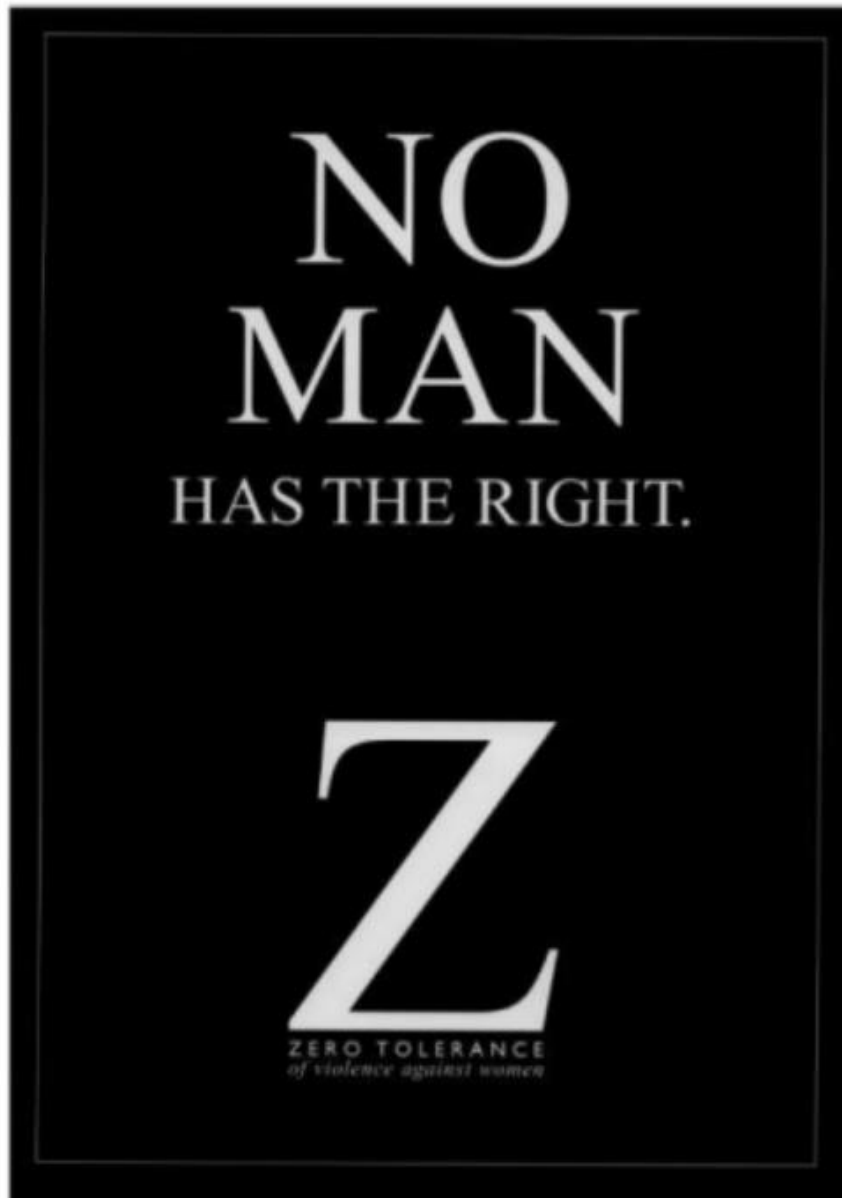
Although there are no men pictured in Figure 5.22, the imagetext unambiguously identifies men as the source of the problem. According to Hart, Figure 5.22 "created a right stooshie," sparking outrage and accusations that the campaign had "gone too far" and they were "pointing the finger at all men." Samson likewise recalled that, over time, the Zero Tolerance campaigns drew

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[63] Source: https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/about-our-prevention-campaign/
Image credit: Zero Tolerance.

political, public, and press backlash. Their recollections are borne out in press clippings found in the Franki Raffles online archives. One male newspaper commentator described the campaign's roll-out to Strathclyde as a "Goebbels style exercise in hate propaganda" (G. Warner, 1994). In the *Trouble & Strife* article, Foley recalls seeing many Zero Tolerance posters with the "male" in "male abuse of power is a crime" graffitied out (1993, p. 17). She wryly ponders whether the vandals might be "feeling defensive" (1993, p. 17).

The then Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Norman Irons, was quoted as accusing the campaign – which by then was spreading beyond Edinburgh – of containing "extreme messages which distort the truth" (Steiner & Rigby, 1994). Irons's accusations were related to claims that the campaign used "selective statistics" (Steiner & Rigby, 1994). Using statistical evidence can be a double-edged sword for campaigners. Statistics can provide a compelling and easy-to-comprehend argument for the prevalence of the problem, but reliable statistics about men's violence against women and children are notoriously difficult to obtain (Walby et al., 2017). Such unreliability can leave campaigners vulnerable to charges of deception. More personal qualitative data can also be rhetorically compelling but potentially difficult to communicate in a quickly comprehensible way. A citation on the back of the *Excuses* postcard ascribes the quotations to Diana Scully's research of convicted rapists, but it is not made clear to the viewer if they are direct citations of Scully's work, paraphrasing, or a combination of both (Figure 5.3).

In a real sense, the potential for backlash can be an integral part of the process of renegotiating hegemonic meanings. The threat of a backlash can make the campaign materials stronger. Part of Samson's role was to try to head off public criticism by ensuring their supporting information was "absolutely doublechecked, buttoned-downed." Both Samson and Hart recalled that the backlash could be hatefully abusive and personal. Although difficult to deal with at times, those negative reactions made the campaigners more determined to carry on their project of resisting male violence.

Samson told me that the backlash reached a "fever pitch" with the *Justice* campaign. Hart likewise said that the *Justice* image with the judge's wig "*really*

upset people" (Figure 5.10). It is perhaps relevant that the *Justice* campaign was an unapologetically direct confrontation to a powerful state institution. From purple prose in newspaper columns to symbolic poking out of models' eyes, the strength of feeling suggests that Zero Tolerance was perceived in some quarters as a real threat to institutional male power. In other words, it was doing its job.

Section 5.07   Chapter conclusion

This chapter considered the intersections of beauty and violence in a series of Zero Tolerance campaigns, while paying special attention to how the tools of a hegemonic (and commercial) representational culture might be co-opted to create powerful visual spectacles that challenge harmful cultural norms. The Zero Tolerance materials subvert the expectations of form to jolt the viewers into reconsidering their naturalised beliefs about what male violence looks like, who it happens to, and who perpetrates it.

The Zero Tolerance campaigns reveal some of the representational trade-offs inherent in counter-hegemonic projects that are reliant on communicative systems of meaning so deeply imbued with patriarchal ideology. A decision to show empowering images of women can also serve to absent male perpetrators from the disciplinary gaze. Positioning those women in domestic spaces can address myths that male violence is only perpetrated by, in Gillan's words, "mad, sad, and bad" men (1999/2015, p. 5), but such positioning can also semiotically reinforce patriarchal notions that a woman's natural place is in the home. A choice to make certain experiences visible – e.g., that of a disabled woman or a fat woman – may render the imagery less relevant to the general public. Refusing to show black eyes may shine a light on less visible forms of abuse, but it may also serve to make less visible the physical brutality inflicted on some women's bodies. As seen with the *Respect* posters, an image can be perceived as simultaneously too glamourous and too mundane (Figure 5.8). All these decisions can attract not just justifiable critique, but an ugly backlash as well. The very ugliness of the backlash can in turn reinforce the necessity of the project and inspire campaigners to keep resisting male violence.

The powerful black and white Zero Tolerance brand identity shows that representational decisions are often driven by practical material concerns, and these constraints can produce semiotic richness. The texts examined in Chapter 6: "Rape Crisis Scotland: Colour and motion" are much more colourful and more overtly sexualised. These divergent design choices bring new possibilities and new pitfalls.

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Chapter 6.   Rape Crisis Scotland: Colour and motion

Section 6.01   Chapter introduction

This chapter continues to explore the central dynamic of this thesis: the possibilities and limits of resistance within a visual landscape dominated by representational norms that sustain male violence. Whereas the Zero Tolerance corpus was static black and white imagetexts, the Rape Crisis Scotland texts are considerably more multimodal, including videos and full-colour materials. This chapter examines how this colourful palette and visual variety function as new forms of semiotic resources with their own strengths and limitations. The analysis pays particular attention to how campaigning materials subvert the visual rhetoric of the dominant representational landscape.

The next section, Section 6.02, briefly introduces the materials in my corpus; how I sourced materials; and my interview participant. Section 6.03 considers how seemingly simple campaigns can be sophisticated in the ways they subvert viewer expectations. Section 6.04 concentrates on how the commercial rhetoric of visually polished images of conventionally beautiful women can be subversively deployed to challenge rape myths and rape culture. The section also explores the potential pitfalls of that approach. The final analytical section, Section 6.05, picks up on themes of beauty, subversion, and representation in relation to the semiotic potential of video and animation.

Section 6.02   Overview of campaigns, organisation, and interview participants

All the campaigns in this chapter's corpus date from after the Scottish Rape Crisis Network officially became Rape Crisis Scotland in 2003. In addition to supporting, developing, and expanding the network of local rape crisis services in Scotland, campaigning for change was central to the remit of the new national

office. At the time of this writing (2021), Rape Crisis Scotland maintains both an organisational[64] and campaign-specific[65] websites from which I downloaded most of the materials for this research, although it should be noted that I did so mostly before a 2021 redesign of the organisational website. Rape Crisis Scotland keeps a wealth of material on its website, and it effectively functions as a de facto digital repository for extensive historical items, such as annual reports (2009 to 2019), newsletters (2004 to 2016), briefing papers, and campaign evaluations. I found further supplementary materials such as the 2003 to 2008 annual reports in the archives at Glasgow Women's Library. The archives also contain materials about the wider Scottish Rape Crisis movement. The interview participant was Eileen Maitland, the current Information and Resource Worker at Rape Crisis Scotland. I was already familiar with Maitland from my time at Zero Tolerance. Maitland joined Rape Crisis Scotland in 2006 and was involved with all the campaigns I analysed. Maitland has also edited an oral history of the Scottish rape crisis movement from 1976 to 1991 (2009). I identified seven Rape Crisis Scotland campaigns that met my inclusion criteria laid out in Section 2.02, i.e., they are Rape Crisis Scotland-led, prevention-focused initiatives aimed at challenging attitudes amongst general rather than specialist audiences (Table 2). As some of the campaigns have long names, I provide abbreviations.

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[64] https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/

[65] http://www.thisisnotaninvitationtorapeme.co.uk/ ; http://www.notever.co.uk/

Table 2: Rape Crisis Scotland campaigns included in analysis

Campaign name	Year launched
End Sexual History & Character Evidence (End Sexual History)	*ca. 2007[66]*
This is Not an Invitation to Rape Me (Not an Invitation)	*2008*
Not Ever	*2010*
10 Top Tips to End Rape (10 Tips)	*ca. 2010-2011*
Pie Chart	*2011*
False Allegations	*2013*
I Just Froze	*2017*

Whereas the Zero Tolerance campaigns were introduced in chronological order, the Rape Crisis Scotland campaign materials are introduced as belonging to (or straddling) one of two broad categories. These categories emerged during my research as useful ways for thinking about the work of the organisation. Some of the campaigns were lower budget and designed in-house (*End Sexual History, Pie Chart, False Allegations*). Other campaigns had higher production values and budgets that allowed for outsourcing elements of production to external creative professionals *(Not an Invitation, Not Ever, I Just Froze).* As will be touched upon, one campaign somewhat straddles these two categories *(10 Tips).*

The Rape Crisis Scotland newsletter describes *End Sexual History* (ca. 2007) as a "postcard campaign," indicating the main format that the materials took ('Sexual History & Character', Winter 2007_2008). The *End Sexual History* postcards challenged the routine practice of rape complainers being asked about their sexual and personal history. I sourced the postcards for my analysis from a Rape Crisis Scotland newsletter article (Figure 6.2) ('Sexual History & Character', Winter 2007_2008). Another "postcard campaign," 2011's *Pie Chart,* exploits the familiar visual conventions of a pie chart to challenge common rape myths. *Pie*

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[66] It was not always possible to discern a definitive launch date for the campaigns. The information might be missing, or sources might contradict one another. Some campaigns had different phases which were rolled out at different times. Where I could not ascertain a definitive launch date, I note the date as an approximation or a range.

Chart materials were produced both as two-sided printed postcards that could be distributed at events, and as downloads for use on social media. Like *Pie Chart,* the 2013 *False Allegations* reinterpreted a common graphical format to make its point. In this case, it is an Euler[67] diagram which asserts that "actual false allegations" are a very small subset of "all reported rapes" (Figure 6.5). Finally, the *10 Tips* (ca. 2010-2011) postcards and posters use humour to draw attention to the absurdity of social attitudes that put the responsibility for sexual violence on victims / survivors. The *10 Tips* postcard appears more visually polished than *End Sexual History, Pie Chart,* and *False Allegations*, but the outputs are essentially only one imagetext reproduced as poster and two-sided postcard form.

Not an Invitation, *Not Ever*, and *I Just Froze* all received funding[68] from the Scottish Government that allowed for the contracting of external expertise and higher production values. Inspired by a US campaign of the same name, the Scottish *Not an Invitation* campaign challenged public attitudes which equate "provocative" clothing, intimate contact, alcohol consumption, or relationship status with sexual consent. The campaign images are available for download from the bespoke campaign website, along with materials such as a campaign briefing, and scoping and evaluation reports. *Not an Invitation's* challenge to victim-blaming discourses around women's clothing was followed up in 2010's *Not Ever* campaign, which is the first video in my corpus (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2010, p. 3). There are three main *Not Ever* materials included in my corpus: the video, the poster*,* and the bespoke standalone website.

The most recent campaign in my Rape Crisis corpus, *I Just Froze*, was developed to support legislative changes brought by the *Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016*. The campaign aimed to educate the wider public – and especially potential jurors – about the "myths, received wisdom and

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[67] Euler diagrams are commonly confused with Venn diagrams, as the two formats look similar.

[68] Many of the campaigns I analysed could be described as supported by Scottish Government funding, if they were paid for by the general operating costs of the organisations which then in turn had government support. What is meant here is that these projects were paid for by funds specifically received by the organisation for spending on such campaigns.

flawed assumptions about how someone should react to being raped" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2017). The campaign included two animated one-minute media co-op produced videos: "So Many Reasons" and "Flight or Freeze." The media co-op is a design and media production company which has worked with many Scottish third sector organisations, including Zero Tolerance and Scottish Women's Aid.[69] Video imagery is reproduced in six digital postcards, a tri-fold briefing leaflet, and promotional items including branded tote bags, and A2 sized posters. It also was used as the cover art on the 2016-2017 Rape Crisis Scotland Annual Report (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Cover and inside page of Rape Crisis Scotland 2016-2017 Annual Report[70]

Section 6.03   Smaller campaigns and the subversive potential of form

The lower budget campaigns tended to be made in-house. In our November 2017 interview, Eileen Maitland described an advantage of this approach: campaigners were "able to act quickly and just do something smaller, more guerrilla style. . . Just off the cuff. . ." One might not describe the imagetexts

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[69] The media co-op website stylises the organisational name with lower-case letters: https://mediaco-op.net/

[70] Source: https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/resources/Making-An-Impact-highresfinal.pdf
Image courtesy of Rape Crisis Scotland.

discussed in this section as "beautiful images" in a normative sense, but they do attract the gaze and engage with beauty in ways that infuse at least some of the imagetexts with a deeper, philosophical beauty. Several of these materials work by exploiting familiar visual and rhetorical conventions in order to challenge ideologies that perpetuate rape culture. The ca. 2007 *End Sexual History* postcard campaign was a response to Scottish Executive sponsored research into the effectiveness of the *Sexual Offences (Procedure and Evidence) (Scotland) Act 2002*. The Act was intended to restrict the use in rape trials of evidence related to a complainer's past personal, sexual, medical, psychological, or criminal behaviours and circumstances. Despite this legislation, the research suggested a "highly worrying increase" in this type of questioning ('Sexual History & Character', Winter 2007_2008, p. 20). Maitland designed Figure 6.2 on Photoshop. The image is one of three similarly formatted *End Sexual History* postcards; the fourth, possibly intended as a reverse image, provides more contextual information about the campaign. The use of the simple line drawing of the Lady Justice figure is evocative. Such figures are rooted in the ancient semiotic tradition in which noble Western cultural ideals are symbolised by women (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 74). The figure's downcast expression and the Venus symbol in the uneven scale suggests that the justice system does not work for women. As with Zero Tolerance images discussed in the previous chapter, her lack of eye contact helps to position her as a surveilled object rather than agentic subject. The image subtly communicates a cruel irony: the figure of a woman's body can be co-opted as a symbol for a system that bolsters patriarchal inequalities. Yet again, women's bodies exist for men. The rest of the postcard mashes up two common rhetorical formats – multiple choice and question and answer to demand engagement with the viewer. The combination of the two formats introduces ambiguity around the correct multiple-choice answer, and it is not clear if this mashing up was intentional. Regardless, these materials fit within a broader organisational pattern of subverting familiar formats to upend audience expectations.

Q: When is a woman likely to be asked what sexual positions she tried with her last boyfriend?

a. During a consultation with her GP

b. When filling out the forms for the next Census

c. In front of a courtroom of strangers when she's giving evidence about being raped

A: Most women seeking justice for rape are forced to endure humiliating and irrelevant questioning about their sexual history in court. Who's really on trial?
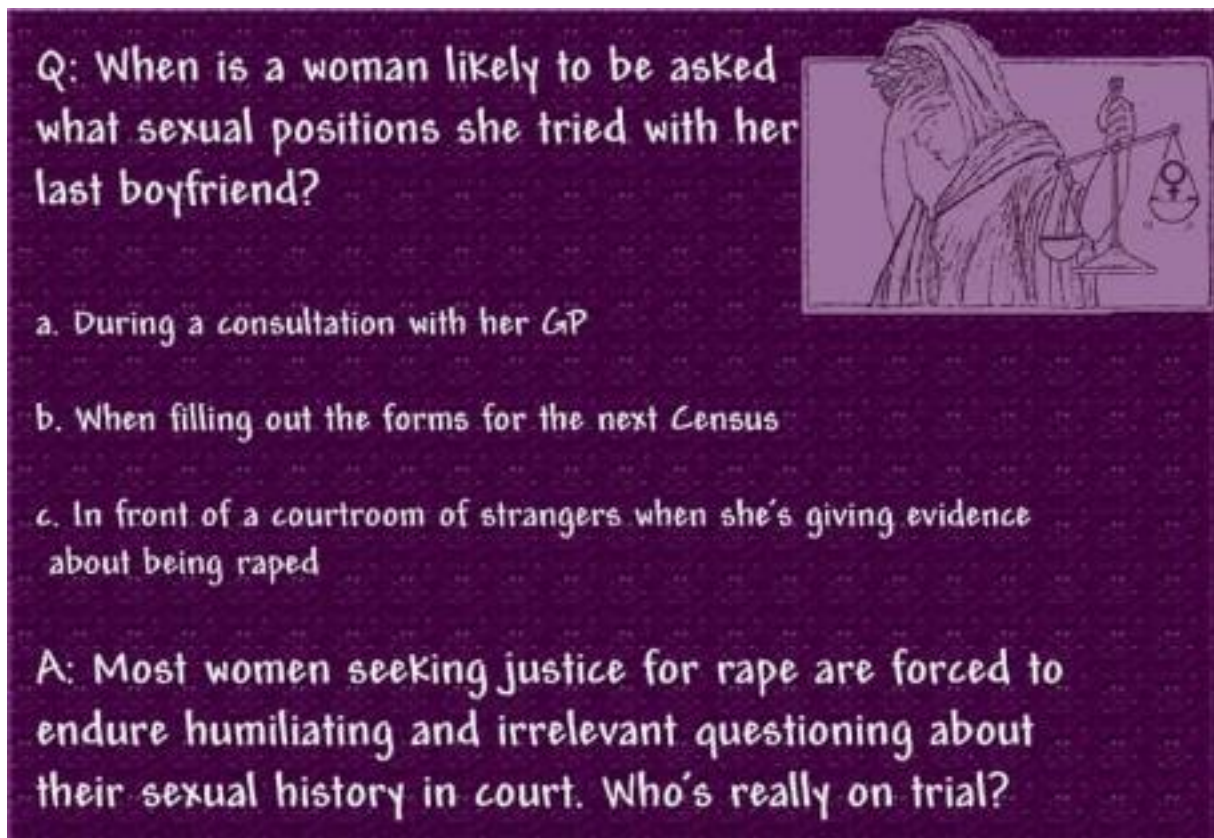
Pie Chart (2011) also exploits familiar visual conventions, and specifically the conventions of abstract graphical representation of data (Figure 6.3, Figure 6.4). Maitland borrowed the concept and design for *Pie Chart* from a breastfeeding campaign she saw online. Without straying too far on a tangent, it is notable that breastfeeding is another issue around which women's bodies are regularly shamed and policed. It is telling that advocacy and healthcare sources feel it necessary to inform women they have the legal right to breastfeed in public (Maternity Action, 2021; NHS, 2020). If women's breast tissue was not so relentlessly sexualised in our representational culture, the act of feeding a baby might not so often be perceived as offensive.

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[71] Source: Rape Crisis Scotland newsletter, https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/publications/RCSNews7.pdf ('Sexual History & Character', Winter 2007_2008)

Image courtesy of Rape Crisis Scotland.

Maitland was attracted to the simplicity of the pie chart conceit as a "good, quick, cheap way to get a message across." The breastfeeding campaign was the first time Maitland recalls seeing the pie chart format used this way, although she did recall that later "everyone and their granny was using this format for all sorts of stuff." An internet search reveals a seemingly endless variety of pie chart memes. The format taps a rich vein of semiotic potential, so much so that there is even a "Pie Chart Meme Generator" where users can create their own (haunted_admin, n.d.; Imgflip, n.d.; Korolkovaite, 2016).

Figure 6.3: Pie Chart postcard, front[72]

Proportion of women raped while wearing short skirts who:

- Were asking for it
- Were inviting the "wrong" kind of attention
- Have only themselves to blame
- Should be treated to a series of tired analogies related to car theft, burglary, or similar
- Were victims of a serious assault and deserving of support, not blame

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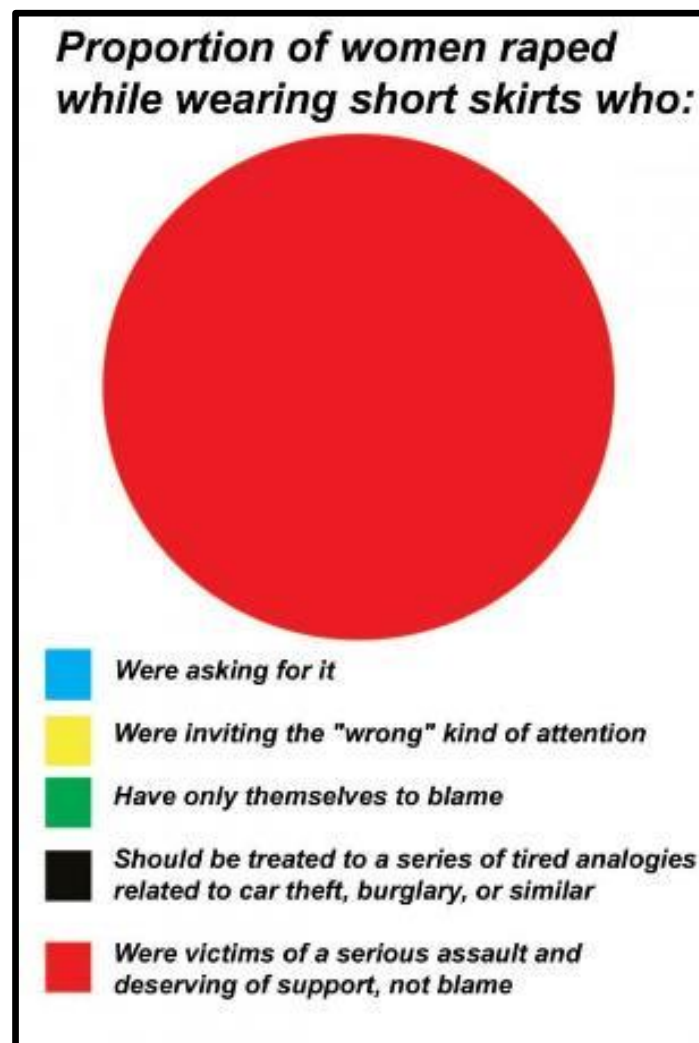
[72] Source for both *Pie Chart* images: Downloaded from Rape Crisis Scotland website(www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk), but it is no longer available on website.

Image courtesy of Rape Crisis Scotland.

Quite straightforward really, even if you don't do numbers or like short skirts

When is comes to rape, culpability lies with the rapist, and nowhere else.

The questions we should be asking are not ones like "*What was she thinking?*" or "*Isn't that a bit like leaving the keys in an unlocked car?*" but:

"*When are we going to start scrutinizing perpetrators instead of those they assault?*"

Blaming women for their choices in the context of rape heaps insult on injury - and supports the myths that seriously hamper their chances of obtaining justice.

Want to do something about this?

Download resources from our campaign websites at: www.thisisnotaninvitationtorapeme.co.uk and www.notever.co.uk

- and help us to shift the focus where it really belongs

RAPE CRISIS SCOTLAND

Pie charts normally include a series of multi-coloured wedges – or pie pieces – as a way of illustrating numerical proportion. It is significant that Figure 6.3 violates these conventions; instead of individual pieces, it shows one whole pie. This violation of form signals the subversive nature of this material – the message is not what the viewer expects. The most salient feature of the *Pie Chart* postcard is a circle of unmodulated red colour contrasted starkly against a white background. The choice of colour is significant as red has the semiotic power to grab our attention. Red can be a "sign of danger" (van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 3). The UK Highway Code uses red circles to signify prohibitions (Department of Transport, 2014). Without straying too far on another tangent, the colour red can also be used by adult women to visibly "signify their sexuality" with beauty products such as red "lipstick, rouge, nail varnish" (Hodge & Kress, 1988, p. 105). The semiotic connection between danger and feminine sexuality suggests that a woman's ownership of her own sexuality and beauty poses a threat to patriarchal power and consequently must be disciplined by the patriarchal gaze.

Maitland told me that Rape Crisis Scotland printed *Pie Chart* postcards to bring to events. The small size and tactile nature of a postcard encourages an

intimate relationship between message, medium, and viewer. It is easy to imagine that the red circle would draw people's gaze and invite them to pick up the postcard to learn more. According to the 2011 Annual Report, the campaign "was very well received, with digital versions circulated widely on blogs and websites, and considerable demand for hard copies" (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2011, p. 9). With the use of an Euler (Venn) diagram, *False Allegations* (2013) also exploits familiar visual conventions of graphical representation of data. Maitland described Figure 6.5 as "an in-your-face graphic to accompany" a briefing (Figure 6.6) that challenged the "common misconception that false allegations of rape are common" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2013, p. 1). In our discussion about the visual registers of the campaigns, she made an observation that reveals a sensitivity to the semiotic potential of form:

> . . . It's something to do with the roots of Rape Crisis being kind of, you know, a grass-roots organisation based in maybe quite a rough or direct action of some kind. And it's nice to retain that element of our, sort of, heritage somehow. . .
>
> [. . .]
>
> . . . sometimes, different messages and messaging styles reach different people in different ways. And can be re-used with greater or less ease depending on how they're produced. . .

Figure 6.5: False Allegations postcard, front and reverse[73]
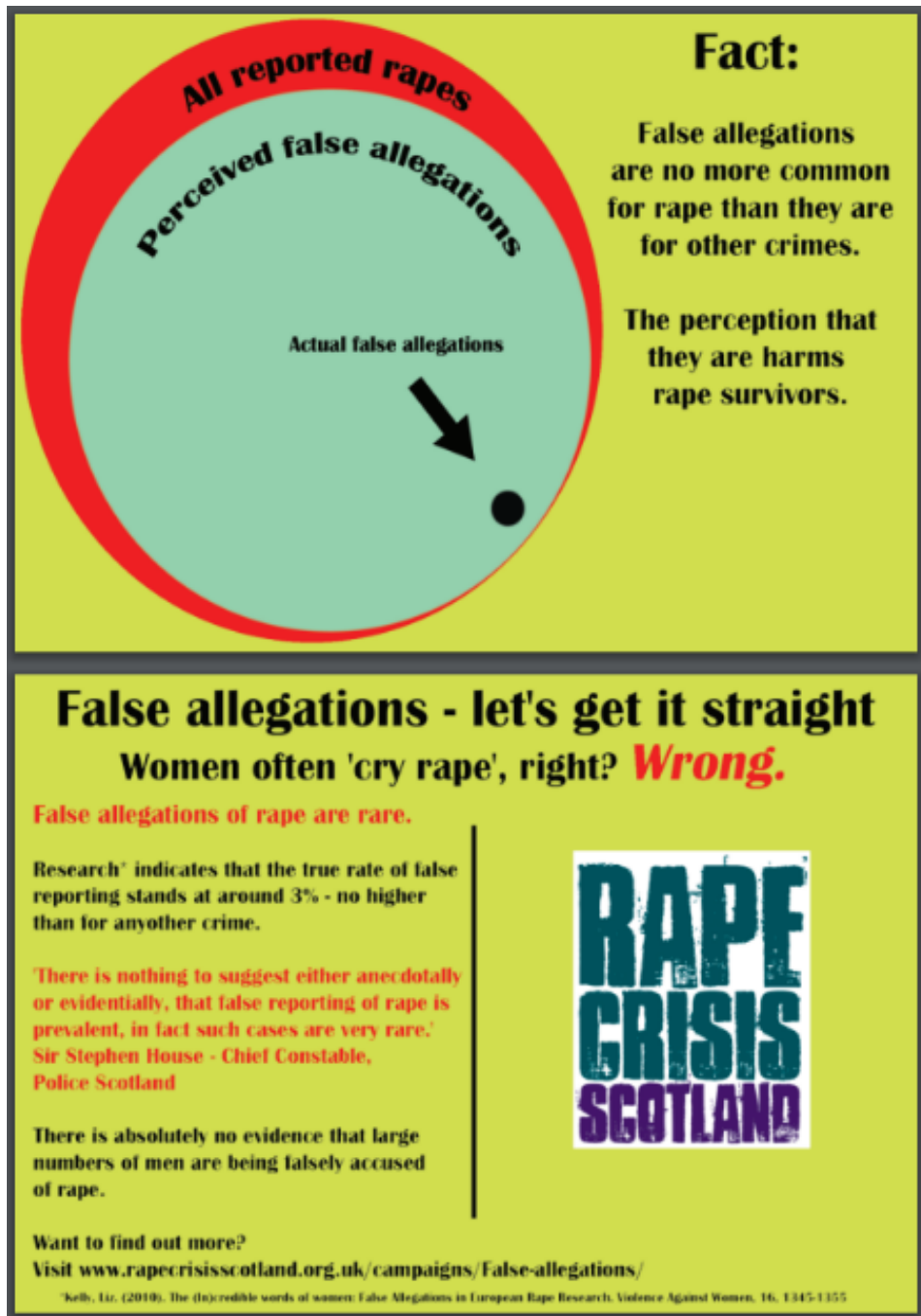
*Figure 6.6: False Allegations briefing paper, pages 1-2[74]*

Maitland also described *False Allegations* as the most "handknitted" of all the materials. I interpret this handknit notion as related to the heritage she references in the previous quote. The Glasgow Women's Library archives of the rape crisis and women's aid movements, particularly from the 1980s and early 1990s, are full of photocopied ephemera like hand-stapled reports or informational pamphlets (Figure 6.7). Many of these featured images that appear hand-drawn – the illustrations of women and girls by artist Jacky Fleming seem to be a particular favourite (see also Figure 6.9). It is useful to recall Kress and van Leeuwen's claim that material production can function as a semiotic resource (1996/2006, pp. 215–238). There is meaning embedded in the materiality of texts. The production practices of materials such as Figure 6.7 are in fact semiotic resources that lend

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[74] Source: https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/resources/false-allegations-bp-170913-1.pdf
Image courtesy of Rape Crisis Scotland.

legitimacy and sense of feminist authenticity to their messages. They signify that these materials were a sisterly labour of love from women who – despite often constrained financial resources – were dedicated to the liberation of women from men's violence. By positioning the more handknit Rape Crisis Scotland materials within the semiotic "heritage" of the rape crisis movement, Maitland highlights how these resources are contextually specific: "Every culture has systems of meanings coded in these materials and means of production" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 216–217). Figure 6.5 taps into a system of meanings embedded in grassroots feminist activism. Not only might this resonate with people who may cast a suspicious eye on more highly polished materials, the connotations of sisterhood, playfulness, and resistance impart the imagetext with a philosophical beauty that transcends its rustic appearance.

