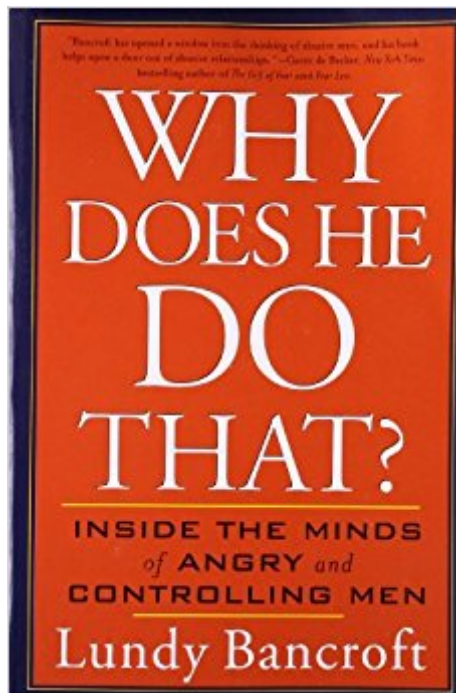




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# Why Does He Do That?: Inside The Minds Of Angry And Controlling Men



## Synopsis

In this groundbreaking bestseller, Lundy Bancroft—a counselor who specializes in working with abusive men—uses his knowledge about how abusers think to help women recognize when they are being controlled or devalued in a relationship, and to find ways to get free of abuse. He says he loves you. So...why does he do that? You've asked yourself this question again and again. Now you have the chance to see inside the minds of angry and controlling men and change your life. In *Why Does He Do That?* you will learn about:

- The early warning signs of abuse
- The nature of abusive thinking
- Myths about abusers
- Ten abusive personality types
- The role of drugs and alcohol
- What you can fix, and what you can't
- And how to get out of an abusive relationship safely

This is without a doubt the most informative and useful book yet written on the subject of abusive men. Women who are armed with the insights found in these pages will be on the road to recovering control of their lives.

—Jay G. Silverman, Ph.D., Director, Violence Prevention Programs, Harvard School of Public Health

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This fascinating investigation into what makes abusive men tick is alarming, but its candid handling of a difficult subject makes it a valuable resource for professionals and victims alike. Bancroft, the former codirector of Emerge, the nation's first program for abusive men, has specialized in domestic violence for 15 years, and his understanding of his subject and audience is apparent on every page. "One of the prevalent features of life with an angry or controlling partner is that he frequently tells

you what you should think and tries to get you to doubt or devalue your own perceptions and beliefs," he writes. "I would not like to see your experience with this book re-create that unhealthy dynamic. So the top point to bear in mind as you read [this book] is to listen carefully to what I am saying, but always to think for yourself." He maintains this level of sensitivity and even empathy throughout discussions on the nature of abusive thinking, how abusive men manipulate their families and the legal system and whether or not they can ever be cured. Jargon-free analysis is frequently broken up by interesting first-person accounts and boxes that distill in-depth information into simple checklists. Bancroft's book promises to be a beacon of calm and sanity for many storm-tossed families. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Bancroft, a former codirector of Emerge, the first U.S. program for abusive men, and a 15-year veteran of work with abusive men, reminds readers that each year in this country, two to four million women are assaulted by their partners and that at least one out of three American women will be a victim of violence by a husband or boyfriend at some point in her life. His valuable resource covers early warning signs, ten abusive personality types, the abusive mentality, problems with getting help from the legal system, and the long, complex process of change. After dispelling 17 myths about abusive personalities, he sheds light on the origin of the abuser's values and beliefs, which he finds to be a better explanation of abusive behavior than reference to psychological problems. Bancroft extends his approach to problematic gay and lesbian relationships as well, making the book that much more useful and empowering. This is essential reading for those in the helping professions and highly recommended for all libraries, especially those in communities with emergency shelter programs. Dale Farris, Groves, TX Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book was TRULY life-changing for me and I highly recommend it to anyone who is in an abusive or controlling relationship OR for anyone who is unhappy and doesn't realize that abusive and controlling patterns may be going on in their relationship. I dated my husband since we were 16 and in high school. 35 years later, I had to come to terms with how miserable I was. I stumbled upon this book and the entire reality of my life was shaken to the core. There were several chapters that brought me to tears. I felt as if I was in an earthquake and the ground was falling out from under me. But once the dust settled, I could not ignore the reality that was staring me in the face. By the time I got through the book I realized a few things: he controlled everything about my life, had

substance/alcohol abuse issues, and was verbally abusive and physically threatening. Despite all of that, I had never defined him as abusive. His control issues began in high school and I interpreted his controlling behavior as "wow, he really loves me." In our 20's, he began using drugs and I gave him a pass on his behavior, blaming the drugs instead of him. Once he stopped drugging, alcohol abuse started and continued until I walked away from the marriage at 50. I told myself time and time again "boys will be boys," "he doesn't really mean the stuff he is saying," "he's just an ugly drunk." In short, I wasted 35 years of my life with this man, who distorted reality and everything I knew to be true and tried his best to make me feel small and unworthy. With the help of this book, I found the courage to tell him that I would no longer "work on things" (because he never really worked on anything, anyway). He moved out of the house last week (I bought him out) and I have to say ... it is sad, but I've never felt more at peace with the decision and I am ALREADY much, much happier. I come home now and I don't have to worry about what mood he's in or if he's going to get mad if I log in and work. NO ONE should have to live with someone who treats you like a child, or curses you out "just because that's the way he's feeling," or will not respect you or your career, or refuses to stop drinking or drugging, or who physically harms or threatens you. ALL of these actions are WRONG and if you are experiencing any of them, PLEASE READ THIS BOOK.

