

<b>Institution: SOAS</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 20 Law</b>
<b>Title of case study: Informing Understanding of and Measures to Combat ‘Honour Crimes’ amongst those Working in the Police, Social Services and Beyond (Lynn Welchman et al.)</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Since the 1990s, honour crimes, including femicide and forced marriage, have received increasing attention, elicited by high-profile cases in the media, condemnation by the United Nations and international as well as domestic human rights groups. Research on honour crimes, necessarily global in scope, has been crucial to better understanding these crimes and developing coordinated responses. Professor Lynn Welchman and colleagues have substantially contributed to this evolving research base, offering a definition of honour crimes and an approach to combating such crimes that has influenced the UK statutory guidance and training followed by the police, NHS and social services.</p> <p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p><i>Honour: Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women</i> of 2005 was the culmination of a project co-directed by Professor Lynn Welchman of SOAS and Sara Hossain of The International Centre for the Legal Protection of Human Rights (July 1999-June 2005). The project, ‘Exploration of the Incidence of and Strategies of Response to “Honour Crimes”,’ was supported by the Ford Foundation throughout.</p> <p>The project was interdisciplinary and international in scope, involving the participation of fellow researchers, lawyers, human rights advocates, journalists and others from over a dozen countries. Project members undertook research on varied manifestations of honour crimes in several countries and regions, including in diaspora communities in the UK. Beyond chapters in the book, other outputs include freely available electronic resources, including an extensive annotated bibliography, case summaries, a training film on forced marriage in the UK, catalogues of relevant national and international penal codes and human rights provisions and a directory of those working on the topic internationally (<a href="http://www.soas.ac.uk/honourcrimes/">http://www.soas.ac.uk/honourcrimes/</a>).</p> <p>Professor Welchman’s contributions focussed on the legal status of honour crimes in several jurisdictions, mainly in the Middle East. More specifically, she examined how the law and its application can either provide a justificatory framework and judicial leniency for those who commit honour crimes or work towards deterring the commission of honour crimes and punishing perpetrators on an equitable basis. How the law can actively combat honour crimes was also a significant component of the research.</p> <p>Also significant was the development of a definition of ‘honour crimes’ that was straightforward but flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of honour crimes and the complexity of circumstance and belief that surround their commission. The lack of such a definition highlighted the opportunities available to the project to make significant and fundamental contributions to the research base.</p> <p>At a two-day roundtable in November 1999 participants, including scholars, lawyers, journalists and human rights advocates working in the UK, South Asia and the Middle East identified the following elements discussed in Professor Welchman and Sara Hossain’s important Introduction to the book:</p> <p><i>The term ‘crimes of honour’ (...) encompass[es] a variety of manifestations of violence against women, including ‘honour killings’, assault, confinement or imprisonment, and interference with choice in marriage, where the publicly articulated ‘justification’ is attributed to a social order claimed to require the preservation of a concept of ‘honour’</i></p>

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*vested in male (family and/or conjugal) control over women and specifically women's sexual conduct: actual, suspected or potential.*

Crucially, this definition situates honour crimes along a wider spectrum of violence against women, in line with the position adopted by the UN the same year, thereby fixing honour crimes within the scope of international human rights law and advocacy. Defining honour crimes in this way remains contested by several countries and by some advocacy groups that promulgate a view stressing the exceptionalism of honour crimes. Nevertheless, it is this definition and the research that underpins it that have influenced the responses of public-facing statutory services in the UK and beyond.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Welchman, Lynn and Sara Hossain, eds. *Honour: Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women*. London: Zed Books, 2005.

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Recent research conducted by the Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation in 2011 highlighted the increasing incidence of honour crimes in the UK. In 2010, for example, 39 police forces in the UK dealt with a total of 2,823 incidents, which represented a marked increase from the preceding year. Many more cases go unreported. In London, honour crimes are more than five times the national average.

Since the publication of *Honour: Crimes, Paradigms and Violence Against Women* in 2005 and particularly since 2008 when the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act was made statutory in law, the definition of honour crimes created by Lynn Welchman and collaborating partners in the Honour Crimes Project hosted by the Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law (CIMEL) at SOAS has gained general acceptance. It has informed multi-agency statutory guidance published in 2009, as well as good-practice guidelines published throughout the period since 2008 that shape how professionals in all public authorities including the police, the NHS, local authorities and in the education and social care sectors respond to honour crimes, including forced marriage, honour based violence and female genital mutilation. Each of the following either directly cite the work of Lynn Welchman and her colleagues, or include clear references to their distinctive definition of honour crimes:

- The September 2008 and 2010 editions of the *Honour Based Violence Strategy* produced by the Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Appendix B discusses the definitions (pp. 29ff) in line with Welchman et al.) (1, below);
- The November 2008 and January 2010 multi-agency, statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, *The Right to Choose*, cites this academic publication alone on honour crimes, using the same definition (2);
- The June 2009 multi-agency statutory guidelines, *Handling Cases of Forced Marriage* produced to complement the statutory guidance listed above, quotes exactly the definition from Welchman et al. (3);
- The June 2009 Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board, *Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage: Guidance for All Staff Working with Vulnerable Adults* (4);
- The 2010 *Forced Marriage and Learning Disabilities: Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines* (5).

