

**J4MB complaint concerning the *Newsnight* edition of 7 January 2013, relating to the BBC's Editorial Guidelines**

**Key**

Highlighted text is the subject of J4MB commentary

'MVFP' means 'male victims and/or female perpetrators'

'DA' means 'Domestic abuse / violence'

Page(s)	Editorial Guidelines section references	J4MB commentary
3 – 6	<b>SECTION 1: THE BBC'S EDITORIAL VALUES</b>	
3	<p><b>1.2.2 Truth and Accuracy</b></p> <p>We seek to establish the truth of what has happened and are committed to achieving due accuracy in all our output. Accuracy is not simply a matter of getting facts right; when necessary, we will weigh relevant facts and information to get at the truth. Our output, as appropriate to its subject and nature, will be well sourced, based on sound evidence, thoroughly tested and presented in clear, precise language. We will strive to be honest and open about what we don't know and avoid unfounded speculation.</p>	You've ignored the extensive body of knowledge about MVFP, so your piece was inaccurate. It was misleading as it mentioned only female victims, citing a statistic from the Home Office British Crime Survey <sup>1</sup> which showed there to be 1.2 million female and 800,000 male victims of DA in 2011/12.
4	<p><b>1.2.3 Impartiality</b></p> <p>Impartiality lies at the core of the BBC's commitment to its audiences. We will apply due impartiality to all our subject matter and will reflect a breadth and diversity of opinion across our output as a whole, over an appropriate period, so that no significant strand of thought is knowingly unreflected or under-represented. We will be fair and open-minded when examining evidence and weighing material facts.</p>	The only opinions reflected in the piece reflected were partial. They didn't reflect breadth or diversity of opinion, significant strands of thought were unreflected, you were neither fair nor open-minded with respect to examining evidence and weighing material facts.
4	<p><b>1.2.5 Harm and Offence</b></p> <p>We aim to reflect the world as it is, including all aspects of the human experience and the realities of the natural world. But we balance our right to broadcast innovative and challenging content with our responsibility to protect the vulnerable from harm and avoid</p>	Your narrative covered only female victims of DA and male perpetrators. You did nothing to protect or highlight vulnerable men and/or

	unjustifiable offence. We will be sensitive to, and keep in touch with, generally accepted standards as well as our audiences' expectations of our content, particularly in relation to the protection of children.	boys who are victims of domestic abuse, and thereby caused unjustifiable offence to male victims of DA.
4	<b>1.2.6 Serving the Public Interest</b>  We seek to report stories of significance to our audiences. We will be rigorous in establishing the truth of the story and well informed when explaining it. Our specialist expertise will bring authority and analysis to the complex world in which we live. We will ask searching questions of those who hold public office and others who are accountable, and provide a comprehensive forum for public debate.	You weren't rigorous in establishing the truth of the story because you omitted MVFP, and you weren't well-informed in presenting it. Your 'expertise' brought neither authority nor analysis to the complex world in which we live. You don't ask searching questions with respect to the MVFP element of DA (see my comments concerning Guideline 1.2.2).
4	<b>1.2.7 Fairness</b>  Our output will be based on fairness, openness, honesty and straight dealing. Contributors and audiences will be treated with respect.	The piece wasn't fair, open, honest, or straight dealing. Your audience wasn't treated with respect.
5	<b>1.2.11 Accountability</b>  We are accountable to our audiences and will deal fairly and openly with them. Their continuing trust in the BBC is a crucial part of our relationship with them. We will be open in acknowledging mistakes when they are made and encourage a culture of willingness to learn from them.	The piece didn't deal fairly and openly with your audiences. We look forward to you acknowledging mistakes were made in this piece, and to learning how you'll encourage a culture of willingness to learn from them.
7 – 12	<b>SECTION 2: USING THE GUIDELINES</b>	
7	<b>2.1 INTRODUCTION</b>  The BBC Editorial Guidelines apply to all of our content whoever creates or makes it and wherever and however it is received. They set out the standards expected of everyone making or presenting the BBC's output. They will help anyone, in-house or independent,	The piece clearly violated many of your Editorial Guidelines.

