

# Examine the patterns of and reasons for domestic violence in society (24 marks)

[Sociology](#), [Feminism](#)



Examine the patterns of and reasons for domestic violence in society (24 marks) Domestic violence is defined as physical, sexual or financial violence taking place within an intimate or family type relationship and forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. There are many patterns and reasons for domestic violence which each sociologist has a different view upon. Domestic violence affects certain people more than others as they are more vulnerable or stress is caused. These people include children, people living in rented accommodation, lower social classes or people with a family member who has a problem with drinking or illegal drugs. Richard Williamson sees domestic violence as a result of stress caused by these factors. Homes with overcrowding or worries about money tend to be more affected from domestic violence because it causes stress and arguments between family members and also reduces the social support a family needs. Dobash & Dobash's research in Scotland based on police and court records and interviews with women reveal many patterns of domestic violence in society. They found that nearly 1 in 4 women have been assaulted but a partner and 1 in 5 it was repeatedly; they also found that most victims are women and 99% of the incidents are committed by men. These patterns are not biased as the research was carried out by a member of each sex; however this data is not accurate as it is found from Scottish police and court records and not all domestic violence cases are reported to the police. The Feminist view of domestic violence is that families shouldn't be patriarchal where the male is dominant because it leads to wives being abused. Kate Millett and Shulamith Firestone argue that all societies have been founded on patriarchy and see the division between men and women in society as a division where men are

the exploiters of women. Although they see marriage and family as key institutions they say that they are the main source of women's oppression and that married men dominate their wives through domestic violence. However, Faith Robertson Elliot opposes this by saying not all men are aggressive and oppose domestic violence; it is also proved from Mirrlees Black that 1 in 7 men have been assaulted and 1 in 20 repeatedly. Feminists ignore the abuse and violence from women as they believe that the reason for domestic violence in families is due to the husband wanting to maintain his dominant status. The New Rights view is the total opposite of the Feminists and believes that the 'Nanny state' is too much and the government should let families get on with their own lives instead of paying them money when they don't have enough. When people don't adopt the 'Nanny state' it can lead to domestic violence as it causes stress through money problems in the family and doesn't let the wife get away from domestic violence as she'll have no financial support. However the New Right like this as the nuclear family can't be separated due to the lack of money the wife would have if they did therefore maintaining the male dominance. The Marxist view on domestic violence is very similar to the New Right as they believe that wives rely on their husbands being a unit of consumption. Marxists believe that domestic violence is acceptable as husbands need to take out their frustration on their wives when they get home from work. They feel that husbands need to do this so that they are relaxed for the next day to perform their role of the 'bread winner'. Therefore, although domestic violence is bad Marxists believe that both

sexes rely on each other for either financial support or a stress reliever so domestic violence is essential in a Marxist society.