

CDFV Re@der

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Domestic and Family Violence Workforce Matters

Evaluation in frontline services

National Family Violence Bench Book Project

Centring the frontline



Director's message

Kia ora koutou katoa, greetings everyone.

When I look back on the time since March I realise what an eventful few months these have been. The release of the Queensland Domestic Violence Task Force report 'Not Now, Not Ever' (2015) at the end of February was a momentous occasion for the domestic and family violence sector and led to a number of activities by the Centre. One of these was to meet with the Hon Shannon Fentiman, the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, and Minister for Child Safety, to discuss the implications of the report for domestic violence research and sector development in Queensland. The strong focus of the report on an overarching strategy and the planned introduction of reforms in legal and social services was supported by recognition of the need for evaluation research. There will be an ongoing need to understand more about critical service gaps and also about what works well in domestic and family violence practice.

Naturally, Domestic Violence Prevention Month was a busy time for us at the Centre. Two key events had a focus on the wonderful people who are our domestic and family violence workforce. Firstly, the Centre hosted Queensland's 11th Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum, a great opportunity for me to get to know the Centre's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group and also to meet with many of you whom I had only spoken to previously. I was humbled by the amount of experience and wisdom present at the Forum and the stories of innovative practice in dealing with the challenges of remoteness and isolation. A highlight was the Forum Dinner where I had the good fortune to meet an interesting woman from 'Africa' who entertained us with stories about her family and I am looking forward to hearing more about them at our next gathering. I am sure all of us who attended the Forum appreciated members of the CDFVR team's organisational skills and helpfulness. Our Brisbane-based Senior Researchers Dr Nada Ibrahim and Shellee Wakefield participated in the Forum as they progressed our project concerning the enforcement of protection orders in Australia. They joined Lauren Pattie and Colleen Gunning in welcoming guests from around the state and beyond. You can read more about the Forum on pages 7 and 8.

Another helper at the Forum whom many of you met was Associate Professor Hillary Haldane who comes from Quinnipiac University in Connecticut (US). Hillary presented a seminar as part of Domestic Violence Prevention Month on supporting domestic violence frontline workers. I know seminar attendees were very pleased with this focus because frontline workers need our support and recognition. The recording of Hillary's presentation can be accessed on our website, and you can read more about her presentation on pages 3 and 4.

Also in May Australia's National Children's Commissioner visited Brisbane in order to meet



with a panel of invited experts to discuss the needs of children in the context of domestic violence. It was good to meet with the Deputy Director General of the Department of Communities Child Safety and Disability Services Cathy Taylor who was on the panel and to meet with others such as representatives from Save the Children, Women's Legal Services and Boystown. It was a chance for all to share some of their experiences in working with families and children in the context of violence.

Throughout much of June I have been working with staff in developing a range of education resources in domestic and family violence. The first modules are now available on the Centre for Professional Health Education (School of Nursing and Midwifery) website. The link to these is as follows: <http://cpheonline.cqu.edu.au/course/index.php?categoryid=2>. There is a small charge for these introductory modules which will be useful for anyone wanting to know more about domestic and family violence. We have also been developing postgraduate qualifications on domestic and family violence practice and these are now going through approval processes within CQU.

I would like to finish by thanking all the staff here at CDFVR for their work over the last period. There is quite a team behind the scenes here and they work hard to make sure the Centre runs smoothly.

Te amorangi ki mua, te hapai o ki muri is a Maori whakatauki or proverb which means that the leader is at the front and the workers are behind the scenes and it means that the one could not exist without the other – a kind of yin and yang without which organisations would fail.

Kind regards,

Annabel Taylor

COVER

Thank you to the Sidney Myer Fund for supporting five workers from around Queensland to attend Through Young Black Eyes training and the 11th Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum in Mackay in May 2015. Congratulations to successful applicants Bino Toby, Cheryl Lang, Colleen Lyall, Wendy Cawdell-Smith and Jo Bunyan.