	<p>public service or commercial, to deal with difficult editorial issues, meet the expectations of the audience, and produce distinctive and challenging content to the highest ethical and editorial standards.</p> <p>As well as representing the values and standards of the BBC, the Editorial Guidelines reflect the relevant provisions of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code 1. Content or output (terms used interchangeably throughout) meeting the standards in the Guidelines will also meet the regulatory requirements when completing the BBC's compulsory compliance process.</p> <p>The Guidelines are commissioned and approved by the BBC Trust. They are published, available to the public, and used as the basis for the consideration of complaints about BBC output. They are part of what makes the BBC distinctive.</p> <p>Any proposal to step outside the Editorial Guidelines must be editorially justified. It must be discussed and agreed in advance with a senior editorial figure or, for independents, with the commissioning editor. Director Editorial Policy and Standards must also be consulted.</p>	<p>We should like to know which individual(s) agreed to step outside so many Editorial Guidelines in this piece.</p>
7	<p><b>2.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p><b>Editorial Responsibility</b></p> <p><b>2.2.2</b> Knowledge of the Guidelines is an essential professional skill, and everyone who makes the BBC's content is contractually required to familiarise themselves with them and work within them.</p>	<p>The people who were responsible for the piece were, clearly, in breach of contract. Would you agree, and if so, what action will be taken to discipline them?</p>
13 -	<b>SECTION 3: ACCURACY</b>	
13, 14	<p><b>3.1 INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>The BBC is committed to achieving due accuracy. This commitment is fundamental to our reputation and the trust of audiences, which is the foundation of the BBC. It is also a requirement under the Agreement accompanying the BBC Charter 1.</p> <p>The term 'due' means that the accuracy must be adequate and appropriate to the output, taking account of the subject and nature of the content, the likely audience expectation and any signposting that may influence that expectation.</p>	<p>In ignoring MVFP, the piece was self-evidently inaccurate, so your commitment has been broken.</p> <p>The accuracy of the piece was neither adequate nor appropriate.</p>

	<p>Therefore, we do all we can to achieve due accuracy in all our output, though its requirements may vary. The due accuracy required of, for example, drama, entertainment and comedy, will not usually be the same as for factual content. The requirements may even vary within a genre, so the due accuracy required of factual content may differ depending on whether it is, for example, factual entertainment, historical documentary, current affairs or news.</p> <p>Accuracy is not simply a matter of getting facts right. If an issue is controversial, relevant opinions as well as facts may need to be considered. When necessary, all the relevant facts and information should also be weighed to get at the truth.</p> <p>Where appropriate to the output, we should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather material using first hand sources wherever possible</li> <li>• check and cross check facts</li> <li>• validate the authenticity of documentary evidence and digital material</li> <li>• corroborate claims and allegations made by contributors wherever possible.</li> </ul>	<p>Given that the piece contained factual content, the absence of coverage of MVFP was particularly egregious.</p> <p>The issue of DA is controversial, as is the BBC's long-running refusal to give proportionate coverage of MVFP. You've clearly <i>not</i> weighed all the relevant facts and information to get at the truth.</p>
14 -	<b>3.2 PRINCIPLES</b>	
14	<b>3.2.1</b> We must do all we can to ensure due accuracy in all our output.	Maybe you 'must', but you <i>didn't</i> .
14	3.2.2 All BBC output, as appropriate to its subject and nature, must be well sourced, based on sound evidence, thoroughly tested and presented in clear, precise language. We should be honest and open about what we don't know and avoid unfounded speculation. Claims, allegations, material facts and other content that cannot be corroborated should normally be attributed.	Maybe it 'must be', but it <i>wasn't</i> .
14	<b>3.2.3</b> The BBC must not knowingly and materially mislead its audiences. We should not distort known facts, present invented material as fact or otherwise undermine our audiences' trust in our content.	You have knowingly and materially misled your audiences. By ignoring MVFP you've distorted known facts and undermined your audiences' trust in your content.
14	<b>3.2.4</b> We should normally acknowledge serious factual errors and correct them quickly, clearly and appropriately.	We look forward to you doing this.
15	<b>3.4 PRACTICES</b>	

