



# WHAT IS MISOGYNY?

A theoretical exploration of a feminist concept



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## THREE WAYS MISOGYNY IS COMMONLY FRAMED:

### AN INTENSIFIER

Understands misogyny as intense, violent actions towards women which are grounded in 'hatred'.

Useful in conveying the level of threat, harm and danger experienced.

Reduces misogyny to an individual attitude. Perpetrators can be dismissed as 'extreme' or 'bad apples'.

### A CONTINUUM

Understands misogyny as a spectrum of acts ranging from the 'everyday' to the extreme.

Builds on Dr. Kelly's concept of a 'continuum of sexual violence'.

Broadens the scope of what can be considered misogynistic.

Blunts the analytical capacity of the term by describing the extreme and the 'everyday'.

### A BACKLASH

Understands misogyny as a **backlash** to feminism.

Focuses on the retributive quality of the actions - the idea of 'taking something back'.

Suggests a causal relationship between misogyny and feminism which is potentially unproductive.

### What is missing?

*Each way of thinking about misogyny – hate, continuum, backlash – offers something important but falls short of providing a coherent definition.*

### Patriarchy

*Misogyny depends on the existence of patriarchal norms.*

*The specific role of misogyny is enforcing the social norms of patriarchy.*

*Misogyny is about control rather than hate.*

*"It is the predictable manifestation of the social power relations within patriarchy" ~ Manne*

References: Benet-Weiser, S (2018) Empowered: Popular feminism and popular misogyny. London: Duke University Press/ Kelly, L. (1988) Surviving Sexual Violence. Polity Press: London/ Manne, K (2018) Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny. Penguin Books.