

FAVTEA BULLETIN

*News, Information and Resources on Domestic and Family Violence
In San Francisco, Marin, Alameda, Contra Costa & Sacramento Counties*

Family Violence Treatment and Education Association

www.FAVTEA.com

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JOIN FAVTEA!

Membership is open to individuals working with perpetrators and/or victims of family violence. Meetings are held between 9:30a.m. and 12:30 p.m. in Berkeley the last Wednesday in December, March, June and September.

For more details, telephone Darlene Pratt at (510) 644-8190, or e-mail her at: totentree@hotmail.com



FAVTEA members (clockwise from left) Gene Arnovitz, Terry Gilbert, John Hamel, and Jackie Ray on steps of Capitol building, Sacramento, after testifying before Assembly Public Safety Committee on April 25.

AB 2051: DV Bill Excludes Male Victims

By Michael Robinson

Recently, the Assembly Judiciary and Public Safety Committees passed out assembly bill AB 2051 authored by Assembly Member Rebecca Cohn, of the 24th assembly district. This is a domestic violence bill that would help to provide educational material relating to domestic violence within the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities. The bill also requires the appointment of a representative to the Domestic Violence Advisory Counsel, which advises on policy and training to the legislature and other state governments agencies.

Last October 2005, a class action lawsuit was filed against the state, state agencies and several shelters regarding discrimination in the state's policy under Health and Safety Code 124250, which defined domestic violence vic-

tims as only women. The Cohn bill, AB 2051 was not introduced until February 16, 2006.

Southern California attorney Marc Angelucci filed the lawsuit, Megan Black v. California, on behalf of Megan Black, the now adult child of an abused father and several other male victims of domestic violence who were denied services as victims. Megan also suffered.

Angelucci had made numerous contacts to Cohn's office after it was learned that she would be introducing a bill to amend H&S code 124250 and other code sections. According to Angelucci, Cohn's office advised him that she was considering his request to include all victims, including straight males.

Recent Center for Disease Control data

(continued on page 2)



Michael Robinson

WE NEED ARTICLES!

FAVTEA welcomes submissions to its newsletter. Each issue goes out to approximately 100 individuals and organizations in the Greater Bay Area, including Children & Family Services, battered women's shelters, law enforcement, certified domestic violence treatment providers, family court specialists and various mental health professionals. We are looking for submissions in the following categories:

NEWS – New programs at your agency, upcoming events, etc.

RESOURCES - Information on other organizations who provide clinical, legal or other services to those who have experienced family violence, or agencies that provide education and training.

ARTICLES – We welcome original articles. These may include essays by clinicians on theory, assessment and treatment, or first-hand accounts by victims of family violence. We also seek summaries/reviews of books, journal articles and media stories.

Articles should not exceed 1,500 words. Submissions should be in Word, and sent via e-mail to the editor, John Hamel, LCSW, at: angercounseling@aol.com. Submit no later than one month prior to publication of next issue (Sept. 1 or March 1). Include address and/or phone number, and brief bio./credentials. John can be contacted at: (415) 472-3275.

(Continued from page 1)
shows that males represent at least 36 percent of all domestic violence victims. Many other studies and data sources show that domestic violence by men and women is about equal.

The arguments against current state policies and AB 2051 is not just about the males that are being discriminated against - their children are also being discriminated against because they do not get the same services (e.g., counseling, shelter) that the children of abused women get. Experts in the field are getting fed up with the politics that surround this issue. Information in this regard had been provided to the committee members.

Despite all the position letters urging Cohn to amend the bill to assure that all victims are recognized, she failed to respond and address the inequities. Each committee member had been provided with evidence of the need to include straight males. Still, during the hearings not a single member challenged the data or information offered to support the need to include straight males let alone ask any questions. Except for one Democrat who abstained in Public Safety, the bill passed out of the committee on a party line vote with the republicans opposing because of discrimination. The other problem with the bill is that it could cause the state the risk of losing 10's of millions in federal STOP grant money.