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Research Update

Ms Shellee Wakefield and Dr Nada Ibrahim

Under the in-kind arrangement for the Queensland Government's contribution to ANROWS (Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety) research projects and activities are negotiated between CDFVR and ANROWS in accordance with the national research program. On this basis, CDFVR has been working on two pieces of research, regarding judicial education issues and investigating the enforcement of protection orders in Australia.

Magistrates are in a key position to respond to people experiencing domestic and family violence, and the first project enabled them to provide feedback regarding their experiences of, and preferences for, the delivery and content of judicial education. Magistrates in Victoria and Queensland participated in the research and the report of the survey findings, including a background literature review and recommendations, has been submitted to ANROWS. It is anticipated that the report will be released shortly.

Since the March Re@der there have been considerable developments in the second research project. The domestic violence protection orders research CDFVR is undertaking explores perspectives of police, magistrates, lawyers, victims' advocates and victims/ survivors in Australia about the enforcement of orders.

Ethics approval was required and has been gained for the two methods of collecting data that form part of the study. These are firstly an online survey and secondly in-depth interviews with up to 50 women who have experienced cross border situations in relation to protection orders. The national online survey is aimed at professionals such as those listed above who are involved with the enforcement of protection orders. Participants for the interviews will be drawn from four Australian jurisdictions; namely Queensland, Northern Territory, New South Wales and Victoria. The survey is currently being piloted among police and domestic violence advocates after which, it will be finalised.

Another important piece of work which forms part of this study is a state of knowledge report about protection orders, comparing domestic violence legislation across Australian states and territories. The review has a specific focus on jurisdictional protection order provisions and will contribute to the development of the survey and the interview questions.

Over the coming months there will be other smaller reports produced by CDFVR researchers in a number of key areas of interest to the Australian governments which will help to inform policy and practice in domestic and family violence.

Would you like to know more about this research? Would you like to participate in this research?

There are two research phases,

- (a) an online national survey with professionals to solicit their views on enforcement of protection orders, and
- b) interviews with victims/ survivors of domestic and family violence on cross-border issues pertinent to enforcement of existing protection orders in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory.

Please email cdfvrresearch@cqu.edu.au to register your interest or learn more about the research.



CDFVR Senior Researchers, Dr Nada Ibrahim and Ms Shellee Wakefield, with visiting scholar Dr Hillary Haldane (middle), at the 2015 Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum in Mackay

Hillary Haldane: Centring the frontline

by Colleen Gunning, CDFVR

CDFVR recognised Domestic Violence Prevention Month with a special research presentation from Dr Hillary Haldane, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Director, Anthropology Program, Department of Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Anthropology Quinnipiac University, Hamden, Connecticut. Dr Haldane's presentation was of particular relevance to the domestic and family violence sector as it focused on frontline workers.

The seminar provided an overview of international transformations of “the frontline” and explored scholarship concerning the frontline, explaining its relationship to the field of anthropology. Dr Haldane discussed the notion of “centring the frontline in program design, planning, delivery, and evaluation” before responding to audience questions.

Dr Haldane explained what brought her to the frontline, namely her nearly 20 years' experience as a frontline worker. She spoke of the knowledge gaps she discovered during her initial research and of her realisation that the frontline was “missing” from international research and from national and state policy documents. Dr Haldane discussed this with colleagues and concluded “we knew something was missing but we couldn't put our finger on it.” These factors encouraged Dr Haldane to leave the frontline as a practitioner and move to engage the frontline as an academic.

She reflected that in “the 90's , the talk was of culturally specific services”.

“When I would ask people ‘what does a culturally specific service look like for a Latina population?’ they could describe (it and) when I asked about what programs would look like for African American women, they could describe (them, but when I asked) ‘what about white women?’... Silence.

No one could come up with what a culturally specific program would look like for European



Dr Hillary Haldane, Associate Professor of Anthropology

descendants. As an anthropologist that interests me because it meant whites were seen as being culturally neutral and everyone else had culture. So that's theoretically what I was really interested in... everyone has culture. We just assume that what is white culture doesn't need to be named. So that to me was a huge gap as well.”

