

Newsletter

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From the Director

End of an era

Recently I received an email from Betty Taylor, a friend and colleague for more than 15 years, saying that she was moving on from the position of Director, Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc. to take time out and "smell the roses". I was shocked but, somehow, not surprised. I was shocked because Betty has, for so long, been an integral part of the movement to end domestic and family violence, as recognised in her having been appointed twice as chairperson of the Queensland Domestic Violence Council. I was not totally surprised by the news, however, because Betty has worked exceptionally hard and achieved many goals.

Under Betty's leadership, the Domestic Violence Prevention Service Gold Coast Inc. (formerly the Domestic Violence Service Gold Coast) has developed a range of strategic alliances locally, nationally and internationally, particularly through her tour of the USA on receipt of a Churchill Fellowship to study integrated justice responses to domestic violence. Perhaps most significant of these strategic alliances is the development of inter-agency partnerships to establish the Gold Coast Integrated Response to Domestic Violence, which has been in operation for about 9 years. More recently, Betty has forged links with several Universities to collaborate on evaluation and research and established a 'sister-service' relationship with the San Diego Family Justice Centre. Her most recent project has been lobbying the Queensland Government to establish a domestic violence fatality review process to assist in the prevention of domestic homicides.

Betty is also passionate about education and training in the area of domestic and family violence and has been instrumental in the development of a variety of education and training initiatives. In 2004 she produced the Domestic Violence and the Workplace Training Manual for Partnerships Against Domestic Violence.

CDFVR is delighted that Betty has agreed to remain as a member of CDFVR's *Course Development Advisory Committee*, which will advise on the development of CDFVR's domestic and family violence training course. We are also thrilled that Betty has agreed to present a distinguished visitor's seminar for broadcast by CDFVR via video-conference. Further details of the seminar will be provided on the Centre's website (www.noviolence.com.au) when a date has been set.



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Centre News Staff Update

Farewell...



Research Fellow, Dr Susan Rees was recently farewelled by CDFVR and Central Queensland University. Susan has taken up a Senior Lecturer position with James Cook University, Townsville Campus and will continue to pursue her research interests which include human rights, Indigenous empowerment programs and family violence, child welfare, domestic violence in refugee communities, asylum seekers' trauma and resettlement, refugee policy, and the socio-cultural determinants of health and illness.

Susan's passion, enthusiasm and commitment together with her wealth of knowledge and experience were invaluable to the Centre's work. We wish Susan every success in her future and look forward to our continued collaboration on various Centre projects.

Welcome...

The Centre is delighted to welcome Kass Fenton to the 12 month fixed-term position of Education Project Officer. Together with part-time project officer, Annie Webster, Kass' primary focus will be on developing a nationally accredited training course for which the Centre has received a \$50 000 grant from the Queensland Government's Office for Women. This course aims to enhance effective and consistent interagency responses to women affected by domestic and family violence. A Training Advisory Committee (TAC) is supporting the development of the course and will ensure its relevance to a wide range of workers in the government and non-government sectors who encounter women affected by domestic and family violence. Currently, the TAC is assisting with circulating a survey throughout the state to gauge training needs.



We look forward to Kass and Annie sharing an update of their progress in the December edition of the newsletter.

2005 Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum update: Men and Women Working Together

The June 2005 edition of CDFVR's newsletter provided an overview of the second annual Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum convened by the Centre in conjunction with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group, and held on 12 and 13 May 2005. Since the publication of that edition, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group has met to review the results of Forum workshops and has prepared an Issues Paper, which has been forwarded to relevant Government Ministers and community agencies. This Issues Paper provides discussion and recommendations in the following areas of concern:

- child protection policy and practice;
- domestic violence shelters in rural and remote areas;
- innovations in education to prevent Indigenous family violence;
- Indigenous justice issues; and
- healing.

A full copy of the Issues Paper can be viewed on the Centre's website at www.noviolence.com.au.



Ministerial Advisory Council on Domestic and Family Violence appointed

The newly appointed Ministerial Advisory Council on Domestic and Family Violence, reporting to Warren Pitt, Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors, met for the first time on 13 September 2005. The Minister appointed the members of the Council to advise the State Government, through him, on domestic and family violence legislation; the annual Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month; Indigenous family violence; and programs for perpetrators of domestic and family violence.