The author of the *Honour Based Violence Strategy* referred to above, Yasmin Rehman, confirmed in interview the importance of the CIMEL project and its establishment of a usable definition that shifted the emphasis away from the notion of honour crimes as a minority issue to one that fell within the broader categories of violence against women. (6) Rehman also began to develop training programmes and materials for the police in 2008 in keeping with these definitions. She and

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Katharine Furniss, Violence against Women and Girls Project Officer, Islington Council, also recognised the ubiquity of the definition in current debates and training. (7) Indeed, the definition is clearly evidenced in the FCO training materials, which are some of the most commonly used online training resources treating the issues associated with honour crimes within government and public services (8).

In addition, the Metropolitan Police Service set up a National Forced Marriage Working Group in which CIMEL participated to agree definitions and to design training and guidance programmes.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has published legal guidance on honour-based violence and forced marriage that quotes the work of Welchman et al. (9). More broadly, the CPS guidance presents honour crimes as a class of crimes that represent a fundamental breach of human rights and a manifestation of violence against women that transcends particular cultural mores, stating, "Such crimes cut across all cultures, nationalities, faith groups and communities. They transcend national and international boundaries."

Internationally, Welchman's work has also received much attention, particularly in Europe and North America where courts are hearing increasing numbers of cases in which "honour" is imputed as a motivating factor in the commission of crimes. Her definitions have shaped the responses of The Dutch Ministry of Justice dealing with similar issues surrounding honour crimes in a number of diaspora communities (10). In Germany, the Max Planck Institute was commissioned by the German government to undertake a study of honour crimes and also referred to Welchman's definition (11). The Canadian Department of Justice has cited the work of Welchman in its "Preliminary Examination of so-called 'Honour Killings' in Canada" (10) and *Honour: Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women* is one of four references consulted in the Swiss Surgir Foundation's *Manual for Policy Makers, Institutions and Civil Society: Combating Honour Crimes in Europe* (12).

The work of Welchman et al. provided a framework of definitions that was utilised by the police in the first instance to be followed by consistent application of such definitions in a range of forms of guidance and training provided by different government agencies, the NHS and the CPS. These have then been utilised in daily practice by teachers, doctors, lawyers, social workers, and interest and lobbying groups as, for example, in Islington where the Council 'periodically holds training and workshop events delivered either by the forced marriage unit or some of the leading voluntary sector organisations in this field.'

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Honour Based Violence Strategy:  
[www.acpo.police.uk/documents/crime/2008/200810CRIHBV01.pdf](http://www.acpo.police.uk/documents/crime/2008/200810CRIHBV01.pdf) [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].
2. The Right to Choose:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/35532/fmu-right-to-choose.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/35532/fmu-right-to-choose.pdf) [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].
3. Handling Cases of Forced Marriage:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/35530/forced-marriage-guidelines09.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/35530/forced-marriage-guidelines09.pdf) [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].
4. Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage: Guidance for All Staff Working with Vulnerable Adults  
<https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/wwwfileroot/legacy/socialservices/adults/ForcedMarriage.pdf> [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].

5. Forced Marriage and Learning Disabilities: Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/35533/fm-disability-guidelines.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/35533/fm-disability-guidelines.pdf) [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].
6. Yasmin Rehman, author of the *Honour Based Violence Strategy*.
7. Katharine Furniss, Violence against Women and Girls Project Officer, Islington Council
8. FCO forced marriage online training programme: <https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage#guidance-for-professionals> [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].
9. CPS guidance on honour crimes and forced marriage: [http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/h\\_to\\_k/honour\\_based\\_violence\\_and\\_forced\\_marriage/](http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/h_to_k/honour_based_violence_and_forced_marriage/) [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].
10. Canadian Department of Justice, "Preliminary Examination of so-called 'Honour Killings' in Canada": <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/hk-ch/toc-tdm.html> [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].
11. Drs. Brenninkmeijer, Nicole, Miriam Geers and Conny Roggeband. "Eergerelateerd Geweld in Nederland Onderzoek naar de beleving en aanpak van eergerelateerd geweld." Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 2008.
12. Oberwittler, D. / Kasselt, J. (2011). "Ehrenmorde in Deutschland 1996-2005. Eine Untersuchung auf der Basis von Prozessakten." (Polizei + Forschung, vol. 42, ed.: Bundeskriminalamt). Köln: Wolters Kluwer Deutschland. ISBN 978-3-472-08045-9
13. Swiss Surgir Foundation's *Manual for Policy Makers, Institutions and Civil Society: Combating Honour Crimes in Europe*. <http://www.surgir.ch/userfiles/file/surgir-brochure-honor-crimes-en.pdf> [Most recently accessed 23.11.13].