Figure 6.7: Ayrshire Rape Crisis 1994 Report[75]

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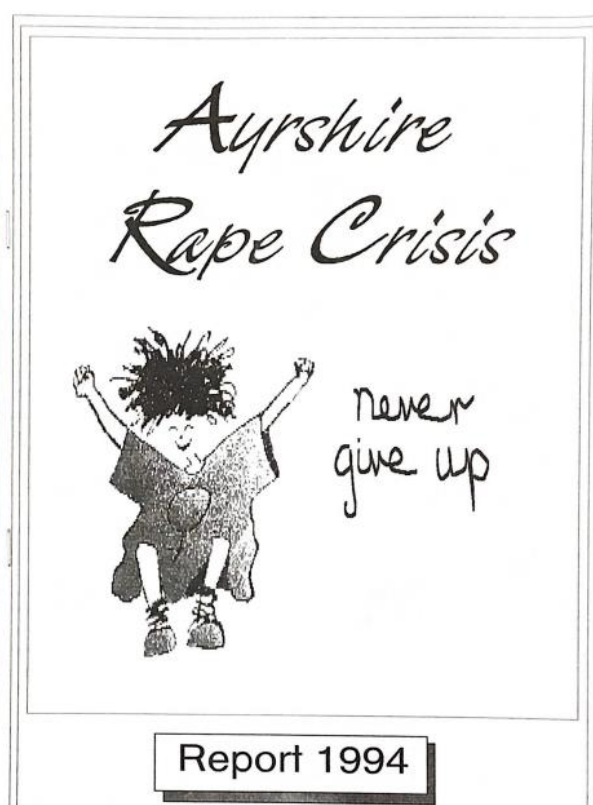
[75] Image source and credit: Rape crisis archives at Glasgow Women's Library. Location information in references (*Ayrshire Rape Crisis: Never Give up [Report]*, 1994)

The second half of Maitland's quote speaks to the interactive nature of the meaning-making process, especially where she says: "different messages and messaging styles reach different people in different ways." While we did not specifically discuss the stylistic juxtaposition of the *False Allegations* postcard (Figure 6.5) and the *False Allegations* briefing (Figure 6.6), the contrast between the two items does gesture to how visually different materials might be suited for different contexts or contents. The postcard is not visually polished. The bright colours – with the sliver of attention-getting red – border on garish. The red and black text jumps around the postcard. The white border around the logo looks out of place. The casual look of the postcards reinforces the colloquial tone of the messaging: "False Allegations – let's get it straight." The briefing paper, on the other hand, does look visually polished, e.g., the text is consistently left-justified and the border around the white logo has been removed. The more professional look of the briefing paper befits its more professional tone and might be more visually attractive to viewers who value professional presentation. The full briefing includes a reading list of 11 sources – including the Home Office, the Crown Prosecution Service in England and Wales, and the Chief Constable of Police Scotland – to evidence that "false complaints are no more common in cases of rape than they are for other crimes" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2013, p. 1). Both materials cite work from Liz Kelly.

There is a quote from this briefing document that pulls at the threads which connect the beauty system and patriarchal violence:

> But popular myths that women cannot be trusted perpetuate a relentless focus on their motives, sexual history, demeanour, credibility and behaviour, leaving perpetrators able to remain unchallenged by comparison, in relative obscurity. (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2013, p. 3)

It is not just women's behaviour that is subject to "relentless focus." Women's bodies are also relentlessly surveilled. Therefore, there is a parallel with the discussion in Section 5.06 around Zero Tolerance's rejection of images of brutalised women. The focus of such images on women's bodies pulls the gaze away from the male perpetrators of that brutality. Cultural discourses and

narratives are often so focused on women's bodies, they pay insufficient attention to men's actions.

      I will close this section by considering *10 Tips*, which is more visually polished than *End Sexual History, Pie Chart,* and *False Allegations*. Unlike campaigns with higher budgets, there is effectively only one *10 Tips* visual output (albeit reproduced in different formats). The two halves of *10 Tips* form the back and front of the postcards, and the top and bottom of the poster (Figure 6.8). One half features a powerful photograph of a woman, Lilya Brik, who is described in a British newspaper article as a "very Soviet siren" (Steward, 2008). The other half is a list of ten tongue-in-cheek tips advising people how not to commit rape. *10 Tips* uses a combination of beauty, humour, and revolutionary form to make visible and challenge patriarchal ideologies that support rape culture.

Figure 6.8: 10 Tips poster version[76]

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[76] Source: https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/campaigns-top-tips/

Image courtesy of Rape Crisis Scotland.

Maitland recounted that Rape Crisis Scotland paid for permission to repurpose a 1920s advertisement designed by Russian artist, Aleksander Rodchenko.[77] The original image was created as part of a literacy initiative and to advertise a state publisher; in the original, Brik shouts out "BOOKS" (Akbar, 2008; Goff, 2020). It is somewhat tricky to analyse an image originally produced for a non-Western public through a lens of "Western" beauty norms (bearing in mind the ambiguity of the "Western" category as discussed in Section 2.06). I have limited knowledge of the semiotic field that produced the original image. Even though I focus on the Rape Crisis Scotland version, I found it helpful to draw from popular sources discussing the original image in order to contextualise my analysis.

The model, Brik, is variously described as an actress, writer, and socialite, but perhaps her most famous role was as a muse for revolutionary poets and artists (Akbar, 2008; Goff, 2020; Steward, 2008). Brik's personal legacy speaks to how women's appearance and abilities are valued in ways that are not easy to disentangle. Samuel Goff writes that Brik "has too often been written off as a society beauty, a muse to great male artists," and that her "own talents as an essayist are seldom considered" (2020). Others, like Russian curator and museum director, Olga Sviblova, have pointed out that it was Brik's "powerful personality" *and* her "striking looks that made her perfect for the role" of inspiring creative energy in others (Steward, 2008). Brik is described as having a beauty that "wasn't conventional," and in this famous image, she appears less as conventionally beautiful, and more "striking" and powerful (Steward, 2008).

The photographer and designer of the original image, Rodchenko, was part of a group of avant-garde artists who wanted to develop a new visual language through highly stylised and abstract uses of techniques such as photography, photomontage, graphic design, and film. Their aim was to create a visual language that could communicate a cohesive revolutionary socialist ideology to a

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[77] The Rodchenko graphics and colour scheme was also used for the cover of the Rape Crisis Scotland 2011 Annual Report and the Winter 2011 Rape Crisis Scotland News (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2011; 'Stop Rape', 2011).

heterogenous population. This "semiotic revolution" was ultimately crushed by Stalin in favour of a more "Old-fashioned centralist and repressive control over meaning" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 30). However, Kress and van Leeuwen contend that the work of Rodchenko and his contemporaries presaged a modern shift that is now in "full flow" to a "new semiotic order" in which more abstract and coded visual communication is usurping the primacy of verbal communication in cultural regimes of knowledge production (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 23–34). The original Rodchenko image has been reproduced and repurposed countless times. A contemporary art magazine calls it a "staple of visual culture" (Goff, 2020). The image's continued ability to speak across time and space reveals that there is still a great deal of semiotic power in its abstract visual rhetoric.

According to Maitland, Rape Crisis Scotland chose the image because they thought it was "quite powerful." When *10 Tips* came out, some of the public may have recognised the visual design as it also inspired the 2005 "You could have it so much better" album cover by Scottish indie rock band, Franz Ferdinand (2005). The Rape Crisis Scotland version more closely copies the look of the original Rodchenko. In the photograph, Brik's dark hair escapes messily out of her headscarf. The close cropping means that the viewer cannot see her body at all (in contrast to other famous photographs of Brik in a sheer dress or languidly posed in glamorous attire) (Vintage Everyday, 2017). Her distinctive large dark eyes – which feature heavily in other images of her – are turned away from the viewer, somewhat interrupting the intimacy generated by the close cropping. In my Zero Tolerance analysis, I drew from Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar to argue that the lack of eye contact can position a representational subject as a passive object of the gaze (Section 5.05). However, visual grammar is a set of descriptive tools not prescriptive rules, and the lack of eye contact does different work in this photograph. The impression of Brik is that of an empowered subject. Part of this impression rests with the peculiar angle – the viewer looks up at Brik which symbolically places her in a position of power over the viewer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, pp. 140–141). The hint of a smile on her open mouth further enhances the sense of agency.

The Rape Crisis Scotland version uses the same distinctive "red and green and black" colour scheme as the original – a feature that Maitland particularly liked. There is a bit of blue in the scheme, and it encircles and draws attention to Brik's face. This feminine roundness of the blue circle contrasts with the masculine angularity of the rest of the graphic (Brownmiller, 1984/1986, p. 1). Diagonal lines create vectors and meet her face to form a triangle with her mouth, giving the appearance of an amplifying acoustic device. The net effect is that all the attention drawn towards the visually attractive face of Brik is redirected to amplify the message she is shouting out. In the *10 Tips* version, that message is "STOP RAPE" and the bold, all-capital, red words grow powerfully larger as they leave her mouth.

Regardless of intention, the cross-cultural repurposing of such texts should prompt reflection as to what meanings are gained or lost in the process of cultural dislocation. By changing the words coming out of Brik's mouth, *10 Tips* does divorce Rodchenko's image from its original ideological intent. Moreover, every repurposing of the image contributes to its "memeification" which distances us "from the advert's original urgency" within the fraught political context of 1920s Soviet Union (Goff, 2020). Of course, the ideological intent of *10 Tips* is not the same as a recording artist using the imagery to sell albums. Sexual violence is itself an urgent threat to women globally. It is also the case that the cultural flow of semiotic exchange can run bi-directionally and in mutually advantageous ways. Before working on Zero Tolerance, Raffles organised an exhibition in the U.S.S.R. of her photographs of women at work in Scotland; the following year she exhibited in Glasgow photographs of women at work in the U.S.S.R. (Franki Raffles Estate, 2017, pp. 18–19). More recently, Russian feminist punk activist group, Pussy Riot, has crafted a powerful visual aesthetic that draws from both Russian and Western semiotic resources (Aiello & Parry, 2019, pp. 143-149).

Returning to Figure 6.8, once the image of Brik attracts the viewer's attention to the need to "STOP RAPE," the bottom half of the poster – or the reverse of the postcard – provides tongue-in-cheek advice on how not to rape women. In the discussion around *False Allegations* (Figure 6.5, Figure 6.6), I noted how the overwhelming amount of attention paid to women's bodies redirects

focus from men's actions. *10 Tips* exploits that dynamic by using the image of Brik to attract the gaze and then humorously redirects the message to potential perpetrators. This approach contrasts with the genre of problematic "safety advice" campaigns that aim the messaging at potential victims (O. Brooks, 2018). The list of anti-rape tips did not originate with Rape Crisis Scotland, and Maitland reported finding versions of this text circulating online. Despite the organisation's due diligence in attempting to track down the originator of this version, its original provenance remains ambiguous.

Like beauty, humour has a complex relationship both within patriarchal discourses that perpetuate gendered oppression as well as feminist discourses that resist it. While a deep examination of how those discourses interact is beyond the scope here, it is worth noting that the *10 Tips* posters and postcards sit within a feminist history of similar materials that used humour to make visible and challenge patriarchal ideology. For example, the women of the 1970s and early 1980s London-based poster design collective, *See Red Women's Workshop,* set out to "make posters that were consciousness-raising, humorous and eye-catching" (Stevenson et al., 2016, p. 11). Closer to home, the cover of a brochure produced around the mid-1990s to advertise the services of Glasgow's Rape Crisis Centre (Figure 6.9) uses Jacky Fleming sketches to challenge the same misdirection of blame that *10 Tips* addresses. In the sketches, a piqued young girl ponders:

> If men can't be trusted on the streets at night.
> Then why aren't THEY kept in?

More recently, "hashtag campaigns" such as the 2013 #safetytipsforladies use humour to nurture "a politics of joy and resilience in the face of sexism, rape culture, and its apologists" (Mendes et al., 2019, pp. 17–18). In fact, according to Rape Crisis Scotland, the *10 Tips* campaign "sparked a good deal of online discussion" and requests for campaign materials came from Scotland, the rest of the United Kingdom, "as well as from much further afield" (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2012, p. 12). It is not surprising that Rape Crisis Scotland's *10 Tips* was retweeted with #safetytipsforladies, given that both campaigns shared a sense of "exasperation with rape prevention advice" (Rentschler, 2015, pp. 353–354).
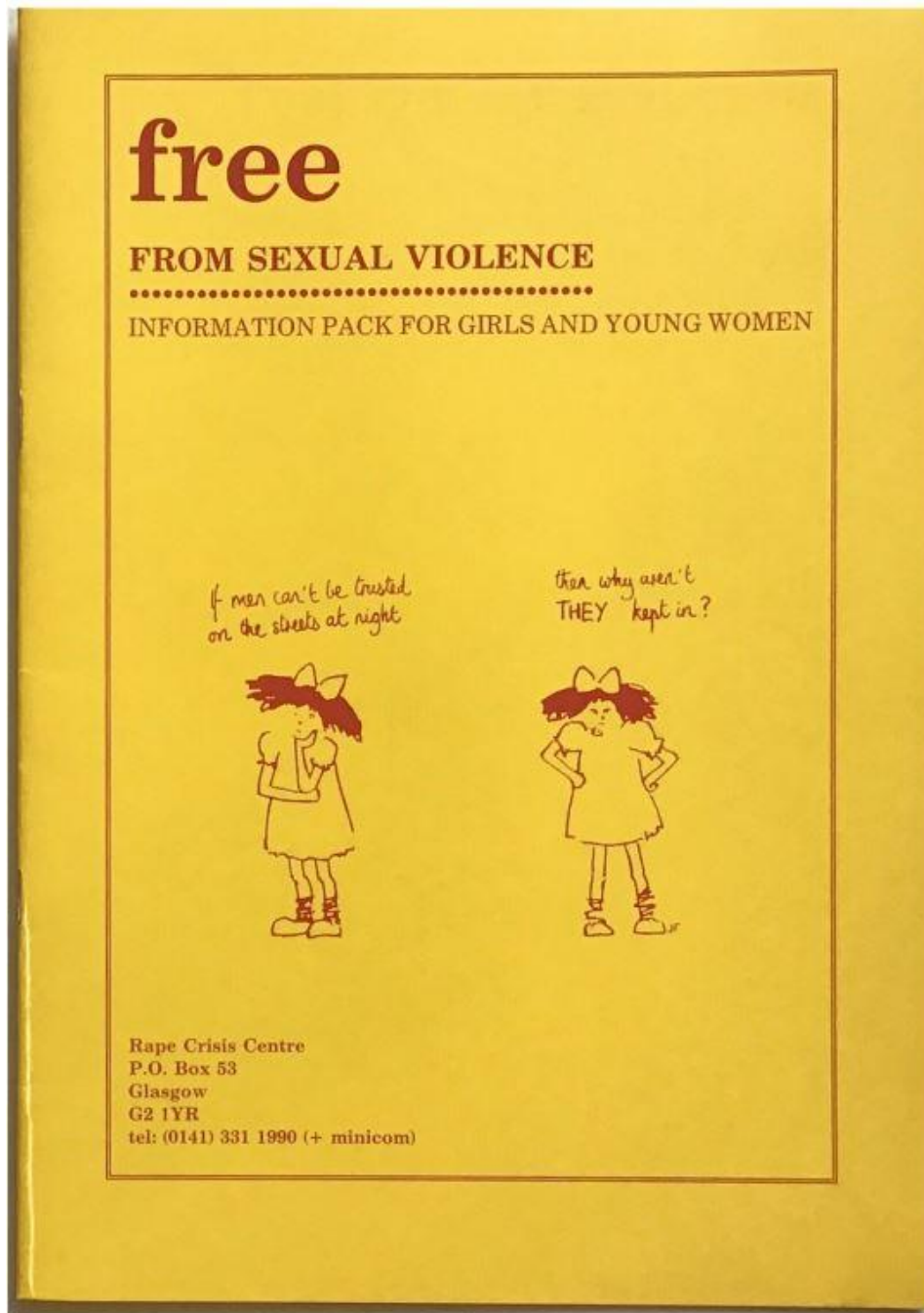
Conversely, humour has also long been deployed *in support of* rape culture and *10 Tips* emerged during a time when humour that traded in tropes of sexual violence – or "rape jokes" – was being increasingly discussed and critiqued. In a note in the 2nd edition of *Just Sex* in 2019, Gavey writes that "Rape jokes are back with a public prominence I could never have imagined in the early 2000s" (2019, p. 45). US news and opinion website, *The Daily Beast*, called 2012 stand-up comedy's "Year of the Rape Joke" (Romano, 2012). A 2015 analysis of whether "rape jokes" can work subversively suggests that while they have rhetorical potential to challenge rape culture, even well-intentioned attempts can reinforce patriarchal ideologies (Cox, 2015). This ambivalence about rape and humour might explain why *10 Tips* proved a controversial campaign with people removing materials from universities or making complaints. I did not find information about the campaign backlash in my contextual research, but Maitland pointed out that "Many, many, many people do not get humour or irony in a context of rape."

It is also possible that people who encountered a *10 Tips* poster might not have realised its origin. The imagetexts do not display Rape Crisis Scotland branding, and viewers are instead invited to "check out" the websites of the earlier *Not an Invitation* (2008) and *Not Ever* (2010) campaigns. These campaigns also did not feature prominent organisational branding – the implications of this are returned to in the next section.

Section 6.04   Larger campaigns and the subversive use of beauty

Like humour, the subversive use of beauty has both potential and pitfalls, as can be seen in the *Not an Invitation* and the follow up *Not Ever* campaigns. Both campaigns address nearly the same themes. Maitland related that in the leadup to the *Not an Invitation* campaign, Rape Crisis Scotland had been heavily involved in campaigning, "discussions and information sharing" around what would eventually become the *Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009*, i.e., the "most radical overhaul of the law on sexual offences in Scotland" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2010b). The Act contained many welcome legislative changes, but Maitland and her colleagues were acutely aware that there would "be no substantive change until [we] really have a major change in public attitudes, with people sitting on juries and so on." The *Not an Invitation* campaign briefing cited several social attitude studies – from the Scottish Executive (2008), Amnesty International (2005) and Zero Tolerance (date not provided) – as evidence of persistent victim-blaming attitudes that held that women victims / survivors bore some responsibility for their assaults (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2008a). Furthermore, according to Scottish Government figures, the conviction rate for police-recorded rapes was only 2.9% (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2008b, p. 2). A pre-campaign research report showed that the campaigners linked those attitudes with the low conviction rates (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, p. 3).

This pre-campaign report was one of two reports that provided invaluable context for my *Not an Invitation* analysis. Maitland recalled that scoping research was a requirement to secure Scottish government funding. To that end, Rape Crisis Scotland commissioned an external market research agency to conduct qualitative focus groups, a quantitative survey, and in-depth stakeholder interviews to test early design proofs to identify the best images for "challenging women blaming perceptions, stimulating discussion and broadening understanding of the victims of rape" (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, p. 7). Rape Crisis Scotland also commissioned the market research agency to conduct a post-campaign evaluation, based off 882 structured in-home interviews of potential Scottish jurors, aged 18-65, as well as 32 stakeholder questionnaires (Progressive, 2009, pp. 7–8).

For the design, the campaigners looked to existing initiatives across the world for inspiration and found one from the United States that they loved (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2007, p. 12). The original campaign started life as "15 graphic, confrontational stickers" in 1993 in New York City (C. Hall, 1995, p. 91). It was led by advertising and branding executive – and activist and educator – Charles Hall and others as an "artistic response to the sexual assault of a dear friend" after a party (C. Hall, n.d.). In 1995, the campaign was donated to the L.A. Commission on Assaults Against Women (LACAAW). The LACAAW version of the campaign featured at least 13 black and white photographs that were mainly produced by established fashion photographers.[79] Many of the photographs were overtly erotic or sexualised. In some, the eponymous tagline is overlaid in suggestive locations such as a woman's genital region as in Figure 6.10, which also shows an image of a hot dog provocatively aimed towards her groin. Hall also wrote and directed at least five advertisement length videos that depicted different scenarios that did not "invite" rape.[80] The campaign continued to be used for many years by institutions and organisations in the Los Angeles area and around the United States (*The Campaign*, n.d.-a).

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[79] Available from an online database maintained by the Centre for Study of Political Graphics: http://collection-politicalgraphics.org/

[80] Available online: http://charleshall.squarespace.com/listen-watch/anti-rape-films.html

Figure 6.10: Image from LACAAW Not an Invitation campaign[81]

Despite the shared tagline, the Scottish campaign is visually distinct from its US progenitor. In contrast to the black and white of the US campaign, the Scottish images are rendered in rich, saturated colour. The original US *Not an Invitation* campaign displays the tagline in red text. The Scottish version embeds the tagline in bright yellow text on a bright pink teardrop logo. The bright pink is eye-catching, but it does not evoke the same range of cultural associations – from danger to sexuality – as the original red.

The pink colour visually ties the campaign materials. During the main phase of the cross-media campaign in October 2008, a series of campaign posters were distributed in a variety of formats in mostly urban locations throughout Scotland, including billboards, bus shelters, and press advertisements (Progressive, 2009, pp. 4–5). Rape Crisis Scotland extended the reach and longevity of the campaign through social media, press coverage, and the standalone *Not an Invitation* website (Figure 6.11). At the heart of the campaign were six photographs by a young French photographer, Julie Cerise, illustrating its four major themes: "Dress," "Intimacy," "Drinking," and "Relationships" (*The Campaign*, n.d.-a). There were differences in the cropping and orientation of the photographs in different formats. These differences were usually minor, but in Figure 6.11 and Figure 6.12 the cropping removed multiple people from the image. According to the pre-campaign report, three images were excluded after the initial focus group stage: a very drunk woman obviously beyond the capacity of consent; a young boy in a park with an older man; and a school girl with a "suggestive" expression (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, p. 7). A further photograph related to lap-dancing was also considered but not used in the campaign. According to Maitland, the lap-dancing image was excluded because they wanted to confine themselves to the four major themes. There was also concern expressed in the pre-campaign report about whether the general public was the appropriate target for this imagery, or if the issue of rape of women in the sex industry demanded a more targeted campaign (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, p. 32).

Figure 6.11: Not an Invitation "Drinking" as it appears on website[82]

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[82] Source for all *This is not an invitation to rape* images:
https://www.thisisnotaninvitationtorapeme.co.uk/

Downloadable versions available: https://www.thisisnotaninvitationtorapeme.co.uk/the-campaign/campaign-pack/

Images courtesy of Rape Crisis Scotland.

The pink colour and the logo also give the campaign its own brand identity. In fact, the posters mention neither Rape Crisis Scotland nor the Scottish Government – although Rape Crisis Scotland is clearly mentioned on the top level of the campaign website with a "Need Help?" link to the organisational website. Following feedback in the pre-campaign research, the campaigners decided to give *Not an Invitation* a brand identity distinct both from the Rape Crisis Scotland

organisation and the funder, the Scottish Executive[83] / Government. *Not Ever* and *10 Tips* also do not prominently feature Rape Crisis Scotland branding. The existence of the *Not an Invitation* evaluation reports makes it the most useful case study to explore the implications of that decision.

The *Not an Invitation* branding does not draw attention to the campaign origins, but it does not entirely conceal them. It would be relatively easy for interested viewers to discover the origin of the campaign and the forums of the bespoke website did attract negative comments.[84] Nevertheless, the choice to not visibly badge campaign materials with organisational branding means that the campaign was not entirely transparent about its origins and interest it serves. This is problematic from a deontological or duty-based ethical perspective which positions ethics inherent to the act itself (Theaker, 2011, pp. 83–84). A similar decision from commercial interests would likely not be ethically justified. The lack of organisational branding could also be strategically risky. If organisational transparency "is intended to establish trust" (Buzzanell, 2010, p. 77), it follows that not being more transparent can undermine public trust and potentially cause reputational harm to the organisation.

Given the omnipresent barrier that sexual violence poses to the realisation of women's fundamental human rights, however, the ethics of feminist campaigning are not strictly analogous to those of commercial interests. From a utilitarian approach, the lack of organisational branding makes sense (Theaker, 2011, p. 83). The pre-campaign report discusses several pros and cons of using organisational branding, including the suggestion that "men specifically might use the Rape Crisis Scotland branding as an excuse for saying the campaign was not aimed at them" (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, p. 40). The report does not elaborate on that point, but the implication is that the Rape Crisis Scotland organisational brand can mean very different things to different viewers. If the

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[83] The Scottish Executive was rebranded to the Scottish Government in 2007, during the development of the *Not an Invitation* campaign (*Scottish Executive Renames Itself*, 2007).

[84] I chose not to include those comments in my analysis as the organisation expressed a preference that I not use them in that way.

campaign was openly badged as Rape Crisis Scotland, some men might be alienated or antagonised before even reading the strapline. Ironically, such men might be most in need of reflecting on their attitudes. Dimitrov argues that the power of invisibility can be exercised in a way that is "situational, strategic" (2017, p. 77). In this case, the lack of organisational branding is marshalling the power of invisibility in order to speak to especially critical segments of the public that might otherwise be closed to them. This branding choice reveals that, just as there are trade-offs about who and what to represent, there will be trade-offs about how best to represent them.

Such trade-offs can also be seen in the campaign's co-option of commercial visual language for a radical non-commercial project. Despite their visual differences, Maitland recounted that there is an important feature shared by both campaigns:

> And there was that idea which we also adopted in our version of it. The idea of subverting glamourous images of women that are so commonly used to sell products, to sell clothes and makeup and other sorts of things . . . we liked the idea of subverting those stereotypically glamourous glossy magazine style images for the purposes of an anti-rape campaign.

The deliberate adoption of a commercial aesthetic in *Not an Invitation* is reminiscent of how Zero Tolerance adopted the GAP aesthetic for their 2001 *Respect* campaign (Section 5.04). Both *Not an Invitation* and the later *Not Ever* present much more sexualised images of normatively beautiful women than any of the Zero Tolerance (or Scottish Women's Aid) campaigns. While all three organisations promote a feminist analysis of men's violence against women, the sexiness of some of the Rape Crisis Scotland imagery both indicates the organisation's specific focus on sexual violence and hints to a distinct approach for dismantling rape culture.

In Section 5.05 of the Zero Tolerance chapter, I discuss how the un-sexualised innocence connoted in the *Prevalence* imagetext of the three teenage girls leaves unchallenged the blame assigned to women who may not be read as innocent (Figure 5.19). It is useful to consider Mendes's critique of well-intentioned

popular discourses that confront the idea that sexual assault is caused by personal appearance (2015, pp. 96–99). She problematises anti-victim-blaming arguments that point out that "rape happens to people regardless of what they are wearing," as well as more "sophisticated" arguments that point out "how modestly dressed women, the elderly, the 'unattractive' and the young get raped" (Mendes, 2015, p. 98). While not wrong, such arguments leave unchallenged the "virgin/vamp dichotomy" which holds some women responsible for their assaults because of their clothes or transgressive behaviour (Mendes, 2015, p. 99). The Rape Crisis Scotland *Not an Invitation* and *Not Ever* campaigns also attack victim-blaming myths that rape is caused by a woman's clothes, appearance, and behaviour, but they do so on more unequivocal terms by defending women's rights to dress, appear, and act how they choose without the threat of male violence. As will be seen, however, this approach has its own pitfalls and can potentially reinforce oppressive patriarchal representational norms

Since the 1960s, much feminist scholarship, critique, activism, and anger has been targeted at advertising and its tropes of "idealized, perfect images of unattainable femininity" (Gill, 2007, pp. 73–74). The "stereotypically glamourous glossy magazine style images" to which Maitland refers are heavily influenced by advertising imperatives, as the advertising and magazine industries are intimately intertwined (Gill, 2007, pp. 181–184). And while the magazine industry may offer different versions of acceptable femininity such as the teen magazine tropes of "girlie girl" or "rock chick" all of these versions are underpinned by the "understanding that girls should be evaluated on the basis of their appearance, together with the requirement that they should be thin, beautiful, curvy, with perfect skin and lustrous hair" (Gill, 2007, p. 186). Excluding the borrowed Brik photograph*, Not an Invitation* and *Not Ever* are the only two Rape Crisis Scotland campaigns that feature human models or actors (i.e., as opposed to drawings or animations). When I mapped the live models and actors against normative standards of beauty, I found the women in these images reflect a narrow visual palette. All the women represented are young (teens-20s), thin, conventionally feminine, without visible disabilities, and almost all appear to be white. Even at the early stage of development, the un/representativeness of the models was flagged as a potential concern by focus group participants. The conspicuously young age

of the models was raised by one survey respondent as potentially implying that "only teenage or early 20s women are raped" and thus could exclude both older women ("in their 30s") and men who attack older women (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, p. 39). Even in this critique, a woman's "rapeable" age seems to end her thirties.

One of the themes of the literature review in Chapter 3 was how the narrowness of the normative beauty ideals constricts the space in the public imagination for the stories of women who fall outside these norms. The *Not an Invitation* post-campaign report suggested that "Black and minority ethnic" (BME)[85] – as well as male and older – participants were less likely to perceive the campaign messaging as important or relevant to their own lives (Progressive, 2009, p. 31). The report does not drill too deeply down into the reasons for these differences, and there are many potential explanations why different demographics may respond differently to the same materials. It may simply be that *Not an Invitation* was less likely to resonate with people who could not see themselves in it. The report did note that BME participants were more likely to say that women shared some blame for their assault if they were "flirting, dressed in revealing clothing, drunk or known to have many previous sexual partners" (Progressive, 2009, p. 25). One of the main findings of the market research was that future campaigns would benefit from targeting messaging and images to increase engagement with those groups (Progressive, 2009, p. 31). If victim-blaming attitudes are more persistent in certain demographics, there should be campaigns speaking to those demographics. As always, however, such targeted endeavours need to be sensitive to the risk of inadvertently reinforcing dangerous stereotypes.