This is a book about abusive relationships. You will notice that 'abuse' is nowhere in the title. I suspect this is because everyone has their own definition of what constitutes abuse, and it almost never covers what they themselves are doing - or being subjected to - are seeing and are concerned about. So, with a title like "angry and controlling men," they are more likely to pick up the book, thinking, "Hey, this might apply to the confusing situation I am facing." Can a man abuse a woman without physically harming her? Yes. He can scream at her. He can throw things around the house. He can vandalize her property. He can routinely blame her for everything that goes wrong in his life, or he can constantly critique her and tear her down, or he can call her names that when I tried to put them in this review, got it banned from . This does not mean that just any unpleasant behavior earns the title abuse. Bancroft uses the word "abuse," but he does not use it irresponsibly. For example, he says that if someone is angry all the time, "I would not like it," but it is not necessarily abuse. Abuse is not a binary kind of behavior that is only invoked when the fists fly, but a deeply ingrained, unrepentant attitude of ownership, entitlement, contempt and resentment that a man displays, not toward most people in his life, but toward "his" woman (including past women). Does it always escalate into physical abuse? Not always. It can still be extremely destructive, even if it never does. Does this sound hard to read? It is. Despite being written in a very readable style, this

book is in some ways torture to read. The only thing worse would be to live it. I recommend that everyone who can stand to, should read this book, because it clears up so much of the confusion that prevails in abusive situations ... confusion in the mind of the victims, the observers, and even (especially?) the professionals. Even if you only read the first three or four chapters, you will be far ahead. The very first chapter, titled "The Mystery," begins with the confusion felt by victims (who might not see themselves as victims) and their friends, as they try to understand the situation and the abuser. "He says I'm too sensitive. Maybe I am." "Have I changed or has he changed?" "Why does he DO that?" This confusion is created by the abuser himself, in his highly successful attempts to justify himself to himself, to his victim, and to the people around him. Bancroft did not start out with this assumption, by the way, but came to it after years of working with abusers in mandatory counseling groups. When he started out, he believed what the abusers told him about how their behavior was caused by their wives' failings, their traumatic childhoods, their unemployment, or the hurts done them by past girlfriends; that they didn't know what they were doing; that they "lost control." Only after several years did the author start to cotton on to the lies. Also confusing is the fact that many abusers can actually be kind (yes, kind) in between abusive incidents. Add to this the fact that the victim may indeed have some mental problems of her own (alcoholism, depression, etc.), either predating the abuse or brought on by it. If she has lived with abuse long enough, she may be barely functional. The abuser, meanwhile, is functional in his life at large (except when it comes to treating his wife well), and appears to be a sane, trustworthy person. To top it all off, he has told her many times that his behavior is her fault. (In fact, he may accuse her of abusing him ... referring to her attempts to defend herself.) Small wonder, then, that the abused woman, her friends, and society at large cannot figure out what her problem is. If they start from the assumption that the abuser is a decent guy who means well, they will never figure out the situation. There are decent guys who mean well. This book is not about them. This book is admirably free of psychobabble. For example, in one chapter Bancroft examines in some detail a frustrating conversation between a whiny, controlling man and his wife, which ends with him insisting on walking home in the cold, even though she would be willing to drive him. The author then analyzes why the man chose to walk home and resent it. Of course, his main motive is to maintain the role of victim, to keep himself in the right and his wife in the wrong, so that he can tell himself (and tell everyone else later) how she "left him" to walk home in the cold. Bancroft then adds, "Also, deep down inside [the man] there is a human being who knows that what he is doing is wrong." In another place, he says, "Most people, when you confront them about something they are doing wrong, get defensive and deny it at first. But later, when they have had some time to cool down, they will come back and admit you were

right. Abusers do not do this. They use the passage of time to find additional arguments about why they are right."One last note. There is a fascinating, counterintuitive warning (late in the book), that women in abusive situations should not seek couples' counseling. "Couples' counseling is designed for problems that are mutual." Abuse is not mutual. It is unilateral. It is not the result of a communication problem. Furthermore, couples' counseling can be dangerous (!) for the wife. The reassuring presence of the counselor might get the wife to open up and say things to, or about, her husband that she would never otherwise dream of uttering. Then, when they get home (or even, in one chilling case, in the car on the way home), she can face violent retaliation. This book will haunt you, but definitely read it. It might help you someday to help someone else, even if it is only by being the only person who believes her.

This book will stop making you feel sorry for your abuser. It will help you hope he one day realizes he is accountable.

This book is a powerful tool for anyone who has to deal with an abusive, controlling man. It is undoubtedly helpful to anyone in an intimate relationship with such a man, but it is also relevant to women who find themselves having to deal with these jerks outside the home; at work, in social settings, or other non-intimate relationships. I always steered clear of such men in personal relationships, but sometimes you have no choice about having to be within the sphere of influence of abusive, controlling creeps like those described in this book, and it helps to know exactly what motivates them. While I recognized the sense of entitlement that these men have, the author describe other aspects of this pathology that helped me to understand what I was facing from several men; competitors bent upon destroying my professional reputation and business by claiming their rights to exploit my work. I would like to see a book about how to deal with such people in a professional setting, especially when their target has no supporting network who will recognize how abusive and controlling these men are.

This book is tough. The author allows abusers no excuses. Some might find it too tough-minded. I didn't. Since my first marriage long ago, I've never believed the sayings that it takes two to make an argument or a divorce. It takes one jerk. This author would agree. I read this book in hopes of shutting up the verbal abuse I've suffered in later years, abuse I've replayed in my mind and argued with. I think my mission is accomplished. I understand the view point the abuser was coming from now. I'm glad I'm free.

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