<b>Gathering Material</b>		
15	<p><b>3.4.1</b> We should try to witness events and gather information first hand. Where this is not possible, we should talk to first hand sources and, where necessary, corroborate their evidence. We should be reluctant to rely on a single source. If we do rely on a single source, a named on-the-record source is always preferable.</p> <p>We should record our research interviews with sources wherever possible. In circumstances where recording might inhibit the source, full notes should be made, preferably at the time or, if not, as soon as possible afterwards.</p>	Mankind Initiative and other charities could supply you with contact details for male victims of DA.
15	<p><b>3.4.2</b> In all our content we must check and verify information, facts and documents, where required to achieve due accuracy. If we have been unable to verify material sufficiently, we should say so and attribute the information.</p>	Mankind Initiative can point you to a great deal of official statistics from the Home Office with respect to MVFP.
15	<p><b>3.4.3</b> There are separate considerations for user generated content. We should not automatically assume that the material is accurate and should take reasonable steps, depending on how it is to be used and if necessary to achieve due accuracy, to seek verification. We must take special care over how we use any material that we suspect has been supplied by a member of a lobby group or organisation with a vested interest in the story, rather than a disinterested bystander.</p> <p>We should carefully scrutinise and, if necessary to achieve due accuracy, corroborate eyewitness accounts submitted by email before using them, for example by talking to eyewitnesses on the phone.</p> <p>We should ensure that user generated content is clearly identified as such.</p>	We don't know who supplied you with the video footage of a female victim and male perpetrator. But we would be interested to learn if you contacted an organisation (e.g. Mankind Initiative) with a view to supplying a male victim for interview, for the purpose of balance.
15, 16	<p><b>Material from Third Parties</b></p> <p><b>3.4.5</b> Material supplied by third parties needs to be treated with appropriate caution, taking account of the reputation of the source.</p> <p>We should normally only rely on an agency report if it can be substantiated by a BBC correspondent or if it is attributed to a reputable news agency.</p> <p>We should only use other material supplied by third parties if it is credible and reliable. This includes weather reports, financial markets information and music charts. We need to</p>	Comment as for 3.4.3.

	ensure that any credit given for the use of third party material is in accordance with BBC credit guidelines.	
16	<p><b>Material from Third Parties</b></p> <p><b>3.4.6</b> We should only broadcast material from third parties who may have a personal or professional interest in its subject matter if there is a clear editorial justification. The material should be labelled. This includes material from the emergency services, charities, and environmental groups.</p> <p>We should be reluctant to use video and audio news releases or other similar material. We do not normally use any extracts from such releases if we are capable of gathering the material ourselves. The editorial significance of the material, rather than simply its impact, must be considered before it is used. If it is editorially justified to use it then we must explain the circumstances and clearly label the source of the material in our output.</p>	The material wasn't labelled, so can we assume it was generated by the BBC?
21	<p><b>Reporting Statistics and Risk</b></p> <p><b>3.4.21</b> We should report statistics and risks in context and avoid worrying the audience unduly, especially about health or crime. This may involve giving trends, taking care to avoid giving figures more weight than can stand scrutiny. If reporting a change, consideration should be given to making the baseline figure clear. For example, a doubling of a problem affecting one in two million people will still only affect one in a million. It will usually be appropriate to report the source of figures, and sometimes the margin of error, to enable people to judge their significance.</p> <p>We should consider the emotional impact pictures and personal testimony can have on perceptions of risk when not supported by the balance of argument. If a contributor's view is contrary to majority opinion, the demands of due accuracy and due impartiality may require us to make this clear.</p>	<p>DA is a crime and by reporting only male-on-female DA, you both worried women unnecessarily, and misinformed both men and women. It reinforced popular misconceptions that only women are victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>The video clips only of a female victim and a male perpetrator would have led to perceptions of risk not supported by the balance of argument.</p>
22	<p><b>Correcting Mistakes</b></p> <p><b>3.4.26</b> We should normally acknowledge serious factual errors and correct such mistakes quickly, clearly and appropriately. Inaccuracy may lead to a complaint of unfairness. An effective way of correcting a mistake is saying what was wrong as well as putting it right.</p>	We look forward to you acknowledging that in omitting MVFP you made a serious factual error. We look forward to hearing how you intend to put it right.