Many international respected domestic violence experts wrote positions letters opposing the bill unless it was amended to include all victims, including straight men. The federal law, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), was amended last year and made substantial changes in Section 3, Universal Definitions and Grant Requirements, including a requirement that the programs be gender neutral. Other changes also included section 4002 (8) "Nothing in this title shall be construed to prohibit male victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking from receiving benefits and services under this title." The General Accounting Office (GAO) section 512 also made changes to make sure that the data was being tracked more accurately and better grant funding accountability. More information can be found at www.vawa4all.org, Safe Homes for Children and Families, which is allied with California Alliance for Families and Children (CAFC)

Members of the Family Violence Treatment and Education Association (www.favtea.com)

spoke against the bill, among them Jackie Ray, Gene Arnovitz, Terry Gilbert and John Hamel. Author of *Gender Inclusive Treatment of Intimate Partner Abuse* (Springer, 2005), Hamel has gained international respect for his work on family violence (www.JohnHamel.net). As a member of SAFE (Stop Abuse for Everyone), he has also been highly supportive of the LGBT community regarding domestic violence. Hamel is quoted as saying:

"As currently written, AB 2051 expands funds currently available for female victims to help heterosexual female, gay, lesbian and transgender individuals. This is a much-needed and welcome step towards full inclusion of all victims. However, the bill deliberately ignores heterosexual males, even though they incur approximately one third of domestic violence related injuries. If gay, lesbian and transgender individuals, who represent a relatively small proportion of all domestic violence victims (fourteen times less than straight men), are to benefit from the same range of services currently available to heterosexual women, why deny these services to heterosexual males?"

"There is an overwhelming, irrefutable body of research indicating that children are adversely affected by witnessing interparental violence *regardless of the perpetrator's gender*. Boys and girls who have seen their mother physically assault their father are just as likely as those who witnessed their father assault their mother to perpetrate dating violence as adolescents and assault their intimate partners in adulthood. The research evidence also finds that parents who assault one another are also likely to also assault their children, *and this correlation holds equally for mothers and fathers*. By ignoring the problem of female-on-male violence, Cohn's bill is not only blatantly gender biased and discriminatory; but more importantly, it actually inhibits our common efforts to effectively combat domestic violence in our communities. Unless amended to specifically include all victims of domestic violence – male, female, gay or straight – this fraudulent piece of legislation should not be allowed to become law."

Michael Robinson is a Sacramento lobbyist and Chair of Safe Homes for Children and Families. For updated information about AB2051, e-mail Michael at wm_robinson@comcast.net.

Shelter for Male and Female Victims: A Co-Ed Model (Part 1)

By Carol Ensign and Patricia Jones

The Antelope Valley Domestic Violence Council (AVDVC) was organized in 1980 at the request of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The Antelope Valley is located in the Northern High Desert area of the county and, during the 1980's was experiencing an inordinate amount of family violence. Spearheaded by Supervisor Michael Antonovich, the Antelope Valley Domestic Violence Council was formed to address this important social problem. Through his efforts, a life-long, free-lease on an area of county property was obtained.

Subsequent to approval of the free-lease, renovation of the property and granting of the non-profit status, the *Valley Oasis Shelter* opened up its doors on September 21, 1981. Since that time the shelter has served approximately 25,000 victims of domestic violence with twenty-four (24) hours of shelter services, around the clock crisis intervention and meals which are prepared by the residents in their cottages. In its early years, Valley Oasis was the largest shelter in the state of California with a bed capacity of 102. The capacity has been reduced over the years to accommodate space for service programs; however, the shelter still remains one of the largest in the state. The current shelter configuration allows emergency space for 65 men, women and children. The reputation of the shelter is nationally known; and victims from Ohio, Wisconsin, Colorado and, as far away as Florida have sought shelter with the Valley Oasis.

As the Domestic Violence Movement progressed, it became apparent that shelter was far from the only service needed by victims and their children. Counseling, peer support, education and childcare were only a few of the additional services in demand. Responding to the growing needs of victims, the Council developed a variety of support programs designed to address the personal and communal challenges facing its clients. Current services include crisis intervention transitional housing, childcare, school readiness programming, peer counseling, case management, social service advocacy, legal advocacy, domestic violence education, living skills and parenting education, individual and group therapy for both adults and children, and community awareness and education.

The Council has grown from its modest beginning with a start-up grant for \$50,000.00 to its current budget of over \$3,000,000.00, employing an average of 45 employees and operating seven program locations; and while the Agency is far more than a shelter, the Valley Oasis Shelter remains its core program, the beginning of each victim's long journey to well-being.