Dr Haldane provided an overview of the general history of the domestic violence movement since the late 1960's. In the context of the United States, she reflected on the local, state, and national recognition of domestic violence, and highlighted the importance of the establishment of the UN Special Rapporteur in 1994. Dr Haldane suggested that since then there has been a



shift from “grassroots social justice, refuge/ collective movement/ volunteerism (to the) professionalisation of the sector. It has become ‘codified’ as a particular sector.”

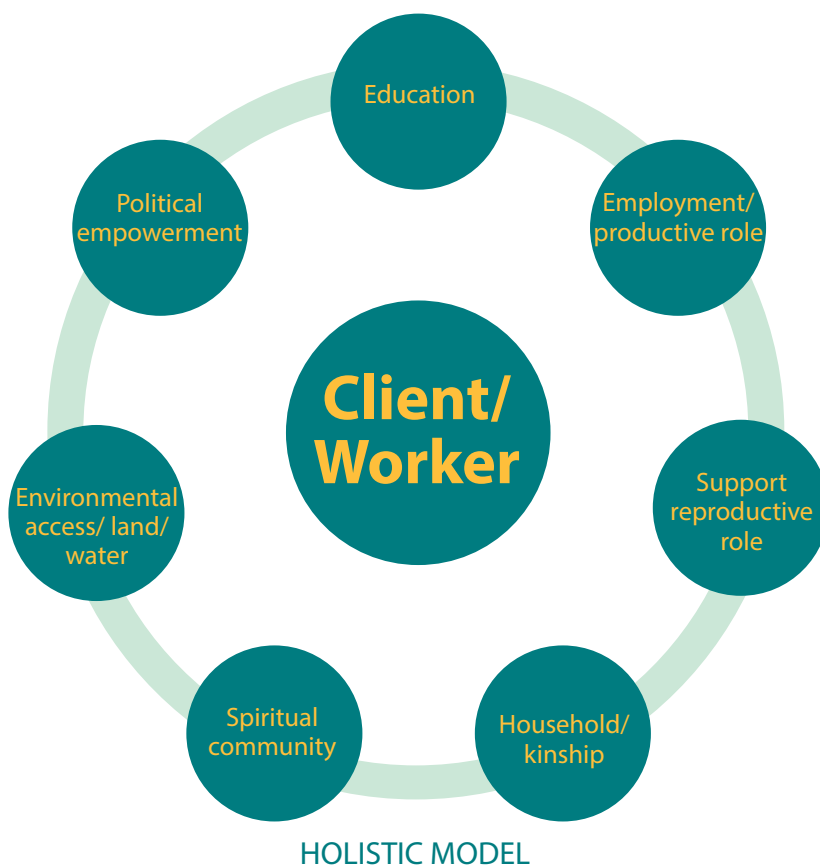
This “codification” has positive aspects, but Dr Haldane’s feeling is that professionalisation has contributed to the sector losing “a little of the social justice edge in the past 20 years which it had possessed in the previous 20 years” She commented that in the past 10 to 15 years, there has also been “an increase in the credentialing of activism... working in violence against women work used to be about activism (and) social change (but now) it has become a job”.

According to Dr Haldane, in her recent interviews with workers, for example, “not a single one mentioned being feminist”. This is in contrast to the 1990’s when her long-term ethnographic engagement with workers commenced and “everyone was a feminist.” With credentialing comes the cost of pursuing further study and Dr Haldane has observed the challenges of recruiting to domestic and family violence work in the United States where prospective workers have student loans equivalent to mortgages.

The question of “scholarship of the frontline” was also discussed by Dr Haldane. In the past twenty years a small amount of domestic violence workforce-related research has emerged, mainly in the fields of social work, psychology and criminology but the research focus has tended to be “above the workers or below the workers”. There has been much research into victims/ survivors and some policy research in the disciplines of political science and legal studies. However the literature which did exist about the domestic violence workforce was generally not positive and suggested workers were perpetrators of abuse. The other approach which Dr Haldane identified was the public health approach, which in the US context, has tended to “medicalise” social problems” and not to be cognisant of structural and political and economic factors.