	Where we may have broadcast a defamatory inaccuracy Programme Legal Advice should be consulted.	
	<b>SECTION 4: IMPARTIALITY</b>	
	<p><b>4.1 INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>Impartiality lies at the heart of public service and is the core of the BBC's commitment to its audiences. It applies to all our output and services - television, radio, online, and in our international services and commercial magazines. We must be inclusive, considering the broad perspective and ensuring the existence of a range of views is appropriately reflected. The Agreement accompanying the BBC Charter requires us to do all we can to ensure controversial subjects are treated with due impartiality in our news and other output dealing with matters of public policy or political or industrial controversy. But we go further than that, applying due impartiality to all subjects. However, its requirements will vary. The term 'due' means that the impartiality must be adequate and appropriate to the output, taking account of the subject and nature of the content, the likely audience expectation and any signposting that may influence that expectation.</p> <p>Due impartiality is often more than a simple matter of 'balance' between opposing viewpoints. Equally, it does not require absolute neutrality on every issue or detachment from fundamental democratic principles.</p> <p>The BBC Agreement forbids our output from expressing the opinion of the BBC on current affairs or matters of public policy, other than broadcasting or the provision of online services.</p>	<p>The piece was clearly not impartial.</p> <p>You weren't inclusive, didn't consider the broad perspective, and didn't appropriately reflect the existence of a range of views.</p> <p>You didn't ensure this controversial subject was treated with due impartiality.</p>
24	<p><b>4.2 PRINCIPLES</b></p> <p><b>4.2.1</b> We must do all we can to ensure that 'controversial subjects' are treated with due impartiality in all our output.</p>	Maybe you 'must', but you didn't.
24	<p><b>4.2 PRINCIPLES</b></p> <p><b>4.2.3</b> We seek to provide a broad range of subject matter and perspectives over an appropriate timeframe across our output as a whole.</p>	The BBC has for many years underplayed – and often ignored altogether – MVFP in its television and radio programmes.

24	<p><b>4.2 PRINCIPLES</b></p> <p><b>4.2.4</b> We are committed to reflecting a wide range of opinion across our output as a whole and over an appropriate timeframe so that no significant strand of thought is knowingly unreflected or under-represented.</p>	Comment as for 4.2.3
25	<p><b>Breadth and Diversity of Opinion</b></p> <p><b>4.4.1</b> Across our output as a whole, we must be inclusive, reflecting a breadth and diversity of opinion. We must be fair and open-minded when examining the evidence and weighing material facts. We must give due weight to the many and diverse areas of an argument. Breadth and diversity of opinion may require not just a political and cultural range, but, on occasions, reflection of the variations between urban and rural, older and younger, poorer and wealthier, the innovative and the status quo, etc. It may involve exploration of perspectives in different communities, interest groups and geographic areas.</p>	You've clearly failed to be inclusive, to reflect a breadth and diversity of opinion, to be fair and open-minded when examining the evidence and weighing material facts, and didn't give due weight to the many and diverse areas of the argument.
25	<p><b>Due Weight</b></p> <p><b>4.4.2</b> Impartiality does not necessarily require the range of perspectives or opinions to be covered in equal proportions either across our output as a whole, or within a single programme, web page or item. Instead, we should seek to achieve 'due weight'. For example, minority views should not necessarily be given equal weight to the prevailing consensus.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the omission of an important perspective, in a particular context, may jeopardise perceptions of the BBC's impartiality. Decisions over whether to include or omit perspectives should be reasonable and carefully reached, with consistently applied editorial judgement across an appropriate range of output.</p>	<p>You didn't achieve 'due weight'.</p> <p>The omission of MVFP <i>has</i> jeopardised perceptions of the BBC's impartiality.</p>
26	<p><b>Controversial Subjects</b></p> <p><b>4.4.5</b> We must apply due impartiality to all our subject matter. However, there are particular requirements for 'controversial subjects', whenever they occur in any output, including drama, entertainment and sport.</p> <p>A 'controversial subject' may be a matter of public policy or political or industrial controversy. It may also be a controversy within religion, science, finance, culture, ethics and other matters entirely.</p>	DA is clearly a 'controversial subject', so your omission of MVFP is all the more regrettable.

