



EDUCATION
FOR CRITICAL
THINKING

Facilitator's Guide

With Impunity: Men and Gender Violence



Developed by
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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: GETTING STARTED

CHAPTER 2: ORGANIZING A COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

CHAPTER 3: ANALYZING THE FILM

PART 1: THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

PART 2: THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF GENDER VIOLENCE

PART 3: UNDERSTANDING OPPRESSION

PART 4: THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE

PART 5: BACKLASH

PART 6: CHANGE

CHAPTER 4: CREATING SOCIAL CHANGE

EXERCISE 1: CREATING SOCIAL CHANGE

EXERCISE 2: WHY ARE WE SILENT?

EXERCISE 3: WHY DON'T WE ACT?

EXERCISE 4: THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

EXERCISE 5: EXPLORING HIERARCHY

EXERCISE 6: ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS

EXERCISE 7: CREATING CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

EXERCISE 8: CREATING A PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

CONCLUSION

NOTES

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About Education for Critical Thinking

Education for Critical Thinking (ECT) was founded in 2010 by former State Representative Michael Paymar and the late Dr. Ellen Pence. Ellen was the founder of the pioneering Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) and Praxis International. The Duluth Model, which was developed by the DAIP, has been widely recognized nationally and internationally for the strategies it has developed to end domestic violence. Michael was involved with the DAIP when it began in the early 1980s working with offenders. He and Ellen co-authored the curriculum *Creating a Process of Change for Men Who Batter*, the most widely used treatment program for domestic abuse perpetrators in the United States. Michael is also the author of *Violent No More: Helping Men End Domestic Abuse*. Michael and Ellen worked together confronting gender-based violence for over thirty years.

ECT believes that gender violence is a human rights violation that should be challenged globally by changing laws to enhance the safety of victims/survivors. ECT also maintains that law enforcement agencies, criminal and civil justice systems, human service providers, and NGOs should be implementing policies and procedures in a coordinated manner to hold offenders accountable for their behavior.

ECT encourages men and women internationally to challenge community institutions to do more to promote societies where men reject beliefs in male superiority and entitlement and instead embrace equality, respectful relationships, and nonviolence with women. ECT believes that we must change cultures that create environments in which men's violence against women occurs far too regularly and often without consequences.

ECT and its partners in the human rights field have conducted workshops, trainings, and conferences around the world on effective intervention and prevention strategies to end gender-based violence.

Creating With Impunity: Men and Gender Violence

Many people working to end men's violence against women have become increasingly concerned about the way that gender violence is currently being framed by some researchers and practitioners in the psychology field. The historical underpinnings of men's violence against women are being pushed aside, replaced by repackaged psychological theories to explain why domestic and sexual violence occurs and how to stop it. The social and historical context of our understanding of gender-based violence has increasingly gone missing in the discourse.

ECT wanted to create a film that challenged the notion that men's violence against women is an individual problem committed by a few troubled men. The film was designed to challenge society to recognize that our culture produces men who batter, men who rape, men who buy women for sex, and men who consume violent pornography—and to identify possible solutions.

ECT founders Michael Paymar and Ellen Pence wrote and produced the documentary *With Impunity: Men and Gender Violence* in 2011 to put men's violence against women into context. The film premiered on Twin Cities Public Television and has aired nationally and internationally.

Michael Paymar and Laura Goodman produced this facilitator's guide to accompany the film, which is designed to be used in a variety of settings. Laura Goodman served in law enforcement for 35 years as a police officer and deputy chief of police in major metropolitan police departments. She was the Ombudsman for Crime Victims for the State of Minnesota. Her work has focused on reducing violence against women and children, increasing the representation of women in police leadership roles and teaching officers how to effectively engage victims and hold offenders accountable for their behavior.

Laura has provided training and written articles on the critical role police officers have in ending gender-based violence. She has experience on a national and international level as a trainer, speaker, and consultant. Laura is a past president of the International Association of Women Police (IAWP) where she continues to serve as a director on its Board of Trustees.