Dr Haldane calls frontline workers “the barometer of violence” because they know what is going on in communities. She posed the question “what does it mean to centre the frontline?” and noted that there are no models to do this. Her research of the past two decades has focused on what frontline workers suggest. They are rich data sources and can paint a realistic picture of how to respond to domestic violence, often in contrast to “idealistic policies”.

Dr Haldane proposed that scholarship needs to address not just what we know, but also needs to address “how do we keep the workforce safe?” “If the workforce isn’t safe, women and children aren’t safe”. The wellbeing of the workforce, including supporting professional development, needs to be attended to in order to “get the work done” of ending violence. However, according to Dr Haldane, frontline workers ignore themselves and in her research the issue of self-care is never identified by interviewees. When workers tell Dr Haldane about their ideal world, it is client-centred. She proposes an alternative model which “centres the frontline”.



Evaluation in frontline services

A precis by Colleen Gunning, CDFVR

To the best of our knowledge, this statewide survey is among the first efforts to systematically investigate the types of information that domestic violence and sexual assault service providers consider helpful in evaluating the outcomes of their services. The study's findings offer important insights regarding the helpfulness of outcome information across different domestic violence and sexual assault types of services (i.e., legal advocacy, medical advocacy, support group services, individual counselling, and shelter).

Macy, Ogbonnaya & Martin, 2015, p. 426

A recent survey from the United States systematically investigated the types of information that domestic violence and sexual assault service providers consider helpful in evaluating the outcomes of their services. This study did not investigate crisis services but eighty domestic violence and sexual assault agency directors provided their opinions about the outcome information that should be collected from victims.

In the US domestic violence and sexual assault agencies are typically community-based, non-profit organisations that offer a range of services including:

- (a) legal advocacy
- (b) medical advocacy
- (c) group support (e.g. emotional support, information, safety planning strategies)
- (d) individual counselling and
- (e) shelter

However, regardless of the nature of the service being evaluated, there was consistency in service providers' feedback. This study identified that four outcome types were repeatedly ranked as among the top five most important fields of information to collect to understand whether services helped victims.

These outcome information types were as follows:

1. victims' satisfaction with services,
2. victims' progress toward meeting their individual goals for that service,
3. changes in the extent of violence and/or trauma that the victims experienced, and
4. changes in the victims' knowledge relevant to the specific type of service (e.g., knowledge of legal options in relation to legal advocacy, knowledge of the emotional consequences of violence in relation to shelter services).

It was acknowledged that victims may be **satisfied** with services, but not helped by them in "observable and measurable ways". Furthermore, the authors note that providers' perspectives on the helpfulness of collecting information concerning victims' service satisfaction may reflect the importance that services place on the empowerment philosophy in helping victims. This current finding appears consistent with prior research suggesting that services should at least be satisfactory to be beneficial and the authors highlight that victims are unlikely to be helped with services "in observable and measurable ways" if they are not also satisfied with services.

In a similar vein, the authors postulate that providers' high ranking of outcome information about victims' **progress** may reflect the importance that service providers place on helping victims in personalised ways. Furthermore, the authors propose that the value placed by providers on the helpfulness of collecting information about **changes in the extent of violence** experienced by victims is a reflection of their focus on ensuring victims are safe. Since one strategy to contribute to safety is giving victims access to information, it is not surprising then that providers rated highly the aspect of **changes in victims' knowledge**.

“Undertaking outcome measurement may be challenging and measures need to be carefully considered to ensure they are not implemented at the expense of service delivery.”

The authors conclude that both researchers and providers face considerable challenges in conducting "ethical, rigorous, and meaningful evaluations of domestic violence and sexual assault services". Their hopes are twofold: that the study's findings will be used to inform the development of beneficial outcome instruments for services, and that such instruments will be used both by researchers and service providers to conduct valuable evaluations.

References

Macy, R.J., Ogbonnaya I.N., & Martin S.L., (2015). *Providers' Perspectives About Helpful Information for Evaluating Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services: A Practice Note. Violence Against Women*, 21 (3), pp. 416-429.

