

WELCOME TO 'THE WAR ON DADS & CHILDREN 2.0'

When this book was first published in May 2021, I set out how the British legal system systematically eroded the importance and powers of fathers, especially working-class dads, who lacked the finances or ability to engage in the system. In my naivety, I hoped this would be a baseline from which to improve matters. Yet, incredibly, things have got much worse.

COVID impacted the world in ways we've never seen. Lockdowns proved to be an ideal opportunity for opportunistic mothers to further alienate fathers from their children. But there has also been the mission creep of bad legislation, and an aggressive war against men launched by well-funded women's charities, aided and abetted by craven politicians keen to jump on a fresh bandwagon to boost their profiles and coffers — all of which is lapped up by a receptive media.

The first edition of this book was published by Grosvenor House Publishing on May 12th, 2021. I eagerly awaited the impact it would have after exposing so much child endangering and anti-dad bias in the family court system. I posted copies to around 30 of the great and good, President's current and former of the family courts, the current and former CEO of Cafcass, various Members of Parliament with responsibilities for children, justice, equalities commission and journalists. So far, not one has responded.

Of course, the pandemic didn't help! But I'm not one to give up, so we decided this book needed an update. In September 2022 Martin Daubney, fresh from his political dalliances as an ex-Member of the European Parliament and Deputy Leader of the Reclaim Party contacted me regarding the need to get this book properly publicised.

This was spurred on by a fantastic interview Martin secured for me in December 2021 with the redoubtable Ann Widdecombe. This was for the New Culture Forum's Heresies series, in my episode entitled 'Men: Second Class Citizens?' (Spoiler: yes!) It's up on YouTube, and it's had 53,000 views now, and I come in around the 19-minute mark.

As well as meeting Ann, what was so heartening were the comments. The top one was from a mum, Janie Harrison, who simply said: "As women, do we really want our sons to grow up in a world where they are discriminated against? We must stand against this injustice too!" That was fantastic. I have never set out to be "anti-mum". My target, all along has been the broken system. In my battle against the system, every single man, woman, child, and even a Martian, is welcome!

Ann was wonderful and has proved to be something of an unlikely ally to my cause. Read her foreword, for which I'm eternally grateful, for more detail. Her endorsement of my work: "Any man denied access to his children will take heart

from this book” was an incredible feeling after fighting, often alone, for so long. I want to thank Ann from the bottom of my heart.

In case you're one of those Martians I referred to above, Ann has been a British political and intellectual tour-de-force since the 1970s. She has been the Minister of State for Employment, Minister of State for Prisons, Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Shadow Home Secretary. Ann was elected as a Member of the European Parliament in 2019 and is a columnist for the Express plus a regular commentator on TV.

During September 2022, Ann and myself had engaged in correspondence on the dire circumstances surrounding the situation for children post-divorce or separation in the UK. Ann assured me of her assistance in my campaign to remove the vast institutional malpractice which is so pivotal to proceedings especially during the 'gateway' process to the family court where domestic violence is alleged.

Ironically, despite vastly different career paths, both Martin Daubney and Ann Widdecombe were Brexit Party members of the European Parliament. Both are very committed to improving the situation for children post-divorce or separation in the UK and their assistance greatly elevates my one-man Don Quixote-type campaigning.

During discussions with Daubney, he suggested, and it became apparent to me, that an update post-COVID was required. Also, he was astounded, even as an ex-Brexit Party MEP, when I informed him that the Istanbul Convention on Human Rights (Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence) had been signed by Sandy Moss, Ambassador Extraordinaire and Plenipotentiary to the Council of Europe, who shook hands with the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe on July 21st, 2022. The Istanbul treaty is being ratified by the UK government on November 1st, 2022.

Effectively, this means that all government departments have to prioritise the requirements of women. You can quickly imagine how the very well-established government-funded agencies and domestic violence charities already in existence will take advantage of this to pursue their ideological and financial interests, at the expense of children's and fathers' welfare. As Martin commented, not one UK voter had voted for this, four and a half years after the UK had voted to 'take back control' by voting for Brexit.

For the record, I have on four separate occasions and at considerable personal risk intervened to protect women from what I perceived as either physical abuse or the threat of. I am totally opposed to physical violence against anyone. I am also totally against government agencies, local authorities and erstwhile charities

facilitating and promoting false allegations of domestic violence based on gender because of their warped anti-male ideology.