26	<p><b>4.4.6</b> In determining whether subjects are controversial, we should take account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the level of public and political contention and debate</li> <li>• how topical the subjects are</li> <li>• sensitivity in terms of relevant audiences' beliefs and culture</li> <li>• whether the subjects are matters of intense debate or importance in a particular nation, region or discrete area likely to comprise at least a significant part of the audience</li> <li>• a reasonable view on whether the subjects are serious</li> <li>• the distinction between matters grounded in fact and those which are a matter of opinion.</li> </ul> <p>Advice on whether subjects are 'controversial' is available from Editorial Policy.</p>	<p>There is little debate about MVFP precisely because the mainstream media – including the BBC – refuses to give it proportionate coverage.</p> <p>DA is clearly a serious subject.</p>
26	<p><b>4.4.7</b> When dealing with 'controversial subjects', we must ensure a wide range of significant views and perspectives are given due weight and prominence, particularly when the controversy is active. Opinion should be clearly distinguished from fact.</p>	<p>You failed to ensure this.</p>
26, 27	<p><b>4.4.8</b> Due impartiality normally allows for programmes and other output to explore or report on a specific aspect of an issue or provide an opportunity for a single view to be expressed. When dealing with 'controversial subjects' this should be clearly signposted, should acknowledge that a range of views exists and the weight of those views, and should not misrepresent them.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the appropriate timeframe for reflecting other perspectives and whether or not they need to be included in connected and signposted output.</p> <p>If such output contains serious allegations, a right of reply may be required, either as part of the same output, or in a connected and clearly signposted alternative.</p>	<p>The omission of MVFP should have been 'clearly signposted' but wasn't.</p>
27	<p><b>4.4.9</b> In addition, we must take particular care and achieve due impartiality when a 'controversial subject' may be considered to be a major matter. 'Major matters' are usually matters of public policy or political or industrial controversy that are of national or international importance, or of a similar significance within a smaller coverage area. When dealing with 'major matters', or when the issues involved are highly controversial and/or a decisive moment in the controversy is expected, it will normally be necessary to ensure that</p>	<p>Given how big a problem DA is in the UK, it's clearly a 'major matter'. All the more reason for the BBC to give exposure to an appropriately wide range of significant views.</p>