The Co-ed Model

The agency's decision to accept male victims of family violence and offer them the SAME residential and support

services offered nation-wide to female victims of domestic violence seemed not only a practical one, but essentially, a *necessary one*. Nowhere in the definition of violence, "*the act or an instance of violent action or behavior; abusive or unjust exercise of power,*" (American Heritage ® Dictionary) does it state that violence is a gender specific issue. In other words, a particular act should not be deemed violent only when perpetrated by a male. And yet, because of the feminist roots of the victims' movement, efforts to help female victims have somehow overshadowed the reality that men can and are abused by female intimate partners. Depending on whose research you accept, the percent of domestic violence perpetrated by women on their male partners is anywhere between 15% of the total, according to crime reports (Rennison, 2003), and 50% according to most random sample surveys (Archer, 2000; Fiebert, 2004). The AVDVC, however, has never been compelled to pinpoint the exact percentage, the program has always been based on the belief that even ONE male victim in need of services is sufficient. Additionally, because domestic violence perpetrated by either parent is detrimental to children, the absence of services for victimized fathers and their children seemed to us a problem in dire need of remediation.

It cannot be overlooked that Valley Oasis' decision to accept men was rooted in its unique configuration. While many shelters began and still remain, single unit, "dormitory" settings, the agency has been fortunate to operate in a location offering multiple housing units, thus allowing for the residential separation of male and female clients; however, it should be noted that on occasion, capacity has forced the coed housing of clients and no problems or objections have arisen.

Cooperation with Law Enforcement and Batterer Intervention

The Antelope Valley is in the jurisdiction of only one law enforcement agency, the Los Angeles County Sheriff. There are two stations, one in the City of Palmdale and the other in the City of Lancaster. The administrative staff of Valley Oasis has worked diligently to develop a positive relationship with law enforcement. For five years the Sheriff Department had a domestic violence response team. The team was comprised of two officers, one sergeant and one lieutenant that were highly trained in the field of domestic violence. The agency had two domestic violence advocates that actually responded with the deputies to domestic violence calls. Over the five years the team was in operation successful filing and prosecution of domestic violence cases rose 40%. This team was dissolved in 2003 due to State and County fiscal cutbacks. The agency continues to have advocates go to the sheriff stations to pick up reports for follow-up calls and services. The agency staff goes to monthly role calls at both stations to answer questions the deputies may have and to provide on going domestic violence training. The agency has two officers from the sheriff department on its' Board of Directors. The trust that has been groomed over the years has been a key factor in the agency staff educating sheriff deputies to the issues, dynamics and behaviors of domestic violence victims, especially male victims. The deputies (continued on page 5)

Domestic Violence: A Human Problem—Not a Gender Problem

“Twenty-five years ago, the problem of wife abuse went virtually unnoticed by the legal, medical, social and research communities. Up till that point, women caught in abusive relationships were left to suffer in silence with no where to turn to for help or understanding. Little support was provided by their own families because of strong adherence to the notion of “to death do you part.” Much of the credit for the increased public knowledge about wife assaults is attributed to the women’s movement which, through its tireless efforts, has brought the issue of wife battering to the forefront. Today, wife abuse has been identified as the single most important dimension of family violence... However, the lobby for the protection of women has been at the expense of protecting other family members also at risk for abuse. In some quarters of both popular and media culture, as well as the legislative culture, violence against women by men has literally squeezed out recognition of other forms of family violence, including the violence perpetrated by women against other women (siblings, daughters, mothers and lesbian partners), against children, and against male partners and elderly fathers...

At the centre of the debate on family violence is the argument over who is the biggest victim. Feminists would have us believe that women are unquestionably the greater victims and men are the greater perpetrators - even at the cost of invented figures, illogical arguments and suppressed empirical data which dispel this position. It has been suggested that feminists fear that what is perceived as the more serious problem of wife abuse will be impeded by drawing attention to other forms of domestic violence....that by sharing the victim spotlight with men, funds will be diverted away from women’s shelters and advocacy and towards the needs of men and others suffering abuse. Is it too naive of me to suggest that by viewing family violence - and specifically spouse abuse - as a much larger problem than has been until now, more funds could be directed to domestic abuse programs which recognize the role of both partners. These funds could then be used to bring about long term solutions by working with couples and their families instead of the current band aid strategies that shelters offer to women alone.

