

[00:00:18.710] - VO

On the Engender, Scotland's Feminist Policy podcast.

[00:00:23.130]

[Jingle]

[00:00:26.890] - Amanda Aitken

Hello, and welcome to On The Engender. My name is Amanda Aitken. Today, I am joined alongside my wonderful co-host, Alys Mumford. Hello.

[00:00:35.500] - Alys Mumford

Hello.

[00:00:37.050] - Amanda Aitken

And our Policy and Parliamentary Manager, at least for this recording, Eilidh Dickson.

[00:00:42.020] - Eilidh Dickson

Hi.

[00:00:43.320] - Amanda Aitken

My notes here say to start off with good things, but how are we meant to think of good things when you're leaving us, Eilidh?

[00:00:49.870] - Eilidh Dickson

I know. I'm such a traitor. I feel really, really bad and I'm going to miss the women's sector so much. But obviously, I'm very excited to take my feminism into my new role.

[00:01:02.520] - Alys Mumford

By the time listeners you're hearing this, Eilidh will have departed Engender Towers and will be, can I say, Eilidh? Yes or...

[00:01:10.990] - Eilidh Dickson

You can say, yeah!

[00:01:10.990] - Alys Mumford

..will be working for the Scottish Human Rights Commission. Still talking about CEDAW as much as she can, I'm sure.

[00:01:18.920] - Eilidh Dickson

I mean, would you expect anything less? But CEDAW and all of the other conventions that Britain has signed up to, I'm not her favourite.

[00:01:27.310] - Alys Mumford

[Whispered] No, really, CEDAW is going to be the one she's talking about..

[00:01:29.500]

[Laughter].

[00:01:33.110] - Amanda Aitken

Great performance so far, but all you seem to be mentioning is...[Laughter]

[00:01:36.090] - Alys Mumford

And will you stop wearing that cape in the office? [Laughter]

[00:01:42.640] - Eilidh Dickson

I know, I know yes. Maybe we should get a photo of me dressed as the CEDAW lady before I go so that you could-

[00:01:49.770] - Alys Mumford

Obviously, we're going to get a photo of you dressed as the CEDAW lady, before you leave.

[00:01:54.060] - Amanda Aitken

On your leaving night, we can... It's like an obnoxious end party, but just you as the CEDAW person.

[00:01:58.690] - Eilidh Dickson

There we go. It's the feminist campaign that Scotland didn't know it needed, a woman walking around the streets of Edinburgh in a cape, either a feminist campaign or a little bit Only Fools and Horses.

[00:02:15.030] - Amanda Aitken

I'm going to kick off with some good things. I'm going to come to you Eilidh, first seen as how... you're leaving us. I don't know why. Maybe you should be last, actually, no, I'll come to you first.

[00:02:25.390] - Eilidh Dickson

Well, I'm going to do a very sweet, good thing, which is I had a really lovely weekend. My best friend, since I was three years old, came to stay with me for the weekend while my partner was away. We watched the best film of all time, which I'm devastated to have to tell you, is the sequel to the Jumanji rip-off.

[00:02:44.270] - Alys Mumford

Was it good?

[00:02:44.270] - Eilidh Dickson

It was shockingly, terrible, but in a really great way. I got to see my friend. Then that same weekend, my cousin came back from New Zealand. She moved there in February 2020. At the exact right time to move to New Zealand, but has obviously not been able to get back for two years, so I was able to see her as well. Obviously, the pandemic is still very much a fact of everyone's lives. Obviously it's a bit of a strange time in terms of things being back to normal and not quite back to normal. But it was a really nice way to spend the weekend, seeing people I hadn't been able to see for such a long time.

[00:03:24.790] - Amanda Aitken

That's so nice. Reconnections. Also, Alys' face just lit up with that film knockoff, expecting it to be really good. And the disappointment there, Alys, that was so sad. I was like, oh, build her up just to knock her down.

[00:03:38.390] - Alys Mumford

I think we will disagree. I think, I will think it as genuinely good and Eilidh will think it is ironically good but we will see. [Laughter]

[00:03:46.530] - Amanda Aitken

What's your good news, sorry, this week?

[00:03:48.320] - Alys Mumford

My good news also relates to Eilidh's partner being away, in that, when he got back, he did some baking and I reaped the rewards of a delicious Bara Brith - some lovely Welsh fruit tea loaf, which I haven't yet given the review of. But Eilidh, please pass on, that it was very delicious, very citrusy this time, which I appreciated a lot.