	<p>an appropriately wide range of significant views are reflected in a clearly linked 'series of programmes', a single programme or sometimes even a single item.</p>	
28	<p><b>Controversial Subjects and Linking</b></p> <p><b>4.4.14</b> We should not automatically assume that contributors from other organisations (such as academics, journalists, researchers and representatives of charities) are unbiased and we may need to make it clear to the audience when contributors are associated with a particular viewpoint, if it is not apparent from their contribution or from the context in which their contribution is made.</p>	<p>Women's Aid – along with numerous other 'abused women' charities – has long been known for downplaying MVFP, or ignoring it altogether. You didn't make it clear to the audience that Woman's Aid is 'associated with a particular viewpoint'. At the very least you should have included in the programme one or more interviewees with alternative viewpoints.</p>
28, 29	<p><b>Contentious Views and Possible Offence</b></p> <p><b>4.4.18</b> Contributors expressing contentious views, either through an interview or other means, must be rigorously tested while being given a fair chance to set out their full response to questions. Minority views should be given appropriate space in our output; <b>it is not for the BBC to suppress discussion.</b></p> <p>Consequently, we will sometimes need to report on, or interview, people whose views may cause serious offence to many in our audiences. On such occasions, referral should be made to a senior editorial figure who may wish to consult Editorial Policy. The potential for offence must be weighed against the public interest and any risk to the BBC's impartiality. Coverage should acknowledge the possibility of offence, and be appropriately robust, but it should also be fair and dispassionate.</p> <p>The public expression by staff and presenters of personal offence or indignation risks jeopardising the BBC's impartiality.</p>	<p>By ignoring MVFP, and not invited interviewees onto the programme who could have spoken about it, you've suppressed discussion.</p>
29	<p><b>Consensus, Campaigns and Scrutiny</b></p> <p><b>Consensus</b></p> <p><b>4.4.19</b> There are some issues which may seem to be without controversy, appearing to be backed by a broad or even unanimous consensus of opinion. Nevertheless, they may present a significant risk to the BBC's impartiality. In such cases, we should continue to</p>	<p>The idea that DA is overwhelmingly a male-on-female phenomenon may be 'without controversy' but it's also demonstrably <i>wrong</i>.</p>

	<p>report where the consensus lies and give it due weight. However, even if it may be neither necessary nor appropriate to seek out voices of opposition, our reporting should resist the temptation to use language and tone which appear to accept consensus or received wisdom as fact or self-evident.</p> <p>We must challenge our own assumptions and experiences and also those which may be commonly held by parts of our audience. BBC output should avoid reinforcing generalisations which lack relevant evidence, especially when applying them to specific circumstances. This might occur in the fields of politics, race, charity, science, technology, medicine or elsewhere. These can present some of the most difficult challenges to asserting that the BBC does not hold its own opinion. Care should be taken to treat areas of apparent consensus with proper rigour. Where necessary, consult Editorial Policy.</p>	<p>The prime reason it's without controversy is that the mainstream media – including the BBC – refuses to tell the truth about MVFP.</p> <p>You <i>haven't</i> challenged those assumptions. The programme reinforced generalisations which lack relevant evidence.</p> <p>Care <i>hasn't</i> been taken.</p>
29	<p><b>Campaigns</b></p> <p><b>4.4.20</b> Similarly, the BBC must remain independent and distanced from government initiatives, campaigners, charities and their agendas, no matter how apparently worthy the cause or how much their message appears to be accepted or uncontroversial.</p>	<p>Through not challenging organisations such as Women's Aid vigorously enough or often enough, you've inevitably become associated with their misleading narratives.</p>
31	<p><b>Impartiality in Series and Over Time</b></p> <p><b>4.4.25</b> In achieving due impartiality, a 'series of programmes' may be considered as a whole. The term 'series of programmes' applies to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content that deals with the same or related issues, within an appropriate period, and are clearly linked.</li> </ul> <p>This may include a strand with a common title; different types of linked programmes (such as a drama with a following debate); a clearly identified season of programmes or items on the same or similar subjects; or a set of interlinked web pages. Such programmes, items or web pages need to achieve due impartiality across the series, and online content should include links or signposts to the other online elements.</p>	<p>The BBC hasn't been impartial with respect to its output in general, or specific programmes such as <i>Newsnight</i>.</p>

	<p>The intention to achieve due impartiality in this way should be planned in advance. For programmes, the dates and times of other programmes in the series should be announced at the time of the first relevant programme. Where that is not practicable, advance notice of subsequent programmes in the series should be given in other ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programmes dealing with widely disparate issues from one edition to the next, but also clearly linked as a strand with a common title and a particular remit.</li> </ul> <p>In strands, due impartiality should normally be achieved within individual programmes, or across a specific number of explicitly editorially linked programmes. However, across a whole series or over time these strands will also need to demonstrate due impartiality, for example through a consistent application of editorial judgement.</p>	
31, 32	<p><b>4.4.26</b> On long-running or continuous output (such as general daily magazine programmes, the News Channel, Online, etc.) due impartiality may be achieved over time by the consistent application of editorial judgement in relevant subject areas. For instance, it is not usually required for an appearance by a politician, or other contributor with partial views, to be balanced on each occasion by those taking a contrary view, although it may sometimes be necessary to offer a right of reply.</p> <p>However, editors of long-running or continuous output should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it reflects a broad range of individuals and views, including all main strands of argument</li> <li>differing views are given due weight and treated fairly in terms of prominence, treatment and time of day</li> <li>there is an appropriate timeframe for assessing that due impartiality has been achieved.</li> </ul> <p>Particular care is required approaching elections (see below).</p>	<p>Due impartiality hasn't been achieved over time.</p> <p>Those campaigning for male victims of DA – e.g. Mankind Initiative – should be offered a right to reply.</p> <p>For many years editors have comprehensively failed to ensure these things.</p>