Attempts at diverse representations can also be complicated by the semiotic weight of whiteness. The *Not an Invitation* models are not, in fact, exclusively white. Their faces are partially obscured, but both Figure 6.13 and

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[85] At the request of Rape Crisis Scotland, the evaluation report included a boost sample of Black and minority ethnic (BME) respondents between the ages of 18 and 65 (Progressive, 2009, p. 7).

Figure 6.17 appear to feature women of East Asian descent. Maitland recalled that some people that reacted to the campaign did not realise that the woman in Figure 6.13 is Asian. As will be returned to, it is not really this woman's face that is her most salient feature – indeed, the top half of it is cropped off which makes it more difficult to discern her features. Still, the misperceptions of her race echo similar responses to the Zero Tolerance *Prevalence* example in Figure 5.18, in which some white focus group participants failed to recognise one of the three little girls was a child of colour. (I also made this mistake at first.) Without making too strong a causative claim, these responses speak to a default whiteness so pervasive that women of colour are subsumed by the weight of dominant assumptions.

Figure 6.13: Not an Invitation "Necklace" landscape version downloadable for web

The fact that all the *Not an Invitation* models were "quite young and stereotypically attractive" was addressed in a factsheet that accompanied the campaign (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2008). The factsheet expressed a keen-ness to "ensure that women of all ages are included in the campaign, and . . . making sure that future phases of the campaign include images of older women" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2008). No campaign specifically targeted at women clearly in their 30s, 40s, or beyond, ever materialised, which I further discuss in Section 6.05 with respect to *Not Ever*. I propose that there is a hazard to glamourous images of normatively beautiful women beyond representational invisibility, and this hazard

relates to the regulatory role normative beauty standards play in maintaining the hegemonic patriarchal order. Both *Not an Invitation* and *Not Ever* challenge how the threat of sexual violence is used to regulate women's appearance and behaviour, e.g., a woman in a short skirt is "asking for it." Beauty norms are similarly used to regulate women's appearance and behaviour, e.g., women face intense social, cultural, and economic pressure to adhere to standards of beauty. Therefore, replicating the visual rhetoric of beauty culture risks shoring up norms that underpin other manifestations of that order, including rape culture. As Arthurs asks in her critique of the sexiness of MTV's anti-trafficking EXIT campaign: "If scenarios are designed to appeal to the audience's pre-existing tastes and assumptions how can they result in new ways of thinking and behaving?" (2009, p. 306).

Arthurs's critique centres on how the use of shocking images of brutalised women to attract public attention to sex trafficking potentially accentuates "the sexual objectification on which sexual exploitation depends" (2009, p. 313). This critique sits against a wider representational backdrop in which popular media can serve as a site where beauty culture and rape culture intersect. At the extreme end of this phenomenon are those representations, discussed in Section 3.04 of the literature review chapter, that aestheticise violence against beautiful women. Often, however, the entanglements of beauty culture and rape culture are not so conspicuous, and these intersections can be revealed through stereotypes around characteristics such as race, disability, fat-ness, age, gender identity, or sexuality. For instance, the inclusion of Black women may have helped the *Not an Invitation* campaign speak to a more diverse viewership. Such an inclusion, however, would need to be managed carefully because of another way that the photographs tap into a glamourous visual rhetoric – they tend to be overtly erotic or sexualised. The persistent trope of the hypersexualised Black woman means that inclusion is not as simple as swapping in Black models for white ones. Putting Black models in scenarios such as the one in Figure 6.14 potentially invokes racial stereotypes and further stigmatises Black women's bodies.

Figure 6.14: Not an Invitation "Intimacy Phone Box" landscape version downloadable for web[86]
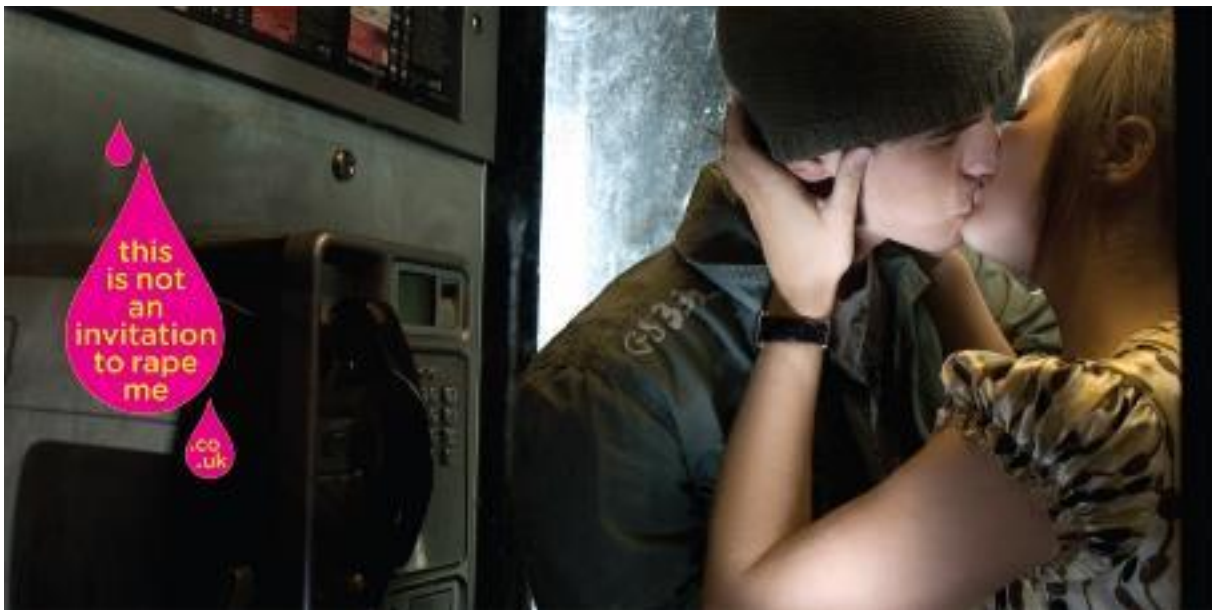
The original US *Not an Invitation* campaign iterations feature more images and a wider diversity of women, scenarios, and media than did the Scottish one. Commenting on *Not an Invitation* materials in the United States, Projansky claim that some[87] reinscribe "racialized cultural identities" by presenting white women as "beautiful, but aloof" and African Americans as more "sexually expressive" (Projansky, 2001, p. 225). Projansky also makes this compelling observation about the distinctive tagline:

> The red lettering says, "This is not an invitation to rape *me*" [emphasis added], drawing a distinction between the spectator and the women the ad depicts and acknowledging that someone (i.e., a heterosexual man) is looking at something (i.e., an objectified woman) that is not to be read as an invitation. In short, while these images may not invite rape, they do invite a heterosexual male gaze. (emphasis added by Projansky, 2001, p. 219)

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[86] The downloadable landscape version on the "Intimacy" theme features a photograph of a different couple (Figure 6.17).

[87] The critique seems aimed at the televised public service announcements (PSAs) that were filmed and directed by Charles Hall (whereas the photographs were taken by many photographers). Although I do not delve into how the identity of the producers might affect the work, it is important to note that Hall is African American.

This observation does not account for how the female spectator might encounter these imagetexts. Yet, the broader point about how the campaign imagery may invite an erotic gaze is undoubtably relevant to the Scottish campaign, in particular the one that deals with the theme of "Dress," shown in landscape (Figure 6.13) and portrait (Figure 6.15) configurations.

Figure 6.15: Not an Invitation "Necklace" portrait version downloadable for web

While it is important to acknowledge the hazards of subverting representational norms, it is also important to acknowledge the tactic's power. My central query is not whether different feminist approaches are inherently right or wrong, but what compromises and ambivalences they provoke. As Sut Jhally

warned in 1987, effective critiques of the way that gender norms are represented in advertising need to acknowledge the emotional attraction of such imagery. Gender is a uniquely efficacious "social resource" for advertisers (1987, p. 135). Gender's primacy in the structuring of our social order means both that it can be communicated "at a glance" and that it "reaches deep into the innermost recesses of individual identity" (Jhally, 1987, pp. 135–136). What Maitland described as "glamourous images of women that are so commonly used to sell products" is a language that we all speak, and that speaks to all of us. While the discursive landscape around sex, gender, and advertising has shifted in the past three decades, Jhally's observation about the emotional appeal of erotically charged advertising remains relevant: "Conventionalised sexual imagery (such as high heels, slit skirts, nudity) draws us in and makes an advertisement attractive for us" (1987, p. 138).

It is therefore worth exploring what makes the *Not an Invitation* dress image an attractive advertisement. That some observers failed to notice that she was not white may be partly related to the fact that only the bottom half of her face is visible, which hardly encourages the eye to linger. Several other visual elements coalesce to draw the viewer's eye to a particularly salient and erotic feature: the pronounced shape of her right nipple under her vest. These elements include her large eye-catching intricate necklace; the light falling against the right side of her body; the nipple's position roughly in the horizontal centre; the contrast between the solid white of her lightweight vest; and the busy graffitied wall behind her and her slim, toned, young body. In the portrait version, the pink overlaid logo sits just beside her nipple (Figure 6.15). According to the scoping report, this image was especially impactful; her suggestive attire was repeatedly commented on, with one participant admitting that "Being a man I am drawn to the nipple" (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, p. 18).

This man's candid response highlights the postfeminist pitfalls of sexualised imagery. In her critique of *Free the Nipple*, Megarry argues that the hashtag campaign's exhibitionist strategy of encouraging women to share topless photographs "plays into, rather than challenges, patriarchal ideology" (2018, p. 1079). McRobbie expresses similar reservations about the postfeminist, capitalist

re-packaging of sexualisation as liberation. She asks: "What need might there be for a feminist politics at all, if women could simply subvert the meanings of the goods and the values of the dominant cultural world around them?" (McRobbie, 2009, p. 8). Approaches that position liberation as achievable via the sexualisation of normatively beautiful bodies risk having more in common with the individualistic postfeminist trope of the always-sexually-available "up for it" woman discussed in Section 3.05 of the literature review than with a radical challenge to patriarchal norms.

Campaigns that challenge rape culture must inevitably navigate these tensions created by the inescapability of feminine beauty norms and male surveillance. As a feminist organisation with a structural analysis of men's violence against women and access to professional resources, Rape Crisis Scotland is well positioned to walk this representational tightrope. The research-driven visual and narrative messaging of *Not an Invitation* was much more controlled than crowd-sourced Twitter-based hashtag campaign like *Free the Nipple* could be. While Figure 6.15 draws the eye to the nipple, the construction of the women resists reducing her (only) to a sex object. As discussed previously, the model is of East Asian descent. Like Black women, East Asian women are also subject to fetishistic representational stereotypes, such as the passive, delicate, and hyperfeminine "Lotus Blossom Baby," or the devious, predatory "Dragon Lady" (Tajima, 1989). This model, however, is presented neither as passive nor predatory. She is constructed as an independent woman moving with purpose towards a destination that only she knows. She is the only *Not an Invitation* model on her own, with neither female companions nor male romantic or sexual partners. Several other factors support this reading of her as an agentic subject: her neutral expression; the position of her face looking out towards her destination (even without eyes); and the fact that she does not acknowledge the spectator. This photograph in Figure 6.13 and Figure 6.15 simultaneously presents the beautiful young woman's body as a site of erotic visual pleasure while presenting her an independent subject in control of her own self and sexuality. Furthermore, presenting oneself to-be-looked-at can also be an exercise of power (Dyer, 1982, p. 66). This imagetext does not entirely escape the problematics of a representational landscape that perpetuates sexual

objectification, but it does offer a more confrontational approach than insisting that chaste or modestly dressed women get raped too.

This photograph is also the first that appears on the website, and in that sense, is almost the face of the campaign (albeit with only a portion of an actual face) (Figure 6.16). The bespoke, standalone *Not an Invitation* website helped the organisation to fulfil a key objective of the campaign by sparking public conversations about sexual violence (Progressive, 2009, p. 27). Both the *Not an Invitation* and *Not Ever* websites hosted forums where visitors could share their own beliefs and opinions – both complimentary and critical. By creating opportunities for people to share their experiences, these forums function as a "form of consciousness raising" (Loney-Howes, 2015, p. 9), or as networked counterpublics (Edwards et al., 2020; Mendes, 2015, pp. 159–186) that create space to challenge hegemonic rape myths.

The *Not an Invitation* website also has an interactive feature that encourages viewers to toggle between the readings of agentic subject and sexual object. Website visitors are prompted to click on pink and yellow dots overlaid on greyscale versions of the photographs to see hypothetical "different points of view," mimicking a conversational format between sexual violence myths and their rebuttals. These dots are often suggestively placed, such as one very near the model's nipple. Not only does the photograph invite the gaze, but the interactive feature invites the viewer to (virtually) touch her body. The first comment that is revealed highlights that – despite the intimacy of this exchange – the most important feature is how the woman feels about her attire, thus reinforcing the connotation of agency established by the photograph:

"I feel great in this outfit – the vest looks so much better without a bra."

The contrasting point of view attempts to refute this agency by ascribing motivation to her attire that she herself never expresses:

"I see a scantily dressed woman, asking for it."

This pernicious myth that women could ever be "asking for" rape reflects the way that threats of sexual violence, like beauty norms, are used to regulate women's appearance and behaviour.

Figure 6.16: "Dress" section of the bespoke Not an Invitation website
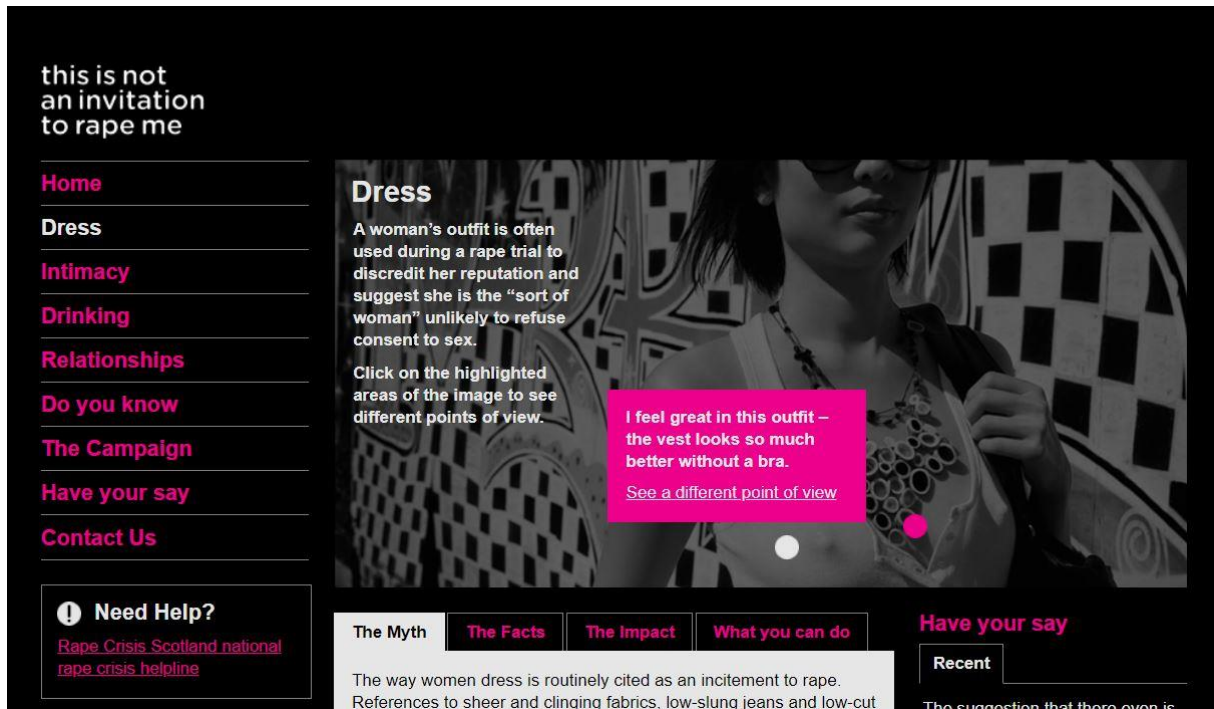
The photograph in Figure 6.16 has the most direct relevance to beauty norms, but the role of sexual violence in regulating women's behaviour is a common feature across the *Not an Invitation* and *Not Ever* materials. Women who drink too much are asking to be assaulted by predatory men (Figure 6.11). Women who passionately kiss and caress men in a phone box (Figure 6.14) or the back of a taxi (Figure 6.17) are asking for those encounters to turn into sexual violence.

Figure 6.17: Not an Invitation "Intimacy Taxi portrait version downloadable for web

The latter two images, Figure 6.14 and Figure 6.17, focus on the theme of "Intimacy." The inclusion of men makes possible alternative readings in which the statement that "this is not an invitation to rape me" could be interpreted as coming from either party. Under the (then) forthcoming *Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009*, men could finally (legally) be victims of rape (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2010b). In Figure 6.17, it is the young woman who appears to be in control. She is at the forefront of the image. She leans over and into the man. Her hand is on his unbuckled belt. The young woman in Figure 6.17 is sexy. The lighting of the photograph draws attention to her pink bra strap sliding down her arm and her

stylish patterned white tights. While the man is more passive, his hand on her chest suggests that he is still a consensual participant.

According to Maitland, the photograph they initially planned to use for Figure 6.17 had to be adjusted as some pre-campaign focus group participants thought the man looked asleep. Although the alternative images are no longer available to view, I wonder if there might have been semiotic potential in flipping the script by using the "sleeping man" photograph. If the man was asleep, the young woman would be transformed from enthusiastic participant to perpetrator. An image of a woman assaulting a sleeping man might disrupt the "perennial theme. . .that men are always eager and ready for sex" which permeates popular culture (Gavey, 2019, p. 7). Men are supposed to always want sex, especially with beautiful, sexy women (Gavey, 2019, p. 246). On one hand, flipping the script could have posed a powerful challenge to hegemonic ideals of masculinity that drive gendered violence. On the other hand, such an image might detract from the feminist analysis by presenting sexual violence as a gender-neutral problem divorced from patriarchal power and control.

Two of the *Not an Invitation* posters stand out in that they do not centre around the role that threats of sexual violence play in regulating women's immodest dress or transgressive behaviour. The posters in Figure 6.18 and Figure 6.19 are on the theme of "relationships" and feature a young couple at their wedding. While threats of violence can play a role within interpersonal relationships, the woman in these photographs is not behaving in a socially transgressive manner that demands regulation. On the contrary, weddings are "the privileged moment of heterosexuality" (Dyer, 1997, p. 124). Indeed, even the relatively recent wider acceptance of non-heterosexual marriage may represent more of a co-option than a radical challenge to the role of marriage in reproducing heteronormative ideals (McRobbie, 2009, pp. 49–51).

Figure 6.18: Not an Invitation "Wedding" landscape version downloadable for web

Figure 6.19: Not an Invitation "Wedding" landscape version downloadable for web

The young bride is the only blonde woman in any of the *Not an Invitation* photographs. The fairness of her upswept blonde hair is complemented by the way the light falls on her fair skin and her white dress, veil, and bouquet. Resonant here are Dyer's observations about the ways in which lighting, cosmetics, (blonde) hair colour, and clothing –especially bridal wear – can be used to construct a "glowing" ideal of white feminine beauty (1997, p. 124). Dyer writes: "Idealised white women are bathed in and permeated by light. It streams through them and falls on to them from above. In short, they glow" (1997, p. 122). The glow evokes the values associated with whiteness as discussed in Section 3.02: purity, virtue, innocence, and beauty. The myth being addressed here is less whether woman's behaviour invites rape, and more whether rape within heterosexual marriage exists at all. As one of the website's hypothetical points of view describes: "I don't think that a man forcing himself on his wife is rape." This response is not really surprising; it was as late as 1989 that marital rape was definitively made illegal in Scotland (Brindley & Burman, 2011, p. 151). As C. Donovan and Barnes point out, definitions of violence affect perceptions, even amongst victims / survivors. Writing about feminist campaigns to criminalise marital rape, they claim that "without explicitly criminalising a husband forcing his wife to have sex, a wife might not problematise the behaviour at all, believing instead that it is within her husband's conjugal rights" (C. Donovan & Barnes, 2019, p. 244). Some focus group participants were initially confused by the photograph, with one observing that ". . .her dress cannot be considered provocative" (B. Cameron & Murphy, 2008, p. 21). This observation naïvely stumbles quite close to a key point of the entire *Not an Invitation* campaign – that it is not a woman's clothes, appearance, or behaviour that causes rape.

According to Maitland, this theme was the one that was the most controversial and caused the "biggest stir" amongst focus group participants and irate commenters on the website. It is notable that the groom is himself young, white, fresh-faced, and conventionally attractive – and thus more likely to attract sympathy – than less visually appealing perpetrators. He is not what a rapist looks like in the cultural imagination. As a beautiful, white, virtuous bride, she also subverts expectations about the presumed look of a woman who "invites" rape.

A glowing, young, blonde woman also appears as the protagonist in the follow up to *Not an Invitation.* Rape Crisis Scotland describes *Not Ever* as "Scotland's first ever TV campaign aimed at tackling women-blaming attitudes to rape" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2010a). As the first video artefact in my corpus, the 29 second *Not Ever* television advertisement rewards more in-depth analytical attention. As with other campaigns, *Not Ever* subverts viewer expectations, but with the added semiotic complications of movement, sound, and time in which the use of colour, lighting, framing, and camera distance construct a narrative of a woman moving from the object of the gaze to an agentic subject. For my close analysis of the video, I considered it as three discrete scenes. My social semiotic analysis was also informed by the campaign's bespoke website and downloadable poster.

As with *Not an Invitation,* Rape Crisis Scotland looked outwith the women's sector to contract a creative team for: scripting, art direction, filming, website and social media production, media planning and buying. Aware of the limitations of *Not an Invitation*'s dissemination strategy of focusing on "billboards and bus stops," Maitland recalled that the campaigners felt that television provided an opportunity to reach a much wider Scottish audience. The television advertisement ran during the summer of 2010 over three different channels in Scotland (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2010, p. 6). The campaign coincided with the men's football World Cup, which Maitland attributed to helping the campaign to reach a larger viewership than might otherwise be anticipated. The organisation claims that the television advertisement reached 82% of the Scottish population (Rape Crisis Scotland, ca. 2010, p. 6). *Not Ever* addresses three of the four major themes laid out in *Not an Invitation,* but the "Dress" theme is most germane to how the video interacts with notions of beauty.

The *Not Ever video* opens with a medium-long shot of a woman in a bustling pub or bar (Figure 6.20). Visible from the knees up, the woman conforms

to Western beauty ideals: white, slender, visibly able-bodied, and in her 20s.[88]
The woman's youth is notable as Rape Crisis Scotland had previously expressed
a keenness in the *Invitation* campaign materials to "make sure that future phases
of the campaign include images of older women" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2008).
When I asked Maitland about this in our interview, she suggested that a young
woman was a more natural choice for the *Not Ever* script, as it centred on a
woman on a night-out. I propose that the choice of a young and conventionally
attractive model also helps propel the video's storyline, which first reproduces a
victim-blaming narrative, in order to later knock it down. Women perceived as
beautiful or "pretty" are also more likely to be perceived as complicit in their own
assaults, i.e., perceived as vamps (Benedict, 1993, p. 19). The presentation of this
woman as young and beautiful thus helps advance this set-them-up / knock-them-
down narrative arc.

Figure 6.20: Opening scene of Not Ever[89]
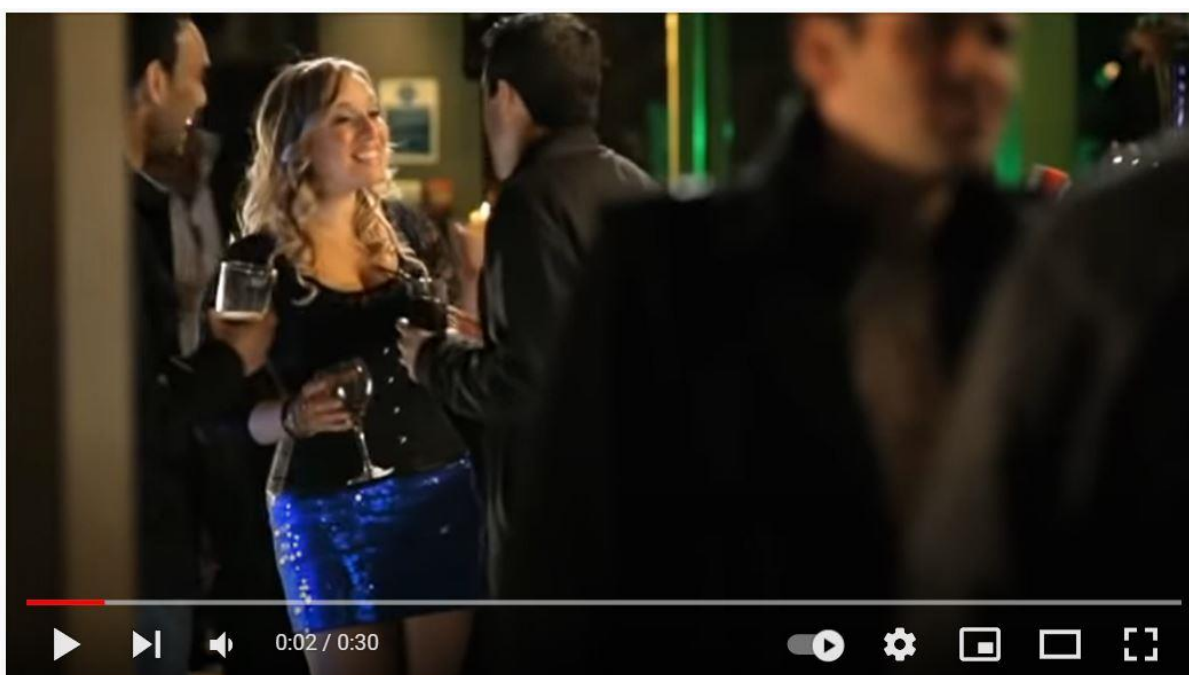
As the scene opens, the smiling young woman the figure most in-focus. The light falls on her face and hair to signify the glowing ideal of white feminine beauty. The woman is positioned between her two male companions, whose bodies are turned away from the viewer and towards the woman. The visual positioning of the woman as the focus of attention of her two male companions is the first hint that she is being narratively positioned as the object of male attention.

The viewer does not know it yet, but they are viewing her from a broadly similar angle to the main male character and thus being invited to share his perspective. As the scene unfolds, it becomes evident that this man's perspective is driving the narrative of this scene. The perspective positions the viewer (and the main male) not in an intimate personal space but close enough to surveil her body. This ability to see the woman's body is important to the narrative arc of the advertisement. The viewer can see that she is wearing a fitted black top that reveals her well-lit cleavage. More importantly, the viewer can clearly see the scene's most salient feature: the blue sequin mini-skirt which hugs the woman's figure and stops mid-thigh. Several features draw the viewer's eye to the skirt. The rich, saturated blue colour sharply contrasts with both her black shirt and the muted background. As the woman moves, the sparkling sequins catch the viewer's eye. The attention drawn to the skirt suggest that it, not the woman, may be the real star of the show.

The skirt takes an even more semiotically central position in the companion *Not Ever* poster. The poster removes the woman altogether and shows just the skirt on a hanger (Figure 6.21). Two labels hang off the skirt: "Asking to be raped?" and "notever.co.uk." Although the *Not Ever* website does not have the same degree of interactivity as the *Not an Invitation* website, these labels do similar work of inviting discussion. They pose a provocative question and then signpost the reader to a website, the name of which gives a very strong clue as to the answer.

Figure 6.21: Not Ever downloadable poster[90]

Returning to the video, the medium also allows for another mode missing from static materials: sound. In a muffled voice, the woman appears to be playfully – and perhaps flirtatiously – rebuking one of her male companions:

"You're terrible. You're so bad. Shut up! You're silly."

[90]Source: https://www.notever.co.uk/the-campaign/campaign-poster/
Image courtesy of Rape Crisis Scotland.

As she speaks, the camera cuts across the room to a close shot of two young men in conversation. Only the main man's face is visible, as his companion is turned away from the camera. As the woman says "bad," an expression comes over the main man's face which indicates that he has spotted her (Figure 6.22). The juxtaposition of the woman's "bad" and the man's expression signals a change from the previously carefree mood of the advertisement.

Figure 6.22: Main man of Not Ever
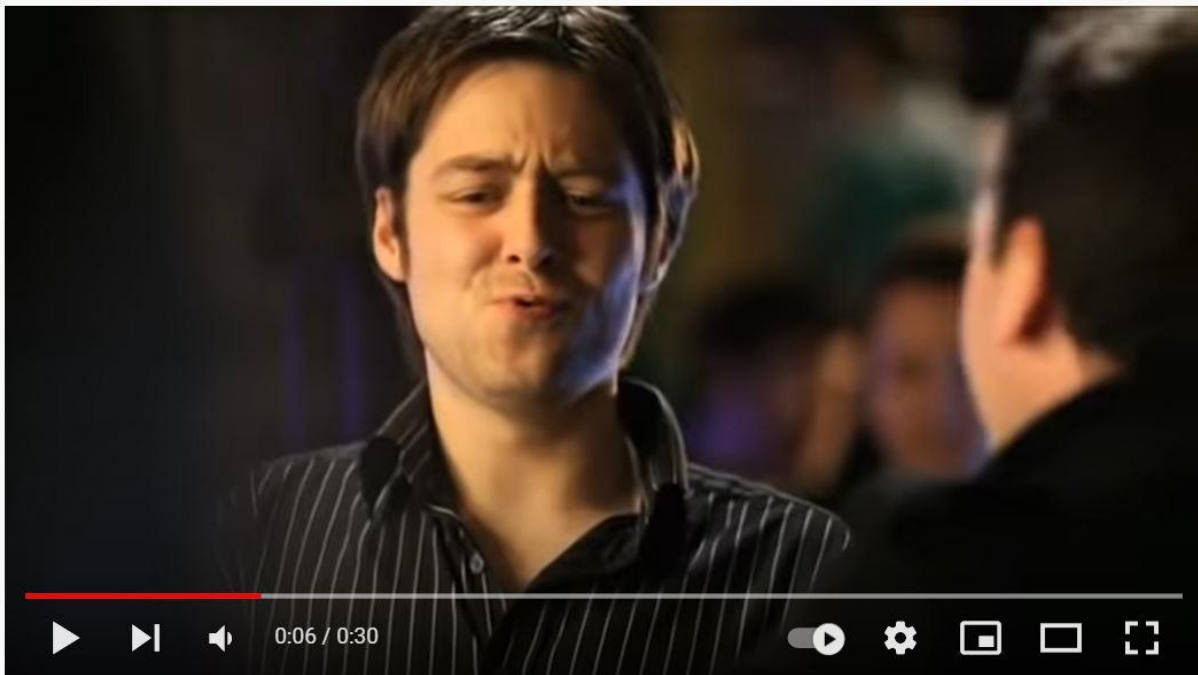
The next few seconds exploit the dynamism of the moving image in a series of reverse angle shots: the camera cuts to a head and shoulders shot of the woman before returning to the main man. In contrast to static images, "moving image can represent social relations as dynamic, flexible and changeable" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 261). Although no characters have changed location, this back-and-forth of close shots symbolically repositions the man from an impersonal, public distance to a more personal one. His objectifying gaze symbolically intrudes into the personal space of the woman, and the viewer is invited to join in. This symbolic intrusion emphasises that the cultural norms which legitimate the perpetual surveillance of women's bodies are interlinked with the cultural norms that legitimate the violation of women's bodily autonomy, i.e., women's bodies exist for the gratification of men. As the main man leers at the woman, he urges his companion to:

"Check out the skirt. . ."