I cannot help being frustrated by attempts to resolve the abuse that many women suffer by turning a blind eye to other women who inflict serious physical and emotional abuse on their loved ones. By denying this aspect of many women’s existence, we do little to help women cope with life’s stressors, or assist them in building more satisfactory intimate relationships...Even more damaging to the image of women is the self imposed label of victim. In doing so, we deny ourselves the empowerment that we have long strived for. As long as women subscribe to the notion of universal victimization, they will never experience the freedom that goes along with having control over their lives.”

-Reena Sommer, speaking at the 1995 Women’s Freedom Network Conference

“On the whole, men do indeed have a more powerful left hook. The problem is that the dynamic of domestic violence is not analogous to two differently weighted boxers in a ring. There are relational strategies and psychological issues at work in an intimate relationship that negate the fact of physical strength. At the heart of the matter lies human will. Which partner - by dint of temperament, personality, life history - has the will to harm the other?”

-Patricia Pearson, *When She Was Bad: Women and the Myth of Innocence*, p. 117.

“At some point, one has to ask whether feminists are more interested in diminishing violence within a population or promoting a political ideology. If they are interested in diminishing violence, it should be diminished for all members of a population and by the most effective and utilitarian means possible.”

-Dutton, D., & Nicholls, T. (2005). A critical review of the gender paradigm in domestic violence research and theory: Part 1— theory and data *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 10, 680-714.

GENDER-INCLUSIVE RESEARCH AVAILABLE FROM FAVTEA

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LIBRARY

Abstracts/first pages for over 325 journal articles and book chapters on intimate partner abuse are now available from FAVTEA. This comprehensive collection contains the most significant studies and meta-analytic reviews from the past 30 years - as well as the most recent research. Address such topics as prevalence rates, gender differences and similarities, etiology and risk factors, the context of violence (including self-defense, mutual vs. unilateral assaults, extent of physical and psychological injury to victims), the impact of partner abuse on children; and the effectiveness of current policy and intervention strategies. Ideal for researchers and anyone interested in expanding their knowledge of domestic violence.

Price: \$35.00, including shipping cost

120-PAGE INFORMATIONAL MANUAL “DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TODAY”

This manual provides a comprehensive, organized summary of research on domestic violence, including much of the literature in the Domestic Violence Library. It can be viewed and downloaded from the web. Go to www.JohnHamel.net, and click on the “research” link on the home page. The manual is divided into the following 7 sections, and each can be downloaded separately:

Prevalence Rates * Context

Risk Factors * Relationship Dynamics * Socialization

Gender Roles * Power and Control

Co-Ed Shelter (Continued)

have been open to learning about male victimization and as a result have been able to identify male victims and make referrals to the agency as well as encouraging male victims to go to the shelter. In addition to being given resources and referrals by law enforcement, male victims in the Antelope Valley receive more understanding and compassion from law enforcement officers. A positive result from the relationship between Valley Oasis and the Sheriff Department is that deputies from other stations in Los Angeles County are aware of the services that Valley Oasis provides and not only make referrals to male victims but on numerous occasions, have driven male victims up to the shelter.

The Antelope Valley has one District Attorneys Office. This office has a designated domestic violence attorney who works with the agency very closely. Up until the cutbacks of 2003, the agency had a District Attorney on its' Board of Directors. The agency provides training to the DAs on domestic violence and male victim issues. As a result, more cases involving male victims are being accepted by the DA.

The agency has developed a close working relationship with the judges and commissioners at the Court House. At the request of several judges, the agency has advocates at the courthouse to provide support and resources to victims. The advocates work out of an office that is shared with local attorneys. This arrangement was solicited by the attorneys and has proven successful. It has provided the advocates an opportunity to educate attorneys about issues concerning male victims. In addition, the agency has been able to meet with local judges and discuss male victim concerns

and issues. This relationship has resulted in judges having an increased awareness of the dynamics and behaviors of couples in domestic violence relationships where the male is the victim and male victims are being treated with compassion and understanding in more courtrooms.

Valley Oasis is the only domestic violence shelter in the Antelope Valley and there are 5 or 6 batterer's intervention programs. Staff members attend monthly batterer's service provider meetings to discuss treatment issues of domestic violence victims and perpetrators including male victims and female batterers and the impact this dynamic has on children, family members and society. Present at these meetings are also judges and attorneys.