National Family Violence Bench Book Project

by Colleen Gunning, CDFVR

CDFVR Advisory Group member Professor Heather Douglas, (ARC Future Fellow, TC Beirne School of Law, University of Queensland) is leading a team of researchers to develop a National Family Violence Bench Book.

The proposal for a National Family Violence Bench Book arose from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's formal endorsement in 2013 of the earlier joint Australian Law Reform Commission Report 114 and New South Wales Law Reform Commission Report 128 contained in a document titled, Family Violence – A National Legal Response.

The Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration engaged the researchers in the Bench Book project, which will assist judicial officers in the treatment of family violence-related issues in a range of legal proceedings across Australian state, territory and federal jurisdictions.

As a leading provider of national resources for judicial education, the Australasian

Institute of Judicial Administration was invited by the Attorney-General's Department to facilitate the development of such a bench book. To ensure the depth and relevance of the project, judicial officers representing all jurisdictions will be consulted regularly for feedback on proposed content and approaches. The research team will consult with the broader group of stakeholders from time to time as needs dictate.

The National Family Violence Bench Book is intended as a critical tool for guiding judicial understanding of how family violence affects a range of legal proceedings across jurisdictions,



Research Team (LtoR): Imogen Riethmuller, Professor Heather Douglas and Senior Researcher, Kate Chapple

predominantly the interaction between protection orders, criminal law, family law, and child protection law. The primary aim of the bench book is to improve consistency in judicial approaches to family violence across Australia.

The project is based at the TC Beirne School

of Law, at The University of Queensland's St Lucia campus in Brisbane. Professor Douglas will be supported by senior researcher, Ms Kate Chapple, and a number of School researchers and staff.

"This is a significant project with great potential for assisting the judicial treatment of family violence-

related matters in all Australian courts. The initial engagement is two years from 1 June 2015 and the research team looks forward to the support and interest of the domestic and family violence sector in the development of the Bench Book." said Professor Douglas.

Professor Douglas invites Reader readers to contact the research team if they have any questions or concerns or wish to send any background or published material. The National Family Violence Bench Book project email address is: DVBenchbook@law.uq.edu.au

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The current prevalence of family violence in Australia is utterly unacceptable... It is fundamental that women and their families are safe from violence in their homes and communities, and that we remain absolutely committed to ensuring we reduce and ultimately end domestic violence. The Bench Book will be a comprehensive online tool for judges across Australia... It will promote best practice and consistency in judicial decision making in cases involving family violence.

This is a significant step towards an effective, harmonised approach to family violence in our courts. //

Joint Press Release: Senator The Hon George Brandis QC, Attorney-General and Senator The Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women

11th Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum

From the 2015 process evaluation

The 11th Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum, No shame- Name it, was held in Mackay on 6 and 7 May. As always it was a time for sharing, networking and learning; with services showcasing their programs and participants having the opportunity to engage in skilling circles facilitated by staff from SNAICC, DVConnect and Queensland AIDS Council. As evidenced through the daily evaluation, the Forum continues to be an extremely valuable resource for those responding to domestic and family violence.



of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they “learnt new things” at the Forum.

What was your favourite thing about the Forum this year?

“Skilling circles”



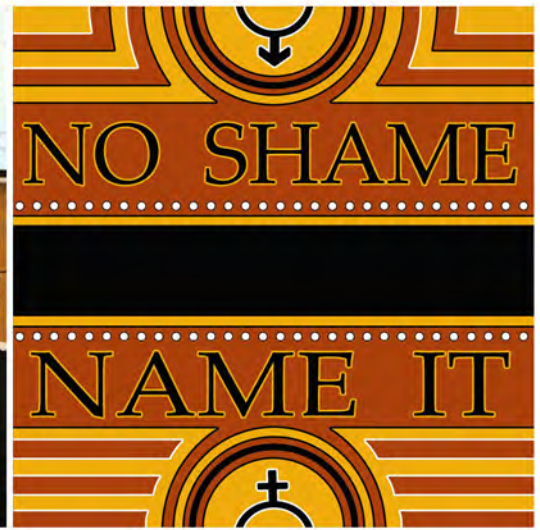
“Strong questions, strong ideas and great work being done in the community.”