The camera obliges him by cutting to an extreme close-up of the skirt and the tops of the woman's thighs (Figure 6.23). The sequins sparkle as the woman shifts her weight, and her genital region is nearly at the centre of the screen. This suggestive framing positions both the main male character and the viewer as voyeurs. At the moment that the main male character says "skirt," one of her companion's hands appears to accidentally, and almost imperceptibly, gesture towards the skirt. The tight visual focus on the skirt reinforces the main man's line. He is not saying "Check *her* out." He is saying "Check out *the skirt . . .*"

Figure 6.23: The Not Ever skirt

The final shot of the first scene returns to the main man as he fixes a meaning to the skirt as a sign of sexual consent:

". . .she's asking for it."

This statement simultaneously imbues the skirt with a sense of agency while denying it to the woman. Figure 6.24 is a screenshot from the campaign's bespoke website. It is visually tied to the video and the poster through the reproduction of the skirt motif, while providing more space for discussion and contextualisation. This page poses a rhetorical question: "When is a skirt more

than a skirt?" (*The Campaign*, n.d.-b). The answer makes it very clear that no inanimate object – no matter how "short," "sheer," or "shiny" – can override the consent of the wearer (*The Campaign*, n.d.-b)

Figure 6.24: Not Ever website – "The campaign"[91]
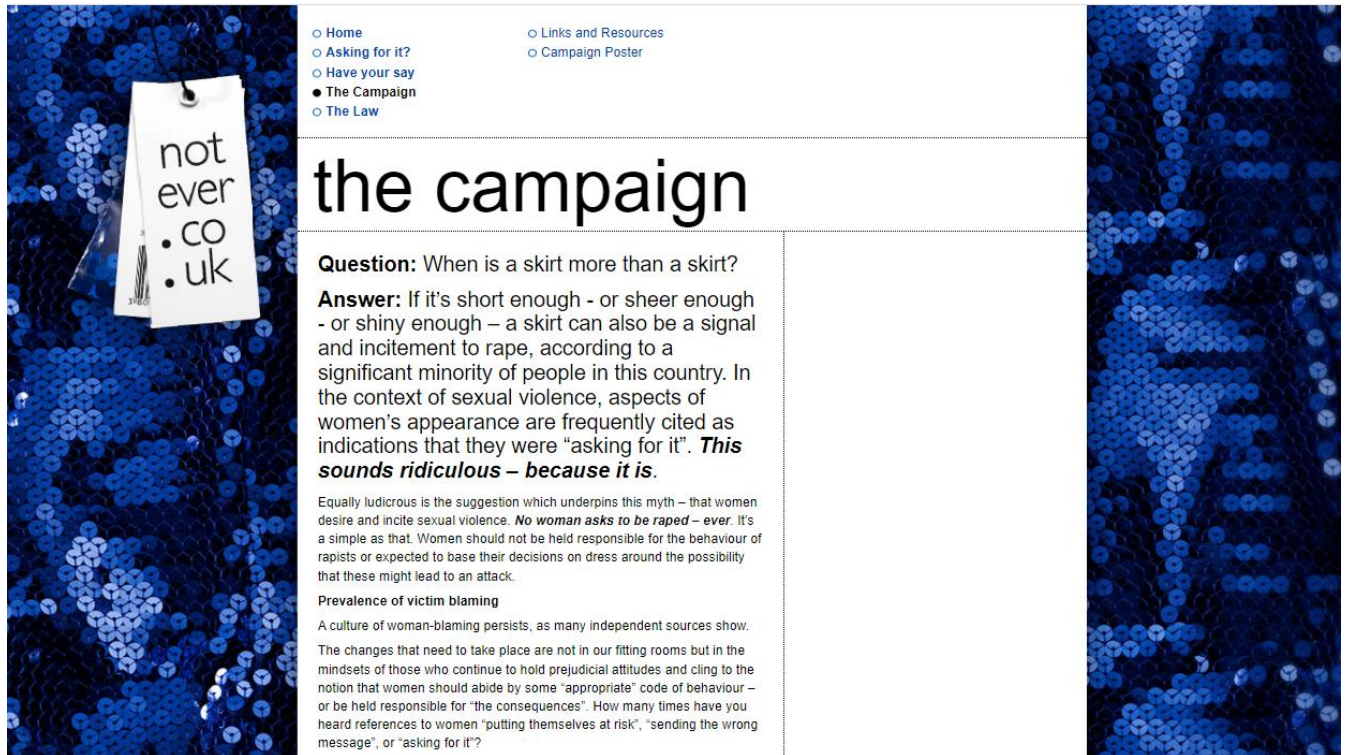
Returning again to the video, the opening scene ends with the main man's companion leering at the woman over his shoulder (Figure 6.25). It is worth noting that both leering men are white, neatly groomed, and young (20s-30s). Although less visible, the woman's companions also appear to be of a similar age and well groomed, although one of those appears to be a man of colour. By presenting the leering men as just ordinary (and white) men on a night out, the advertisement neither monsters them nor plays into racist stereotypes of Black men preying on white women. This second man's choice to participate in, rather than challenge, his companion's problematic behaviour highlights how rape culture is normalised through casual male "banter."

Figure 6.25: Not Ever main man's companion

The first scene set up the rape myths, and the second scene begins to knock them down. The second scene opens with a long shot looking down towards the same young blonde woman and a female sales assistant in a department store (Figure 6.26). The blonde woman still wears a full face of cosmetics, but her clothes and hair are more casual. In her right hand she is holding a pink skirt, in the left she is flipping the blue sequin miniskirt off a rack of clothing. Holding both skirts, she walks towards a mirror.

Figure 6.26: Not Ever main woman and sales assistant
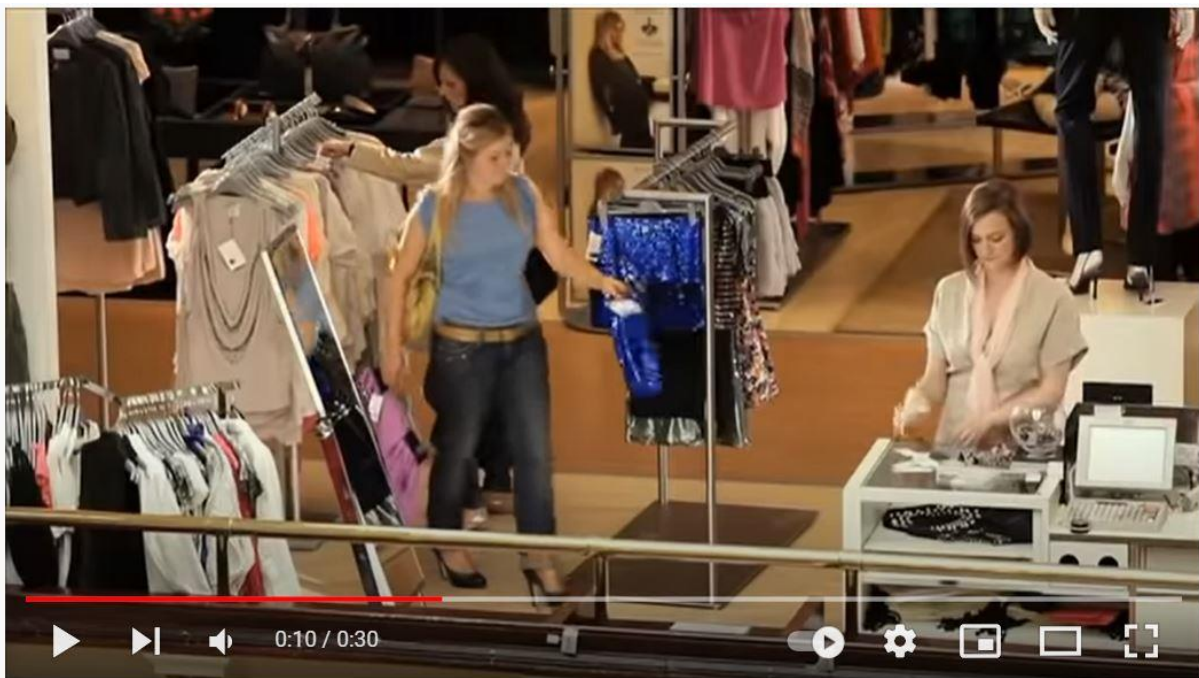
Her movement attracts the viewer's eye, as does the flash of blue sequins as she flips the skirt off the rack. The sparkle of the sequin skirt stands out amongst the muted tones of the store, but not so dramatically as in the darkened bar. The camera cuts to a medium close shot of the main woman from the waist-up as she compares the two skirts in the mirror. The scene then cuts to a head and shoulders shot of the sales assistant, who is also white, young (20s-30s), smartly dressed, with neatly styled hair and cosmetics. She smiles and asks the main woman:

"Can I help?"

The next several shots cut between the two women as they speak (Figure 6.27). For the most part, both women remain in the frame simultaneously. This gives the impression that this is a friendly meeting of equals, and the mix of medium-close and close shots gently invites the viewer into this warm interaction. This contrasts with the impersonal symbolic violation of the first scene.

Figure 6.27: Not Ever main women and sales assistant speak

The main woman replies:

"Ah. Yeah, thanks. I'm going out tonight and I want to get raped. I need a skirt that will encourage a guy to have sex with me against my will."

At this point, the skirt is again positioned as the unifying visual and narrative element of the advertisement, and the camera cuts to a close shot of the blue skirt in her hand. She then swaps it with a pink skirt. As both women look in the direction of an offscreen mirror, the sales assistant responds:

"The blue one. *Definitely* the blue."

The main woman smiles and nods in agreement.

There are two related assumptions built into this conversation. First, the woman's choice of skirt is made primarily on the basis of the presumed "message" it sends to men. This assumes that women are cultural dupes who perform feminine beauty solely or mainly for the patriarchal gratification of men. This assumption shares the same shortcomings of what Bordo calls the "'old' feminist discourse (that) may have been insufficiently attentive to the multiplicity of meaning, the pleasures of shaping and decorating the body, or the role of female agency in reproducing patriarchal culture" (1993b, p. 31). This assumption precludes the possibility that she is purchasing the skirt for *her own pleasure* and that she wants to feel beautiful for *herself*. Another of the "pleasures" of patriarchal beauty norms for some women may indeed be making themselves attractive to men. This brings us to the second assumption, which is rooted in what Andreasen calls "rapeability logic," i.e., that a woman's appearance can be read as "de-facto consent" (2020, p. 108). However, even if an attractive young woman dresses with the specific goal of attracting a desiring gaze, it does not then follow that she is inviting sexual assault.

The last few seconds of the scene conclusively assert the woman's agency, thus subverting the woman-as-object narrative established in the first scene. The camera angle changes, and the woman is now the only element in focus. It is a close head and shoulders shot, which again positions the viewer in the woman's personal space. Any sense of unobserved intrusion is disrupted when she turns towards the camera, breaking the fourth wall to speak directly to the viewer (Figure 6.28). She is also turning away from the mirror and thus symbolically away from the task of making herself appealing to the gaze. By looking directly at the viewer, the woman is recast from object of desire to agentic

subject. The viewer is being directly addressed by the woman and is no longer the "invisible onlooker" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 119). Although her expression is not necessarily angry, she is no longer happy or relaxed. With her agency fully asserted, she highlights the ridiculousness of the previous exchange by saying:

"As if."

Figure 6.28: Not Ever "As If"

For the third and final scene, the screen cuts to an extreme close-up of the skirt, so that shimmering blue sequins cover the entire screen. White text in the centre reads: "Nobody asks to be raped." Below that, in smaller text is: "notever.co.uk." A male voiceover reads:

"Nobody asks to be raped." <<pause>> "Ever."

As the man says "Ever," the word appears on the screen (Figure 6.29). These closing two seconds also shut down any ambiguity about whether it is possible for a woman's clothes to signal that she is "asking for it."

Not Ever reveals how meaning can be constructed via motion. The most recent campaign in my corpus, *I Just Froze,* also uses motion to construct meaning in the form of two animated videos which were supported by an accompanying suite of materials. All of the materials are visually tied together through the style of animation / illustration and a co-ordinated colour scheme of black, white, grey, seafoam green, mustard yellow, and a very few emphatic splashes of bright red. *I Just Froze* has the first animated campaign materials in my corpus, and I close this chapter by briefly considering some of the representational potential afforded by that medium.

Unlike *Not an Invitation* and *Not Ever,* all the *I Just Froze* materials display the logos of Rape Crisis Scotland, the Scottish Government, and the media co-op. *I Just Froze* launched in March 2017, just before the judicial directions requirement of the *Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016* came into force. The new requirements stipulate that judges must advise juries that there may be "good reasons" why victims / survivors do not resist a rape or delay reporting it (Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016,

2016, sec. 6). Such scenarios, therefore, should not be interpreted as evidence of a false allegation. The animated video, "*So Many Reasons*,"[92] explains why survivors may not report their experiences. "*Flight or Freeze*" explains why survivors might not fight back.

When I asked Maitland about the decision to use animation for this campaign, she told me that they particularly liked a 2015 media co-op NHS Lanarkshire in 2015, around the effect of trauma on the brain (media co-op, n.d.). Maitland also told me they wanted something suitable for social media as this was to be the key method of dissemination. The six postcards include the #IJustFroze hashtag and were designed to be distributed digitally. Two of the postcard images (Figure 6.30, Figure 6.31) were further simplified to be printed onto tote bags (Figure 6.32). The simple style of the animation is ideally suited for this type of adaptation. I suggest there is also a metaphorical elegance, as so much of Rape Crisis Scotland's campaigning work challenges the ubiquitous surveillance and policing of women's bodies and what women wear. Carry-able and wear-able items like tote bags (or t-shirts, pin badges, etc.) are ways that women can reclaim our bodies as sites of resistance. If women are going to be watched regardless, we may as well give the watchers something to see.

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[92] I took the *I Just Froze* video names, "*So Many Reasons*" and "*Flight or Freeze,*" from the names the Rape Crisis Scotland gave to them: https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/campaigns-i-just-froze/

Figure 6.30: I Just Froze "Kapow" postcard[93]

Figure 6.31: I Just Froze "Shattered" postcard

[93] Source for all *I Just Froze* postcards: https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/campaigns-i-just-froze/

Images courtesy of Rape Crisis Scotland. Produced by media co-op.

Figure 6.32: I Just Froze tote bags[94]

In the animated videos, music, sound effects, and voiceover help propel the video's narrative. The words of the (mainly) female narrator are incorporated into the illustration, as if they are decorative subtitles. In the next chapter, I discuss this technique in more depth around its use in another media co-op production, *Hidden in Plain Sight* for Scottish Women's Aid (Section 7.05). Of particular interest here is how the campaign's pared-down aesthetic helps navigate the representational tension identified in the Zero Tolerance chapter discussion around the difficulties of striking the balance between generality and specificity in representations of victims / survivors (Section 5.05).

The style of the illustrations and animations lends a usefully generic quality to the characters. It is difficult to make observations about their identities other than in the most general terms. The main protagonist in each animated video is a

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[94] Source: My own photograph of items collected from a sector event.

slender, dark-haired, young-seeming woman (Figure 6.33, Figure 6.34). It appears to be the same woman in each video and all the postcards, but even that cannot be categorically established. Seen without the context of other campaign materials, the silhouette on Figure 6.31 could be interpreted as a long-haired man.

Figure 6.33: I Just Froze "Fight or Freeze" protagonist [95]

Figure 6.34: I Just Froze "So Many Reasons" Video protagonist

This de-individualisation is more extreme in other frames of the animated videos, such as Figure 6.35 and Figure 6.36. These other victims / survivors of sexual violence are drawn as outlines against decontexualised solid-coloured backgrounds. On one hand, there is a generalising uniformity to the representational subjects. In both Figure 6.35 and Figure 6.36, the outlines are the same general size, shape, and colour. On the other hand, the differences in their hair and necklines semiotically mark them as individuals. The narration in Figure 6.36 makes the important point that there is no universal experience of sexual violation:

"The time it takes someone to speak out is different for everybody."

The rendering of the subjects as literally face-less outlines invites the viewer to fill in the details with our own diverse meanings and experiences. In some places, however, a potential identity is relayed through the narration. Notably, both videos suggest that one of the figures could be "Your son." This deliberate inclusion of male victim / survivors was what compelled me to re-evaluate my initial plan to "men's violence against women and children" as a consistent umbrella term, as discussed in the section on the complexities of naming gendered violence (Section 2.05).

Figure 6.35: I Just Froze "Fight or Freeze" (friend, neighbour, daughter, son)
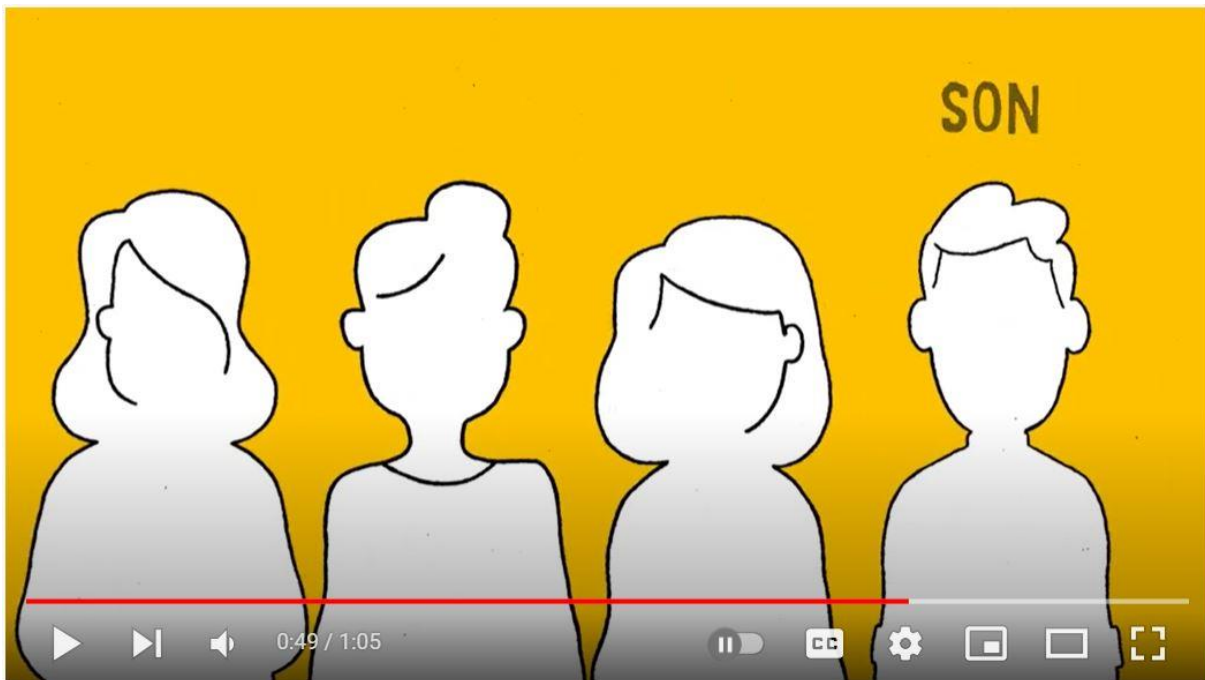
Figure 6.36: I Just Froze "So Many Reasons" (is different for everybody)
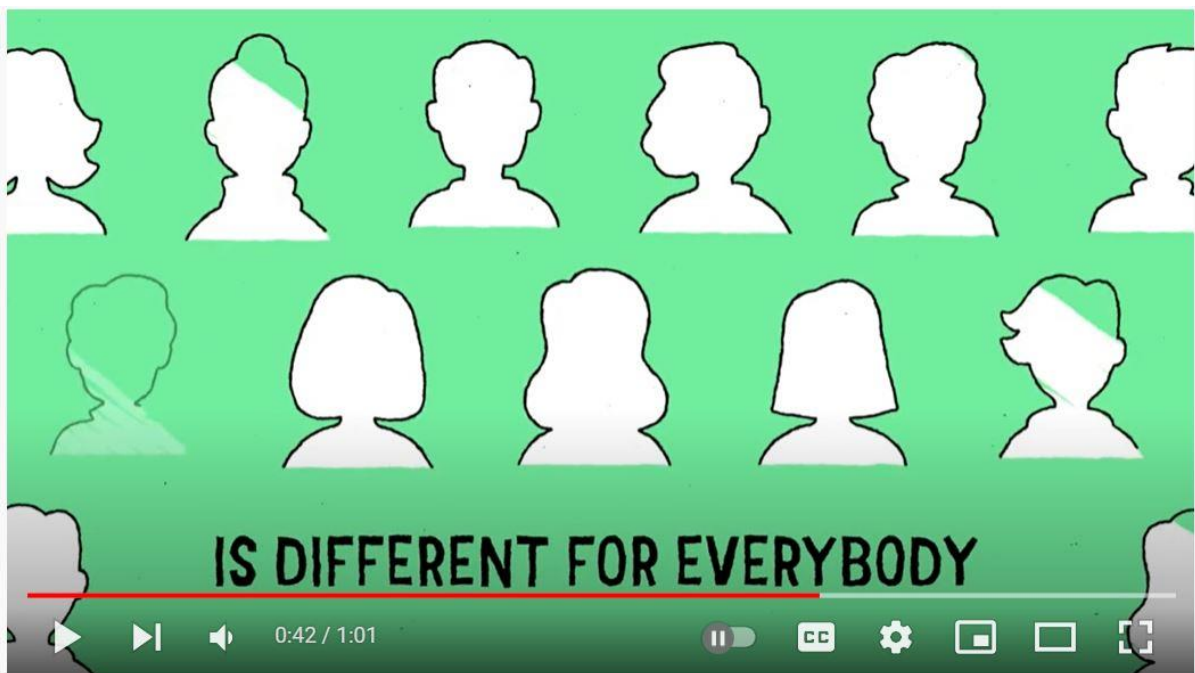
It makes practical sense to include men in the messaging as the Rape Crisis Scotland helpline is open to men, and some of the local Rape Crisis centres provide support to men. However, the inclusion of men creates representational and ideological tensions. Men and boys do experience rape, but it is still a gendered crime supported by patriarchal structures of power and control. As a class, men are not subject to the regulatory force of threats of sexual violence (nor

beauty norms) in the same way that women are. For example, *Not an Invitation* was "specifically about attitudes to women" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2008). As the campaign fact sheet states: "when did you last hear someone commenting that a man was 'asking for it' because he was dressed in revealing clothing?" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2008).

The inclusion of men does not invalidate a gendered analysis of violence. Indeed, hegemonic ideals of masculinity can make it more difficult for men to seek help. Rape Crisis Scotland recognises this problem in a pamphlet produced for male survivors. The pamphlet challenges social attitudes "that 'real men' can't be raped/sexually assaulted because they should be able to defend themselves against attack" (Rape Crisis Scotland & Henderson, 2020, p. 13). While the inclusion of men could help break down harmful gender stereotypes, it should be done in a way that does not construct sexual violence as a "gender-neutral" problem. The "*So Many Reasons*" video strikes this balance by having a female protagonist but ending the main narrative part of the video with a man saying: "I was raped" (Figure 6.37). One does wonder if a male victim / survivor might feel too embarrassed to watch the video long enough to see this validation of his experience, but this inclusion still points to ways campaigns might address the shame, humiliation, fear, and disbelief attached to sexual trauma, regardless of the identity of the victim / survivor.

A semiotic advantage of the aesthetic of the *I Just Froze* materials is that the representations are less influenced by Western beauty norms. By not looking too much like any specific people, the *I Just Froze* characters can stand for more people in general. This constructive de-individualisation comes at the potential cost of making less visible how specific intersectional marginalities might make someone more vulnerable to violence. Trade-offs like this may be inevitable, but they can pay off. It remains to be seen if the relatively recent *I Just Froze* will have the same staying power as some of the older campaigns in my corpus, but it seems to have already shown the ability to speak over distance and through time. According to the organisation's 2017-2018 Annual Report, the campaign "attracted many requests and enquiries both within the UK and further afield (including Ireland, Turkey, Australia and South Africa) to use the videos in

education and e-learning programmes, to feature in case studies and screen at film festivals" (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2019, p. 12). Most poignantly, the campaign motivated one woman to finally seek support after living with her trauma for eight years (Rape Crisis Scotland, 2019, p. 12).

Figure 6.37: I Just Froze "So Many Reasons" (I was raped)
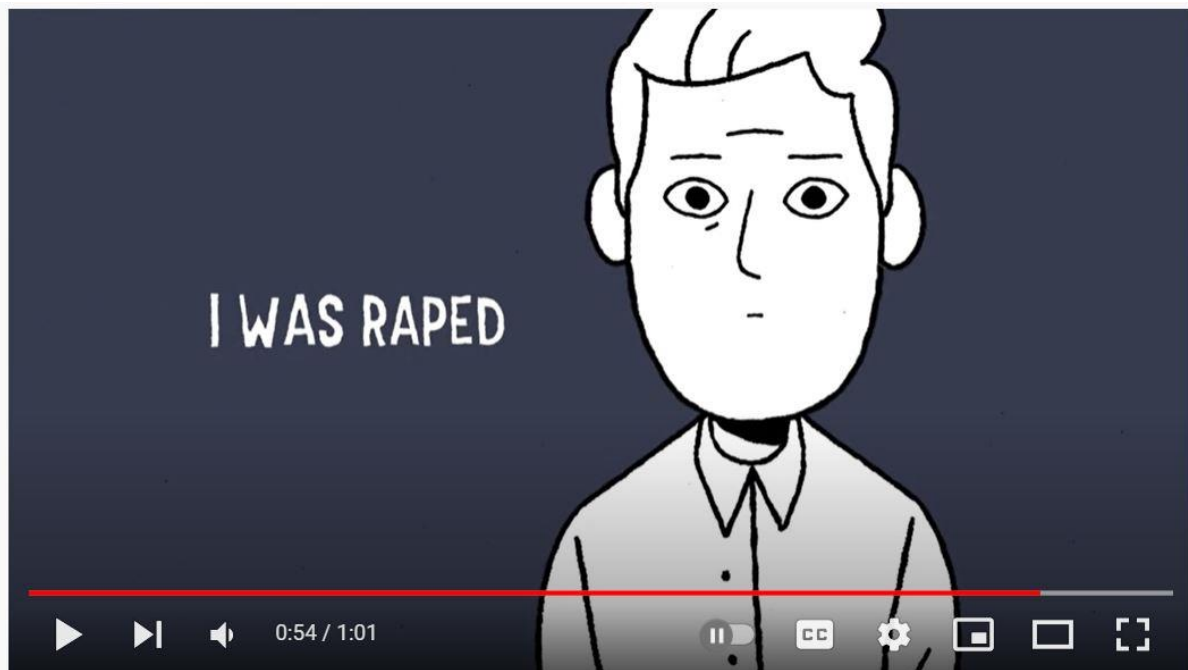
Section 6.06   Chapter conclusion

Rape Crisis Scotland and Zero Tolerance are driven by the same conviction that it is perpetrators who should be addressed by violence prevention campaigns. As stated on the Rape Crisis Scotland website, *10 Tips* aimed to "reverse the popular trend of focusing rape prevention messages on women and instead transfer these towards more appropriate recipients – potential perpetrators" (Rape Crisis Scotland, n.d.-a). However, there are some significant rhetorical and visual differences in how these two organisations went about achieving that aim. Unlike the more unequivocal Zero Tolerance "NO MAN" imagetext (Figure 5.22), *10 Tips* does not actually mention men at all, and could hypothetically be addressing women who may assault or rape other women (Figure 6.8). Other materials such as *I Just Froze* make space for men as victims / survivors of sexual violence. This explicit inclusion of men can help break down

the gendered expectations of hegemonic masculinity that underpin both men's violence and men's potential reluctance to seek support out of a sense of shame for being insufficiently "manly" to resist victimisation. However, such inclusion must be managed carefully so that the gendered nature of sexual violence is kept visible.

Overall, the visual aesthetic of Rape Crisis Scotland is much more colourful and playful than the unequivocal branding and messaging of Zero Tolerance. This visual playfulness and the use of humour works alongside a rhetorical approach that makes space for playing with cultural nuances and ambivalences about sexual violence. According to Browne, "rape was a late edition" to the agenda of the women's liberation movement (2014, p. 156). She suggests that part of the reason for the later adoption is that there was more ambiguity around rape, and even many women in the liberation movement found the process of unlearning normalised woman-blaming beliefs about rape to be especially difficult (2014, pp. 156–157). The myth that victims / survivors are to blame for rape may be harder to shed than those related to domestic abuse. However, as will be seen in the next chapter, Chapter 7: "Scottish Women's Aid: Sketches and shadows," even with domestic abuse, the disciplinary gaze is often focused more on the women experiencing it than the men perpetrating it.

The early Zero Tolerance campaigns disrupted the links between sexual violence and sexual desire by featuring victims / survivors that, under rape culture logic, were unambiguously unsexy and innocent: the grandmother and the toddler (Figure 5.2), the schoolgirls playing on the floor (Figure 5.18), and three teenage girls sweetly bonding together (Figure 5.19). By contrast, Rape Crisis Scotland campaigns like *Not an Invitation* and *Not Ever* work – at least in part – because the models *conform* to conventional parameters of beauty and sexual desirability (Section 6.04, Section 6.05). Tapping into such a sexualised visual rhetoric is not unproblematic. It can reproduce the idealisation, homogenisation, and objectification inherent in the system of Western beauty norms, but it is a more direct strategy for confronting victim-blaming beliefs about sexual violence. Furthermore, as it does not entirely sever sexual violence from sexual desire, it provides semiotic space for the nuanced and ambivalent ways that people might

understand sexual violence, i.e., as potentially about violence, sex, and power all at once (Boyle, 2019, pp. 66–71). The first Zero Tolerance campaign powerfully challenged the public's preconceptions about the prevalence of sexual violence and who it happens to. The Rape Crisis Scotland argument goes even further, by making it clear that a woman's perceived innocence or desirability is beside the point. A woman's appearance or behaviour does not cause rape. Rapists cause rape.

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Chapter 7.   Scottish Women's Aid: Shadows and sketches

Section 7.01   Chapter introduction

Both Zero Tolerance and Rape Crisis Scotland produced campaigns that deliberately subverted the visual language of the fashion and beauty industries. Such a commercial visual language is inevitably implicated in the system of Western beauty norms. The conception of beauty that underpins the fashion and beauty industries is a narrow one with an exceedingly visual and physical focus, but the work analysed in this chapter demonstrates that there are other expressions of beauty which may offer liberatory potential. None of the Scottish Women's Aid campaigns that I looked at reproduced the fashion and beauty commercial aesthetic in the same way as did Zero Tolerance and Rape Crisis Scotland. Nevertheless, the campaigns in this chapter do tap into beauty in ways that expose and exploit its power in the lives of ordinary women.