COVID lockdowns: a new weapon against dads.

The COVID epidemic had many unforeseen knock-on effects on society, and it undeniably had a shattering impact on shared parenting. Some 95% of resident parents are mothers. Those who were hostile to shared parenting suddenly had a wonderful opportunity.

The Families Need Fathers website published the MoJ statistics from January to March 2022 on its website, and it is truly shocking reading - Family Court Statistics Quarterly: January to March 2022.

The latest data shows that Private Law cases, on average, have increased in length since the last quarter from 44.3 to 46.2 weeks – double what it took five years ago and getting worse every quarter. COVID has clearly been a major factor, increasing times by 20 weeks, but in reality, the figures were getting worse since 2017 and cases now take 25 weeks longer than five years ago.

Furthermore, at the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) open board meeting of 28th April 2022 it was reported that the average time taken for Private Law cases that go beyond a first hearing has increased to 54 weeks and the ones involving the appointment of a Children's Guardian, have increased from 92 to 94 weeks in the last quarter.

Cafcass also report that there are approximately 7-8,000 more children in the system than pre-COVID, with anticipated 'suppressed demand' forecast by MoJ to result in an increase of caseload potentially over 10% in 2022/23.

The comments below are from service users of the charity on the same page as the MoJ statistics. This is the sad reality for so many fathers trying to maintain a relationship with their children:

"I had to wait 2.5 years for a final hearing and 7 months for a 1-hour directions hearing!"

"I waited nearly 12 months before my first hearing".

"I'm still waiting for a final hearing, and it's been 2 years so far".

"There has been 7 adjournments and two vacations amounting to more than 12 months in delays all because mother claims to be unwell just before each hearing".

"I waited 4 months for first hearing".

"11 months for a directions hearing – still hasn't happened".

"Waited 9 months for my first hearing, mother didn't turn up also, have to wait a further 4 months for the next hearing".

I will add a few more anecdotes from desperate dads who'd phoned me for advice. One mother told a dad: "I will not allow you to take my child on public transport because of the COVID risk, you will have to buy a car if you want to see him." This father didn't have the proverbial pot to pee in after spending thousands in the family court.

Another father was told he would have to provide a new sterile seat cover every time he travelled on public transport with his child. Strange how this didn't apply when the mother travelled on public transport... Court orders were treated with even more contempt than usual: hard to imagine in itself. Any lawyer, politician or judge defending the system would advise said fathers to take their cases to court. With delays of almost a year before the first hearing?

The Great COVID Domestic Abuse Epidemic That Never Was.

COVID was also a fantastic opportunity for the domestic violence charities to seriously enlarge their coffers. Suddenly, they started a major outcry about the need for extra government funding because of the increased risk to vulnerable women from violent men in their lives. Journalists and political commentators joined in the outcry, the avalanche of manufactured panic gained momentum, and many £millions of extra funds were thrown their way. No politician in modern Britain will stand in the way of such an avalanche - cowardice predominates among that species, especially as the Labour Party in Westminster has so many cheerleaders for gendered domestic violence agency provision. As for the Tories being the party supporting family values? Forget that vacuous promise – and instead look at how matters have become much worse since they took power.

My favourite local authority, Brent, seriously upped the ante where domestic violence of a gendered nature is alleged. In November 2021, Brent announced 16 days of action led by VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) specialists and Councillors. Also announced was their open meeting in Brent Civic Centre for Monday 29th addressing the 'epidemic' of crime against women and girls. Surprisingly there was no mention of the fact that more children are being killed by their mothers than their fathers. In fact, when the British Medical Journal reviewed 9431 studies into child homicide worldwide, it concluded that 54.7% of deaths were caused by mothers.

And of course, no mention of the sad reality that men and boys are far more likely to be victims of violence than are women and girls. Gendered bigotry is very strong here.

“We know that when England lose at football, domestic violence abuse rates increase by 38%. When they win, this figure is 26%.” This idiotic and totally false statement was made by Councillor Afzal in an article he wrote for the Kilburn Times on August 12th, 2021. He was demanding men change. The obvious strange omission is: what happens when England draw? This absurd and false allegation originated in California in 1993. American football hardly ever has a drawn result. Also, when a Washington Post journalist investigated, the allegation was proven to be totally unfounded. Credit to the excellent Nick Langford for presenting this and the sources in his book, *An Exercise in Absolute Futility*.