Carol Ensign has been Executive Director of the Antelope Valley Domestic Violence Council for 9 years. Patricia Jones is Co-Director of the shelter. Carol and Trish speak regularly on victim issues, including the needs of male victims and their children. They can be reached at (661) 949-1916.

This article is an unedited, prepublication excerpt from their chapter to appear in the upcoming book, *Family Approaches to Domestic Violence: A Guide to Gender-Inclusive Research and Treatment*, edited by John Hamel and Tonia Nicholls (Springer Publishing, 2006).

Part 2 of this article will be published in the next issue of the FAVTEA Bulletin (October, 2006).

Resources

HELPLINK - (800) 273-6222 - General information line

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE - (800) 799-7233.
www.NDVH.org

CHILD HELP U.S.A.—(800) 4 A CHILD; (800) 422-4453

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AMERICA—www.preventchildabuse.org
Family Violence information and resources; chapters in 39 states.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COUCIL - Community organization provides resources for abused children and their families

(Contra Costa County)	(Alameda County)	(Marin County)
(925) 946-9961	(510) 780-8989	(415) 507-0181

KID'S TURN - (415) 437-0700 Counseling for children of divorce

YOUTH CRISIS LINE - (800) 843-5200 For children in crisis

SAFE - www.safe4all.org.—Resources for victims of DV, with emphasis on underserved populations - men, gay & lesbian

DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE FOR MEN - Resources for male victims and female perpetrators throughout U.S. (888) 743-5754

MARIN VIOLENCE PREVENTION FORUM - (415) 258-4813
(www.violencepreventionforum.org) Community education/resources

ADVISORY COUNCIL AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE- In Contra Costa county. Contact: Devorah Levine (925) 335-1017

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONSORTIUM - S.F. (415) 626-8709

FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNCIL—Community based organization concerned with child abuse and domestic violence. For meeting times and location, contact Ruthanne Allen, PhD, (510) 670-6350

LIST OF BAY AREA SHELTERS, COUNSELING AND LEGAL RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.FAVTEA.COM.

CALL JOHN HAMEL (415) 472-3275 FOR COMPLETE LIST OF DV-RELATED WEBSITES.

Systems Considerations in Working with Court Ordered Domestic Violence Offenders

By Lonnie Hazlewood, M.S.H.P., L.C.D.C., C.C.C.J.S.

The patriarchal causative model proposed by feminists, stated briefly, is that men go through a gender role socialization process that teaches them to believe in their right as males to exercise power and control over women. There is a related complex of beliefs that are not only present in men, but are expressed by the institutions of society and culture. The "Duluth Model" (Pence & Paymer, 1993) is the most widespread same sex group treatment approach based on this analysis of domestic violence. Activists in the battered women's movement and battered women in Duluth, Minnesota relying heavily on the work on Dobash & Dobash (1989), developed this model. This model rejects treatment through insight models, family systems theory or cognitive-behavioral models in favor of a sociopolitical model with the Power and Control Wheel, describing male-perpetrated abuse and control behaviors, as a central feature. Its goal is to challenge and change traditional patriarchal beliefs held by men and the behaviors associated with power and control of women. It denies or rejects violence committed by women and therefore inappropriate in the treatment of female, gay and lesbian offenders.

A second causative model used by same sex group treatment method is the social learning theory and generational transfer. Work by Leonard Berkowitz, Albert Bandura, Richard Walters, Robert Baron and many others during the 1960's and 1970's contend that violent behavior is learned similar to other complex human behavior. Consequently, any learned behavior can be changed (Rotter, 1982) and new behaviors can be learned. This theory lead to a group of therapeutic strategies known as cognitive-behavioral therapies (Bush, 2003) and is used in same sex group treatment of male offenders, sometime referred to as psycho-educational, to teach anger management skills, but also to encourage new communication, assertiveness, conflict resolution behaviors and other positive relationship behaviors.

Same sex group treatment of men has demonstrated moderate effectiveness in diminishing and eliminating future abuse and violence. My own work with Stacey and Shupe (1987 & 1994) on outcomes of a specific psycho educational model program in Austin, Texas showed that about 70% (partner's report) vs. 82% (men's report) of program completers had not used physical violence on follow-up. Of those who did commit physical violence after program completion all were less severe, 70%, or about the same, 30%, (partner report) and 78.5% and 21.5% respectively from men's reports. We also found significant positive differences between program completers and those not completing treatment. Of the follow-up sample of non-completers almost 67% of female partners reported continuing physical violence and almost 45% of men admitted continued violence.