The next section, Section 7.02, introduces the campaigns, the interview participants, and how I gathered the materials. Section 7.03 discusses the ordinariness of domestic abuse and the ordinariness of women who experience it. Section 7.04 queries how the phenomenon of image-based sexual abuse reflects cultural narratives that position women's bodies as existing for the pleasure of men. Section 7.05 investigates how the dynamics of coercive control can be made visible through creative techniques of animation and illustration. Finally, the chapter culminates with some hopeful reflections about the beauty of survivorship (Section 7.06).

Section 7.02   Overview of campaigns, organisation, and interview participants

I used multiple sources to identify and gather Scottish Women's Aid materials for analysis. Because of the pandemic, my selection of materials was constrained by a greater reliance on online sources than anticipated. These

sources included the current organisational[96] website, in particular the "Campaigns" and the "Projects" pages (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-b, n.d.-g). The current website contains limited information before its copyright date of 2017, so I accessed older materials via social media channels, as well as via the Internet Archive / Wayback Machine where there are records of a previous version of the organisation's website[97] dating back to 2013. I did have some access to the Scottish Women's Aid archives at the Glasgow Women's Library, but it was limited by the pandemic. I could not search through materials in the same exploratory fashion as with the other two organisations. I offset this limitation by drawing from the extensive outputs of the 40th anniversary *Speaking Out: Recalling Women's Aid in Scotland* project hosted on the Glasgow Women's Library website (*Speaking Out*, n.d.) The *Speaking Out* publication was especially useful when writing the organisational history in the introduction to this thesis (Section 1.02) (Orr et al., 2018).

I also reviewed the narrative introductions to the Annual Accounts that were available from the Companies House website – 1993_1994 to 2018_2019. The pandemic necessitated that all my Scottish Women's Aid interviews be conducted remotely, thus I did not have the same opportunities to collect physical materials from homes or offices of the participants as I did with the other organisations. I did already have a collection of campaign materials that I had gathered from sector events before both the pandemic and when I began my Scottish Women's Aid research in earnest.

I identified four campaigns to analyse using the visual grammar rubric described in Section 4.05 (Table 3). These campaigns were all Scottish Women's Aid led or branded; targeted at the general public rather than specialist arenas; and for which campaigning materials such as flyers, websites, and videos were produced. While I included a smaller number of Scottish Women's Aid campaigns than I did for Zero Tolerance or Rape Crisis Scotland, there is substantial breadth

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[96] https://www.womensaid.scot/

[97] http://www.scottishwomensaid.org

and variety to the Scottish Women's Aid corpus, as can be seen in the list of materials in Appendix A.

Table 3: Scottish Women's Aid campaigns included in analysis

Campaign name	Year launched
Together We Can Stop It (Together We Can)	*ca. 2010-2012*
Stop Revenge Porn Scotland (Stop Revenge Porn)	*ca. 2013*
Recounting Women	*ca. 2016-2018*
Hidden in Plain Sight: Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control (Hidden in Plain Sight)	*ca. 2019*

I briefly introduce the campaigns here and provide further details as the chapter progresses. For *Together We Can*, campaigners worked with external partners, including two Glasgow creative agencies that specialise in third sector projects: Do Good and the media co-op (the latter also worked on Rape Crisis Scotland's *I Just Froze*). The creative team for *Together We Can* produced a wide range of print, promotional, audio-visual, and digital materials for the programme, which had both training and campaigning components. These disparate elements were united by a central message that stopping domestic abuse is possible. The *Stop Revenge Porn* work was an in-house, or – as described by an interview participant – more "DIY" effort which consisted of a low budget website. It was an early Scottish example of a campaign to address the phenomena of image-based sexual abuse. *Recounting Women* was a participatory project in which service users were supported to combine their original photography with short captions that told their personal stories of domestic abuse. These were uploaded onto a standalone website and reproduced on 10cm by 20cm card stock. The most recent campaign, *Hidden in Plain Sight,* was developed to accompany the introduction of the landmark *Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018* which came into force in 2019 and criminalised coercive control. The public facing materials of this campaign are rendered in a comic / animated format and were also produced by the media-co-op.

I interviewed five current and former staff members about these campaigns. Two of the participants – Lily Greenan and Ellie Hutchinson – I first

met when I was working at Zero Tolerance. Greenan has been involved in Scottish activism countering men's violence against women since the early 1980s. She has worked or consulted for a wide range of Scottish third sector, health, and government services, including as a development worker at the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre in the 1990s and as Deputy Director of Zero Tolerance from 2018 to 2019 (*Lily Greenan*, n.d.). Our discussion focused on the *Together We Can* campaign, which was produced by Scottish Women's Aid during her time as Chief Executive from 2006 to 2015. Greenan's knowledge and experience meant that our conversation touched on other campaigns, as well as the history of the organisation and the sector. My interview with Hutchinson also informed my understanding of the *Together We Can* campaign as she worked with Greenan on it. I also asked Hutchinson about some of the organisation's very early work around image-based sexual abuse, *Stop Revenge Porn,* which she led on when she was a Prevention Worker at Scottish Women's Aid.

My other three interviews were with current Scottish Women's Aid staff who I had not met before. I disclosed my previous employment at Zero Tolerance and my current voluntary involvement with my local women's aid, so the participants knew I was not a complete outsider to the sector. I was especially keen to learn more about the organisation's work to address the growing problem of image-based sexual abuse. To that end, I interviewed the Scottish Women's Aid National Worker for Legal Issues, Louise Johnson, about a 2017 image-based sexual abuse campaign called *Not Yours to Share.*[98] For reasons I return to in Section 7.04, I ultimately did not select this campaign for analysis with the visual grammar rubric. Una Dosen came to Scottish Women's Aid in 2018 specifically to work as Project Coordinator on the coercive control project which became the *Hidden in Plain Sight* campaign. My final interview participant was Policy Worker Jo Ozga, who developed and co-facilitated the *Recounting Women* project, which I consider at the end of this chapter.

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[98] https://notyourstoshare.scot/

A late addition to my corpus, the *Recounting Women* project is an evocative example of a theme that runs throughout the work of Scottish Women's Aid: listening to and being guided by the experiences of survivors. Writing about collaborative projects with children and young people in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Orr et al. claim that this "collaborative model has continued to be central to the policy research and consultation that Scottish Women's Aid has provided ever since" (2018, p. 42). This collaborative spirit infused many of the materials in my corpus, even when the final outputs were heavily mediated, as with *Hidden in Plain Sight.*

Section 7.03   The ordinariness of domestic abuse

Across all three organisations, most of my interview participants in some way expressed the sentiment that it was important to represent victims / survivors from diverse backgrounds. Achieving these inclusive aspirations is not straightforward. In our discussion about *Together We Can*, Greenan referred to a historic – "pre-Frankie Raffles and 1992 Zero Tolerance" – hesitancy in the violence against women sector about the use of images. Much of that hesitancy was around creating images that were meaningfully inclusive without being tokenistic. As Greenan said, it was about "how you could use images that didn't like, by default, exclude lots of women?" The tensions around using specific images as representations of a more general problem has also been touched upon in the Zero Tolerance (Section 5.05) and Rape Crisis Scotland chapters (Section 6.05). For instance, a campaign with many images of disabled women or fat women may be perceived as being primarily about disability or fatness, and not primarily about the male violence that affects all women (albeit in different ways and to different degrees).

The process of mapping the representational subjects identified general trends of inclusions and exclusions across the Scottish Women's Aid campaigns in my corpus. Women of colour appear as the main characters in both naturalistic (Figure 7.7) and comic formats (Figure 7.12). However, there are no Black women

in prominent roles (although it is possible the hands of the eponymous[99] "*Hairdresser*" in Figure 7.7 are of a Black woman). The protagonist of another *Hidden in Plain Sight* video is an older woman who uses a walking aid. The representation of age was an especially thorny issue with the *Stop Revenge Porn* materials, as the association of this type of abuse with younger age demographics could obscure that it happens to older women as well. There is very little representation of people either visually coded (e.g., two women holding hands) or narratively identified as LGBTQ+, although there was some explicit LGBTQ+ representation in related campaigns (Section 7.04). As with the Zero Tolerance and Rape Crisis Scotland campaigns, the women portrayed across the images tend not to be conspicuously marked as fat, nor is fatness ever a key consideration in the images.

Any of these representational trends could be avenues for further interrogation around how these campaigns engage with conventional white, able-bodied, thin, young, feminine beauty norms. This section focuses on another aspect of representation and inclusion – the way in which campaigns such as *Together We Can* convey the ordinariness of domestic abuse. It is not something that happens only to women who look or live a certain way and that is only perpetrated by men who look or live a certain way. Domestic abuse is a manifestation of patriarchal control structures that we all live under, and thus could affect all of us.

According to Greenan, they considered the messaging of the campaign before considering the communication resources they would produce. As the campaign title implies, the central message of *Together We Can* was that domestic abuse could in fact be stopped. Greenan described this message as "aspirational." It rejects essentialist discourses that domestic abuse is an inevitable outcome of men's supposedly violent natures. Greenan had taken inspiration for the aspirational *Together We Can* messaging from the way that the

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[99] I took the *Together We Can* names "*Barman*" and "*Hairdresser*" from the videos' YouTube captions.

successful 2008 Barack Obama US presidential campaign had used materials targeted at segmented demographic groups in order to "unify a lot of people around a common message," which was the positive messaging of "Yes We Can." There was a complementary *Together We Can* training programme targeting three sectors: trade unions, young people / students, and faith communities. As with similar training or campaigning programmes like Zero Tolerance's *Respect* (Section 5.04), my analysis focuses on the more general public-facing campaigning aspects, albeit the boundaries between different strands of work can blur.

Together We Can was a bystander programme, although not in the sense that it encouraged witnesses to directly intervene in incidents of domestic abuse. Greenan described the programme as aimed at helping people understand "that low-level sexism, racism, homophobia. . . feeds the issue of violence against women and domestic abuse." Everyone – "together" – could therefore do their bit by challenging attitudes and behaviours that, as Greenan characterised, "allow domestic abuse to happen." It is useful to remember here the inherent limitations of a representational landscape so deeply marked by the patriarchal system of feminine beauty norms. The sexist, racist, homophobic (as well as transphobic, ageist, ableist, and fatphobic) attitudes that feed male violence also feed feminine beauty norms which, in turn, reflect and reinforce these attitudes. This presents a challenge to campaigners who need to speak in a way that is intelligible and accessible to wide swathes of the public, while not inadvertently reproducing existing erasures and stereotypes.

Given the campaign aims of challenging oppressive attitudes and coalescing disparate groups around a collective *Together We Can* message, it makes sense that, as Greenan recalled, taking "account of representation" was an important part of the brief given to the creative agencies:

> We don't want a one-dimensional perspective on this issue. We don't want it to be seen as a white working-class woman's issue. We don't want it to be seen as a white working-class man's issue. We needed to resonate across different groups in society. We need it to really do the job of

identifying that domestic abuse can happen anywhere to anyone to any woman.

Some element of exclusion may always be inevitable. Effective messaging cannot speak to everyone all the time, but there are ways that campaigns like *Together We Can* can, as Greenan described, "resonate across different groups in society."

One way that the *Together We Can* work reached out to different groups was through the production of wide-ranging materials for different purposes and locations. There were glossy campaign leaflets and Z-fold information cards, as well as pin badges as shown in an image posted to Facebook (Figure 7.1). There were also digital and audio-visual aspects of the campaign, including: a now-archived bespoke website;[100] two Flash animations made by Glasgow creative agency Do Good, and two one-minute videos produced by the media co-op. As the budget did not stretch to television placement, Hutchinson told me that the videos were shared primarily via social media. Although she did not remember the exact details, Hutchinson recalled that they also appeared on a televised news programme, as well as in the prominent Edinburgh location of St Andrew's Square during the popular Christmas festival.

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[100]https://web.archive.org/web/20110818100434/http://togetherwecanstopit.org/

Figure 7.1: Together We Can Stop pamphlets[101]

These heterogenous materials all feature the red and white "Stop" logo which gave the campaign a unified visual identity. The logo usually appears as a red squared-off speech bubble with the word "stop" inside. Sometimes the logo contains other text as in the small Z-fold leaflets in Figure 7.1. Red was a logical choice given the colour's semiotic associations with stopping, e.g., stop lights are red and stop signs are red and white. The logo was also used for less polished or more crowd-sourced campaign materials. A large placard of the logo was produced to invite supporter participation in the campaign, and by extension, in the aim of stopping domestic abuse. Greenan recalled that campaigners would bring the placard to events and invite people to take pictures with it, just when

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[101] Source: Scottish Women's Aid Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/scotwomensaid/photos/426741294008685

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

people were "already starting to get into the notion of selfies." Such direct public engagement reflected the organisation's commitment to collaboration, and it invited participation from a wide range of groups. The placards encouraged the public to become embodied participants in the interactive semiotic process in ways that concretely affected the visual aspects of the campaign. Greenan said that it allowed campaigners to get images that they could use to promote the *Together We Can* message, such as in the collage of male supporters shared in a Scottish Women's Aid Facebook post (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: Male supporters of "Together We Can"[102]

[102] Source: Scottish Women's Aid Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/scotwomensaid/photos/542432079106272

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

This use of the placards was one of several ways in which the logo was visually integrated as an intrinsic part of the campaign messaging. This technique was also used in the two Flash animations on the standalone website (Figure 7.3, Figure 7.4). The animations start as photographic compositions of characteristically Scottish urban streetscapes filled with bystanders watching men abuse their partners. The "stop" logo then appears as large speech bubbles above the women being assaulted, followed by smaller logos appearing bit by bit above each bystander. The photographs themselves are static, and stationary versions of the imagetexts with the campaign and organisational branding were produced for use online and in print. In the animations, it is the introduction of the stop logo that adds the motion.

Reflecting the desire to resonate with different social groups, the bystanders represent a cross section of Scottish urban society in terms of characteristics such as gender, race, disability, and clothing, although the bustling streetscapes might resonate less with people living in more isolated rural settings. I would not describe Figure 7.3 and Figure 7.4 as beautiful images, but their unusual construction semiotically functions to attract attention in a way that subtly – and not so subtly – challenges the viewers to pay attention to a problem that is alarmingly ordinary, yet all-too-often invisible to the public gaze.

The bystander figures appear to have been photoshopped into the background, making them look uncanny and unsettling. The animations are also unsettling because the interjection of a violent domestic act into quotidian city scenes conveys just how alarmingly everyday domestic abuse is. The uncanniness of the *Together We Can* animations produce an uneasy discomfort that mirrors the discomfort bystanders might feel when witnessing domestic abuse.
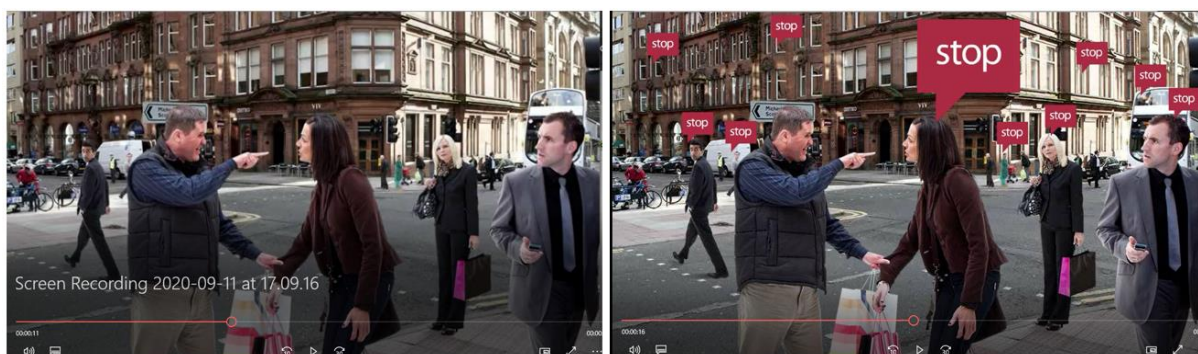
Figure 7.4: Together We Can Animation "Window"
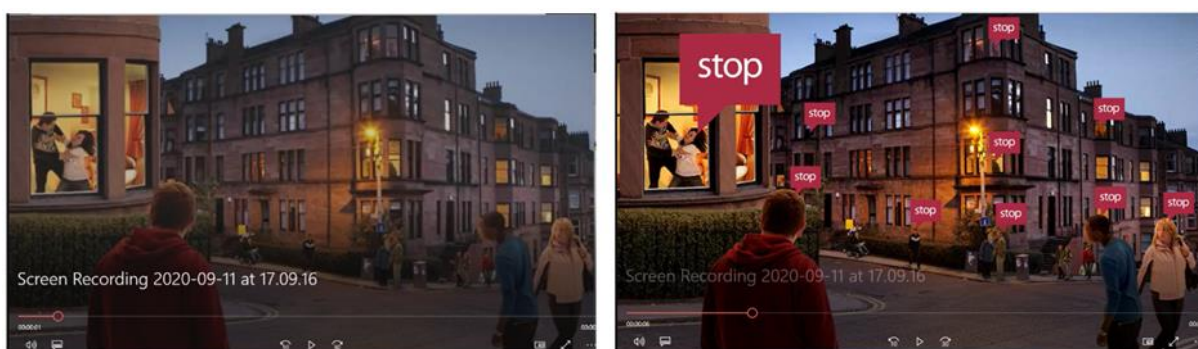
Most remarkable about these Flash animations is they are the only materials across my entire corpus (from all three organisations) that show men in the act of perpetrating physical violence on women. Although not a part of my main corpus,[104] four of the *one thousand words* stock images that Scottish Women's Aid produced with Zero Tolerance did feature men behaving in a manner that was menacing but fell short of physical violence (Figure 5.7). Whereas in the Flash animation in Figure 7.3, a man grabs a woman's sleeve. In Figure 7.4, the physical aggression is even more explicit: a man appears to be in the middle of a full-blown assault on a woman. The Flash images use elements of composition and perspective to make demands on the viewer. The street or pavement in the images seems to extend behind the natural viewing position,

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[103] Source: via email from Do Good design agency.

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

[104] As explained in Section 5.03, *one thousand words* was targeted at specialised publics and thus did not meet my criteria of a "campaign."

which compositionally positions the viewer as within the scene as just another bystander. The public surveillance that so often polices women's bodies is being re-directed towards men's behaviours. As viewers, we are being challenged not to turn our gaze away from male violence. Returning to Greenan's point that *Together We Can* was not a bystander campaign in the sense that it was encouraging witnesses to step into a violent situation, the remedies offered on the website were focused towards changing broader social structures, e.g., through education and writing to politicians (Henderson & Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.).

Although not gratuitously graphic, the Flash animations do instrumentalise and thus subtly objectify women's bodies as locations of violent male agency. Conversely, by making so visible the violent acts of the perpetrators, the animations presage Sliwinki's call to a "courageous kind of *imagining*" that unapologetically defends a woman's right to bodily integrity [emphasis in original] (2018, p. 188). By contrast, the *Together We Can* videos focus not on violent acts themselves but on survivors' retelling of their stories. These videos also convey the ordinariness of domestic abuse and the ordinariness of the women it happens to. Greenan told me that the *Together We Can "Barman"* video was loosely inspired by events witnessed in a pub by a woman's aid worker. The video begins with a series of hazy, dream-like shots that set the scene: soft focus on a barman's hands as he cleans pint glasses; angled close-ups of colourful fruit machines; and black and white CCTV footage of four women socialising in a booth. The inclusion of the CCTV footage gestures to the patriarchal surveillance of women's bodies and behaviours.

The protagonist narrates her experiences as the video unfolds. She recounts how her ex-partner controlled who she spoke to and how she behaved at the bar. The viewer does not see the narrator until about halfway through the video, where there is an approximately 25 second sequence of the woman speaking at camera. The sequence contains a series of jump cuts that moves between head and shoulders shots and medium close shots. This jumping between frame distances is destabilising; the viewer's perspective of the woman keeps changing. The destabilising effect echoes the way in which controlling partners destabilise their victims with unpredictable rules and behaviours – a

"world of moving goal-posts, shifting sand" and "constantly walking on eggshells" (Scottish Women's Aid, 2017a).

The protagonist is white, reasonably slim, not visibly disabled, aged 30s-40s, with long chestnut brown hair. She seems to care about her appearance without being especially glamourous. She has neatly brushed hair, a smattering of cosmetics, a large bold necklace, and dressy but slightly ill-fitting clothes. In contrast to glossy images of beautiful young women in the Rape Crisis Scotland *Not an Invitation* campaign, the "*Barman"* protagonist looks ordinary.

In the middle of her monologue, the camera jumps to an extreme close-up of her face (Figure 7.5). The woman gazes unsmiling at the viewer. As with the woman in the Zero Tolerance *Justice* "Boss" poster (Figure 5.20) or the woman at the ending of the *Not Ever* video (Figure 6.28), this direct address demands the attention and engagement of the viewer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 118). This close look of the woman's face also reveals imperfections that have not been smoothed out through lighting or post-production techniques. There are red patches on her cheeks, some blemishes on her forehead, and fine lines around her mouth. Aiello and Parry argue that texture can function as a semiotic resource (2019, pp. 147–148) – even the "texture of the body" (2019, p. 224). The meaning being produced by the texture of this woman's skin is that she is not a model or a glossy retouched idealised beauty. She is an ordinary, relatable, regular woman.

Figure 7.5: Extreme close-up of "Barman" protagonist[105]
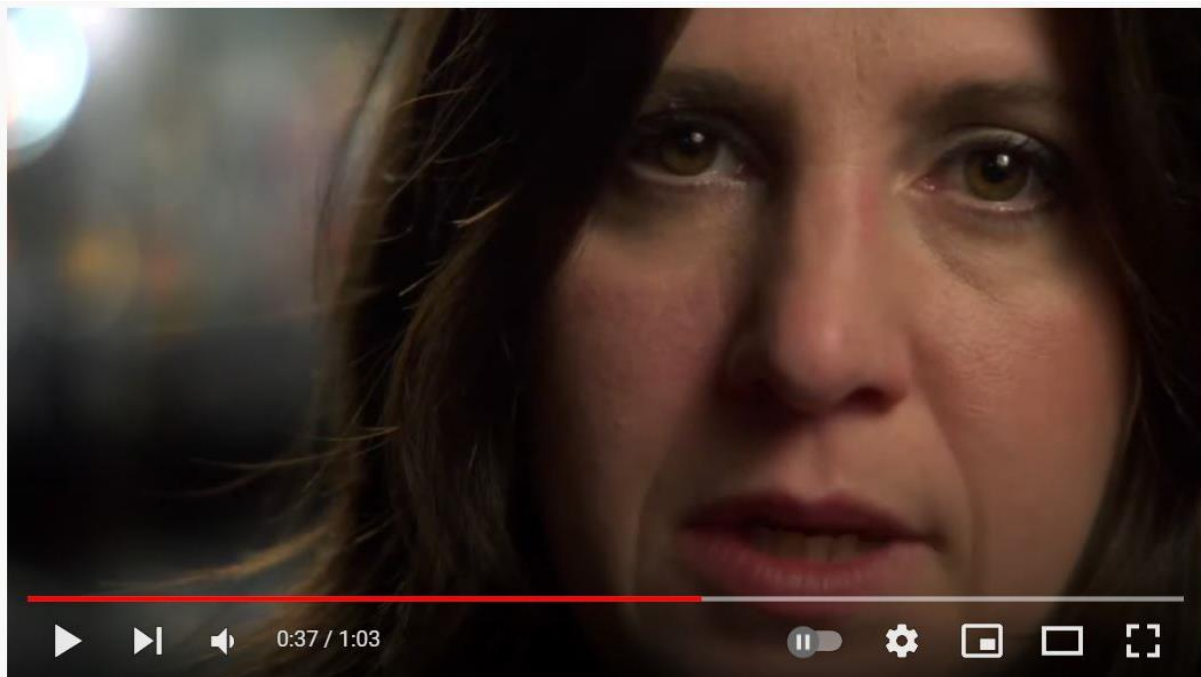
The words that she speaks at this point in her monologue mark the central turning point in the narrative:

"You shouldn't put up with him. You deserve better."

She is repeating the barman's words to her after witnessing her partner's abusive behaviour, but the use of the second person also suggests that she is speaking to other ordinary women who might be viewing the video. She is letting them (us) know that they (we) also deserve better. It is worth noting that the male bartender's intervention is aimed at the woman, rather than at the perpetrator. While this is almost certainly a safer strategy for supporting a woman experiencing abuse than direct confrontation, it reproduces yet another scenario where the disciplinary gaze is directed at the woman, rather than at the male perpetrator who is nowhere to be seen. Furthermore, as with the "domestication" of the Zero

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[105] All *Together We Can Stop It "Barman"* stills sourced from YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V33nDQ5WA64

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid. Produced by media co-op.

Tolerance imagery discussed in Section 5.05, it subtly positions domestic abuse as a problem for women to address.

The visual elision of male perpetrators is echoed in the other *Together We Can* video, *"Hairdresser,"* which features no men at all. This video's protagonist appears to be of south Asian descent, but the two protagonists have several other commonalities. They are both roughly the same age (30s–40s), relatively slim, neatly groomed, and not visibly disabled. Despite important racial and ethnic differences, they represent a narrow cohort of women. Stylistically, the videos are very similar. For instance, as with the Flash animations, both videos weave the "stop" logo into the fabric of the messaging. Each video ends by transitioning from the woman's face, to a series of speech bubbles appearing on the scene with the noises of keyboard clicks, to the final screen with the campaign messaging:

"Domestic abuse. Together we can stop it" (Figure 7.6).

Figure 7.6: Frame from ending sequence of Together We Can videos

Both videos are set in ordinary – but very different – public spaces. Bars and pubs are traditionally masculine. In earlier times, women were literally forbidden from many of these male spaces: the front cover of Browne's history of women's liberation in Scotland features a photograph of women protesting the man-only policy of an Edinburgh pub (2014). By contrast, beauty salons are

traditionally feminine spaces. There are other noteworthy contrasts between the videos. Whereas the "*Barman*" narration never mentions physical violence, the "*Hairdresser*" protagonist reveals that her husband had grabbed her throat, starved her for two days, and cut up her shoes so she could not leave the house. As with the Flash animations, *Together We Can "Hairdresser"* unflinchingly confronts the brutally physical aspects of domestic abuse and control.

The titular hairdresser is only ever seen in close-up of her hands performing tasks associated with a beauty salon, such as washing, handling scissors, cutting hair, and painting nails. It is impossible to definitively say that all these shots are the same woman, but the bright red manicure is consistent throughout. The colour of her nails echoes the red of the stop logo, and thus reinforces the campaign's semiotic use of the colour red (Figure 7.7). Although distinctly relevant in the context of a beauty salon, this is not the only item in the Scottish Women's Aid corpus that features close-ups of manicured feminine hands (Figure 7.8, Figure 7.10). On one hand, this visual focus on a (majority) feminine beauty practice semiotically frames the images as "about women," instead of "about male perpetration." The feminine space of the beauty salon similarly functions to frame domestic abuse as a women's problem. On the other hand, it serves to make women visible in a way that does not provoke an objectifying gaze.

0:25 / 1:06

The close touch in Figure 7.7 conveys a sense of intimacy that is recognisable to any woman who has used the services of a beauty worker. As Greenan observed, the idea that a hairdresser would intervene to stop domestic abuse has "particular resonance for women." While the advertisement's props and setting may subtly frame male violence as a feminine problem, salons can also function as therapeutic sites of feminine pleasure and bonding. As Hannah McCann's ongoing project around emotional work in the beauty industry indicates, salon workers may perceive themselves as "makeshift counsellors," who are likely to receive client disclosures of domestic abuse (2020). McCann also points out that this raises ethical concerns about the expectations placed on relatively low paid and low status service economy workers in a heavily gendered profession. Nevertheless, these feminine spaces can serve as literal, physical sites of resistance. The protagonist relates that the hairdresser was the only place her husband permitted her to go by herself. This allowance provided a rare window of

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[106] All *Together We Can Stop It "Hairdresser"* stills sourced from YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXJDW2jsg40

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid. Produced by media co-op.

opportunity for her to share her experiences with her hairdresser who then called Scottish Women's Aid on her client's behalf. Although men are again not visible, this is an appreciably different intervention than in "*Barman*" where the protagonist is challenged by a man to save herself.

As with all the feminist campaigns in my corpus, the main query is not whether different campaign approaches are better or worse, but what compromises or trade-offs different approaches entail. Even aspirational campaigns must speak to ordinary people as they are now. The choice of the beauty salon setting suggests a pragmatic, well-reasoned recognition of the relationship that ordinary women have with beauty practices and the possibilities such gendered spaces offer for immediate, tactical resistance to male violence.

Section 7.04   *The salaciousness of image-based sexual abuse*

The struggle to resist violence is made more challenging when perpetrators find new ways to enact it, such as with the growing problem of image-based sexual abuse. I was keen to include a campaign about this type of abuse in my corpus because it is so often intertwined with sexualised imagery. As touched upon in Section 4.03 of my methodology chapter, I originally intended to include the 2017 *Not Yours to Share* as a key part of my corpus because the Scottish Women's Aid "Campaigns" page links to it (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-b. *Not Yours to Share* was intended to raise awareness around a new offense of "disclosing, or threatening to disclose, an intimate photograph or film" that was part of the *Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016*. Over the course of my research, it became clear that although Scottish women's organisations had fed into the *Not Yours to Share* campaign, the visual outputs were directed by the advertising agency employed by the Scottish Government (under the sub-branding of "Safer Scotland"). Nevertheless, my wide-ranging August 2020 interview with Louise Johnson – who has been with the organisation since 2001 – about the lead-up to that work was enormously helpful for understanding how the issue of image-based sexual abuse sits within the ethos and aims of Scottish Women's Aid and the wider Scottish policy context.

I decided to use the visual grammar rubric to analyse the organisation's earlier campaigning work on the issue of image-based sexual abuse. In our October 2020 interview, former Scottish Women's Aid Prevention Worker, Ellie Hutchinson, said that when she started looking at the problem around 2013, no one in the UK was "really talking about it" yet. She created the Scottish Women's Aid's standalone *Stop Revenge Porn* website.[107] I did not build a definitive timeline of the work, but Hutchinson recalled not being involved in the organisation's later *Not Yours to Share* discussions because of maternity leave and/or leaving the organisation.

Just defining and naming this kind of abuse is complicated – as also addressed in my earlier discussion of the 2018 Zero Tolerance *Violence Unseen* imagetext about "*so-called* 'revenge porn'" (Section 5.05). I use McGlynn et al.'s (2017) terminology of "image-based sexual abuse" which describes a continuum of technologically facilitated behaviours, including non-consensual sharing ("revenge porn"), digital manipulation, coercive production, or theft of images. In our interview, Johnson spoke at length about the many legal and legislative complexities of defining the new offense for Scotland's 2016 *Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm Act*. As Hutchinson also pointed out, image-based sexual abuse does not fit neatly into existing paradigms of male violence. While leading on *Stop Revenge Porn* work, she received queries from survivors who did not know where to seek support. It did not seem like rape nor domestic abuse, therefore approaching the existing services did not feel right to them.