[00:04:09.250] - Eilidh Dickson

The bread guy will be thrilled.

[00:04:10.920] - Alys Mumford

Bread guy will be thrilled. Amanda, how about you? Mine was on trend with baked goods. I believe yours will also be on trend.

[00:04:17.710] - Amanda Aitken

Mine is on trend, sports claxon required - shock horror, it's sports related. But the Barcelona women's team sold out their national stadium, not once, but actually twice now in the last month. So the next game they're playing, they've also sold out. They were playing the other night to over 91,000 fans, which is just incredible to see. I was reading, online, also that the women's Euro finals at Wembley this year sold out in under an hour when they went on general sale. And - I've already got a ticket so I'm very fortunate. But yeah, buzzing the growth of the women's game, you know it's almost like if you invest and advertise, they will come.

[00:04:59.660]

[Laughter]

[00:05:01.350] - Alys Mumford

I was watching the Women's Six Nations at odd times - I was watching Wales, Scotland at 10:00 PM or something on catch up. It was also a record-breaking crowd. They'd done a showcase for girls in Cardiff Arms Park beforehand and it was just lush.

[00:05:22.600] - Amanda Aitken

It's so nice. Actually I saw on Twitter, where was it, not last night, maybe the night before. It was the other day anyway. I saw on Twitter that... This is kind of like good news, but also a little criticism to the Scotland National team. But all the Scottish women's players teamed up in a group chat. I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall for it and tweeted the same thing at the same time, calling out the SFA for not opening all of Hampden up for the next week's World Cup qualifier against Spain. And just being, what's the point of having this huge National Stadium that is - all the tickets are limited that you've opened so far and you're just not opening more of it? We can't grow the game if you're not opening it. I love that they all rallied together. I was like who to be a fly on the wall -

[00:06:07.520] - Alys Mumford

Sport and collective action. Two of the podcast's favourite topics.

[00:06:11.270] - Amanda Aitken

We just truly love to see it, you know. So, that was my good news for the week.

[00:06:17.370] - Alys Mumford

Excellent. Lovely, good things. But as has been alluded to good things, to bad things, because it is Eilidh's last appearance on the podcast - well, as an Engender staff member -

[00:06:32.670] - Eilidh Dickson

I'll be back.

[00:06:32.670] - Alys Mumford

You're always welcome back - to talk exclusively about CEDAW. So, but it's very fitting that your last podcast is to talk about the misogyny working group, because it is something that you have spent a lot of your Engender life, over the past couple of years, working on. So, thank you for taking the time in your busy weeks of handover to talk to us about misogyny.

[00:06:51.970] - Eilidh Dickson

No, I'm thrilled to. I didn't sound very thrilled, but I am.

[00:06:57.670] - Amanda Aitken

First, Eilidh, can you tell us what the Misogyny Working Group was and also just how it came about?

[00:07:03.040] - Eilidh Dickson

Absolutely. The story of the Misogyny Working Group is actually a long one. It sort of begins when Lord Bracadale, who we have mentioned on the podcast before in relation to hate crime, was asked to do a review of how the Scottish hate crime framework works. He was expressly asked by the Scottish Government, to look at whether gender, as it was set out then, should be added as a category within

the hate crime framework.

[00:07:29.670] - Eilidh Dickson

What that meant was that the Scottish Framework for Hate Crime lists a series of protected groups or protected characteristics, that if a crime is found to involve malice and ill will towards the group as a whole or towards a person because of their real or perceived membership to that group, the crime has to be prosecuted in full and has to be proven in full, and then the judge can determine that it was a hate crime and as a result, can vary the sentence, so can make the sentence more severe, but only up to the maximum penalty that would already apply to the crime. It doesn't change the sentencing significantly in the case of serious offences, but it does add a sort of a severity amount to the maximum limit that's available already.

[00:08:20.350] - Eilidh Dickson

When Lord Bracadale was looking at this, the women's organisations were also looking at the question of hate crime and the endemic, very socially normalised and accepted pervasive misogyny that women experience when both in public spaces and in private spaces, and the way in which violence against women and malice and ill will towards women, as a group, interact with one another.

[00:08:42.510] - Eilidh Dickson

Throughout those conversations and the research and the work that we started doing looking at hate crime at Engender, what we found is that hate crime is a really bad way of understanding violence against women and malice and ill will towards women, for want of a better word, and that misogyny does not neatly fit into that framework.