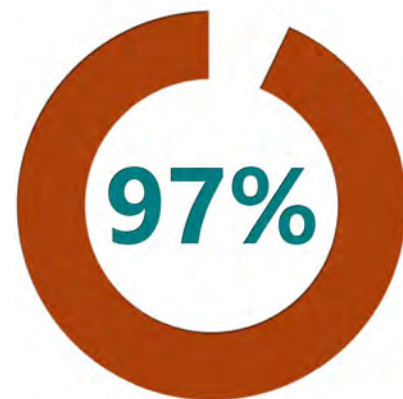
“Networking- learning from people from other areas, dealing with the same issues”

What will bring you back next year?

“Excellent opportunity to build knowledge in making my organisation more culturally competent and relevant”

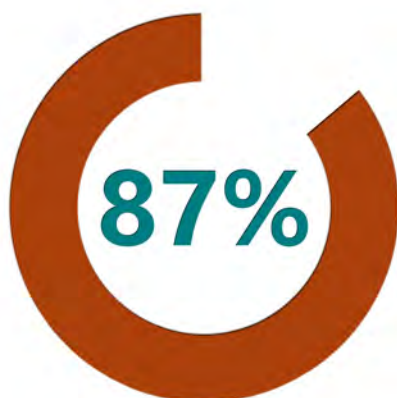


“Informative forum, great to be with other passionate workers and professionals”



of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they could use what they learnt at the Forum in their own work.

“Networking and understanding issues in remote community for women’s experience of DV”



of respondents would come back next year. 13% were undecided and 0% indicated they would not return to the Forum.



A Parallel Journey

Contributed by Andrew Frost, University of Canterbury

Director of Te Awatea Violence Research Centre at the University of Canterbury, Andrew is about to embark on a period of study leave. This includes a planned visit to the CDFVR scheduled for October. Involved in the human services field over some 30 years, Andrew remains involved in teaching, research, supervision, training, credentialing, and consultation.

Ko Roseberry te maunga, ko Avon te awa, ko Geordies te iwi, ko Andrew Frost ahau.

Roseberry is my mountain, Avon is my river, I belong to the tribe of 'Geordies', and Andrew Frost is my name.

Even as I write this, I can peer out from the swirl of exam marking and have, well within my sights now, the exhilarating prospect of six months of study leave, topped off with visits to Sydney and Queensland. In this brief introduction, I'm taking up the kind invitation of CDFV Director Annabel Taylor to present recent work, along with an overview of the ideas I would like to workshop with folks at the planned presentation in October.

In many ways the story of the journey leading to your door has been a complementary and parallel one to that of Annabel. As she began the process of moving out of the role of Te Awatea Violence Research Centre Director here at Canterbury University, I was moving into it. One of the first things to engage my attention in making this transition was the proportion of the centre's work that is, quite appropriately, devoted to DVF.

Domestic and family violence has been described as an epidemic in New Zealand. And, as contentious as this field is, I don't think I have heard anyone dispute the validity of that metaphor, regardless of political or ideological stripe. But beyond metaphor, the term, 'epidemic', clearly has also a literal connotation. The stem word, epidemiology, is, of course, the cornerstone of the study of public health, and I will return later to this notion.

Another thing that struck me in taking up this role is the extent of overlap in the understanding of DFV with what we know about sexual abuse – a field with which I am very familiar. Both forms of abuse occur in the context of concealment and collusion, and are characterised by exploitation, misattribution of responsibility, and the manipulation of blame. The strategies and tactics of those who abuse have much in common, I think. And this conduct is supported by a collusive, culturally-shaped system of power relations.