Nevertheless, Lancashire police, courtesy of a domestic violence agency called Pathway Project, had claimed that domestic violence in England against women increased during the World Cups from 2002 to 2010. Astonishingly, they came to the exact same figures as the totally discredited claim from California in 1993. The accompanying picture and 38% alleged increase were shared around 50,000 times on social media. I bet this highly questionable claim will feature yet again before and during the Qatar World Cup.

But of course, stark reminders that men are violent are omnipresent in the modern world. If a person enters Wembley police station, there are numerous posters extolling the BDVAP/Advance/Women’s Aid work. If you’re a male victim, this is the equivalent of a black man approaching the BNP for help with his civic discrimination.

Ditto the Brent DV website. Brent pays huge sums to its Domestic Violence agency, and neither they nor the Police are accountable or regulate it. I have written confirmation of such from both. What accountability is there for them spending such large amounts of public money, unless by themselves?

Nevertheless, no opportunity will be missed by the anti-shared parenting domestic violence lobby. The tragic murder of Sarah Everard was massively exploited. London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, quickly hopped onto his favourite bandwagon, as the delusional shining knight who will save all females from harm. He publicly demanded and shamed the then Police Commissioner Cressida Dick to do more to protect all women: he then bullied her out of office.

But was there actually a second epidemic - of domestic violence - during the COVID lockdown? The brilliant William Collins blogged about this on his *Illustrated Empathy Gap*, in a post entitled ‘The Great Covid Domestic Abuse Epidemic That Never Was.’

Posted on 25th September 2021, initially the groundwork is established.

In August 2020 a joint Panorama/Women’s Aid “investigation” reported that domestic abuse surged in lockdown. The Guardian reported it thus: “The

coronavirus crisis has dramatically compounded domestic violence against women, new research has revealed. Two-thirds of women in abusive relationships have suffered more violence from their partners during the pandemic.”

Then the politicians hop on the bandwagon. Not to be outdone in the representation of domestic carnage, on 1 February 2021, Under-Secretary of State for Justice, Alex Chalk, told us that: “Charities have reported a 200% increase in calls and people accessing web-chat services since the first lockdown”. The £millions of extra funding started to flow.

(In the updated book, I accidentally omitted 3 payments from William Collin’s blog. These are April 2020 £2m, May 2020 £35m, and Nov 2020 £10.8m.)

Then on 1st February 2021 the Ministry of Justice announced a further £40million funding boost for specialist rape and domestic abuse support services. The same source gives a figure of £125million as the extra funding provided to local authorities for the provision of safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and their children. That’s a grand total of an extra £213million Government funding to domestic and sexual abuse services over a 10-month period. This will be on top of the approximately £300million received by Women’s Aid affiliated charities in the UK annually.

And now for the official figures from the Office of National Statistics. 25 November 2020, “Domestic abuse during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, England and Wales”, ONS states immediately,

“Police recorded crime data show an increase in offences flagged as domestic abuse-related during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, however, there has been a gradual increase in police recorded domestic abuse-related offences over recent years as police have improved their recording of these offences; therefore, it cannot be determined whether this increase can be directly attributed to the coronavirus pandemic.”

Surprise, surprise! The ONS data is a world away from the hysterical narrative. Domestic violence charities reporting an increase in domestic violence does NOT mean more domestic violence, but it most certainly led to a huge increase in funding! Is this an example of fraud? You will be so surprised to read that my close friends in Brent Council vociferously championed the need for more funding during the COVID alleged domestic violence epidemic.

One has to seriously admire the sheer brass neck and opportunism of the domestic violence charities. No tragedy or epidemic will go to waste. But then, just consider the drip, drip, effectiveness of forever banging on about ‘toxic masculinity’. As a further example of the ceaseless attack on men and boys, just consider the wonderful Mayor of London’s intervention on this. The Independent newspaper

April 7th, 2021, reports: “Men simply must change”. Sadiq Khan says violence against women stems from “toxic masculinity” adding: “Children as young as FOUR should be given lessons on misogyny in bid to curb violence against women”.

It appears that all males are guilty of original sin, irrespective of age or action, because of the actions of a tiny majority. If this is not bigotry, then what is?

