

DEPP CASE A WIN FOR ALL VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND FALSE ALLEGATIONS



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“The Depp case has helped raise awareness of male victims of family violence and should encourage many more men to speak up about their experience,” says Greg Andresen, Senior Researcher with the One in Three Campaign, Australia’s national campaign to raise awareness of the existence and needs of male victims of family violence.

“The Depp case should not discourage victims of either sex from coming forward in the future. To the contrary it sends the message that there is a chance that perpetrators of either sex who falsely claim victimhood will have their lies exposed, thus discouraging such toxic behaviour in the future.”

One famous Australian study contrasted spouses' accounts of episodes of violence by wives with those of their children and the wives' mothers, and concluded that, in that study:

“...women’s allegations of DV were proven to be false. In most cases, the initial allegations of DV were modified considerably by them during the course of the study, particularly when they were faced with the accounts of their children and mothers, admitting in the end that they were neither victims of violence nor acting in self-defense.”

“This evidence and the Depp case highlight the injustice done to male victims by the domestic violence support system in Australia,” said Mr Andresen. “The experience of male victims of family violence is also ignored by many media outlets and when it is covered they often fail to acknowledge it as family violence.”

In many areas of the country the only supports available to male victims of family violence are the national 1800 RESPECT and Mensline Australia telephone counselling services. Both of these helplines are bound by the MARAM Framework which discriminates against heterosexual natal males who phone up claiming to be victims of family violence by presuming they are perpetrators.

“The Depp case demonstrates that perpetrators of either sex can claim victimhood in an attempt to hide their crimes. If screening is to be done when callers phone telephone helplines, it must be applied equally to male and female callers,” said Mr Andresen.

The One in Three Campaign is calling upon the new Labor government, in the spirit of governing for all Australians, to review this policy with urgency. They will also meet with Catherine Fitzpatrick, Australia's first National Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner, once she starts her tenure on July 1st.

Members of the One in Three Facebook Community came forward with their experiences of injustice this week.

Amanda Sillars from the Eeny Meeny Miney Mo Foundation said, “Too many people claim they are victims of DV when they are the perpetrator. They will often spread these falsehoods far and wide in the community and tell their stories confidently with emotion and detail. They can be believable to the untrained eye. We need to make these individuals and groups that support them accountable for the harm they cause and the cost associated with trying to fight these false allegations.”

BJ said, “I went to a police station on Friday and asked to speak to a domestic violence liaison regarding my current order as a male victim. They said the officer only supports females.”

Chris said, “Having been told by a lawyer that what I experienced would have been enough for a woman to raise an intervention order, but not for me as man, I hope this case can lead to objectivity around assessing and recognising abuse, and that abuse is abuse, irrespective of the perceived or assumed physical, mental or emotional strength of the victim to tolerate and endure abuse based on their gender.”

For further information or comment, please contact Greg Andresen, Senior Researcher, One in Three Campaign, 0403 813 925 or info@oneinthree.com.au.