	When dealing with 'major matters', due impartiality cannot normally be achieved over time or by a breadth of views available across our online services.	
33	<p><b>Personal View Content</b></p> <p><b>4.4.29</b> The BBC has a tradition of allowing a wide range of individuals, groups or organisations to offer a personal view or opinion, express a belief, or advance a contentious argument in its output. This can range from the outright expression of highly partial views by a campaigner, to the opinion of a specialist or professional including an academic or scientist, to views expressed through contributions from our audiences. All of these can add to the public understanding and debate, especially when they allow our audience to hear fresh and original perspectives on familiar issues.</p> <p>Such personal view content must be clearly signposted to audiences in advance.</p>	With very rare exceptions the BBC permits only gender feminist narratives on DA, which deny or minimise the known facts about MVFP.  Personal view content wasn't signposted.
	<b>SECTION 5: HARM AND OFFENCE</b>	
34 – 36	<p><b>5.1 INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>The BBC aims to reflect the world as it is, including all aspects of the human experience and the realities of the natural world. In doing so, we balance our right to broadcast innovative and challenging content, appropriate to each of our services, with our responsibility to protect the vulnerable and avoid unjustifiable offence.</p> <p>Creative risk-taking is a vital part of the BBC's mission. However, in all our output, the greater the risk, the greater the thought, care and planning required to bring creative content to fruition. We must be sensitive to, and keep in touch with, generally accepted standards as well as our audiences' expectations of our content, particularly in relation to the protection of children. Audience expectations of our content usually vary according to the service on which it appears.</p> <p>When our content includes challenging material that risks offending some of our audience we must always be able to demonstrate a clear editorial purpose, taking account of generally accepted standards, and ensure it is clearly signposted. Such challenging material may include, but is not limited to, strong language, violence, sex, sexual violence, humiliation, distress, violation of human dignity...</p>	By ignoring MVFP you haven't reflected 'all aspects of the human experience'.  Male victims of DA are consistently offended by the stance of the BBC in general towards MVFP, and a number contacted us with respect to this particular edition of <i>Newsnight</i> .