What I find strange, and disturbing, is how retro-chauvinistic so many men are when posturing as defenders of all women. As a rule, the smaller the man the correspondingly bigger the desire to “protect all women and girls from harm”. Sadiq Khan is shorter than most women. His city has huge problems with crime and gang culture because of fatherlessness, and yet he portrays himself as women’s saviour. I hate this infantilism of women: in my opinion it brings women back to the Edwardian or Victorian era. So much for equality!

But many of these allegations are false. A previous Families Need Fathers (Scotland) submission of 5 December 2017 to Scottish Parliament concluded that 70% of the allegations were found on best available evidence to be false.’ Ref: Prof T MacKay (Education and Child Psychology, vol 31 no 3, British Psychological Society 2014).

“We draw the committee’s attention to the investigation of false allegations in contested family law cases by Professor MacKay. He found 70% of the allegations investigated in his Scottish study were judged in court or found on best available evidence to be false”.

Perhaps now you understand my drive to remove the institutional facilitation and promotion of false allegations by government funded agencies and charities. I deeply believe that many vulnerable women in society who do need help are not getting it because of the smarter ones who are ‘gaming’ the system to gain advantage in the family courts.

Do you believe that implementation of the Istanbul Convention will improve the situation for these needy women and children?

Indoctrination, not education: the poisoning of young minds

Ultimately, what cost is there to children and society because of this highly toxic gendered narrative? If schoolgirls are being taught that they are at great risk of violence from all men in their lives as they grow up, and schoolboys are being forced to accept guilt for being born male, what sort of education is this? The answer is simple, it is not education: it is indoctrination.

Society has an absolute duty to protect children from this warped indoctrination. It is hardly surprising that: “The proportion of children experiencing a probable mental disorder has increased over the past three years, from one in nine in 2017 to one in six in July 2020. The rate has risen in boys aged 5-16 from 11.4% in 2017 to 16.7% in July 2020 and in girls from 10.3% to 15.2% over the same time period, according to The Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2020 report.

Actions have consequences. Writing this I’m reminded of the Daniel Pelka briefing given by Brent’s Local Children Safeguarding Board in December 2013 (Chapter 5 of this book). I’m also reminded of when Women’s Aid so aggressively pursued their 19 Child Homicides campaign, which got huge media coverage.

The brilliant William Collins exposed this hypocrisy in his incredible blog 330 child homicides, later 332 (Chapter 9 of this book).

He trawled through coroner’s reports and serious case reviews where children had been killed and surprise, surprise, discovered that more children were killed by the mothers than the fathers.

This included two beautiful, innocent children killed by their mother in a Women’s Aid refuge. The mother told police she wanted to ‘hurt the father.’ Women’s Aid were attacking the desire of the family courts to maintain contact between children and their father’s post separation. This is a savage indictment of gender politics and media bias overriding children’s safety. For me, the welfare of children is infinitely more important than a toxic narrative which ceaselessly demonises one half of society.

Coercive and Controlling behaviour legislation was brought into the UK in 2015. I cover this in chapter 13, Four Pillars of Failure. Anecdotally, I estimate that almost half of all contested family court cases where the mother basically doesn’t want the children to be with and to love their father features the allegation: “I’m a victim of coercive and controlling behaviour”. I know of cases where dads who argued with the mother because she sought to restrict or stop contact between the child and the father have used this argument successfully in the family courts. As it is broadly subjective, and almost impossible to defend against because the dad by doing so will be accused of further ‘coercive and controlling behaviour,’ it is yet another dagger in the heart of fathers who wish to remain in their children’s lives.

In 2015 the government brought in changes to judges' pensions, probably part of its ‘austerity’ programme. The almost immediate impact was that many judges retired shortly afterwards. This was a central part of the huge delays in the family court. More magistrates were brought in, and this only added to the problem. Basically, magistrates have no power, and they are led by the court clerk and

Cafcass adviser. I could say 'dumb and dumber' but I know that many magistrates do mean well.

Earlier in this chapter I quoted MoJ statistics on the huge delays in the family courts. I ask you this question, what child can withstand separation from a loving parent for many months, or even years, while this glacial-paced court process trundles on? After six months or a year, the child desperately wants to ignore the separated parent both for its own emotional protection and to please the primary carer, who is hostile to the ousted parent.

And now, ask yourself one question. Are you prepared to be a part of the solution for children, or do you just want to be like Pontius Pilate: wash your hands and move on?