[00:09:02.280] - Eilidh Dickson

What we saw is that, in states that had implemented hate crime aggravation on the basis of sex or gender, that it was rarely used because the types of violence against women that were captured or the types of harassment of women that were captured by that framework were so normalised and so understood as typical parts of being a woman out in public spaces, that the aggravation was actually rarely applied in practice.

[00:09:29.340] - Eilidh Dickson

It also failed to kind of wrestle with this question of power because of its symmetry. So actually, what does hate crime against men look like? What does hate crime against women look like? Are they the same? Are they different, and how does power change the way in which an experience of harassment is felt by the group, or how do the members of the group change their behaviours in response to actual and predicted levels of harassment?

[00:09:57.480] - Eilidh Dickson

So, we were doing this work. We published a report, which we've talked about in the podcast before looking at the case for adding sex as an aggravation, but also looking at the possibility of something new and something different that sat more neatly within the hate crime framework.

[00:10:12.390] - Eilidh Dickson

So Scotland's Hate crime framework, which is outlined within Equally Safe, the National Strategy for Eliminating Violence Against Women, understands that all violence against women is a cause and a consequence of women's inequality and CEDAW [inaudible 00:10:24] - this comes from international law, this comes from feminist activism, this comes from feminist theory. This idea that gender as a power and as a hierarchy is part and parcel of violence against women. You can't easily unpick the two. All violence is a form of discrimination and all discrimination leads to the circumstances in which violence can be perpetrated.

[00:10:47.110] - Eilidh Dickson

And so, what we proposed was that there was a need to look at this in more detail outwith the conversations of hate crime, and that limiting our focus on misogyny to hate crime wasn't actually going to do the radical work of protecting women and having protections that sit within a complicated but quite rapidly evolving legal landscape around violence against women.

[00:11:14.000] - Eilidh Dickson

We were really pleased when the Scottish Government announced, in response to this report and in response to the debate that was happening around hate crime, that it would set up this Misogyny Working Group and that it would invite Baroness Helena Kennedy to chair that group.

[00:11:28.390] - Alys Mumford

So this group, on which you sat and other experts, as you mentioned, sort of grappled with some of these issues. I know it's been really interesting stuff, looking at, coming from an equality perspective, coming from a legal perspective and working these things all through. That was really - you know, when we were talking about hate crime and saying that we need to be looking beyond that. Actually, that's one of the things Engender was really calling for, that space, to have the expertise in the room and really think about this stuff. So, on International Women's Day, we saw that the final report of this group, led by Baroness Kennedy, was released. We'll obviously link to that in the show notes, but can you briefly tell us what was the conclusion, what was the recommendation and should we be excited about it?

[00:12:16.270] - Eilidh Dickson

As you say, the process of being involved in this group has been really interesting because it brought together experts in social work, legal experts, practitioners, academics, international law experts, human rights experts, women's sector organisations. We heard a lot of evidence from academics and experts around the world.

[00:12:40.320] - Eilidh Dickson

We didn't just look at what we knew within our own boundaries of practice. We also heard from some of the experts doing really radical thinking in this space. The first thing we did was come up with a definition of misogyny, which was deliberately non-legal and deliberately rooted in power and in social structures that allow not only harassment, but this ownership or entitlement to women's attention, to women's skills and expertise and, crucially, to women's bodies that sits at the heart of misogynistic behaviour.

[00:13:13.960] - Eilidh Dickson

Once we have that non-legal definition, from there, we started to think about what law can do. We were very clear that law can't make it illegal to be a misogynist. We can get into the business of regulating people's attitudes. There still needs to be a huge amount of work done to change that culture and disrupt it and there is lots of work happening within the space of primary prevention and attitude change that we know women's sector organisations and others are looking at. And the report makes it really clear that that is the big picture stuff. We still need to do that. That law is a tool that can help us drive culture change, but it won't deliver culture change on its own. The recommendations of the report, very much, sit within the existing frameworks that exist. I've already mentioned Equally Safe.

[00:14:01.770] - Eilidh Dickson

I've already talked about the work that women sector organisations do, and it does talk about the sustainability of funding and training as well for police and other practitioners who operate around violence against women. The report does recommend quite a radical approach to law reform in the creation of a misogyny and criminal justice bill. So what the report does or what the recommendation does, is name the problem. It says that this is a gendered problem. It's misogyny. It's not hatred of women on the basis of sex, it's not hatred of men on the basis of sex, it's misogyny, and it's entitlement that goes beyond hatred.