This is the 7th Council established to advise the State Government on domestic and family violence policy, programs and legislation, with the first Council being established in 1989 on the recommendation of the Queensland Domestic Violence Taskforce. While its advisory role has remained fairly constant, the composition of Council membership has varied over time, particularly in regard to the number of government departments represented. The current Council structure represents the greatest departure from convention, however, with the appointment of 10 members specifically representing each of the Department of Communities' 10 regions; three Indigenous members representing urban, rural and remote areas of the State; a Cape York representative; and Torres Strait Islander representative. Regional representatives will consult stakeholders within their regions, and incorporate stakeholder views in Council deliberations.



Members of the Ministerial Advisory council with Minister Warren Pitt

The Minister has also appointed an independent chairperson, Ms Katrina Finn, to enable members to represent their constituencies without the responsibilities of chairing the Council's three meetings per year over its two year term. Ms Finn is a solicitor with more than 7 years experience in the area of domestic and family violence prevention in Queensland, including more than five years with the Women's Legal Service and 18 months with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Advocacy Service.

Other non-government members of the Council are: the Centre's Director, Ms Heather Nancarrow (Deputy Chairperson), representing Mackay/Whitsunday; Mrs Aurora Foster (Far North Queensland); Ms Shirley Slann (North Queensland); Ms Susan Morris (Fitzroy/Central West Queensland); Mrs Elizabeth Benson-Stott (Wide Bay-Burnett); Mr Keith Hunter (Darling Downs/South West Queensland); Mrs Peggy Tidyman (Moreton); Ms Gabriele Kuhnert-Murray (Sunshine Coast); Dr Brian Sullivan (Greater Brisbane); Ms Diane Speirs (Gold Coast); Ms Amanda Brazier (Urban Indigenous representative); Mrs Rae Kelly (Rural and Remote Indigenous representative); and Ms Jeanette Kairupan-Vellis (Torres Strait Islander representative). The Cape York representative is yet to be announced. Queensland Government agencies represented on the Council are the Queensland Police Service, the Office for Women, Queensland Health, and the Departments of Communities; Child Safety; and Justice and Attorney-General.

Conference opportunity

Service providers, frontline workers, academics and interested parties are invited to attend **Circles of Compassion: Human-Animal Relationships, Welfare & Wellbeing** 1 & 2 December, 2005 at Rydges Capricorn Resort, Yeppoon, Queensland.

Themes for conference presentations and roundtable discussions include: human-animal bond; implications of animal mistreatment and cruelty; and humane education, therapy and service provision.

Additional roundtable discussions will focus on: humane education; public policy development regarding the links between violence to humans and violence to animals; and links between domestic violence, child abuse and animal abuse from a service provider perspective.

Registration information is available from Dr Nik Taylor, CQU, phone (07) 4930 9433 or email: n.taylor@cqu.edu.au. Information may also be found at: http://www.rydges.com/meetingsandbusiness/cwp/corp_bookings.asp?mastercode=circles



By Lyndon Reilly, CDFVR Indigenous Research Worker, CDFVR

I would like to thank David Patterson, Chairperson of the Yarrabah Men's Group, for inviting me to Yarrabah to attend a combined meeting between the Yarrabah and Innisfail Aboriginal and Torres Strait Men's Groups. Furthermore, Wu Chopperen's Health Service Indigenous medical practitioner, Doctor Mark Wenitong, and Trevor Binjuda Male Support Worker with the Healthy, Happy Families Unit were also present.

The meeting took place at the Yarrabah Community Hall and was well attended, with approximately 15 men and young males from both groups attending. The meeting's friendly environment encouraged informal discussions. The main issues that were raised in the meeting and which are regularly reiterated by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men's groups connected to the project 'Through the Eyes of Blackfellas' were:

1. health, such as causal factors of heart disease and diabetes;
2. family violence, the role of men's groups in the intervention and prevention of violence;
3. funding, equitable funding avenues to provide men's groups the tools and resources to develop and implement innovative community projects; and
4. community development to develop safe and strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Participants in the project consider that men's centres may need to be established to provide appropriate services for men and promote activities such as cultural activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, communities and especially, youth.

"Health is not just the physical well-being of the individual but the social, emotional and cultural well-being of the community. This is a whole of life view and it also includes the cyclical of life-death-life" (Tsey, Patterson, Whiteside, Baird & Baird, 2002, p 278).