Where legally permissible, significant programmatic

changes need to be considered either at the community level, centralized assessment and referral systems, or at the programmatic level to include gender inclusive principles. First, assessment should include an interview not only with the identified victim, but when possible with the children or other witnesses to the abusive event. This is a process that should be done through police investigation, but too often police educated in the patriarchal view of domestic violence are trained to look for evidence of male wrongdoing, rather than ascertaining who is the most likely person to have committed the assault, and are too busy or lack motivation to pursue a more thorough investigation of the facts. This process needs to include a risk assessment that leads to a referral to treatment involving differing approaches and durations.

Also important are attempts to understand couples and family abusive dynamics, within a gender-inclusive perspective. I have devised a conflict tactics type survey in my program, the Domestic Violence Threat Containment Intensive Treatment Program, in Austin, Texas based on the Center for Social Research abuse scale (Shupe & Stacey, 1984). It attempts to capture the types of abuse and violence between intimates, who and how often did each initiate physical violence and what types of injuries were sustained. It is reproduced at the end of this chapter (see table 2). Each member of the couple completes this scale. This type of process can give important information about couples abuse and violence and differentiating types of domestic violence: single unidirectional abuse and violence, escalation of violence from verbal and psycho emotional abuse and mutual abuse and violence. This type of information is also important in determining treatment approach.

Communities and programs need to offer a variation in the duration of same sex group treatment based on the individual's assessment. Those men who commit single acts of violence or mild levels of violence, i.e., restraint, pushing, shoving, slapping with no history of injury or those using size and strength against their partner when no physical contact is made as in interfering with a 911 call are appropriate for short term approaches; whereas, those men who represent higher levels of injury and threat need to undergo moderate or long term length programs. Those leading or supervising BIP groups who want to apply gender inclusive and systemic principles to men's groups must be prepared to listen to men's experiences without defensiveness or ideological positions to protect. Men usually arrive to these groups with resentments, emotional wounds, significant untreated individual /couple/family dysfunction and alcohol and substance abuse problems.

First, one must realize the difference between responsibility and blame. If your demeanor and presentation project blame and fault to group members you have a greater barrier to overcome in forming any kind of therapeutic alliance with the group. Taking responsibility of one's thoughts, feelings and actions is an empowering process that leads to an assumption that one can control oneself, whereas blame and fault produce shame, which can lead to anger and rage. This does not mean that someone who has

committed abuse or violence should be protected from the natural emotional consequence of guilt and remorse. It means interacting with men in ways that show that you as the group leader know they are responsible for choosing their responses to their intimate partner and other family members, while validating their own experiences of abuse and injustice.

One method for promoting responsibility taking by group members is to correct language usage from an external agent of control to an internal one. Often a group member will describe their behaviors of abuse or violence as caused by his intimate partner, as in “she pushed my button”, “she put me in jail” or “she made me angry”. This can be reframed by asking the person to rephrase their statement using *I* as in “I reacted when she said or did something” and “I got angry”. There are many opportunities in other situations and interactions to make linguistic redefinitions of causation. One does not have to invalidate the reality of the external circumstance or the group member’s reaction to it, but continually stress the individual’s primary ownership of it.

Misidentifying the causation of one’s responses to external stimuli in interpersonal interactions leads to feelings of powerlessness, produces faulty coping responses and ends in externalizing blame and attempts to control. If I am made to be angry, I have no control over my response and have to change or control the external causation to not be angry. Most people can easily understand the self-defeating nature of this strategy, since control of another person is an impossible task that leads to frustration and anger. A more accurate identification of causation for behavior, this response was learned in the past, leads to more adaptive responses that centered within the individual. Perception, beliefs, cognitions and behavior can be changed in ways that lead to successful coping with circumstances and behaviors the individual experiences as provocative.