[00:14:39.860] - Eilidh Dickson

What we were really conscious of is that, if you try and define hatred against women, most men who hate women will argue that they don't hate all women. There are women in their lives that they love and respect, but they hate a particular type of women who behaves in a way that they don't agree with. We wanted to really get into the ways in which we can look at that prejudice in a way that actually unpicks what the hatred is or what the entitlement is, or what the malice that's involved is.

The report recommends that a misogyny aggravation is created so that's not a symmetrical aggravation. It is firmly rooted within that understanding of power, but it also understands that that is of quite limited value. It will still require police to understand and unpick what misogyny looks like in public spaces and that's where the training comes in.

[00:15:37.980] - Eilidh Dickson

It recommends that a new offence of stirring up hatred of women, as a group, is created. That would be trying to capture things like incel culture or online harassment and intimidation, not of individual women, but that stems into the hatred or discussion of women as a whole. Then the report further recommends that a new crime of misogynistic harassment is created, and that's about public harassment, public sexual harassment, but also harassment that is gendered but not of an expressly sexual nature.

[00:16:16.170] - Eilidh Dickson

Finally, the report recommends that a new offence of threatening or invoking rape to intimidate a woman - rape or disfigurement to intimidate a woman, be created. We all know those examples online, which are the overwhelming scale of rape threats made online. Quite often those are articulated in a way that is not a direct threat that the law could already perhaps deal with, even if it's not being applied properly. But it's often talked about in graphic terms, and I'm sorry, I will use the language that the report does, but this idea of, who would rape you or you should be raped, what we were trying to do is really unpick the way in which language is developing around violence against women online.

[00:17:04.130] - Alys Mumford

I think that's really interesting, as well, because sometimes when you get detractors online, just being like, what's the point of this? Why do we really need this new legislation? I think those sort of examples of where actually there are gaps in the law and there are gaps in understanding if something is misogyny. And we also talk about that in terms of stalking and other things where perpetrators have moved to the online space because it is available and actually saying, you do not need to have a tweet at you saying, "I am going to rape you," to feel like a tweet is threatening rape. And so, I think that's a really, really important point.

[00:17:43.780] - Eilidh Dickson

And we were really clear about wanting to get into that space of the way in which women change their behaviours in order to protect themselves, either physically or emotionally or both. The way women use public space differently to men and I would include the Internet, in that many women don't want to be as active or as visible online because they don't want to encounter that abuse. It has a communicative effect. It's not only harming the direct victim and obviously it is harming the direct victim, we know women leaving online spaces entirely. But it does signal to other women who see it, the endemic power and abuse and hatred that undermines their equal participation in online spaces and other public spaces.

[00:18:32.420] - Amanda Aitken

That's so interesting. As you picked up on as well, the Internet as a public space is obviously something that Engender talks about quite a lot. And so that's really nice to see that involved in the recommendations for creating these new laws. But with all these recommendations that you've just mentioned, what happens now that the report's out, what happens with these recommendations, and when will anything happen?

[00:19:01.490] - Eilidh Dickson

The report was launched on International Women's Day, as Alys said at the start, and the First Minister responded pretty quickly in the afternoon, she gave a speech to Parliament as part of the International Women's Day debate, where she talked about pardoning the witches and the really excellent campaign we saw around the pardon for witches. Then she's talked about the way in which that culture that allowed the persecution and the execution of women for witchcraft still being very deeply rooted in our society, and that the Misogyny Working Group's report and recommendations offered an opportunity to change things for the better in the 21st century.

[00:19:43.650] - Eilidh Dickson

So that's not a formal response to the report, but I think a really welcome understanding of the way in which this report could have an impact, and I think signals, at least, if not an acceptance of the individual recommendations that the Scottish Government is considering them for practicality, but considering them thoughtfully and hopefully with that gendered understanding of why these are urgently needed. I don't think we have a date yet for when the Scottish Government will formally respond. But if they do accept the recommendations in full or in part, what we would expect is that the normal parliamentary process around a bill is followed. So we'll be looking at consultation, about what that bill should include, whether it needs to tweak some of the recommendations, whether it needs to include more things. Obviously, Engender, will be thinking now about that next stage of parliamentary engagement. But for the moment, we're just really excited that the report has had such an impactful reception.

[00:20:40.380] - Alys Mumford

Amazing. Thank you, Eilidh, for the overview of the report. As I say, we'll link to that in the show notes. Some recommendations to finish off this podcast with. Eilidh, we've had a beautifully diverse range of recommendations from you over the years. A lot of books, a lot of pasta, a lot of chick-lit and defences of chick-lit, which we've been here for. No pressure. What is your final, On The Engender recommendation for us?