Domestic and Family Violence: Yarrabah and Innisfail Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Men's Groups are genuinely concerned with the prevalence of violence in Indigenous communities in urban, regional, rural and remote locations. The men attending the meeting suggested that with the commitment of men's groups in the intervention and/or prevention of domestic and family violence, its prevalence could be dramatically reduced. The justification for such commentary is that it is predominately males who are the wrong-doers of violence; hence men working with and for male wrong-doers via mentoring, behavioural reform and strengthening identity programs is just common sense with regards to the reduction of violence. Yarrabah and Innisfail men also consider that establishment of a men's centre would act as the hub for the delivery of such programs. Moreover, these men believe that men and women working in a reciprocal relationship, that is understanding each others' social responsibilities, is imperative in the crusade to restoring resilience into their respective communities. Lilla Watson states:

"In traditional Aboriginal society, women and men worked in cooperation with each other and that this still continues today. While there are clearly delineated forms of 'men's business' and 'women's business', there is also 'public business' where male and female roles overlap and where men and women work together" (Watson, 1994, cited in Pease, 2002, p 142).

Men's Centres: The phenomena of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men being the main offenders of violence, having poor health, having poor education, high imprisonment rates and being a highly marginalised group within Australia, suggests the establishment of men's groups and men's centres are imperative to the rehabilitation of the social and cultural identity of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. Men's centres operating as multi-purpose gathering places, where men's groups develop and implement social and cultural programs which may include health, education, employment, empowerment and cultural activities, may have an enormous influence on the restoration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men's rightful position within society.



L-R - David Patterson, Bernie Powell, Leonard Murgha & Lerster Kynuna from Yarrabah Men's Group

“Historical processes have devalued the Aboriginal male role in both the family and the community. When Aboriginal men were confined to reserves, many lost their self-respect and self-esteem” (Davis, 1992, cited in Pease, 2002, p 141).

Cultural Activities: As part of their journey in rediscovering their rightful position within society, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders’ society, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men are rediscovering leadership. Men are concerned with the cultural breakdown of so many Indigenous youths, especially the lack of respect for Elders and knowledge of their culture. The major contributing influences, besides being corrupted by American television programs, and using Afro-American terminology such as ‘Wassup Nigger’, is petrol sniffing and paint sniffing. Men at the meeting stated that as men they needed to take up their rightful position and lead the youth who have lost their way, back on to the right social and cultural paths. Cultural activities such as hunting, fishing, camping on country and teaching stories and dance, are strategies the men believe can work. However, it can only work with the assistance of other groups such as Elders’ groups and women’s groups, as Lilla Watson stated, family violence is ‘public business’.



“Petrol sniffing is one of the most common kinds of substance abuse in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It is usually young men who become petrol sniffers. For some families, petrol sniffing is an even bigger issue than grog abuse. It is hard to work out just how much crime is caused by petrol sniffing but it is clear that in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities petrol sniffing causes bad behaviour, erosion of cultural traditions and health problems for sniffers” (Yaldilda, p 40).

Yarrabah Men’s Group members, backrow L-R: Corey Bounghi & Jason Fomile Front row L-R: Les Murgha, Bernie Powell & Robert Patterson

The [FUN]ding Game: To establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men’s centres, and for men to co-ordinate and operate progressive innovative projects such as cultural activities and violence prevention, one factor, above all others remains a hindrance: inequitable funding opportunities. The ‘fun’ of locating and applying for funds is an area that constantly frustrates men’s groups. Inequitable

funding opportunities for men’s groups, restricts their position, which leads to little or no impact at all in restoring resilience within their community. Government agencies such as the Office of Indigenous Coordination Policy (OIPC) and its sub-branches, Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICCs), need to consult and collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men’s group executive committees, to ensure equitable funding opportunities are available to recognise their significance and support the continuation of men’s groups.

In concluding, I would like to draw on a section of the meeting that I am sure was very powerful to all the participants, as it was for me. David Patterson identified a young male participant who was going through sorry business. David announced how strong it was for him to come to the meeting, and welcomed him and stated “it good to see you here and you know we are here to support and guide you through this sorry time”. This assertion intensified the notion that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men’s groups produce a benevolent and accommodating approach to men and young males, which is imperative to the restoration process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men’s identity, and safe and strong families and communities.