Hutchinson identified a particular challenge to naming the issue: the need to use language that "meaningful to people" while accurately representing the problem. "Revenge porn" achieves the former. It was the language that kept popping up in Hutchinson's work with young people – it is "survivor-led language" that resonated with those with experience of such abuse. With only two words and three syllables, it is also easy to speak and remember. "Revenge porn" falls short

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[107] https://stoprevengepornscotland.wordpress.com/

on Hutchinson's latter criterion: "Because it's not about revenge and it's not about pornography."

Johnson also asserted that such offenses were not perpetrated out of revenge and pointed out they were often part of "ongoing control." She further said that framing such abuse as "pornography" evokes "all the connotations that can have – consensually and otherwise." Johnson recalled wanting to move away from the "salacious" connotations of pornography, in order to highlight that this was malicious, controlling behaviour. Describing images as porn also implies that they were intended for the public domain, i.e., not images taken for private purposes. The extent to which consent can be truly operative within the sex industry is a contested issue amongst feminists, but I would add that the language of pornography implies a degree of consent for image sharing which is missing from the behaviours this work addresses.

Both Hutchinson and Johnson recalled having long conversations around official terminology with other stakeholders and partners, like the police, the Crown Office, and other women's organisations. They eventually settled on the five words (and 14 syllables) "non-consensual sharing of intimate images." The language on the subsequent Scottish Government / Safer Scotland *Not Yours to Share* website is very similar to this; it tends to refer to some version of sharing "intimate images or video of someone without their consent" (Safer Scotland / Scottish Government, n.d.-b). It does not quite roll off the tongue. As Hutchinson pointed out, this more bureaucratic language may appeal to agencies such as the police, but less so to people who actually need support. What the language shift achieved in ideological precision, it may have lost in semiotic resonance.

Ironically, the "salaciousness" implied in the "revenge porn" moniker may have helped to attract interest and support to the work. Hutchinson recalled that the very early "revenge porn" work received a surprising amount of media attention even before Scottish Women's Aid was able to gather data about its incidence through surveys or case studies. Hutchinson speculated that the unexpected level of early media interest may well have been intensified by the "potential to see young, pretty white girls in their underwear or with no clothes on." This echoes the SlutWalk news coverage that over-represented scantily clad

young white women (Mendes, 2015, p. 120), as well as the tendency for media reports on human trafficking to construct "melodramatic" and misleading narratives of a preponderance of young, beautiful, and naïve sex trafficking victims (Doezema, 2010, pp. 1–4). As discussed in Section 3.04 of the literature review, lurid sexualised media coverage and images of normatively attractive women can attract attention to an issue, but potentially at the cost of reinforcing the patriarchal dynamics – such as surveillance and objectification – that underpin men's violence against women and children.

There will always be intersectional tensions about how best to frame campaign messaging. My interviews and visual analysis revealed a tension around image-based sexual abuse and age. The growing problem of image-based sexual abuse came to Hutchinson's attention through her youth prevention work, and she was keen to adopt "language or images that would appeal to young people." A June 2021 Ofsted "Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges" highlights just how urgent this problem has since become for young people. Among other alarming findings, the "vast majority of girls said being sent sexual images, being coerced into sharing images, or having their images reshared were common" (Ofsted, 2021). Hutchinson was careful to qualify that older people can also experience image-based sexual abuse. Johnson highlighted the necessity of expanding the frame beyond young people so that older survivors could recognise themselves. I did not subject the *Not Yours to Share* website to the same kind of analysis and scrutiny that I did to the campaigns in my corpus, but it is worth briefly noting that the campaign did include a fictionalised case study of a couple in their "early forties" (Safer Scotland / Scottish Government, n.d.-a)

My visual analysis centres on what Hutchinson described as a "scrappy, a bit crappy, DIY" WordPress website that constituted the campaigning outputs.[108] The *Stop Revenge Porn* website is a much less visually polished artefact than many of the other items in my corpus. The website is still online, but no longer maintained. Its most recent news story is from May 2014 (Stop Revenge Porn

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[108] https://stoprevengepornscotland.wordpress.com/

Scotland, 2014). The *Stop Revenge Porn* website does not feature the Scottish Women's Aid corporate branding or logo, although the organisation is regularly mentioned.[109]

Hutchinson wanted to appeal to young people with an aesthetic that was "accessible" and not "so corporate." She started the website with a few survivor stories and photographs taken by her own supportive friends. The eight website images are smartphone snapshots, not professional photographs. They feature verbal messages produced through a variety of means, including handwritten, printed out, and photographed from a computer screen. Similar to the photographs with the *Together We Can* placards, there is also an associated "Stop revenge porn" Flickr gallery of images of supporters – including prominent MSPs – holding supportive signs (*Stop Revenge Porn: Messages of Support*, n.d.).

Hutchinson was adamant that she did not want to imitate educational approaches that blamed young women and girls for taking or sharing the images, rather than the young men for forwarding them on without the women's and girls' consent. In her analysis of educational "sexting" campaigns, Zauner expresses similar concerns around "the penalisation of sexual expression by young women in particular" (2021, p. 5). Such approaches yet again make women and girls responsible for male behaviour. They are also predicated on the implicit assumption that women's bodies exist not for their own pleasure, but for male consumption. Under this rape culture logic, a woman (or girl) taking or sharing intimate images of herself is unnatural behaviour that must be disciplined, whereas it is natural and socially sanctioned for men (or boys) to assume ownership over an intimate image of a woman (and girls). *Stop Revenge Porn* confronts such victim-blaming discourses with forceful anti-victim blaming messaging, such as the text in Figure 7.8 which reads:

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[109] The website also mentions that the site is supported by "End Revenge Porn," but the link to that organisation is defunct.

WHATEVER HAPPENED BEFORE,

IT'S <u>NOT</u> YOUR FAULT!

STOPREVENGEPORNSCOTLAND

Figure 7.8: Stop Revenge Porn hand holding message in situ on website[110]
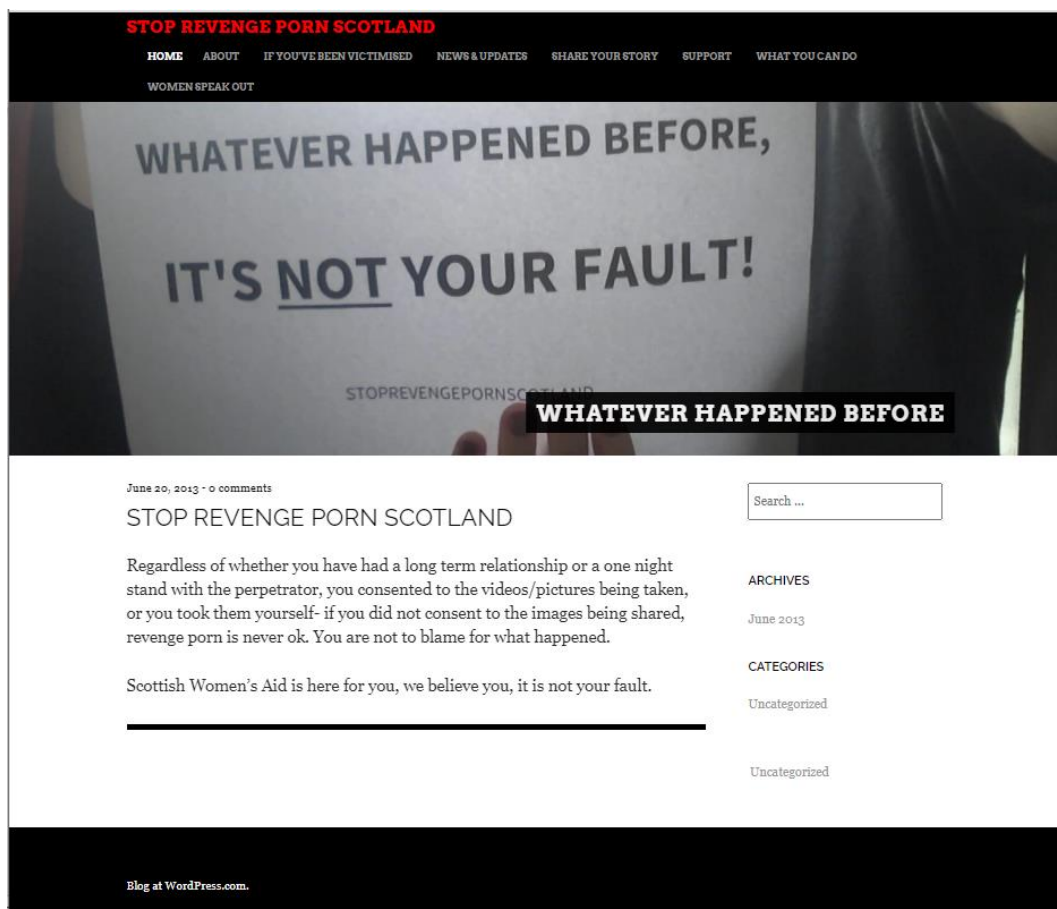
Figure 7.8 is also one of several images that show glimpses of manicured hands. As discussed in the previous section, Section 7.03, manicured nails can serve as signifier for generalised femininity, without exposing women's full bodies to objectifying gazes. In the *Stop Revenge Porn* images, it also means the images

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[110] Source: https://stoprevengepornscotland.wordpress.com/2013/06/24/whatever-happened-before/

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

do not focus too tightly on the specifics of some identities to the exclusion of others, as hands give the viewer only limited clues into the subject's identity.

Mendes et al. write that digital platforms can facilitate spaces where women can "disrupt the male gaze, and collectively call out and challenge injustice and misogyny through discursive, cultural, and political activism" (2019, p. 16). The *Stop Revenge Porn* website also highlights the specific semiotic potential of open-source digital platforms such as WordPress that do not require big budgets or advanced design skills. The campaign taps into what Hutchinson characterised as a "third wave feminist" aesthetic of "zines and flyers on Paint and. . . cut and paste." I would suggest that this tradition speaks back further than the third wave to the "handknit" heritage of feminist activism that was evoked by some of the Rape Crisis Scotland materials (Section 6.03).

Hutchinson also recalled that : ". . . I kind of wanted to make it look fun, as well. As a bit fun and a bit. . .I always liked the idea of, like, joyful resistance." Figure 7.9 is an instructive example of how this joyful resistance looks in practice. A message is handwritten sideways on lined notepad paper. The message is adorned with doodles of love hearts, smiley face, and (feminism-signifying) Venus symbols. These joyful sketches may make the more serious tone of the text less intimidating to the potential victims / survivors who are being addressed. In other respects, however, Figure 7.9 holds back an uncomfortable mirror to society. This note is laid against a chaotic, handmade, collage of faces and body parts of stereotypically beautiful and glamourous women, presumably cut from fashion magazines. The appearance of the handwritten sisterly note clashes with the backdrop that conjures the wider media culture which often reduces a woman down to a consumable "collection of body parts" (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 174).

Figure 7.9: Stop Revenge Porn beauty collage in situ on website[111]
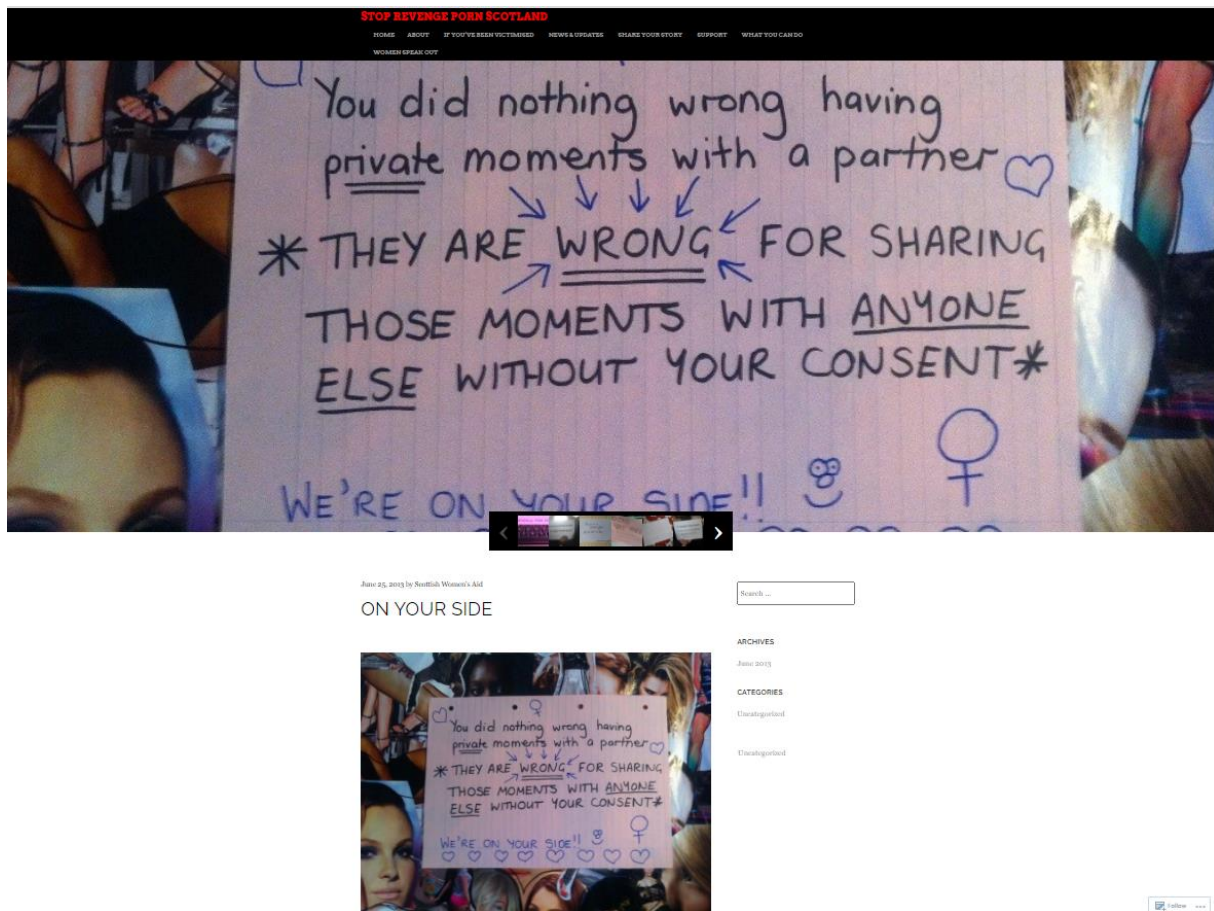
Figure 7.9 is the only image on the *Stop Revenge Porn* website that references beauty culture and the implied sexiness – and by extension, salaciousness – of so-called revenge porn. Except for the glimpses of (most likely) women holding up the signs, none of the other WordPress website images really feature people at all. The avoidance of identifiable images also can be read as ideological resistance to the gaze. Image-based sexual abuse involves using people's own images – whether real or digitally manipulated – against them. As discussed in Section 2.04 around the intersectional aspects of male violence, that abuse can often take the form of weaponised beauty norms, e.g., calling a woman fat, ugly, or a slag. Absenting women's images from male surveillance is not an entirely satisfactory solution to this problem. It reflects the victim-blaming burdens

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[111] Source: https://stoprevengepornscotland.wordpress.com/2013/06/25/on-your-side/
Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

placed on women to "modify their behavior and actions to placate attackers" (Mendes et al., 2019, p. 15). Nevertheless, by not showing photographs of women, the website also becomes a site of visual resistance against the dynamics of image-based abuse and the wider representational culture. It withholds women's images from public consumption and forces the gaze on their words instead.

Section 7.05   The in/visibility of coercive control

Insults about a woman's appearance can also function as coercive control. Perpetrators of coercive control use "various means to hurt, humiliate, intimidate, exploit, isolate, and dominate their victims" (Stark, 2009, p. 5). The primary means of establishing control is "the microregulation of everyday behaviors associated with stereotypic female roles, such as how women dress, cook, clean, socialize, care for their children, or perform sexually" (Stark, 2009, p. 5). The pattern of behaviours that constitute coercive control would be familiar to experienced domestic abuse practitioners long before they had Stark's language to name it. In a 1999 publication celebrating "25 years of Listening to Women," Scottish Women's Aid provides a "brief history and theory" of their work which charts a "move away from knowing and talking about physical violence to recognising the crucial effect of emotional or mental abuse" (Scottish Women's Aid, ca. 1999, pp. 51–52). Critically, coercive control may not be visible on a woman's body but – as described by Johnson in our interview – it still leaves "mental bruises." Just because certain women might be invisibilised or symbolically annihilated from the representational landscape, does not mean that those women do not exist. Likewise, the fact that we cannot always see the harm done to women does not mean that harm does not exist.

The *Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018* that criminalised coercive control came into effect in April 2019. Scottish Women Aid's *Hidden in Plain Sight* (2018) campaign accompanied this landmark change to Scottish law. In our March 2020 interview, project co-ordinator Una Dosen told me that *Hidden in Plain Sight* was initially conceived as a training programme to help local women's aid groups and external agencies understand the nature of coercive control. As the project

developed, Dosen said it became clear that it would be useful to have similar materials developed for more public distribution.

Reflecting Scottish Women's Aid's participatory ethos, *Hidden in Plain Sight* began with a working group drawn from direct service delivery staff in local women's aid groups. Both the training materials and the more public-facing materials feature the symbolic stories of two composite characters, "Shona" and "Amira," who are represented in still and animated comic formats. Their stories are an amalgamation of many women's experiences as recalled by domestic abuse support and helpline staff. Dosen recounted that the originators took care that no one woman's story could be identifiable from the campaign materials. An implication of this amalgamating of stories will be returned to in the final discussion around *Recounting Women* in Section 7.06.

Dosen worked with media co-op to turn these stories into a visually co-ordinated suite of materials. I analysed two animated videos and four posters using the visual grammar rubric. These materials are accessible or downloadable from the *Hidden in Plain Sight* campaign page on the Scottish Women's Aid website. Posters were also available at women's sector events; I collected print versions of the posters from a coercive control conference in Stirling (womensgrid, 2019).

The posters share the same images, characters, and quotations as the videos. Another video – "Hidden in Plain Sight: Coercive Control and Domestic Abuse" – does not feature on the campaign webpage.[112] This video is mostly a combination of the two shorter videos with some additional content. It was designed for use in specialist training settings where, as Dosen recalled, there would be the time and space for trainer-facilitated discussions about the videos. As this longer video is available for public viewing via the Scottish Women's Aid

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[112] Longer video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36mQFefBylM&t=106s/

"Amira's Story": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnJRiUA29jg/

"Shona's Story": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NB40tcFvyts&t=1s/

YouTube page, it does inform my broader contextual understanding of the campaign materials. However, I do not perform the same level of in-depth analysis as I did for the shorter ones which were more deliberately targeted at the general public and designed to be shared via social media. At just over six minutes, Dosen felt the training video was too long for people to engage with on social media. For example, Twitter only allows for sharing videos with a 2 minute and 20 second maximum length.

When I asked Dosen if the aim of creating visual appeal factored into the campaign's aesthetic, she told me that the purple, light teal, and coral colour scheme was drawn from the existing Scottish Women's Aid colour palette. In Section 5.04, I discussed how the black and white Zero Tolerance colour scheme served to create a unified visual identity for the campaigns while also semiotically reinforcing the black and white clarity of the message. The colours of *Hidden in Plain Sight* scheme evoke softness and femininity, and they lack Zero Tolerance's hard visual boundaries between black and white and between right and wrong. The *Hidden in Plain Sight* colours are more semiotically ambiguous, echoing the ambiguous boundaries of coercive control. Whereas punching or kicking one's partner is self-evidently abusive; coercive controlling behaviours are usually more subtle which makes the abuse more difficult to identify. This ambiguity is reflected in Shona's opening narration:

"I couldn't put my finger on when it changed. It wasn't one thing he did."

Given that the point of the campaign was to highlight that coercive control can be "hidden in plain sight," overtly physical tropes of bruised faces or battered bodies would be nonsensical and counterproductive. While their facial expressions and body language often convey sadness and distress, Shona and Amira (and Amira's children) are not problematic in clichéd ways of bruised faces or black eyes. This echoes a theme that can be seen in the Zero Tolerance's poster featuring the attractive young woman hospitalised by her husband who was "a successful businessman, loving father and respected member of the community" (Figure 5.13). While hospitalisation suggests more explicit physical violence than the coercion depicted in the *Hidden in Plain Sight* narratives,

materials from both campaigns communicate that an abusive relationship may appear very differently from outside than it feels from within.

This dynamic can be seen in Figure 7.10 which presents text and visuals adapted from "*Amira's Story*" for use on the *Hidden in Plain Sight* page on the Scottish Women's Aid website and thus positioned as illustrative for the entire campaign (it was also adapted for one of the posters). This imagetext uses a mobile phone as a narrative device to illustrate Amira's experience of abuse. The phone was part of Dosen's wish to make the campaign more "relatable." Dosen felt that the mobile phone imagery might particularly resonate with young women. I would add that the ubiquity of the mobile phone means that it has resonance in older demographics as well. She said that "everybody's on their phones all the time" – so much so that women might not always recognise controlling behaviour that is facilitated by the phone. The materials aim to prompt such recognition with a narrative that Dosen characterised as "turning away from the physical, turning away from stereotypes." This potentially sets up a productively disruptive semiotic interaction with the viewer, as so much of our experience of how women are portrayed on the representational landscape is via their physical bodies. Turning away from the physical may force the viewer to see and think about women's experiences in radical new ways.

Figure 7.10: Hidden in Plain Sight "Hostage" on website (as appears on tablet device)[113]

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[113] Source: https://womensaid.scot/project/hidden-in-plain-sight-domestic-abuse-and-coercive-control/
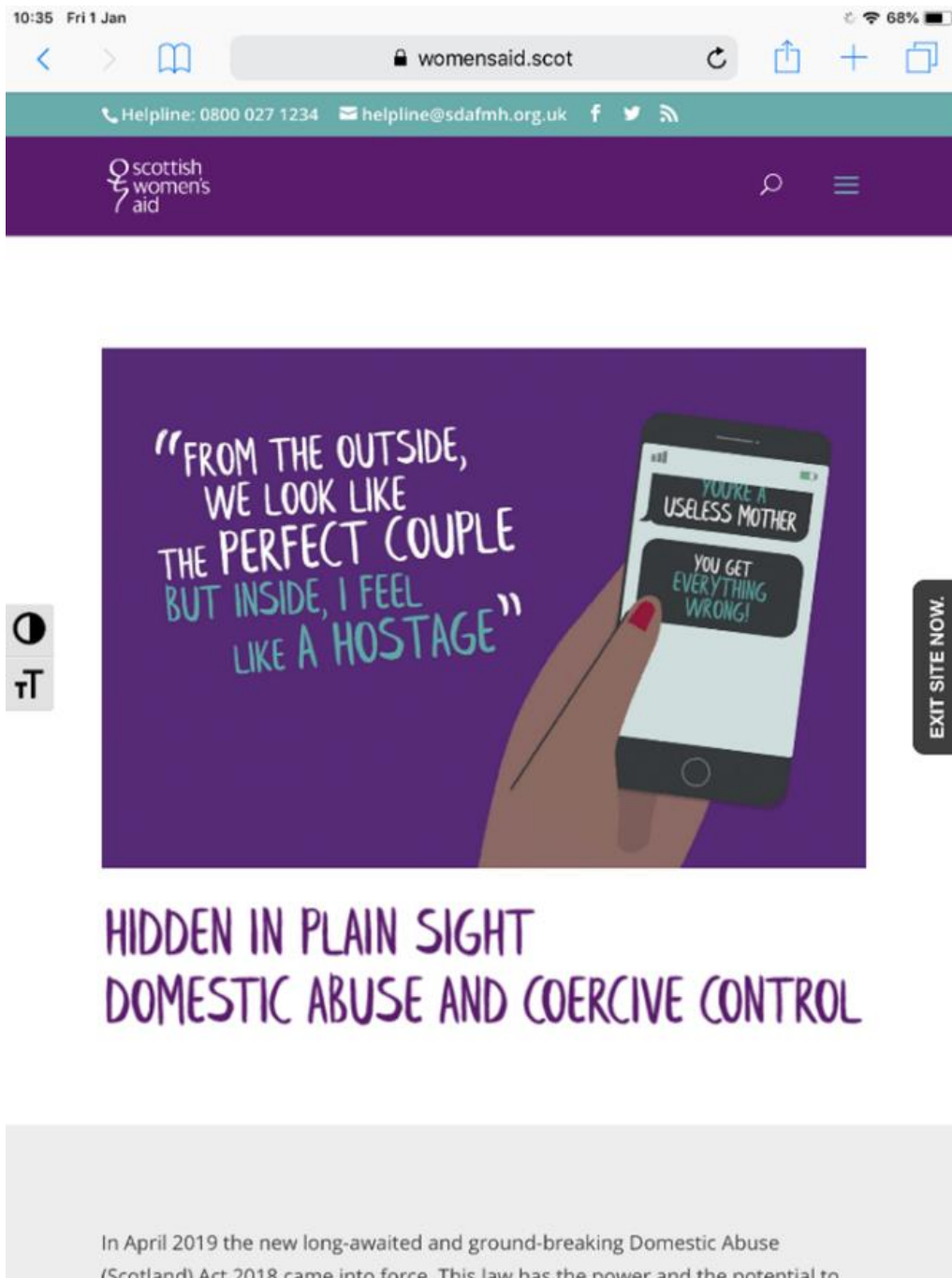
Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

As a visual conceit, the mobile phone imagery also presents another opportunity for a close-up of manicured nails, which, as has been discussed in Section 7.03 and Section 7.04 of this chapter, can serve as a not unproblematic visual signifier of femininity. More concretely, the mobile phone motif highlights the role that mobile phones and other forms of technology can function as tools for abusers to surveil or abuse their partners, such as when Amira's husband sends the abusive messages illustrated on the mobile phone image in Figure 7.10. The longer *Hidden in Plain Sight* training video also has a sequence in which Amira narrates that her husband told her that he put hidden cameras in the house to watch her "when no one's there." As she speaks, floating green eyes pop into the frame, surrounding Amira within an oppressive gaze. This floating eye symbolism also appears in one of the four campaign posters (Figure 7.11). The entitlement to women's bodies that underpins beauty culture is intimately connected to the entitlement to women's bodies that underpins coercive control. Under patriarchy, women's bodies must always be watched and controlled.

Figure 7.11: Hidden in Plain Sight floating eyes poster[114]

The *Hidden in Plain Sight* videos creatively use captioning – a technique that was also used in another media co-op production, Rape Crisis Scotland's *I*

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[114] Source: https://womensaid.scot/project/hidden-in-plain-sight-domestic-abuse-and-coercive-control/

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

Just Froze (Section 6.05). Both videos are captioned throughout, but the creative effect is more pronounced in *"Amira's Story."* Amira's words are written in the simple style of closed captioning for accessibility. By contrast, the written captions of the husband's spoken words are rendered using different graphic forms. His words start as text messages on Amira's phone, as in the related "*Hostage*" image on the website (Figure 7.10). As the narrative unfolds, his angry voice is set over deep ominous background music. The captions of his spoken words become more visually chaotic as they close in on Amira and her children. The effect crescendos with the threat pictured in Figure 7.12:

"YOU'LL NEVER SEE THE KIDS AGAIN"

Figure 7.12: Hidden in Plain Sight Amira's husband's angry words[115]

The menacing and destabilising chaos of the husband's captions semiotically conveys the way that perpetrators of coercive control psychologically destabilise and entrap women and children. The visual messiness of these words

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also disrupts the impression that Amira and her husband are a "perfect couple." This notion of a perfect couple is a floating signifier, without fixed meaning. In the cultural context of this video, what does a perfect couple look like? And what imbues this perfect couple notion with so much symbolic power that it can obscure an abusive relationship?

To shed light on that latter question, it is helpful to return to Magaraggia and Cherubini's argument, introduced in Section 3.03, that there are a range of sociocultural implements that facilitate men's violence against women, including the structural inferiority of femininity in popular representations of women's bodies (2017, pp. 442–444). In other words, a representational culture that positions women's bodies as beautiful objects supports male violence. Another of these implements is an asymmetrical heterosexual "ideology of romantic love" in which women are expected "to altruistically sacrifice themselves for the sake of love" (Magaraggia & Cherubini, 2017, p. 443). They further argue that the ideology of romantic love is produced, reproduced, and reinforced by cultural artefacts such as films and pop music. I suggest that this idealisation and idolisation of romantic love renders the "perfect couple" as a recognisable and rhetorically beautiful trope which can mis/inform people's judgements about romantic relationships.

This brings us back to the first question: what does a perfect couple look like? The race and immigration status of Amira and her husband do mark them out somewhat as outliers in a culture that centres whiteness. There are several clues in the video that convey that Amira is an immigrant. She and her husband have accents that suggest Asian backgrounds. Her husband uses the threat of deportation to exercise control over Amira. Dosen said that the characters of Amira and Shona were designed to incorporate many "protected characteristics." Under the 2010 UK Equality act, there are nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation (Equality Act, 2010). Immigrants and older women were identified as groups that Dosen wanted to be sure to include because of the specific ways that these women experience coercive control, while often being left out of narratives about domestic abuse. For instance, people may not be aware that the "No Recourse to Public Funds"

stipulation may bar migrant women from accessing many strands of domestic abuse support (El-Atrash, 2020).

Overall, however, the presentation of Amira and her husband is less as cultural outliers and more as conforming to the normative expectations of Scottish middle-class respectability. They reflect Siraj's claim that the "Scottish minority ethnic population tends to be middle class" (2011, p. 720). They are a teacher and a doctor. They are parents. A sequence in the video shows Amira's hands flipping through three cheerfully coloured snapshots of familiar happy family scenes. The construction of Amira and her husband as a superficially perfect couple is bolstered by the fact that their images are aesthetically appealing, both in terms of their own appearances and in the style of the imagery. Amira is relatively young with young children. She is slender, not visibly disabled, and well-groomed with manicured nails and neatly tied back long hair. From what little the viewer can see of her husband, he is also young, slender, not visibly disabled, and well-groomed. Finally, the most obvious and salient stylistic feature is that Amira and her husband are comic illustrations and animations, rather than naturalistic representations. The tidiness and clean lines of the images mimics the perceived tidiness of their relationship.

There were some more practical advantages to using animations and stylised drawings for the *Hidden in Plain Sight* campaign. Dosen felt that this format would have a longer shelf-life than would using human models. This longer shelf life can be seen in the way that the clothing is rendered is simple unmodulated blocks of colours, thus un-mooring it from the vagaries of fashion. By contrast, the photographs used in Zero Tolerance's *Respect* campaign or Rape Crisis Scotland's *Not an Invitation* campaign are more rooted in the fashion of the time. In the case of the *Respect* posters, the materials were deliberately based on contemporary fashion aesthetics. Dosen also recounted that the use of illustrations and animations sidesteps the potential issue of using models or actors who may be recognised from other pieces of work.