[00:21:09.840] - Eilidh Dickson

Well, now I don't feel mine has the gravitas that it really ought to. I am really enjoying The Great Interior Design Challenge on the BBC and watching on iPlayer. It's just so charming and it's just such a nice creative space and all the people on it are really nice. Alan Carr is such a great presenter. I've never really been an Alan Carr fan, but he's really such a lovely presenter and he has such a nice conversation from all the other participants. I'm not normally one for these competition shows, that's normally Alys' bag, you are normally a big fan of the *Sewing Bee* and *Bake Off*, but I think, this one is just really sweet and different. But it doesn't have the gravitas. I'm now thinking if I were to recommend one thing.

[00:21:58.230] - Amanda Aitken

Do you watch it because it makes you feel better about you justifying that chair you bought recently?

[00:22:03.190] - Eilidh Dickson

Which chair?

[00:22:04.440] - Amanda Aitken

Which chair!

[00:22:05.160] - Alys Mumford

What a revealing question. [crosstalk 00:22:06]

[00:22:10.330] - Eilidh Dickson

I'm on a furniture buying ban. Although having said that, I did just buy a new set of shelves and bread guy did say they were his favourite thing in the house so maybe my furniture buying ban is... This is the accessible relatable content that people are listening to the podcast for, isn't it?

[00:22:29.050] - Alys Mumford

Amanda, can you please redeem us? What's your recommendation?

[00:22:33.910] - Amanda Aitken

You know what, I was really struggling. And then this, is it a recommendation or is it just something on my to-do list that I recommend everyone else to?

[00:22:42.350] - Eilidh Dickson

We've all been there.

[00:22:44.770] - Amanda Aitken

But I'm yet to go because I've just been so busy and pick wild garlic this season. I'm almost putting this here as a reminder and also a recommendation for everyone to go have at it at your local park, if you can find some, because it's just so great. You can blitz it up and freeze it in some butter. There you go. You've got beautiful sauces for the rest of the year.

[00:23:08.850] - Alys Mumford

Brilliant. If you get it wrong and you accidentally pick some wild leek, you can eat that too. I mean, there probably are things you can pick by the side of cycle paths that you shouldn't just eat.

[00:23:18.290] - Amanda Aitken

That's true.

[00:23:18.770] - Alys Mumford

But wild garlic and three-cornered leek, is that what it's called?

[00:23:24.310] - Amanda Aitken

Yeah. It is the season. Make sure you know what you're picking. But that is my recommendation because I've not done it yet.

[00:23:32.440] - Alys Mumford

Amazing. Well, my recommendation is also something I haven't yet done in that, I've got very into Hurdle, which is like Wordle, but for the first intros of songs. Excellent. There's also Worldle, which is very difficult to say, but it's just a little outline of a country. [crosstalk 00:23:48]

[00:23:48.220] - Amanda Aitken

Are you just training for the ultimate pop quiz at this point?

[00:23:50.470]

[Laughter]

[00:23:52.870] - Alys Mumford

I mean, why can't I keep training, lads? But this morning's Hurdle, and it won't be a spoiler because this will go out in a few weeks, was Fugees, Ready or Not. Excellent. Therefore my friend Tom, who has a podcast recommendation for literally any topic and they're always very good, hi, Tom, has recommended 60 songs that explain the 90s podcast that has a special episode on Ms. Lauryn Hill so we'll pop a note to that in the show notes. You have a listen. I'll have a listen. Sorry if it's bad, blame Tom.

[00:24:30.350] - Amanda Aitken

Great. So many good recommendations. Eilidh, we're so sad to be leaving you but thank you for joining us. As Alys had said at the beginning, we hope that you will return in another capacity to join us for some more recommendations as well as some more interesting insights into your new job and world.

[00:24:49.330] - Eilidh Dickson

Cape and all.

[00:24:50.310] - Amanda Aitken

Cape and all. Thanks for listening. Until next time, stay safe.

[00:25:00.470]

[Jingle]

[00:25:00.470] - Amanda Aitken

On The Engender is hosted by Alys Mumford and produced by myself, Amanda Aitken. The music



featured throughout was written and performed by Bossy Love. To find out more about the work of Engender, head to [engenderscot.org](http://engenderscot.org) or follow us on Twitter @EngenderScot and be sure to click subscribe to this podcast so you don't miss the next episode.