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Dimensions of disability, rurality and lesbianism in women's experiences of intimate violence

By Kay Gray, Social Worker and Michelle Bradford, Education Officer, CDFVR



The January-March 2005 edition of CDFVR's newsletter featured an article from Kay Gray and Michelle Bradford titled: "*Intersections of oppression in women's experiences of intimate violence*". This article explored the concept of intersectionality as a tool and framework for identifying and understanding the interactions and impacts of intersecting dimensions of gender, race and class on women's experiences of domestic and family violence.

The following article expands on intersectionality and the interaction of constructs such as disability, rurality and lesbianism in shaping and compounding women's experiences of domestic and family violence.

Disability

Ablism is a construct that promotes ability of some and the disability of others according to social and cultural norms (Easteal, 2001). Numerous authors examine the intersectional meanings of disability to amplify the constructed powerlessness and vulnerability to violence that disabled women experience (Jennings, 2003; Cockram, 2003; Easteal, 2001).

Intersectional analysis identifies the critical differences that frame women's vulnerability when they are disabled. Characteristics of particular disabilities represent specific frameworks of susceptibility to abuse, while integrated knowledge of the needs and issues women encounter through disability and domestic violence expand the frame of reference from which their needs may be perceived and their well being nurtured. Myths about disabled women as intimate partners, as childlike, as a burden and their partner as a hero inscribe challenges to workers to be open to respond to disabled women authentically and empathically. Creating space and opportunity for disabled women to communicate their needs and meanings is inherent to their gaining freedom from domination and abuse.

Cockram (2003) asserts that links between women's disability and the risk of abuse, associated health impairment and impediments to seeking help have remained hidden as contributors to the intersectional shaping of disabled women's experiences of violence. Associations of disability types, cultural influences, localities, and abuse specific to disabled women are critical issues for research.

Jennings (2003) itemises a range of forces associated with disability that compound vulnerability to violence and interact with sexism, ablist, institutionalism and class to reflect disabled women's intersectional positions. These forces

include social isolation, powerlessness, poverty, carer abuse, discrimination, exploitation, incredibility and ignorance that violence is criminal, and that she has a right to safety from abuse.

Identifying and encompassing all abusive behaviours including those of carers within the definition of domestic violence and identifying vulnerability through reliance on others for care is central to disabled women's realities of violence. Jennings (2003) discusses the critical need for community strategies that provide relevant accessible information and services that respond to disabled women's needs. Failure of society to provide women with disabilities with information, alternatives and opportunities entrench the disempowerment and violence that unacknowledged prejudiced social attitudes condone. Systemic and structural oppression are enacted through patronising and devaluing attitudes and exclusion of disabled women from contributing to program and service planning (Jennings, 2003).

Myths about disabled women as intimate partners, as childlike, as a burden and their partner as a hero inscribe challenges to workers to be open to respond to disabled women authentically and empathically.

International research findings from Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) in 1998, show that women with disabilities are assaulted, raped and abused at two times the rate of other women irrespective of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or class (cited in Jennings, 2003). Gender dimensions of disability are generally disregarded in research and practice with disabled women and their meanings as wives, mothers and lovers are denied. In addition, patriarchal perspectives that construct physical and intellectual capacities of disabled women as deficient may expose such women to abusive sexual expectations that other women are less likely to encounter. Inability to fulfil expected household roles may also heighten exposure to violence. Sexual violence may also include forced sterilisation and forced abortion while physical and emotional abuse may include deprivation of aids, care and support (Jennings, 2003).

The "dominocentric" expectation of womanhood as beauty and perfection is contrasted with the construction of disabled women as asexual beings, reinforcing internalised negative self-images and marginalisation. Paradoxically, "disabled" women are frequently labelled promiscuous, compounding social prejudice, powerlessness and heightened vulnerability to violence (Easteal, 2001).

Research by Cockram (2003) uncovered convincing evidence of the simultaneous and mutually compounding impacts of gender and disability in women's experiences of domestic violence. This study confirmed the extreme abuse disabled

women suffer; identified practical areas for change; as well as the many social, political, legal, cultural and economic aspects that require transformative action for disabled women to gain emancipation and holistic nurturing. Jennings (2003) further asserts that legal responsiveness to disabled women is critically impacted upon and women's exposure to and experiences of domestic violence exacerbated, through lack of appropriate, accessible information and services together with lack of acceptance and credibility in the criminal justice system (Jennings 2003).