The focus of my research and practice in work with abusers has been largely to do with perpetrator programmes, and especially with matters of context and processes, primarily related to the process of therapeutic engagement. Struck by the range of reasons for undertaking programmes and the strategies of engagement adopted by



Andrew Frost, University of Canterbury

participants in them, it baffled me that we have not, until recently, considered how this process might be understood and promoted. It seems to me pointless to persist in dragging someone kicking and screaming through a programme; to paraphrase an old joke: it infects the hope and optimism of other participants, wears down practitioners, and annoys the client. On the other hand, a participant who brings or finds determination, positive expectation and, yes, a consuming curiosity about themselves, can 'buoy the passengers, inspire the crew, and progress the vessel'.

As a component of what I have referred to elsewhere as social therapy, groupwork with those who have abused offers the opportunity to engage them in an exploration of their own unmet needs for positive regard and connectedness. As a consequence, groupwork also provides opportunities for encounters that confront these men with the exploitive and evasive tactics they have deployed in interpersonal relationships in order to try to gain these human goods. In terms of therapeutic intention, the goal is of course to open up alternative, respectful and non-abusive means. But first they must commit to the process in which they will experience challenging, shaming, and personally confronting, here-and-now realities.

My own work in this field concerns the exploration of how this challenge might be met. On my way to Queensland I am scheduled to attend the conference of the Institute of Group Leaders in Sydney where I will present recent research on this topic. In the planned workshops in Queensland, I intend to engage folks in discussions about how the principles of group therapy might be used effectively and appropriately in inviting, engaging, and challenging men involved in perpetrator programmes. In doing so, I hope to promote the idea of working with DFV as community development – as a politics of men's practices, in the service of public health. I do appreciate this invitation from CDFVR, and I am looking forward to discussing and working on these ideas with you.

Date claimers

Public Lecture

The Criminal Justice Response to Intimate Partner Violence: Limitations and Possibilities

Presented by:
Fullbright Senior Specialist, Professor Leigh Goomark

Date: Monday 3 August 2015

Time: 10am - 11am followed by discussion, networking and refreshments concluding at 12pm

Venue: UQ Business School Executive Venue Level 19, Central Plaza One, Corner of Creek & Queen Streets Brisbane

RSVP: to law.uq.edu.au/fulbright-bris-lecture, by 28 July 2015

For further enquiries please contact events@law.edu.au



Professor of Law at the University of Maryland Frances King Carey School of Law; Professor Goodmark directs the Gender Violence Clinic, providing representation on intimate partner abuse, and cases involving gender violence. Her award-winning book, *A Troubled Marriage: Domestic Violence and the Legal System*, was released in 2012 by NYU Press.

Feminists fought hard for recognition that domestic violence was a crime and helped to conceive and build the criminal justice response that now dominates the worldwide discourse on addressing domestic violence.

But the decision to rely so heavily on the legal system as the primary systemic response to domestic violence in the United States has not been a success and has had serious unintended consequences for the men and women that come into contact with that system. The legal system's response essentialises people subjected to abuse, utilizes overly restrictive definitions of domestic violence, inappropriately relies on separation to protect people subjected to abuse and restricts the autonomy of people subjected to abuse through the use of mandatory policies. This talk will discuss those problems and imagine a reconfigured legal response to domestic violence.

Two Day: Masterclass and workshop

Masterclass: working with men

Presenters: Dr Andrew Frost

Date: 13 October

Time: To be confirmed

Venue: To be confirmed

RSVP to: c.gunning@cqu.edu.au

Workshop: Groupwork skills

Presenter: Dr Andrew Frost

Date: 14 October

Time: To be confirmed

Venue: To be confirmed

RSVP to: c.gunning@cqu.edu.au

Practitioner-led webinar 2015 calendar

28 August

The use of volunteers for complex service delivery

Presented by: Jo Bryant, CEO, Protecting all children together
Find more information or register [click here](#)

30 October

The language of accountability

Presented by: Mark Walters, Mensline Coordinator, DVConnect
Find more information or register [click here](#)

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If you would like to be included on, or removed from, the Centre's mailing list, please ring us on (07)4940 3320.

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Queensland
Government

The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research receives defined term funding from the Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services to undertake research and develop educational resources pertaining to domestic and family violence in Queensland.

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