44, 45	<p><b>PRACTICES</b></p> <p><b>5.4.27</b> Our audiences, particularly children, can be frightened or distressed by the portrayal of both real and fictional violence. We should make very careful judgements when we plan to include violence in our output; there is increasing public concern about violence in society in general and as portrayed in the media, both in factual and fictional content. Consideration should be given to the editorial justification for any depiction of violence, and violent content should normally be clearly signposted. When real life violence, or its aftermath, is shown on television or reported on radio and online we need to strike a balance between the demands of accuracy and the dangers of desensitisation or unjustified distress. There are very few circumstances in which it is justified to broadcast the moment of death.</p> <p>Our editorial judgements need to consider a number of factors which, in combination, can increase the impact of violence, both in factual or fictional content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• violence that is true to life and may also reflect personal experience, for example domestic violence, pub brawls, football hooliganism, road rage, and mugging</li> <li>• violence in places normally regarded as safe, such as the family home and hospitals</li> <li>• unusual or sadistic methods of inflicting pain, injury or death</li> <li>• incidents where women, children and the vulnerable are the victims</li> <li>• violence without showing the effect on the victim or the consequences for the perpetrator</li> <li>• sexual violence</li> <li>• verbal aggression and tone, particularly when it includes the use of the strongest language and discriminatory or sexually offensive terms</li> <li>• suicide, attempted suicide or self-harm</li> <li>• broadcast reactions of others to violence, especially those of children</li> <li>• post-production techniques such as atmospheric music, slow motion, graphic close-ups and sound effects</li> <li>• sustained menace or unrelentingly dark tone.</li> </ul>	<p>Do you not recognise a need to use editorial judgement with respect to incidents where <i>men</i> are the victims?</p>
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46, 47	<p><b>Portrayal</b></p> <p>5.4.38 We aim to reflect fully and fairly all of the United Kingdom's people and cultures in our services. Content may reflect the prejudice and disadvantage which exist in societies worldwide but we should not perpetuate it. In some instances, references to disability, age, sexual orientation, faith, race, etc. may be relevant to portrayal. <b>However, we should avoid careless or offensive stereotypical assumptions</b> and people should only be described in such terms when editorially justified.</p>	Ignoring MVFP is a careless and offensive stereotypical assumption.
	<b>SECTION 6: FAIRNESS, CONTRIBUTORS AND CONTENT</b>	
52	<p><b>6.1 INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>The BBC strives to be fair to all – fair to those our output is about, fair to contributors, and fair to our audiences. BBC content should be based on respect, openness and straight dealing. <b>We also have an obligation under the Ofcom Broadcasting Code to “avoid unjust or unfair treatment of individuals or organisations in programmes”.</b></p> <p>Much of this section concerns the process of recruiting those who participate in or are otherwise involved in our content, and it should be considered alongside Section 7: Privacy – Privacy and Consent.</p> <p>However, material inaccuracies in the way people are referred to, or featured, may risk causing unfairness. This applies not just to factual output (for example when representing the views of, and information about, others), but also to drama portraying real people or organisations. Consequently, this section of the Guidelines should also be read in conjunction with Section 3: Accuracy.</p>	<p>The <i>Newsnight</i> piece was fair to neither male victims of DA nor your audiences.</p> <p>You appear to be in breach of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code by ignoring male victims of DA.</p> <p>Through not referring to male victims of DA, you've caused unfairness. You featured only a female victim and a male perpetrator of DA.</p>
	<b>6.2 PRINCIPLES</b>	
	<p><b>6.2.1 We will be open, honest, straightforward and fair in our dealings with contributors and audiences</b> unless there is a clear public interest in doing otherwise, or we need to consider important issues such as legal matters, safety, or confidentiality.</p>	<p>By ignoring MVFP you haven't been open, honest, straightforward or fair with your audiences.</p>
	<b>SECTION 8: REPORTING CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR</b>	

83	<b>8.2 PRINCIPLES</b> <b>8.2.1</b> We must ensure that material likely to encourage or incite the commission of crime, or lead to disorder, is not included on our services. However, this is not intended to restrict the broadcasting of any content where a clear public interest can be demonstrated.	We contend that by not showing MVFP, you're encouraging and inciting female perpetrators of DA. They're not being encouraged to hold themselves responsible for their actions.
	<b>SECTION 10: POLITICS, PUBLIC POLICY AND POLLS</b>	
106	<b>10.2 PRINCIPLES</b> <b>10.2.1</b> We must treat matters of politics and public policy with due accuracy and impartiality in news and other output.	You haven't used due accuracy and impartiality.
107	<b>10.2.3</b> We must not campaign, or allow ourselves to be used to campaign.	Through giving undue exposure to organisations supporting only female victims of DA, you're seen to be campaigning.
	<b>SECTION 14: EDITORIAL INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE FROM EXTERNAL INTERESTS</b>	
141	<b>14.2 PRINCIPLES</b> <b>14.2.2</b> We must not endorse or appear to endorse any other organisation, its products, activities, services, views or opinions.	Through giving undue weight to organisations supporting only female victims of DA, you're seen to be endorsing them.

## Reference

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778\\_298904.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_298904.pdf)