In discussing intellectually disabled women's experiences, Easteal (2001) identifies critical elements of disempowerment encountered, including intellectually disabled women's different judgements of situations, lack of information and understanding of human rights and exposure to social control through service provision. These facets of disability may intersect with other major dimensions of gender and/or culture to heighten their vulnerability to domestic violence and worsen its nature. Lack of credibility, communication handicaps and social isolation are other significant factors disadvantaging disabled women in gaining legal protection and compounding exposure to violence. Legal judgements regarding disabled women's capacity to testify about abuse experienced, are often made by people who are not competent, or are prejudiced, in their assessments (Easteal, 2001).

Disabled women deal with abuse in different ways. Some women endure pain rather than experience an empty void, others disengage from intrusion upon their physical and psychological integrity, while women who have known what it is to be "abled" and accepted may react with power and anger. Some women expose themselves to risk and lethality in longing to feel intimacy and belonging (Jennings, 2003).

Cockram's (2003) interviews with disabled women and agency workers identified experiences typical of many battered women and emphasised the degree of powerlessness, marginalisation and discrimination that pervades disabled women's lives as frequently extremely complex and oppressive. Strategies women used to cope with domestic violence included attempts to change the abuser, please or placate the abuser, or psychologically withdraw.

A sense of self-worth they had retained despite the abuse was often vital in making the decision to leave. Leaving released women from ever-present fear of violence to themselves and sometimes their children. Paradoxically, leaving sometimes exposed them to increased risk of injury and the experience of further social isolation and lack of support. Fear of losing their children or having no available support and care were critical deterrents to leaving for some women (Cockram, 2003).

Cockram's study further indicated that women with a disability generally did not access domestic violence services

nor police or court intervention. A medico/legal model that reflects stereotypical prejudicial social attitudes to women with disabilities reinforces their aversion to seeking support of authorities. The findings support Easteal's (2001) assertions highlighting perceptions of incredibility and other negative assumptions about disabled women.

Even in services that were increasingly aware of the abuse and trauma disabled women experienced, Cockram (2003) found that lack of resources and relevant skills remained major limiting factors. Cockram further asserts that increased numbers of services, collaboration between agencies and funding to provide nurturing services were critical to responding creatively and effectively to facilitate disabled women's rights to freedom from violation, fear and vulnerability to abuse.

Disabled women's ignorance of the nature of domestic violence and prolonged disabling experiences of abuse and domination inhibit their capacity to define their experience and needs. Naming violence against disabled women is paramount to identifying their violated positions at intersectional locations of neglect and prejudice. Collaborative approaches that embrace the multi-dimensional contexts and interactional influences of domestic violence and disability are keys to transformative strategies that respond empathically and creatively to emancipate women from abuse amplified by constructions of disability (Jennings, 2003).

Rurality

Locations of women in terms of vulnerability to domestic and family violence in rural and remote areas relate not only to geography but also cultural norms, political marginalisation and unequal power relations across gender, social stratification and ethnicity. These contextual dimensions are deeply interwoven, manifesting a range of compounding forces of disempowerment and entrenched patterns of relating that are conducive to violence in families and community. While rural women's socioeconomic positions and political ideologies are diverse and span a range of contexts and implications, some factors contributing to vulnerability tend to reflect established cognitive and behavioural norms (Hastings & MacLean, 2002; Wendt & Cheers, 2002, Keys Young, 1999).