Figure 7.13: Hidden in Plain Sight poster featuring Shona[116]

[116] Source: https://womensaid.scot/project/hidden-in-plain-sight-domestic-abuse-and-coercive-control/

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid; Produced by media co-op.

In their discussion on the ideology of romantic love, Magaraggia and Cherubini argue that the expectation that women will sacrifice for romantic relationships "blurs the boundaries between love and violence" (2017, p. 443). We are primed by such expectations to interpret certain problematic behaviours as romantic or loving. This sociocultural priming can inhibit women from recognising the warning signs of coercive relationship dynamics. It can also prevent outsiders from realising that women and children are in danger, especially if a relationship's external appearance conforms to our assumptions about a perfect couple. This point is made in the longer training video when Amira describes her husband visiting her at work to "check up on" her, which colleagues interpreted as "sweet" and "attentive." She experienced it as controlling, and this behaviour eventually forced her to sacrifice her career. It is not spelled out in the Amira video, but losing her income would also make her further vulnerable to her husband's control over her and her children. It is worth remembering that, while Amira's story is symbolic, it is composed from real-life experiences and professional expertise about the dynamics of coercive control.

Whereas our representational landscape and the ideology of romantic love may render the perfect couple as a powerful trope, the fluid and interactive nature of meaning-making also renders it a site of resistance where counter-ideologies can be enacted. *Hidden in Plain Sight* uses a familiar object – the mobile phone – to upend the positioning of Amira and her husband as a perfect couple. In the process, it exposes the dangers of the perfect couple trope. The ideological resistance is enacted not just through the campaign's narratives – it is also embedded in its visual style. In the case of the representations of Amira and her husband, the fact that they are symbolic abstractions is semiotically significant. They bear hallmarks of what Kress and van Leeuwen would call low modality. Modality,[117] in this sense, refers to how we determine if "what we see or hear is true, factual, real, or is it a lie, a fiction, something outside reality" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996/2006, p. 154). Amira and her husband are drawn with simple

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[117] As distinct from "multimodality" which refers to texts that are constructed through several different semiotic modes, such as image, text, video, etc.

lines; they are depicted in blocks of soft unmodulated colours with limited shading; and they are often positioned against backdrops with limited or no pictorial detail. They have low modality in that they are not meant to be "real" pictures of actual people, and the stories they represent are symbolic, not literally true. However, Kress and van Leeuwen are careful to point out that "modality is 'interpersonal' rather than 'ideational'" (2006, p. 155). It does not portray absolute truths – it produces shared ones. The low modality of the comic / animated format signifies the low modality of the perfect couple trope. The shared interactive truth being co-produced by the video is that we should not take simple, colourful, or beautiful exteriors at face value.

Shona's relationship also has a deceptive appearance. The opening title scene transitions into an image of a wall shelf containing several items: books, a scent diffuser, a clock, flowers in a vase, and a congratulations card (Figure 7.14). Three framed images are on the wall, including two that are drawn as silhouettes. One silhouette appears to be a graduation photograph. The other appears to be a wedding photograph. These domestic accoutrements signify love and family. The mood begins to change when Shona starts her narration, backgrounded by ominous pulsing music:

"I couldn't put my finger on when it changed."

This darkening mood is also expressed visually, as a shadow creeps across the domestic scene (Figure 7.15). The visual flow from light to dark results from a stylistic decision that Dosen explained in our interview. During the early development of the campaign, the media co-op told Dosen and her colleagues to look at campaigns online and determine what appealed to them. One thing Dosen said they found "interesting and appealing" were materials that had "kind of blending in from scene to scene." Dosen felt that this blending could represent the way that coercive control manifested not as a series of discrete incidents, but as part of a pattern: "something (that) flows." In the video, Shona says the change happened "bit by bit." In Figure 7.14 and Figure 7.15, the affordances of animation are exploited to mirror the dynamics of the phenomenon being illustrated.
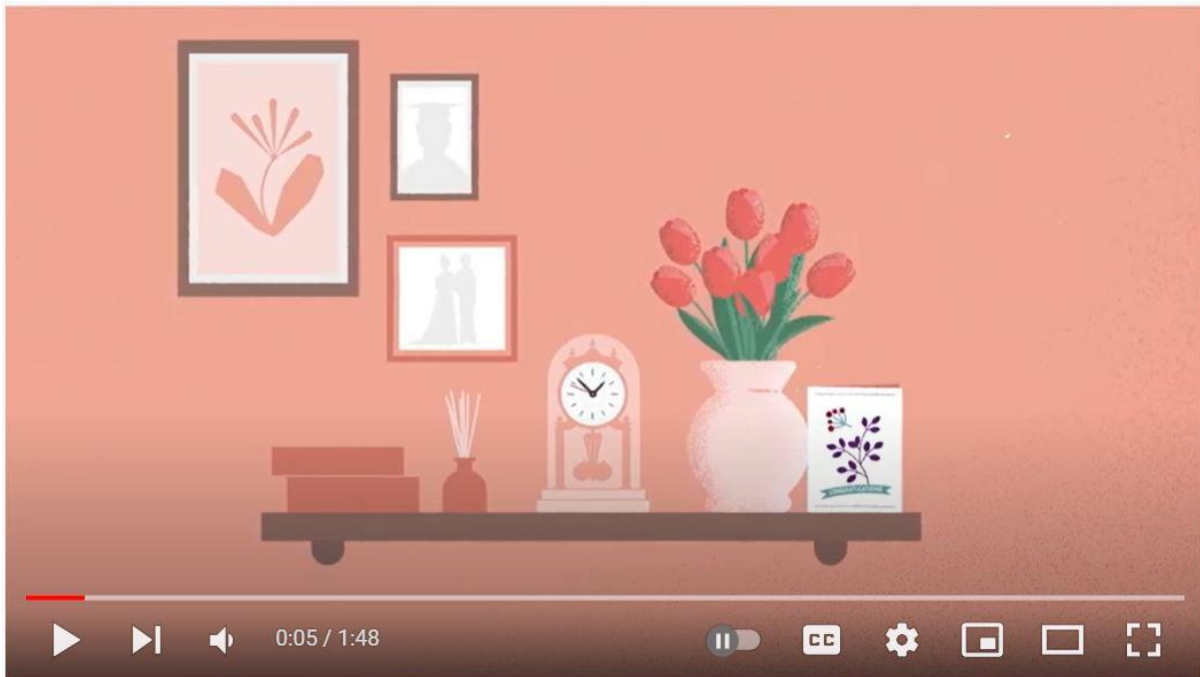
Figure 7.15: Hidden in Plain Sight "Shona's Story" shadow on shelf
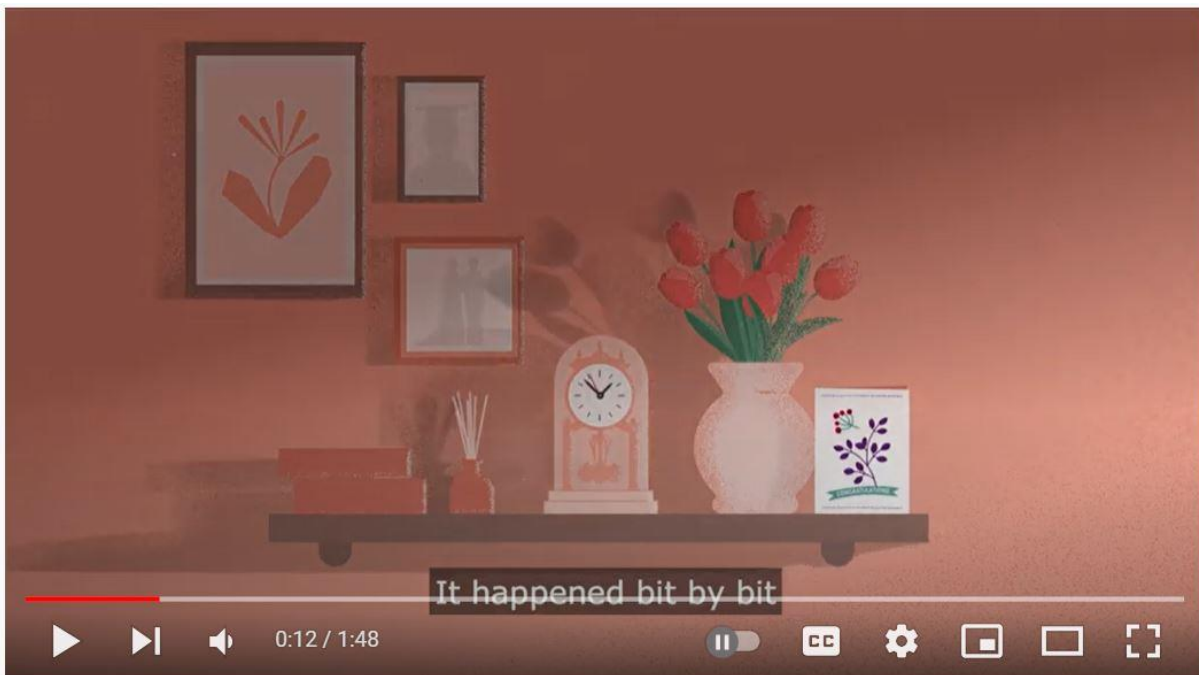
Shona herself is not conventionally beautiful. She is semiotically marked as an older woman via white hair and lines on her face; the facial lines are particularly visible on the poster version (Figure 7.13). The texture of her face stands out and contrasts with the smooth features of Amira and her young family. Shona uses a cane in the videos, indicating that she is disabled. The inclusion of

an older character was very important to Dosen and her colleagues. Such representation is essential as UK and US research suggests domestic abuse against older women is under-recognised and poorly understood (Bows, 2018; Crockett et al., 2015). As Dosen recounted, older women may not "see themselves as a victim or survivor."

Shona is not visually unappealing. She is depicted using the campaign's characteristic neat lines and soft colours. Her white hair is neatly coiffed. When the video viewer first sees Shona from the back, her clothing is understated and feminine – a long purple dress with a v neck and capped sleeves (Figure 7.16). There is a hint of a white necklace resembling pearls around her neck. Although her expression is pained at times, her necklace, neatly coiffed hair, colourful clothes, and the gentle aesthetic of the campaign conjures a familiar and appealing stereotype of a genteel and kindly older woman.

Figure 7.16: Hidden in Plain Sight "Shona's Story" Shona's husband
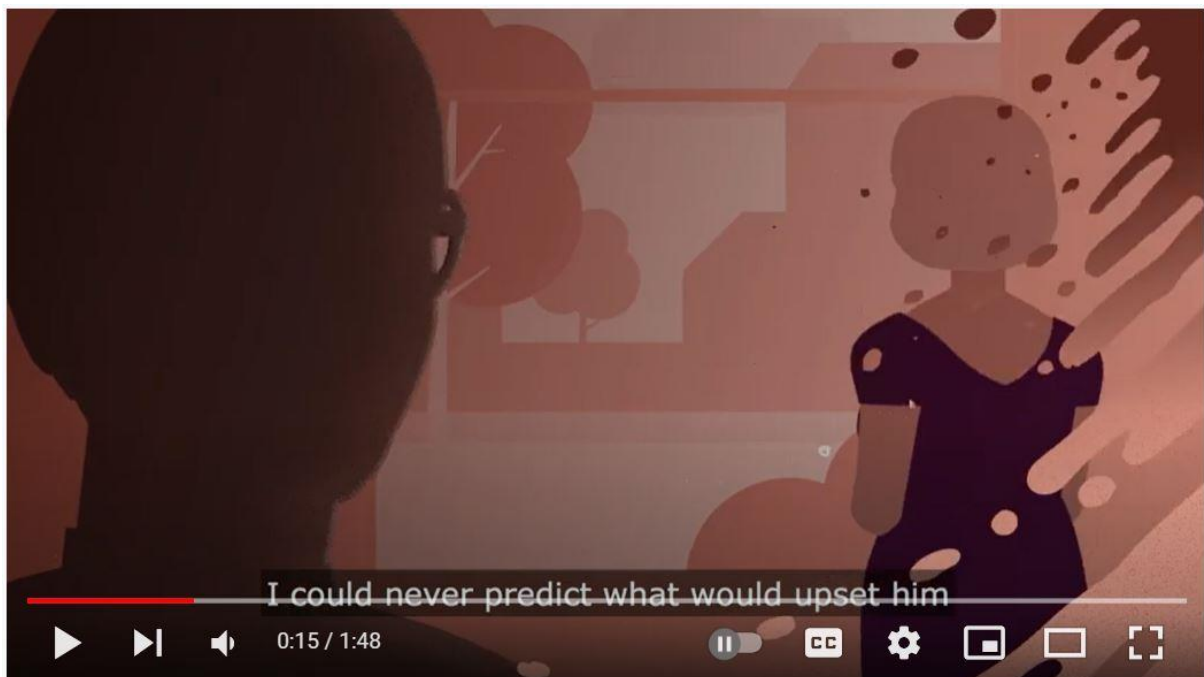
Shona refers to her husband's physical attractiveness in a way that is unusually direct amongst all the materials I analysed from all three organisations. This reference is made during the longer *Hidden in Plain Sight* training video, where the shelf scene is prefaced by narration from Shona:

"He's such a handsome man.

When we were first married he charmed everyone

I felt so lucky!"

These lines were edited out of the shorter "Shona Story" video, but their challenge to perpetrator myths merits a closer look. In Section 3.03, I discuss the popular tendency to "monster" male perpetrators of violence, which positions them and their behaviour outside of – rather than linked to – normative masculinity. Shona's husband is not a monster. As with Amira's "perfect couple" status, Shona's husband's handsome and charming exterior helps to obscure his abusive behaviour. This strand of myth-busting is weakened somewhat in the shorter edit of "Shona's Story," in which the husband is only seen as a shadow watching Shona through his spectacles as she gazes out the window (Figure 7.16). The shot retains the campaign's gentle aesthetic which undercuts any potential perception of him as a monster. Nevertheless, the ominous dark figure of a man gazing intently at Shona is another nod to the role that surveillance plays in patriarchal domination over women and their bodies.

Section 7.06   The beauty of survivorship

"*Shona's Story*" also features a dynamic that I observed in many of the materials I analysed. There was a narrative journey of women reclaiming their agency by moving beyond the control of their abusers. If we embrace a definition of beauty as more than the physical, the possibility of a joyful life for women after abuse is profoundly beautiful. Videos especially allow for an unfolding of narrative journeys over time. The "*Barman*," "*Hairdresser*," and "*Shona's Story*" videos all contain moments in which the woman protagonist pivots from object of male control to subject in her own story, albeit spurred by the interventions of others. Shona describes her pivotal moment this way:

"All it took was one person to ask me the right questions."

In "*Barman,*" the pivotal moment was when the eponymous barman told the protagonist that she deserved better (Section 7.03). The protagonist of "*Hairdresser,*" narrates her turning point as follows:

". . .and he told me I'd never see the kids again. She (her hairdresser) rang Women's Aid. My hairdresser saved my life. She believed me and did something about it."

In "*Amira's Story,*" her husband makes a nearly identical threat to prevent access to her children, illustrating the totality of his control and the skilfulness of coercively controlling abusers to identify and exploit their partner's vulnerabilities. In these cases, the controlling partner is exploiting a mother's love in order to keep her under his control. "*Amira's Story*" does not have this moment of change. It is an outlier in that it ends on Amira questioning her own culpability, although it features the same swelling hopeful music at the end as does "*Shona's Story.*"

Like "*Shona's Story,*" I want to end this final analytical chapter on a hopeful (and beautiful) note. By comparing how Shona was drawn in the beginning of the video (Figure 7.16) and the end (Figure 7.17) we can see how her beautiful journey of hope was semiotically produced. In the second image the barrier of the husband has been removed from between Shona and the viewer; she is open to the world. She is no longer looking out of the window while trapped under the watchful eye of her abuser. She is outside and a songbird flies into the frame, symbolising beauty and freedom. Her more formal dress has been swapped for trousers which potentially allows more freedom of movement, as does her cane. "Taking away, hiding or damaging" mobility aids can be another technique that abusers use to exert control over their victims (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-d). Although there was a pivotal moment ("one person") that changed Shona's direction of travel, her hopeful journey has not been easy and it is still ongoing. As she says: "It's taking a long time to find myself again." This suggests that her sense of self had been lost under the control of her husband and mirrors the broader representational landscape which portrays women as existing not for themselves but as decorative characters in men's stories.

Figure 7.17: Hidden in Plain Sight "Shona's Story" resolution
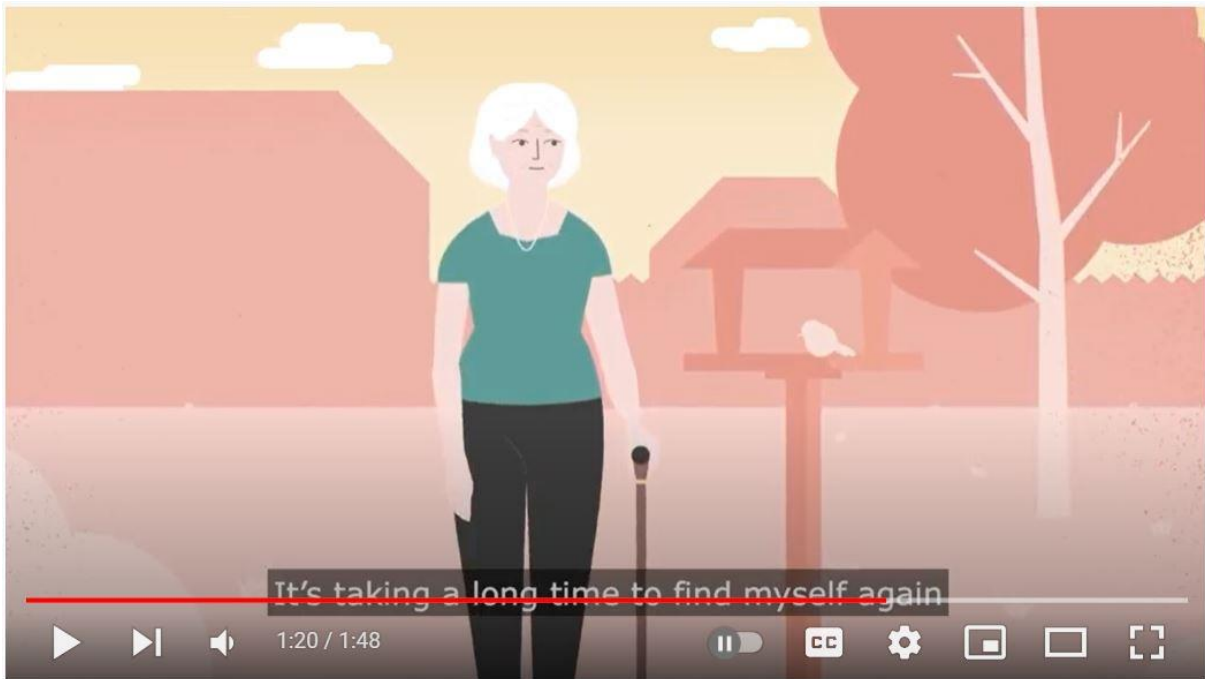
The most beautiful part of Shona's story is that she survived and broke free. When asked about how notions of beauty might inform future campaigns, Hutchinson made the rhetorical journey from physical forms of beauty to the beauty of an idea in her compelling observations about the beauty of survivorship:

> – because the imagery around survivorship is so beaten and bruised and we're getting better at that. But I actually think, like, survivors and showing the strength of moving on or recovering from whatever form of gender-based violence you've experienced – is really beautiful. In that strength and that [. . .] community of when women come together and support each other when they have experienced abuse – is really something [. . .] **incredibly** powerful and really beautiful that we just don't celebrate enough.

An especially powerful example of the beauty of survivorship is *Recounting Women,* a project that highlights "the impact of domestic abuse on women's experiences of homelessness, injustice, isolation and poverty" (Scottish Women's Aid, 2019). As described in the corpus selection section of my methodology chapter, I had not originally planned to include *Recounting Women.* After closer consideration, I found that it fit my criteria of being Scottish Women's Aid led (and

branded) and aimed at the social attitudes of the wider public. The work also provides a powerful template for resistance to male violence.

In my December 2020 interview with Policy Worker Jo Ozga, she explained the participatory "photovoice" methodology that produced *Recounting Women*. The content was produced by Scottish Women's Aid working with local women's aid groups to support victims / survivors to take photographs and compose text that communicated their experiences of abuse (Scottish Women's Aid, n.d.-a). Among the list of benefits that Caroline Wang and Mary Burris attribute to the participatory photovoice approach is that it can affirm "the ingenuity and perspective of society's most vulnerable populations," and allow them to show not just their needs but also their "assets and strengths" (1997, pp. 384–385). In other words, the methodology reveals the bad and the good, the ugly and the beautiful.

The group participants created imagetext vignettes that were reproduced on a website (Figure 7.18) as well as posters and cards (Figure 7.19). The amateur work of these women was also displayed in a public space that regularly features the work of professional photographers, including Alicia Bruce and her *Violence Unseen* work for Zero Tolerance (*Zero Tolerance Tours Violence Unseen*, 2019). *Recounting Women* imagery was exhibited at Edinburgh's Stills Gallery in 2019 (Edinburgh Women's Aid, n.d.). Ozga told me that this exhibition was seen by prominent supporters, including a Cabinet Secretary. The *Recounting Women* materials were used in a variety of awareness raising and training settings. Ozga found that by incorporating the *Recounting Women* images into PowerPoint presentations at conferences, she could create much more of an impact than just presenting a report – particularly amongst audiences not familiar with the dynamics of domestic abuse. Ozga suggested that "images do have much more of an impact than words."

Returning to Kress and van Leeuwen's assertion that material production is another semiotic resource, the less heavily mediated – although not un-mediated – nature of these materials injects them with powerful layers of meaning. Unlike the abstracted imagery of *Hidden in Plain Sight* or the dreamy filmography of *Together We Can*, there is a sense in the *Recounting Women* materials that we are authentically connecting with the women. As Ozga observed:

(And I think) the fact that it's women themselves. Expressing themselves about their experience and what they want to see change. I think that's what's so powerful about it for me.

This is a different approach to meaning-making than employed by campaigns such as *Together We Can* and *Hidden in Plain Sight,* which drew upon organisational knowledge of women's experiences but were much more heavily mediated. The public facing materials were created by external marketing and advertising professionals. While *Together We Can* and *Hidden in Plain Sight* drew on organisational knowledge and a feminist analysis to tell illustrative or emblematic stories of male violence, they do not "recount" the actual experience of individual victims / survivors as with *Recounting Women*.

Ozga said that the participants were not given many rules, with one critical exception. None of the photographs could feature faces or other identifying details. This allowed for all the participants to feel comfortable that their participation would not lead to the perpetrator discovering their whereabouts. This aligns with the understandable care that campaigners took to ensure that none of the women that inspired *Hidden in Plain Sight* could be identified. However, in *Hidden in Plain Sight*, this care also serves to abstract the women from their own stories in service of organisational objectives. This decision reflected the ways in which an organisation, and not the people it serves, can ultimately hold the power about who is made visible. By empowering women to tell their own stories, *Recounting Women* redresses some of the power imbalances between organisations, viewers, and the women themselves. The campaign aims to develop what Lugo-Ocando and Hernández-Toro might call a "community of equals" (2015). As always, there are representational trade-offs. The women are the writers and subjects of their own stories, but the dangerous realities of those women's lives meant that their faces could not be shown. They are simultaneously visible and invisible.

As with the budgetary restrictions that influenced the Zero Tolerance black and white aesthetic (Section 5.04), the "no faces" restriction forced imaginative thinking and made possible other creative expressions. One participant found a way around the no faces rule that did not compromise anyone's anonymity. She

took a photograph of a collage of model's faces which had been cut out and re-arranged in a Picassoesque fashion (centre, Figure 7.18). As with the similar collage that featured on the *Stop Revenge Porn* website (Figure 7.9), this imagery directly invokes the wider representational culture dominated by fragmented images of beautiful women. However, the participant co-opts this representational culture to make her own point about her abuse. The caption likens these faces to the mask that a woman who experiences domestic abuse must show to the world to hide her insecurities and vulnerabilities. It speaks to the dynamic explored in *Hidden in Plain Sight* in which pretty exteriors can hide unpleasant truths. The participant's creative repurposing of high fashion images demonstrates how beauty norms and practices can function as sites of resistance.

Figure 7.18: Examples from the Recounting Women website[118]

I'm just a shadow of myself. I was chatty, cheerful, happy and a real joker; creative, active and healthy. What happened to me? The shadow darkens and covers all these qualities of mine. What remains? Anxiety, depression, panic attacks, hair loss, insomnia and nightmares.

The mask women have to wear after domestic abuse. You're expected to be ok and show a positive face but underneath you feel insecure and vulnerable.

I'm moving up, out of a black hole. After getting into debt, being made homeless, losing all my possessions and separated from my son. I'm slowly making my way one step at a time, a year down the line.

Few of the photographs in *Recounting Women* could be described as beautiful in a normative sense. Many are out of focus. Some are dull and grey. Six picture some sort of rubbish bin or bag. However, when I asked Ozga if she found the *Recounting Women* campaign to be beautiful in any way, she insightfully responded:

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[118] Source: https://www.recountingwomen.co.uk/

Image credit: Fair dealing / Scottish Women's Aid.

So yeah, I think there's just different ways of seeing the beauty in the images and in the awfulness of some of the words 'cause. . .you see the image. . . and then you read the words and then you look at the image again in a different way. And I think, yeah, I think there is something quite beautiful in that and, and really horrible as well, you know. . . I think it's both.

Not every story told in *Recounting Women* is one of successful self-rediscovery after abuse. The participants were at different parts of their healing journeys. The woman who produced Figure 7.19 wrote about feeling like an ugly duckling and isolated by her experience of domestic violence. Yet, the moral of Hans Christian Andersen's "Ugly Duckling" fairy tale is the value of self-acceptance and becoming who one was meant to be (1843/2019). Therefore, it is poignant that the picture that participant chose was not of an ugly duckling, or even an ungainly cygnet, but of a beautiful, albeit solitary, full-grown swan. While her words express her sadness and loneliness right now, her choice of image expresses a hope for a beautiful future.

Figure 7.19: Recounting Women "Swan" in card format[119]

The beauty of the *Recounting Women* imagery stems from the dogged resistance to simplified, un-nuanced narratives of domestic abuse and survival. The imagetexts do not fall into the trap identified by Kelly et al. that binarily positions (negative) victimhood versus (positive) survivorship (1996, p. 92). The *Recounting Women* participants produced a transcendent beauty that is more than the sum of its parts.

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[119] Source: My own photograph of items collected from a sector event.
Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

Section 7.07   Chapter conclusion

This chapter unravelled some of the visual and narrative themes that emerge in the work of Scottish Women's Aid. As will be returned to in the final conclusion chapter, these themes run right through the campaigns from all three organisations: how visual styles can be used to make visible dynamics of abuse; how the wider representational culture legitimates patriarchal surveillance and control of women's bodies; the difficulties of addressing the needs of specific groups (e.g., young people's vulnerabilities to image-based abuse) without reinforcing existing erasures (e.g., image-based abuse happens to older people too).

A theme that emerged strongly in the Scottish Women's Aid corpus is one that evokes the long history of feminist debates around beauty. In Section 2.06 of the theory and language chapter, I outlined the feminist perspectives on the beauty system, ranging from outright rejection to embracing its liberatory potential. Several of the campaigns in this Scottish Women's Aid chapter featured close-up photographic or illustrated imagery of hands with painted nails (*Together We Can, Stop Revenge Porn, Hidden in Plain Sight*). I share Bartky's scepticism that women can hold onto "conventional standards of feminine body display" and achieve full economic and social liberation (1990, p. 78). Until manicured nails no longer serve as useful signifiers of womanhood, they are still implicated in patriarchal gender norms. Nevertheless, I am acutely aware that the power relations that drive that process of meaning-making are inherently fluid, and that fluidity can open spaces for resistance. I return to *Recounting Women* in Section 8.03 of the conclusion chapter to further consider how beauty practices can provide a space for resistance against patriarchal power.

Chapter 8. Conclusion: Surveillance, in/visibility, and the future of resistance

Section 8.01 *Chapter introduction*

Both violence and beauty function as regulatory mechanisms to perpetuate gender inequality by keeping women "in our place." The materials analysed in this thesis served as rich sites to probe where these two patriarchal forces intersect. My research journey had many twists, turns, and dead ends. I honed my research questions until I resulted with the five listed in Section 1.01. The subordinate research questions provide depth and context; they required me to look closely at how the representational subjects (RQ2); the aesthetics of the materials (RQ3); professionals' decisions (RQ4); and other factors (RQ5); engaged with an expansively defined idea of beauty. Each one of these questions produced insights that fed into my overarching query (RQ1):

> How do the campaign materials engage with the wider system of Western beauty norms, and what trade-offs or compromises are involved?

As I considered the research questions, three subordinate themes emerged: surveillance, in/visibility, and resistance. Each theme can be related to both beauty and violence, so they were helpful for locating their intersections in the campaign texts. This conclusion chapter uses examples from each of the campaigns to reflect upon these themes. Section 8.02 uses the first two of the themes to offer empirical observations on the overarching research question: What are some of the trade-offs made by the campaigns? Section 8.03 shifts between the empirical and the theoretical to explore how powerful spaces for resistance can still be found despite inevitable compromises. Section 8.04 concludes the thesis by suggesting some future areas for academic and activist work.

Section 8.02 *Compromises of surveillance and in/visibility*

The research framework outlined in Section 2.07 is informed by the feminist understanding that the representational landscape reproduces the idealised,

homogenised, and objectified beauty ideals to which women are expected to aspire through the performance of beauty practices. How closely a woman can or will conform to those norms influences how (and if) her experience of male violence is made publicly in/visible. Those expectations of feminine beauty are enforced by surveillance of women's bodies and behaviours. Surveillance and in/visibility also function in the perpetuation of gender inequality and men's violence against women and children. These dynamics inevitably create semiotic challenges for feminist campaigns, but the fluidity of surveillance, in/visibility, and the semiotic process itself enable space for resistance.

As repeated throughout this thesis, my central query has never been whether different campaigning strategies of feminist resistance are right or wrong, but what trade-offs those different strategies entail. This work aims to offer an original contribution to academic scholarship and activist practice by identifying and problematising some of the semiotic trade-offs in the visual meaning-making of these texts. Five trade-offs I observed can be described as: *inclusion always involves exclusion; feminine solutions to a masculine problem; sexy imagery can uphold sexist ideologies; abstract attitudes and concrete violence;* and *general representations of specific experiences.*

Informed by the conceptual understanding that meaning-making is a fluid and relational process, the deep dive into these materials led me to conclude that the significance of in/visibility cannot be understood through a dichotomous lens of representation versus erasure. *Inclusion always involves exclusion.* One of the clearest examples is a theme introduced in Section 3.05: the absence of voyeuristic images of brutalised women's bodies in this corpus. Campaigns such as Zero Tolerance's *Prevalence (1992)* evidence a radical feminist rejection of the objectification inherent in the reduction of feminine bodies to pitiable locations of masculine violence. The early licensing guidelines stipulated that any localised variations of campaign materials "should empower women and children, not portray them as victims" (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 2001 p. Appendix 4). As discussed in Section 5.06, a rejection of these well-worn visual tropes can make visible more subtle forms of abuse and control. The Scottish Women's Aid's *Hidden in Plain Sight: Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control (ca. 2019)* campaign

is a more recent intervention that shines a much-needed light on the subtle manifestations of coercive and controlling abuse.

