

Cognitive Constructions of Masculinity: Unheard Voices, Sociocultural Contexts, and Psycho-Psycho-clinical Implications within the Framework of Italian and European Law

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BRAIN. Broad Research in Artificial Intelligence
and Neuroscience (2025, Vol 16, Issue 3)



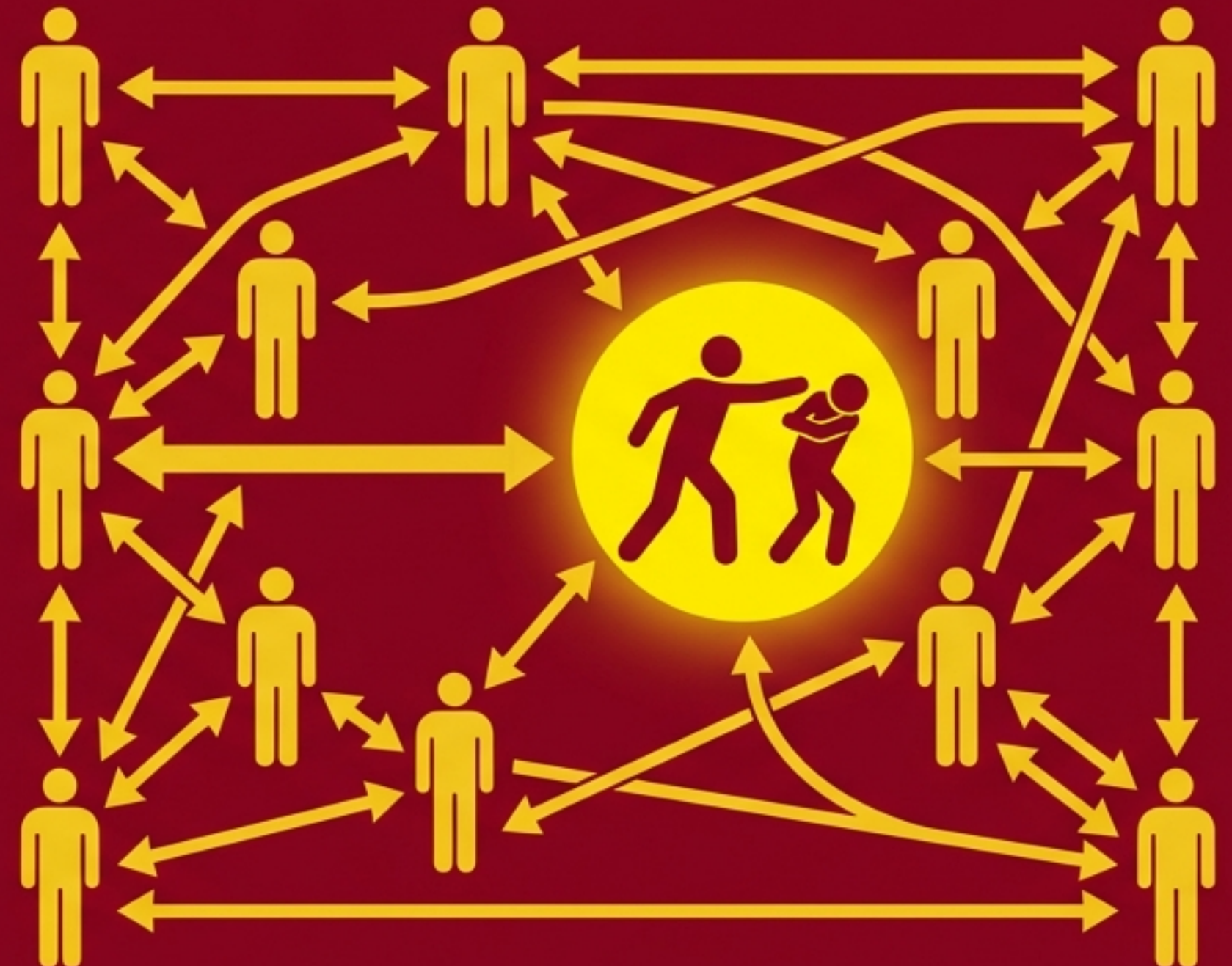
The Unidirectional Narrative

Decades of vital public debate have successfully illuminated violence against women, but solidified a skewed cultural assumption.



The Hidden Multi-directional Reality

To achieve a truly holistic understanding of psychosocial dynamics, we must pierce the veil of silence covering male victimization.



The Architecture of Silence

Rooted in patriarchal ideals and social role theory, “Hegemonic Masculinity” demands emotional repression. This deeply embedded cultural construct limits a man’s ability to perceive himself as a victim, creating a paradox where reporting violence means sacrificing socially constructed identity.



Breaking the Silence: The Macrì et al. Survey (1,058 Italian Men)



Projected to the Italian male population (18–70), this represents millions of unseen victims.

The Psychological Toll & The 'Mask' of Trauma

THE SOCIAL MASK
(Visible & Tolerated)

Uncharacteristic
Anger & Aggression

Workaholism

Substance
Abuse

Self-Imposed
Isolation

THE CLINICAL REALITY
(Hidden & Internalized)

Severe Post-Traumatic Stress
Disorder (PTSD)

Internalized Depressive Disorders

Serotonin Dysregulation &
Somatic Pain

Relational Trauma &
Sexual Dysfunction

The Secondary Victimization Loop



The Legal Blindspot: Intent vs. Application

	The Law on Paper (Theoretical Intent)	The Judicial Reality (Practical Application)
Protection Orders (Law 154/2001)	 Protects a broad, undifferentiated range of family members.	 Practically applied almost exclusively to canonically "weak" figures (women/minors).
Domestic Abuse Recognition (Law 119/2013)	 Recognizes stalking and psychological violence.	 Male victims struggle to establish "serious indications of guilt" due to societal biases minimizing female aggression.
Istanbul Convention (2011)	 Aims to protect all victims of domestic violence.	 Primarily focuses policies on women, leaving men and LGBTQ+ individuals marginalized.

The Fatherhood Battleground

Law 54/2006: Shared Custody.
(The legal right to a continuous relationship with both parents).

The 'Maternal Preference' Bias.
(Judicial practice routinely favors mothers as primary caregivers, allowing child custody to become a weapon of psychological violence and alienation).



ECHR Condemnations of Italy

(The European Court of Human Rights has repeatedly condemned Italy—in 2016, 2018, 2021, and 2023—for failing to enforce fathers' visitation rights under Article 8).

Redefining Gender-Based Violence

The Unidirectional Definition.

Violence
Against
Women

Any form of psychological, physical, sexual, or institutional violence exercised against ANY ANY person or group on the basis of their sex or gender identity.

True gender equity requires acknowledging misandry and the unseen violence experienced by men.

1. RECOGNIZE & VALIDATE.

Elevate violence against men to an official public health priority.

2. RAISE AWARENESS.

Deconstruct gender biases in media campaigns to promote mutual recognition.

A Multidimensional Action Plan

3. SUPPORT & PROTECT.

Fund specific, accessible psychological and legal assistance pathways for male victims.

4. DEEPEN KNOWLEDGE.

Fund large-scale, longitudinal empirical research to monitor dynamics and intervention efficacy.