Critical parameters of rural women's awareness intersect with rural conditions to elevate their vulnerability and

Intersecting factors for rural women include lack of identification of their situation as violent; lack of available services; traditionally conservative reluctance to access services, resources and support; fear of reprisal if they do and lack of privacy in small communities.

perpetuate violence. Intersecting factors include lack of identification of their situation as violent; lack of available services; traditionally conservative reluctance to access services, resources and support; fear of reprisal if they do and lack of privacy in small communities (WESNET, 2000; Keys Young, 1999). Minimising the occurrence and connotations of abuse and its impacts on themselves and their children, Christian beliefs about commitment to marriage, fear of extended family and community rejection and women's belief they can protect their children exacerbate vulnerability and degree of violence (Wendt & Cheers, 2002). Traditional inheritance processes that exclude and marginalise women in terms of identity and economic stability as well as other disempowering dominant prejudicial and oppressive attitudes constrain women's motivation to seek assistance and freedom from abuse (Wendt & Cheers, 2002; WESNET, 2000; OSW, 2002). Propensity of rural communities to label women as deviant and to blame them for the violence compounds fear of rejection and isolation (Cheers, 1985; Wendt & Cheers, 2002).

Farming families' sense of privacy and reluctance to seek help, high substance misuse and the experience of disorientation and disempowerment, emanating from rural economic decline, destabilisation of traditional roles and perceived effectiveness for women, men and youth provide critical embers from which violence might flare (Alston, 1997). These conditions, while varying in detail across regions and rural industries, create conditions for escalating violence but also opportunity for change through political and social reform and transformation. Feminist strategies and post-modern perspectives that reinforce strengths of ingenuity, innovation, courage, belonging and community connectedness need also challenge rural uniformity, disabling family and community systems and government policies that exacerbate exposure of women and children to physical and psychological violence. Conscientisation and politicisation of inequities and disadvantage are vital (Lynn, 1990). Promotion of feminist poststructuralist perspectives that enable women to define and articulate their life meanings and purposes as individuals as well as partnerships that foster individual values and aspirations and nurture community strengths offers space to validate women's experiences and create impetus for change.

Strategies to create common goals for non-violence through education, validation and empowerment facilitate negation of superficial social stratifications that entrench women's disempowerment and lack of credibility as a political force for change. Networking across class and ethnicity is vital to validating women's voices and mustering their collective wisdom and strengths to generate knowledge and skills to create new perspectives and values of relating between women, men and children. Dichotomies of traditional privilege and contemporary marginalisation represent confusing cognitive and affective conditions for many rural families. Such paradoxes provide contextual potential for renewal of energy and direction as options are envisaged, explored and

enacted. Harnessing political will and rural ingenuity offers immense opportunities for prioritising peaceful facets of rural endeavour.

Lesbian Relationships

Easteal (2001) includes in her analysis of multiple intersections of difference and violence, the meaning and impacts of lesbian relationships. As lesbians fall outside accepted concepts of womanhood, understanding and response to violence they experience is generally excluded from discourse on domestic and family violence. Rejection of lesbian relationships socially, and marginalisation politically, are compounded by devalued identities lesbians frequently internalise (Easteal, 2001; Davis and Taylor, 2002). These contexts compound powerlessness and isolation of lesbians and manifest inappropriate and inadequate services, legal protection and advocacy (Easteal, 2001; Davis and Taylor, 2002). Intersectional impacts of race and class experienced by oppressed and marginalised women, may be complicated by issues of rurality and motherhood, compounding exclusion, lack of self-worth and vulnerability to domestic and community violence (Easteal, 2001; Davis and Taylor, 2002).

The lack of acceptance of lesbians and their lack of credibility in political and social arenas entrenches their relative powerlessness in influencing policy and development of appropriate legal and social services.

Structures of power that intersect to frame lesbians' exposure to violence include services that are ill-equipped to understand or respond to their needs, inadequate and ill-defined legal status, incredibility in the legal system and inappropriate shelter provision (Easteal, 2001; Davis and Taylor, 2002). Marginalisation through intersecting facets of class and race disadvantage may compound exposure to harm (Easteal, 2001; Davis and Taylor, 2002).

Disempowerment of lesbians is magnified through intersections of gender and sexuality, both of which contribute to framing them as 'other'. The lack of acceptance of lesbians and their lack of credibility in political and social arenas entrenches their relative powerlessness in influencing policy and development of appropriate legal and social services that offer protection, validation and empowerment where violence is an issue. Lack of support and an integrated approach to protection in a vulnerable and fragmented gay and lesbian community is also a significant predicament for lesbians when the abuse comes from another lesbian (Davis and Taylor, 2002). Community hatred may also manifest violence, an issue that is not specifically and universally addressed in the political forum of justice (Easteal, 2001).