Making visible abusive behaviours that are often "hidden in plain sight" is a crucial part of the mission to liberate women from male violence. However, the early Zero Tolerance campaign reports also suggest that an absence of more graphic imagery can have a silencing or erasing effect for women who perceive that their experiences are not being represented (Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993, p. 41). Furthermore, the licensing guideline's rhetorical frame of "empowerment" versus "victimhood" is not unproblematic. While the avoidance of "victimising" imagery can function as a powerful semiotic disruption of preconceived ideas of what abuse "looks like," it also potentially constructs victimhood / survivorship as exclusively binary positions rather than as a continuum that is inclusive of a range of valid responses to the trauma caused by male violence.

As argued in Section 5.05, the settings and presentations of the *Prevalence* photographs also subtly reproduce a visual rhetoric in which women are the visible objects of the gaze while men are the invisible – but *agentic* – subjects. I found that despite wanting to address (overwhelmingly male) perpetrators, few of the campaigns in this thesis actually show them. The effect of that pictorial absence is that male violence is repeatedly, if inadvertently, framed as a problem for women to address – thus subtly calling for *feminine solutions to a masculine problem*. The notable exceptions are the *Together We Can Stop It (ca. 2010-2012)* Flash animations (Figure 7.3, Figure 7.4) (Section 7.03). This pair of items are also the only materials in my main corpus that show men in the *act* of perpetrating physical violence against women. The Flash animations direct public surveillance towards men's actions, albeit by simultaneously positioning women's bodies as conduits for representing those actions.

Other campaigns more overtly reproduced visual rhetoric that positions women as objects of a gaze. Rape Crisis Scotland *This is Not an Invitation to Rape Me (2008)* and its follow-up *Not Ever (2010)* subvert the visual rhetoric of commercial advertising to play with – and unequivocally reject – the myth that a woman's appearance can be read as a signifier as what Andreasen has theorised as "de-facto consent" (2020, p. 108). Unlike feminist discourses that challenge

victim-blaming by pointing out that men rape women in "unsexy" clothes, these Rape Crisis Scotland campaigns boldly insist that rape is always the fault of the rapist, regardless of a woman's clothes or behaviours (Mendes, 2015, pp. 96 – 99). As Rape Crisis Scotland's *Pie Chart (2011)* says, women who are raped while wearing short skirts are "victims of a serious assault and deserving of support, not blame" (Figure 6.3). A more overtly sexualised approach creates its own tensions, as discussed in Section 6.04. By subverting commercial visual rhetoric, campaign imagery can potentially reproduce commercial genres' objectifying tropes – tropes which are driven by patriarchal and commercial imperatives. In other words, *sexy imagery can uphold sexist ideologies.*

Although less overtly sexualised than the *Not an Invitation* imagery, Zero Tolerance's *Respect (2001)* also deliberately exploited a commercial visual rhetoric, i.e., that of the GAP fashion retailer. Another notable feature of the *Respect* imagetexts is that they do not actually mention male violence at all (Figure 5.4, Figure 5.8, Figure 5.9). This is a markedly different approach than some materials from Rape Crisis Scotland's *End Sexual History & Character Evidence (2007)* (Figure 6.2) and Zero Tolerance's *Justice (1997)* (Figure 5.10) which directly reference rape and rapists to make publicly visible the role of socio-cultural institutions in protecting male power. Asking a woman if she found the man who raped her at knifepoint "attractive" will be outrageous to many – alas not all – viewers (Figure 5.20). People may find it more difficult to discern the less obvious connections between social expectations of "tough" boys and "pretty" girls, and male violence (Figure 5.8). The educational aspect of the *Respect* programme would have created opportunities to discuss such connections between gendered expectations and gendered violence (Reid Howie Associates, 2001a). Encountering a *Respect* imagetext outwith a pedagogical context – e.g., on a bus side – might muddy the semiotic interaction and make it difficult for viewers to make the connections between *abstract attitudes and concrete violence.*

Section 6.04 also discussed how deploying commercial visual language can reproduce not just those genres' tropes, but their exclusions as well. The tactic can render some women's experiences less visible. This was not the only

intersectional tension around representational in/visibility that I found when mapping the subjects of the entire corpus (RQ2). For example, while there are some women who could be described as plump, conspicuously fat women are entirely missing from this corpus. Similarly, only one campaign, Zero Tolerance's *Violence Unseen (2018),* featured a woman explicitly represented as LGBTQ+ (Figure 5.17). *Violence Unseen* shone a much-needed intersectional light on some of the additional vulnerabilities faced by migrant women, disabled women, and transgender women.

It must be acknowledged that the campaigns did feature other women who do not adhere to conventional white, able-bodied, thin, young, feminine beauty norms. For example, all three organisations have campaigns showing women of colour, but they found that representing race can be complicated by stereotypes and expectations about racialised bodies. In at least two photographs, the hegemonic dominance of whiteness may have led some viewers to misapprehend the racial identity of the photographic model (Figure 5.18, Figure 6.13) (Section 5.05, Section 6.04).

The many representational tensions around race and other intersectional oppressions, expose the challenges of crafting *general representations of specific experiences.* As I argued in Section 5.05, messaging that makes visible specific intersectional experiences of male violence may subtly reframe the issue as "about" that specific group rather than "about" male violence more generally. Rape Crisis Scotland's *I Just Froze (2017)* sidesteps this hazard with abstract animations and illustrations that could potentially represent anyone who experiences sexual violence – including men. Anonymising and abstractive approaches also involve compromise. By not addressing anyone specifically, such campaigns may not always be attentive to the ways in which intersectional oppression can impact someone's experience of male violence (Section 6.05).

Section 8.03   Semiotic spaces for resistance

The dynamics of surveillance and in/visibility complicate feminist resistance, but they do not make it impossible. In 1999, one of the Zero Tolerance

originators, Evelyn Gillan, reflected upon the campaign in *Concept, the Journal of Contemporary Community Education Practice Theory*:

> In unequivocally naming the gender of the problem as male and asserting that male violence merely reflects social, cultural, and societal values, Zero Tolerance dismissed the mad, sad, and bad theories of male violence offered by the media representations and medical models. By re-defining the problem, the campaign refused to debate on the terms dictated by the dominant culture and created a space within which change became possible. Zero Tolerance then set about building a new set of truths. (1999/2015, p. 5)

The work in this thesis has been driven by an interest in how the language of images can be exploited to create a conceptual space for the possibility of change. Even though it is difficult to assess the long-term efficacy of media campaigns to address male violence, no change at all can happen unless that space is created.

One theme that emerged repeatedly in this work is the semiotic potential of different types of form (RQ3) for creating "beautiful images" that carve out semiotic spaces for change. Several of the campaigns deliberately adopted a visually polished or beautiful aesthetic to co-opt and subvert the tools of the dominant representational landscape (RQ4). Some representational decisions were also influenced by practical considerations such as the problems of securing models or tight budgets (RQ5). For those who are committed to resisting and redefining the dominant cultural norms, it is promising that less resources and/or less visual polish is not necessarily a semiotic shortcoming. Constraints can drive creativity and lend different registers of semiotic richness to the campaigns. What Rape Crisis Scotland's Eileen Maitland described to me as the "handknitted" *False Allegations (2013)* postcard strikes a different semiotic chord than the campaign's more visually polished briefing paper (Figure 6.5, Figure 6.6). The semiotic power of less visually polished materials was also highlighted by one of my Scottish Women's Aid interview participants, Ellie Hutchinson, when she spoke about the "scrappy" and "DIY" look for the *Stop Revenge Porn Scotland (2013)* campaign.

Form was not the only semiotic tool at campaigners' disposal. Rape Crisis Scotland *10 Top Tips to End Rape (ca. 2010-2011)* used humour to turn the disciplinary gaze towards perpetrators (Figure 6.8). It is their behaviour that needs to change. Tip 8 pokes fun at traditional "safety advice" (O. Brooks, 2018) by exhorting potential perpetrators to:

> Carry a whistle! If you are worried you might assault someone "by accident" you can hand it to the person you are with, so they can call for help.

10 Tips was semiotically rich, but it drew a backlash. Maitland suggested it was because people might not "get humour or irony in a context of rape." However, the not-at-all-humorous *Excuses (1994) "No Man"* imagetext (Figure 5.22) also attracted backlash, causing what one of my Zero Tolerance interview participants called a "right stooshie." As argued in Section 5.06, such backlashes – or even just the threat of them – can form an integral part of the interactive process of semiotic renegotiations of "common-sense" patriarchal norms. Campaigners may craft materials with the expectation that they will be challenged, and consequently make the materials more resilient to such challenges. Although often difficult and ugly, a backlash can evidence that the campaigns are perceived as a genuine threat to hegemonic norms. Perhaps what some people were objecting to was not the humour of *10 Tips* but the unapologetic feminist challenge to the patriarchal order.

My conceptualisations of violence (Section 2.05) and beauty (Section 2.06) are both informed by the understanding that these forces serve to uphold that patriarchal order. The misogynistic trope of the brutalised beautiful women discussed in Section 3.04 is one of the most disturbing ways that these two patriarchal forces collide. By simultaneously representing women's bodies as legitimate sites for patriarchal beauty standards and patriarchal violence, the trope reflects and reproduces the patriarchal logic that women's bodies exist to be controlled by men. However, while the semiotic power of beauty may be exploited by patriarchal and commercial interests, beauty does not, in fact, *belong* to those interests. Beauty is a site of women's violent oppression, but it can also be a site of a woman's beautiful resistance. Such resistance can take the form of literal practices and places, such as talking to a beauty worker about an experience of

abuse (Figure 7.7) (Section 7.03). Beauty practices that focus on the body can be sublimated into a beauty that celebrates women's strength, resilience, survival, and resistance.

The Scottish Women's Aid *Recounting Women (ca. 2016-2018)* work is a powerful template of how beautiful resistance can be when victims / survivors are empowered to speak their own truths. The life-or-death necessity of maintaining anonymity relegated them to a liminal space of visibility and invisibility, but the *Recounting Women* contributors still found ways to resist. Figure 8.1 is an example of how an individual can find strength in beauty. The picture is of a pair of shiny, sparkly, tasseled shoes. A purple filter gives the picture a soft, feminine sheen. The text reads:

> Fear of being disabled I feel more accepting now. I feel people put a label on you but I'm still me and I can wear sparkly shoes even if they are flat.

Even though we do not see the woman at all, her agentic self speaks loudly through the imagetext. Her "sparkly shoes" are a form of resistance against those who would put a label on her that denies her agency and selfhood. Whether anyone else thinks the shoes are beautiful is irrelevant; she clearly believes they are. In a world that might prefer a woman like her remain invisible, she resists by sparkling.

Figure 8.1: Recounting Women shoes[120]

Fear of being disabled I feel more accepting now. I feel people put a label on you but I'm still me and I can wear sparkly shoes even if they are flat.

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[120] Source: https://www.recountingwomen.co.uk/

Image credit: Scottish Women's Aid.

Section 8.04   Chapter conclusion: On the future of resistance

This thesis looks deeply at a relatively small set of images that I believe offer important insights about feminist activism both within and outwith the Scottish context. Several of the campaigns have had wider reach. The original Zero Tolerance campaign, in particular, had global resonance (R. J. Donovan & Vlais, 2005, pp. 74–79; Drezin, 2001, pp. iv, 62–63; Raab & Rocha, 2011, pp. 8,15,79; Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, ca. 1996). My methodological approach was to immerse myself in the semiotic practices of each organisation, which enabled depth of analysis. In future work, I would like to organise the analysis thematically running across all three organisations rather than individually by organisation. Each one of the trade-offs listed in Section 8.02 could form the basis of a standalone work.

Different methodological approaches could also generate rich analysis. Another approach may be to gather a much larger dataset, using a methodology more akin to those discussed in the literature review around social media and cyberactivism (Section 3.05). One such project might be to perform a visual discourse analysis of the homepage images of all the autonomous rape crisis or women's aid services in Scotland, the United Kingdom, or beyond. These local organisations may be less likely to have budgets for large scale campaigning work. However, as I observed from my own experience as the volunteer Chair of my local women's aid group, these organisations may be more embedded in the communities they serve. It would be enlightening to study the semiotic resources of these more local organisations. This approach could be a good way to explore the different visual registers of materials and how they relate to issues such as authenticity and legitimacy. As addressed in Section 2.03, it would also be instructive to apply more quantitative research methods to understand the organisational and socio-cultural effects of decisions around distribution channels.

Future research – and campaigns – might also usefully address some of the problematics and exclusions with respect to the representational subjects. For instance, Barnes and C. Donovan claim there is a historical "resistance within parts of the women's movement and some lesbian communities to acknowledging

that women might perpetrate abuse in their intimate relationships" (2018, p. 68). It could be fruitful to explore the ways in which feminist campaigns include or exclude LGBTQ+ women or to analyse anti-violence campaigns produced by LGBTQ+ organisations. Similar work could be applied to the visibility of women of colour, older women, disabled women, fat women, or even men in such campaigns.

The relative invisibility of fat women in the campaigns is of special interest to me. It resonates with my own experiences and reinforces Royce's observation that more critical work is needed to explore the intersections between sizeism and violence against women (2009, p. 151). The exclusion of fat women from narratives about sexual violence feeds into myths introduced in Section 1.01 that some women are too undesirable to harass or rape. It also does not make visible the specific ways that fat women may experience male violence, e.g., abusers may use anti-fat insults as part of a pattern of control (Royce, 2009, p. 153). It misses the opportunity to expose the cultural shame assigned to feminine bodies that "fail" to sufficiently adhere to the disciplinary regime required by normative standards of beauty, and how that cultural shame can then be weaponised against women.

One form of male violence that none of the campaigns directly addressed and thus might reward further study is that of femicide. The 2021 rape and murder of Sarah Everard in London drew a great deal of media attention, which was likely due to several reasons. The possible role that Everard's youth, whiteness, and conventional beauty played in attracting attention has been widely commented upon, including in press pieces by feminist thinkers cited elsewhere in this thesis (Ingala Smith, 2021; Manne, 2021). The murderer's identity also played a role in the press attention. When he was identified as a serving police officer, it was made viscerally clear to women in the United Kingdom that "safety advice" cannot protect us from a powerful and violent man intent on doing us harm. The grief and shock of the crime was compounded by advice given by the Metropolitan police to "wave down a bus" if a lone woman was worried that an officer might harm her (Grierson, 2021). Finally, the rarity of stranger murder likely contributed to the crime's perceived newsworthiness. Of the (at least) 1,425 women murdered in the

United Kingdom by men between 2009 to 2018, only 8% were committed by total strangers (Femicide Census, 2020, p. 4). Kelly's continuum does not hierarchise forms of male violence with the "crucial – and sometimes forgotten exception – of violence that results in death" (Kelly, 2011, pp. xviii–xix). It would be instructive to explore how campaigns can explicitly draw the link between more prosaic, and potentially less media-visible, forms of men's violence against women and children and its most extreme manifestation.

Fundamentally, all the campaigns in some way hit up against the central dilemma inherent in RQ1: if communicators want to make their messages understood, they need to speak in a language that people understand. The visual language of Western beauty norms is one that all of us can understand, but it is a language that comes with more than its fair share of patriarchal baggage. There is no way out of a representational system so deeply invested in reproducing patriarchal ideology, but there are spaces and places for resistance. Like violence, beauty can be an oppressive mechanism for perpetuating patriarchal power. Unlike violence, however, beauty can also be beautiful.

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Appendix A   All campaign materials analysed with rubric

Zero Tolerance				
Prevalence (1992)	**Excuses (1994)**	**Justice (1997)**	**Respect (2001)**	**Violence Unseen (2018)**
1. 3 to 93 2. 3 to 93 (Original) 3. By 18 4. Businessman (formerly "Wife") 5. Men Don't Listen 6. No Man	7. Whoever 8. Blame 9. Premeditated 10. Love 11. Drunk 12. Never	13. Boss 14. Insufficient 15. Male Racket 16. Kids 17. Sentence 18. Witness	19. Difference 20. Says Who 21. Think Respect	22. Intro 23. Saint 24. Disability 25. Images 26. FGM 27. Prostitution 28. Outsider (formerly "Trans") 29. Online

Rape Crisis Scotland						
End Sexual History & Character Evidence (ca. 2007)	**This is Not an Invitation to Rape Me (2008)**	**Not Ever (2010)**	**10 Top Tips to End Rape (ca. 2010-2011)**	**Pie Chart (2011)**	**False Allegations (2013)**	**I Just Froze (2017)**
30. Postcard front 1 31. Postcard front 2 32. Postcard front 3 33. Reverse	34. Dress (landscape poster & postcard, portrait, in situ on campaign webpage) 35. Drinking (landscape poster & postcard, portrait, webpage) 36. Intimacy 1 (landscape, portrait) 37. Intimacy 2 (landscape, portrait, webpage) 38. Wedding 1 (landscape, webpage) 39. Wedding 2 (portrait)	40. Video (divided into 3 scenes) 41. Skirt poster 42. www.notever.co.uk (11 screen grabs)	43. Poster 44. Postcard	45. Postcard front 46. Postcard reverse	47. Postcard front & back 48. Briefing	49. Fight or Freeze video (frames) 50. So Many Reasons (frames) 51. Shatter (postcard) 52. Kapow (postcard) 53. Brain (postcard) 54. Sinking (postcard) 55. Woman (postcard) 56. Eye (postcard) 57. Tote bags (x2)

Scottish Women's Aid				
Together We Can Stop It (ca. 2010-2012)	**Stop Revenge Porn Scotland (ca. 2013)**	**Recounting Women (ca. 2016-2018)**		**Hidden in Plain Sight: Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control (ca. 2019)**
58. Barman video (3 "scenes") 59. Hairdresser video (3 "scenes") 60. Animation 1 – Window 61. Animation 2 – Streetscape 62. Animation poster version 63. Image of Stop placard (in 6 different images, leaflets, & ephemera) 64. Social media quotes (5 different images) 65. Website (internet archive) 66. Misc. images	67. Website slideshow image 1 (2 versions) 68. Website slideshow image 2 (2 versions) 69. Website slideshow image 3 (2 versions) 70. Website slideshow image 4 (2 versions) 71. Website slideshow image 5 (2 versions) 72. Website slideshow image 6 (2 versions) 73. Website slideshow 7 (2 versions) 74. Website slideshow image 8 (2 versions) 75. Website embedded image 1 76. Website embedded image 2 77. Website embedded image 3 78. Website embedded image 4	79. Website photograph 1 80. Website photograph 2 81. Website photograph 3 82. Website photograph 4 83. Website photograph 5 84. Website photograph 6 85. Website photograph 7 86. Website photograph 8 87. Website photograph 9 88. Website photograph 10 89. Website photograph 11 90. Website photograph 12	91. Website photograph 13 92. Website photograph 14 93. Website photograph 15 94. Website photograph 16 95. Website photograph 17 96. Website photograph 18 97. Website photograph 19 98. Website photograph 20 99. Website photograph 21 100. Website photograph 22 101. Website photograph 23 102. Website logo image	103. Shona video (4 "scenes") 104. Amira video (4 "scenes") 105. Going Mad poster 106. Hostage poster 107. Crime poster 108. Upset Him poster

NB: The names of individual items / imagetexts here were not necessarily the names assigned by the organisations. I named some of the materials to help with clarity when writing.

Appendix B   Visual grammar rubric (compressed)[121]

	Organisation: Zero Tolerance Campaign: *Prevalence* Item(s): *"By 18"*	Column for recording observations, analysis, and reflexive memos about campaign item(s).

Prompts

	"Representation and interaction: designing the position of the viewer" **(Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 114–153)**	
"Represented participants" and "interactive participants"		*This is one of those examples. . .*
"The image act and the gaze" (demand & offer)		*The represented participants. . .*
"Size of frame and social distance"		*The subjects are seen. . .*
For objects, landscapes, & buildings (3 significant distances)		
"Perspective and the subjective image" (naturalization of socially determined viewpoint)		*This is a subjective image with a clear central perspective. . .*
"Involvement and the horizontal angle"		*This photo is taken from. . .*
"Power and the vertical image"		*This photo is taken from. . .*
"Narrativization of the subjective image" (attitudinal meanings)		
"Objective images" (special & privileged viewer positions)		
	"The meaning of composition" **(Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 175–214)**	
"Composition and the multimodal text"		
"Given and new: information value of left and right"		*Again, it is not immediately. . .*
"Ideal & the real: the information value of top and bottom"		*This dynamic seems much more. . .*
"The information value of centre and margin"		*There might be something. . .*
"Salience"		*The most salient elements. . .*
"Framing"		*In addition to the rug framing. . .*
"Linear and non-linear compositions"		*This is a linear composition.*
	"Materiality and meaning" **(Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 215–238)**	
"Material production as a semiotic resource"		
"Production systems and technology" (3 major classes)		*These were analogue images. . .*
"Brushstrokes"		
"The meaning of materiality"		*The "materiality" of these. . .*
"Colour as a semiotic mode"		
"The communicative functions of colour"		
"A distinctive feature approach to the semiotics of colour" ("value," "saturation,"" purity," "modulation," "differentiation," "hue")		*There's no real colour palette – it's black and white. I think this idea. . .*
"Home decoration: Colour, character, and fashion"		*Very homely picture with no. . .*
"Colour schemes"		*The idea that colour. . .*
Adapted from: Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). Reading images: The grammar of visual design (2nd ed.). Routledge. (Original work published 1996))		

[121] N.B. This is a compressed version of the rubric, featuring the parts that emerged as the most useful. When I used the rubric to note my observations, most of the documents were over 30 pages long.

Appendix C   Transcription key

Ellipses alone	. . .	• omitted parts of transcripts for clarity, readability, or • omitted details that do not add to the argument
Ellipses in brackets	[. . .]	• omitted paratextual information, such as "inaudible" or "laughing," or • redacted parts of interview during transcription, or • omitted superfluous interviewer comments or interjections
Text in brackets	[But], [and], [he] etc.	• added minor text for readability and flow
Bold text	**incredibly**	• emphatic speech by interview participant

Appendix D Codes / themes that emerged in interviews

Advertising conventions	Justice system & social work
Animation	Language
Backlash	Legislation
Beautiful image	Longevity
Beautiful life	Male focus or avoidance
Beauty practices	Messaging
Branding	Models
Children & family	Myths
Clothing	Politics, policy, & advocacy
Coercive control	Poverty, austerity, social security
Collaboration, participation	Power
Colour	Prevention
Consent	Professional
Constraints	Public or private
Continuum	Relatable
Evaluation	Scotland
Feminist analysis	Setting
Future	Sexiness
Handmade or DIY	Stereotypes
Inclusion or exclusion	Style & form
Intersectional concerns	Training
Isolation	Victim or perp imagery

Appendix E Mapping the representational subjects[122]

Record and/or description of organisation / campaign / imagetext / individual subject(s):
Space for reflective / explanatory notes:

Body

Gender (coded)	Race	Sexuality (coded on bodies)	Size
Indeterminate	Subject not visible	Subject not visible	Subject not visible
Female	Indeterminate	None	Indeterminate
Male	Indeterminate, blocked view		Body not visible
Indeterminate – likely male	Indeterminate, likely PoC		Body not visible – thin face
Trans woman	Indeterminate, likely white		Thin
	Indeterminate, likely white or Asian	**Sexuality (contextual clues)**	Thin & "curvy"
Disability	Asian		Stocky
	PoC – likely African descent	Subject not visible	Plump / chubby
Subject not visible	PoC – (non-specific / obvious)	Heterosexual	Baby
No visible disability	PoC – Asian (South)	None	
Disability - visible, walking aids	PoC – black (African)		
Disability - invisible	PoC – likely Asian		
	White		

Age (categories)

Indeterminate	Young person – s'dary school	Adult – younger (20s/ 30s)
Child – indeterminate	Young person indeterminate – young person to younger adult	Adult – middle aged (30s/40s)
Child – baby		Adult – middle aged plus
Child – pre-school		Adult – elderly
Child – primary school		Adult indeterminate
Child indeterminate – pre-teen to teen		

Hair & Makeup

Colour	Length	Type	Style		"Messiness"	Makeup
Hair not visible	Hair not visible	Hair not visible	Hair not visible	Hairband	Hair not visible	Subject not visible
Subject not visible	Subject not visible	Subject not visible	Subject not visible	Half pony	Subject not visible	Indeterminate
Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Loose	Indeterminate	No makeup
Black	Hat	Hat	Hat	Loosely pulled back	Hat	None visible
Blonde	Very short	Afro-textured	Baby	Man – short	Very styled	None visible – too far
Brown	Short	Curly	Blowout	Man – medium	Neutral	Wearing makeup
Light brown	Shoulder	Wavy	Bob	Man – slightly long & full	Very messy	Wearing makeup – heavy
Medium	Breast length	Straight	Boy cut	Ponytail / braid		Wearing makeup – light
Dark	Medium / mid	Straightened	Braids	Pulled back		Wearing makeup – medium
White	Mid to long	Spiky	Brushed neat	Pulled back – fringe, bow		
	Long		Buzz cut	Scarf		
			Corn rows – braids, scarf	Updo		
			Corn rows – pulled back			

Attire & Accessories

General categories	Specific observations		Glasses
No clothes visible	Casual but not unkempt	Gray suit or tux	Subject not visible
Subject not visible	Casual – fatigues jacket, knit hat	Mixed – casual and dressy	Indeterminate
Professional	Casual, nice blouse	Sexy – short skirt	Not visible
School uniform	Dark suit probably	Striped button up shirt	No
Very casual	Dressy – fashionable	Traditional bride gown, jewellery, veil	Yes
Casual	Dressy – not fashionable	White shirt	Sunglasses
Fashionable	Ethnic		
Fashionable – "night out"	Fashionable – night out, dishevelled		
	Fashionable – revealing, sexy		

Aspects of image / Class

Frame / shot	Gaze	Class (embodied clues)	Class (setting clues)
Subject not visible	Subject not visible	Subject not visible	Indeterminate
Extreme close shot	Demand	Indeterminate	Not visible
Close shot	Offer	Not visible	No setting visible
Medium shot	Offer (closed eyes)	Middle	Middle
Medium close shot	Offer (partially obscured eyes)	Working	Middle – upper
Medium long shot	Variable		Working
Long shot			
Very long shot			
Variable			

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[122] N.B. I used an Excel spreadsheet to log these observations. This chart is a summary of the categories that emerged from the process.

Appendix F   Interview participants

Name	Organisation	Campaigns	Interview / Email Date
Elaine Samson	*Zero Tolerance*	*Prevalence, Excuses, Justice, Respect*	*21-Aug-19*
Liz Ely	*Zero Tolerance*	*Violence Unseen*	*11-Sep-19*
Susan Hart	*Zero Tolerance*	*Prevalence, Excuses, Justice, Respect*	*29-Oct-19*
Eileen Maitland	*Rape Crisis Scotland*	*All Rape Crisis Scotland*	*07-Nov-19*
Una Dosen	*Scottish Women's Aid*	*Hidden in Plain Sight*	*26-Mar-20*
Lily Greenan	*Scottish Women's Aid*	*Together We Can Stop It*	*20-Apr-20*
Louise Johnson	*Scottish Women's Aid*	*ScotGov Not Yours to Share, general image-based sexual abuse work*	*21-Aug-20*
Ellie Hutchinson	*Scottish Women's Aid*	*Together We Can Stop It, Stop Revenge Porn, general image-based sexual abuse work*	*07-Oct-20*
Jo Ozga	*Scottish Women's Aid*	*Recounting Women*	*16-Dec-20*
Jenny Kemp	*Zero Tolerance*	*Email communication about Zero Tolerance timeline*	*06-Mar-20*

Appendix G   Interview topic guide[123]

Interview Topic Guide

GUEP Approval Number 642   Participant number [Insert]

Research Project Title:

Missing from the Picture: Beauty Norms in Scottish Anti-Men's Violence Against Women Campaigns

My research questions

NB: For my reference, not for asking interview participants.

1. How do the visible subjects (i.e. representations of people), of anti-MVAW public communications campaigns fit within / or map against the Western representations of beauty?

2. How do the visual and narrative tropes that emerge from this set of materials engage with the wider system of Western beauty norms?

3. How does the aesthetic construction of the campaigns engage with notions of beauty? (e.g. are they constructed to be "beautiful" images in some way?)

4. How did norms of beauty and representation feed into the representational decisions of the feminist professionals that designed and developed the campaigns?

5. What other factors (ideological, budgetary, availability of models, etc.) influenced the representational decisions of the feminist professionals that designed and developed the campaigns?

About the interviews

My expert interviews will take a semi-structured format. I have identified some initial questions to ask all my participants (below). Other questions may emerge from their answers.

Other general and case-specific questions may emerge from my ongoing research and textual analysis. The interview questions fall under several thematic areas.

Part 1: Preparation

1. Review participant information and consent form.

Part 2: About the participant

1. Tell me a bit about yourself and how you came to be involved with the campaign.

Part 3: About the campaigns

Practical aspects of the campaign

1. What professional expertise – from within or outwith the women's sector was consulted for this campaign?

1

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[123] This was a working document that changed and adapted as the project developed, e.g., the title.

2. Tell me about the any constraints of the campaigns (budgetary, organisational, etc.).

3. What form did the campaign materials take (posters, postcards, bus shelters, etc)

    a. Why did you choose these forms?

Message construction:

1. What were the aims and objectives of this campaign?

2. Who was the intended audience?

3. What changes we you hoping to see from the campaign?

4. How did you envision that changing happening?

    a. i.e. did you have a theory of change?

5. What was the message of this campaign?

    a. How did you construct this message?

6. How did you choose the visual aesthetic of the campaign?

    a. Were you aiming to make this campaign visually appealing, or beautiful in any way?

    b. Follow up by asking about specific aspects of the design.

7. How did you choose the models?

    a. Who were you trying to represent with this campaign?

    b. Would you consider your models to be "beautiful?

        i. Why or why not?

    c. Were there decisions to exclude certain women or experiences from this campaign?

8. Did you meet any resistance to these design decisions?

9. Is there any documentary evidence about the planning of the campaigns that you are able to share?

Part 4: Missing historical gaps in my knowledge base

I will end the interview by asking for answers to specific factual questions that have arisen from my research. (e.g. I might need to clarify timeframes for certain campaigns.)

Part 5: Closing

1. Do you have any sense of what future campaigns might look like?

    a. Do you think we'll see more or less "beautiful" women?

    b. Do you have any general comments on the role of beauty in these campaigns?

2

Part 6: External resources if required

The focus of my questioning will not be about any personal experience of violence, but rather your professional experience campaigning around men's violence against women. Nonetheless, in accordance with our ethical protocols, I have included relevant helpline information below:

• Scotland's 24-hour Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline on 0800 027 1234

• Rape Crisis Scotland: Phone free any day between 6pm and midnight on 08088 01 03 02 or if you are deaf or hard of hearing on minicom number 0141 353 3091.

• Help for suicidal thoughts: call the Samaritans helpline at 116 123

3