CHAPTER 1: GETTING STARTED

INTRODUCTION

Men's violence against women presents society with enormous challenges. In the United States, the annual number of individuals raped or sexually assaulted is estimated to be 293,066. Not surprisingly, 60 percent of these assaults are not reported to law enforcement. Despite rape-shield laws, many sexual assault victims are reluctant to call the police or to testify in court. They are afraid they won't be believed or are concerned about losing control of the case after reporting the crime. Other victims don't report being assaulted because they don't want their friends, family, co-workers, and colleagues to know; rape still carries a social stigma. In the United States, one in five women will be raped in their lifetime; for men, the incidence is one in seventy-one. Ninety-eight percent of female and ninety-three percent of male rape victims reported that their assailants were male.ⁱ

Nationally, a husband or boyfriend beats his spouse or girlfriend every 15 seconds. A current or former intimate male partner is responsible for 30 percent of all female homicides. One out of every four men will use violence against an intimate partner at some point in their relationship. Children are present during 80 percent of the assaults against their mothers, and one in six women will experience stalking by a current or former male intimate partner.ⁱⁱ

The economic and human costs of gender violence are enormous. The annual financial burden of sexual violence in the United States is billions of dollars in child protection services, medical care, and mental health services, lost work productivity, law enforcement intervention, criminal and civil justice processes, incarceration, and related costs. On the human side, victims/survivors suffer trauma, scarred families, serious injuries, and sometimes death.

Yet men's violence against women is minimized, trivialized, and rationalized, and it continues to occur regularly, often without legal or social consequences to the perpetrator. Women are blamed: "Women provoke men's anger in marriage by not doing what their husbands want," "Women entice men to take advantage of them sexually by their actions—their use of alcohol and the way they dress." And when the focus is on the men, some psychologists and therapists hypothesize that they use violence against women because they are insecure, or they have poor impulse control, abandonment issues, and unresolved relationships with their mothers or fathers. Attention has recently been focused on studies in neuroscience that suggest that childhood trauma has an impact on brain development. Some people still accept the idea that

male sexual aggression is a natural biological phenomenon and thus is a valid explanation for why men rape.

While some perpetrators do have psychological problems and personality disorders, the vast majority don't. Mental health and medical explanations simply can't explain the impact of long-held patriarchal beliefs about the role of women in the family and in society and the long history of men's violence against women.

With Impunity: Men and Gender Violence traces the historic and institutional supports of men's violence against women from early civilizations through Colonial times to the present day. It leaves no doubt about the origins and gendered nature of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and sex trafficking. The fundamental questions posed in this film are these: Can women ever be safe if men don't change? And can men change if we don't continue to challenge the institutional and social practices that allow their violence to continue?ⁱⁱⁱ

In many countries, violence against women and other human rights violations are widespread and often unchallenged by the state or society. When lawlessness has become the norm in countries engaged in war, victims/survivors describe horrific gang rapes and torture at the hands of both military and civilian men.

Throughout the world, girls and women are disfigured, imprisoned, or killed as punishment for not "obeying" customs, laws, or the dictates of their husbands or fathers. Human rights groups publish reports on the staggering number of immigrant girls, boys and women being forced into prostitution and sexual slavery.

The United States Congress has demanded action to curtail rape on college campuses and in the military. Policymakers argue about the cost of civilly committing sex offenders while paying scant attention to prevention of sexual violence. Many women in the "sex industry" are coerced or forced into performing degrading and often violent sex acts during the production of mainstream pornography.

The documentary *With Impunity: Men and Gender Violence* and this facilitator's guide have been developed to promote meaningful dialogue about gender violence, its multiple causes, and possible solutions. Gender violence is a serious and pernicious global human rights problem, but it is solvable. A good place to start is at the grassroots level, in our own communities, holding community dialogues.

ⁱ Michele C. Black, Kathleen C. Basile, Matthew J. Breiding, Sharon G. Smith Mikel L. Walters, Melissa T. Merrick Jieru Chen and Mark R. Stevens, *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ⁱⁱ National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2015.

ⁱⁱⁱ Education for Critical Thinking and Twin Cities Pubic Television.

PROMOTIONAL SAMPLE