Absence of public acknowledgment of violence in same-sex intimate relationships exacerbates isolation from mainstream and gay and lesbian communities, as neither sector has come to terms with the existence and meaning of violence in lesbian relationships. Lack of understanding and suppression of its occurrence and nature by those who experience it, by those with homophobic attitudes and by workers who have no experiential conceptualisation to respond authentically, exemplify the complex circumstances lesbians are faced with in violent relationships. Heterosexual and homosexual intimidation at an interpersonal and institutional level compounds fear and psychological trauma (Davis and Taylor, 2002). Inhibited and confused self-identity some lesbians or bisexual women experience magnifies their feelings of powerlessness and their incapacity to acknowledge their need of support. As for all women, lesbians have a right to experience their sexuality safely and legitimately. Legislation and services that validate lesbian

and gay identity and community and provide avenues for informed, participant counselling and safety networks are vital aspects for political and structural reform.

Intersectionality provides a framework of analysis to explore and respond to locations of vulnerability to oppression and discrimination for women. Dimensions of disability, rurality and lesbianism may interact with other major dimensions of gender, race and class to intricately and dynamically shape and amplify women's vulnerability to domestic violence. Responses that deconstruct and honour women's individual experiences of their intersectional positions, together with recognition and exposure of the systemic and structural processes that support and perpetuate oppressive and discriminatory practices, are essential to supporting women toward realising their rights to safety and freedom from abuse.

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Distinguished Visitors Seminar

Media representations of violence to Filipino women in Australia: Women in danger or dangerous women?

Nicki Saroca, PhD.

The Centre is delighted to be hosting a visit from Nicki Saroca, PhD, Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University. We would like to thank the Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences for facilitating Nicki's visit to CQU Mackay Campus, through the Distinguished Visitors' Program.

Nicki's doctorate focused on Filipino women, violence and media representation and her current research project (with Dr Kathryn Robinson) is titled "Interpersonal and Family Relations in Intercultural/Transnational Marriages", with a particular focus on Filipino-Australian couples and their families. On October 18, Nicki will present a seminar, which will be video-conferenced to sites around Queensland, titled "**Woman in Danger or Dangerous Woman? Contesting Images of Filipina Victims of Domestic Homicide in Australia**".

Check our website for further details on www.noviolence.com.au.

The Centre welcomes your participation in this event (no cost involved) and invites you to contact Annie on (07) 4940 7834 or email a.webster@cqu.edu.au for further information.



New Beginnings...Violence Prevention on the Gold Coast

By Betty Taylor, Director, Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc.
Guest contributor

In August, 2005 over sixty people gathered at the Gold Coast International Hotel to celebrate the launch of the newly incorporated Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc. Guest speaker of the night was Ms Linda Apelt, Director General, Department of Communities, who congratulated the Service for its vision, commitment and past track record.

Previously known as the Domestic Violence Service Gold Coast, the Service has been a vital part of the community sector for the past 13 years. Through independent incorporation the Service has been able to redefine and reshape its vision and future direction. Founded in 1992, the Service has grown from a small service with three staff to a large organisation providing responses to domestic violence through a model of integration and collaboration. The Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast (DVPC) will have three specific program areas:

- counselling services which also incorporates groups and court support;
- management of the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Integrated Response which includes project development and research; and
- a Domestic Violence Training & Education Centre (DVTEC) which will focus on training, education and resource development.

The Service has always strived to develop improved and innovative responses at a practice level while also focusing on systemic and institutional change. The Fax-back program is one example of the numerous programs developed by the Service that have grown to become 'common practice' across the state.

DVPC aims to have a strong focus on partnerships across government, business and universities. A landmark beginning has been a three way partnership with Community Corrections, University of South Australia and the DVPC which has resulted in the receipt of an Australian Research Council grant to study the outcome of the perpetrator program over three years. The Centre is keen to pursue further such partnerships in the future. DVPC has a commitment to continued learning through research and evaluation which is linked to practice and assists in reducing and stopping domestic violence. Project SAFER Phase 2, a pilot project between DVPC and Gold Coast Police will also be externally evaluated over the coming year.

The Domestic Violence Training & Education Centre (DVTEC) program area brings a new arm to the Centre and aims to provide high quality training, educative workshops, forums and conferences as well as the development of educational and training resources.

The Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc thanks all who have supported us over the past 13 years and we look forward to moving forward with new and stronger partnerships to address domestic violence at both a practice and systems level.



Kay Hyatt, President of Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc addresses the audience during the Centre's launch.

Conference opportunity

Domestic Violence Court Assistance Network Qld (DVCAN)
9-11 November, 2005
Rydges Plaza, Cairns

DVCAN's 5th state-wide conference aims to bring together domestic violence court assistance workers, service providers and academics to share information, strengthen networks, build on ideas and knowledge and promote innovation.

Conference Program and Registration will be available shortly. Further details may be obtained by contacting Conference Organiser, Ms Dolly Oui, Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service, phone (07) 4040 6100; or email rosped@dvcairns.org

Workshops, Conferences and Date Claimers

October 3-5 2005

International Conference on Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking

Baltimore, Maryland, USA

www.evawinc.com/baltimore2005.html

October 6 2005

Working with parents in the context of intergenerational child abuse

Ringwood, Victoria

<http://www.childhood.org.au>

October 10 2005

Children at Risk from their Families: assessing the Risk, Weighing the Evidence

London, UK

Telephone: 01372 818504 Fax: 01372 818505

Email: nagalro@globalnet.co.uk

October 10-12 2005

Their Lives, Our Work: Critical Questions for Practice in Child, Youth and Family Services

Preston, Victoria

Telephone: (03) 93470062

www.cwav.asn.au/news/events.html

October 23-26 2005

World Conference on Prevention of Family Violence

Banff, Canada

www.wcpfv2005.ca

October 24 2005

Making It Fair: Respectful intervention with disadvantaged young people who have enacted violence and abuse

Surry Hills, NSW

<http://www.nswfta.org.au/workshops>

October 25-27 2005

26th Australian Family Therapy Conference

Sydney, NSW

Telephone (02) 88248822

Fax: (02) 88248822

Email: conf@nswfta.org.au

www.nswfta.org.au/conf

October 28 2005

From 'parentification' to expertise: therapeutic work with children and their families in the context of violence or parental mental illness.

Commission for Children and Young People, Surry Hills, NSW.

<http://www.nswfta.org.au/workshops>

November 4 2005

Trauma and Resilience in Children 0-5 years

Noble Park, Victoria

<http://www.qec.org.au>

November 9 2005

Domestic Abuse in the UK: International Conference

London, UK

Email: office@reconstruct.co.uk

www.reconstruct.co.uk/events/index/php

Domestic Violence Court Assistance Network (Qld)

9-11 November 2005

Rydges Plaza, Grafton Street, Cairns

Ph (07) 4040 6100

Fax: (07) 4040 6111

Email: rosped@dvcairns.org

November 16-18 2005

Protecting Children: Asian Perspectives and Beyond - 6th ISPCAN Asian Regional Conference

Singapore

www.ispcansingapore.com

November 17-20

Honoring the Child, Honoring Equity 5: Reconsidering Rights and Relationships

Telephone: (03) 83447780

Email: education-celec@unimelb.edu.au

www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/events/conference/current/CEIEAnnualConf/index.shtml

December 1-2 2005

Circles of Compassion: Human-Animal Relationships, Welfare and Wellbeing

Dr Nik Taylor, CQU

Telephone (07)49309433

Fax: 49306460

Email: n.taylor@cqu.edu.au

December 5-8 2005

The Fourth Australian Family & Community Strengths Conference

Newcastle, NSW

Email: family@pco.com.au

<http://www.pco.com.au/family>



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We encourage readers to contribute to the Centre's Newsletter. If you have any information or articles you wish to publish, please contact Centre staff.

HAVE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS CHANGED?

We have become aware that some recipients of the CDFVR newsletter have relocated or changed contact details, including email address. To enable us to update our records and ensure that you receive our quarterly publication, please contact us at the above phone, fax or email address with your change of details. Please be assured that the Centre does not release your details to any third parties without your permission.

If you would like to be included on, or removed from, the Centre's mailing list, please ring us on (07)49407834.

The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research (CDFVR) receives triennial funding from the Queensland Department of Communities to undertake research, education and evaluation activities pertaining to domestic and family violence. CDFVR is located within the Centre for Social Science Research in the Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences at Central Queensland University, Mackay Campus.

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Queensland Government, Central Queensland University, or Centre for Social Science Research.

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