Clients court-mandated to a domestic violence program are often resentful. An immediate source of resentment has to do with the criminal justice system process, which has precipitated their referral for treatment. It is inadvisable to align oneself with this process, since program participants usually already see the program and group leader as part of this system. One can empathize with a client’s resentments toward the criminal justice system, while continuing to hold that individual responsible for their choices. Assumptions of legal guilt are counterproductive and can lead to power struggles between the client/group and the leader. The high rate of plea-bargaining can certainly produce a significant number of false positives for domestic violence and those referred to treatment from pretrial diversion processes and conditions of bond have not been adjudicated. A group leader can acknowledge these truths without colluding and still hold a participant responsible for the choice of being in the program. After all, ultimately there is a choice in our justice system to accept an offer to plead guilty or no contest to a criminal charge for a known outcome or choose to plead non-guilty and this can be stressed with those who voice this resentment.

Also brought up as a source of resentment is the cost of treatment and the profit motive of the provider. As one man recently stated in group “I told the judge that the whole thing was just about money and putting asses in classes”. These inquiries need

to be met honestly and non-defensively even when it is stated in what appears to be an insulting way. The group leader can respond honestly to these statements personally “you’re right I would not be here if I was not being paid” and for private program providers there is indeed a profit motive like any other business. One does not need to be ashamed of this truth in a capitalistic society.

Another common refrain from men in same sex groups is “why doesn’t she have to attend counseling she’s part of the problem too?” The group leader can reply with a criminal analogy that points out that a victim of robbery is not required to attend counseling as well as others victims of crime are not. It can also be pointed out that individual counseling for his intimate partner is available and couples counseling can also be pursued outside of the program. A list of referrals is helpful, especially those that include low fee or sliding fee scale options. The group leader also needs to redirect this inquiry and point out that the group program has the specific goal of eliminating abuse and violence and is not intended as a cure for all problems in a couple or family (Hamel, 2005).

A corollary complex of complaints about intimate partners of men in group that are in intact relationships are “I’m changing but she isn’t”, “she won’t let me leave when I get too angry”, “she threatens to call the police, if I don’t do what she wants” and “I’m afraid she might make a false accusation”. In my clinical experience these complaints are reasonable and often true. A response from the group leader that says verbally or nonverbally “I don’t believe you”, or “I’m not interested” is counterproductive to positive change. If a program is having contact with the partner at intake, strategies can include informing victims that “when he get too angry and may become abusive or violent he is instructed to leave the scene, and we really need your help in allowing him to leave, this is for your safety”. The group leader can encourage a man to take responsibility and to grow by pointing out that in a system any change causes responses from other parts of the system and is accompanied by the adaptation of others, and that it may take time for his efforts to be noticed. Typically there is small incremental progress taking place, unnoticed until the change accumulates to a level that is recognizable. Another group strategy is to point out the man’s choice of leaving the relationship if he is fearful of his partner making false accusations against him, or threatening to call the police for nonviolent acts of which she disapproves. Not only does this intervention provide a viable option on which he may take action, but also serves to uncover important issues of dependency.

Lonnie Hazlewood has worked in the domestic violence field for 25 years. He is currently the Director of the Domestic Violence Threat Containment Intensive Treatment Program in Texas, and has co-authored two pioneering books—Violent Men, Violent Couples (1984) and The Violent Couple (1992).

This article is an unedited, pre-publication excerpt from his chapter to appear in *Family Approaches to Domestic Violence: A Guide to Gender-Inclusive Research and Treatment*, edited by John Hamel and Tonia Nicholls (Springer Publishing, 2006).

ABOUT FAVTEA

FAVTEA is comprised of family violence specialists in the Greater Bay Area, who are concerned about partner, child, sibling and elderly abuse. Our goal is to reduce violence in the home, and to build safe, healthy and productive relationships. In our view, this goal can best be realized within a gender-inclusive, whole-system framework. We believe that domestic violence cannot be separated from family violence. We also believe that family violence is a human issue, not a gender issue, that current public policy towards intervention is short-sighted and inadequate, and that effective treatment must be empirically derived, based upon sound research and clinical experience.

We believe that family violence stems from learned behavior, as well as early trauma and disrupted childhood attachment, which can be altered and repaired. Our approaches are eclectic and practical, and we reject rigid, “one-size-fits-all” methods. We empower our clients by helping them stay safe, providing them resources, teaching them alternatives to abuse, and by holding them accountable for their actions. There is truly “no excuse” for domestic violence.

CURRENT AND UPCOMING BOOKS BY FAVTEA MEMBERS

“Essential reading.”

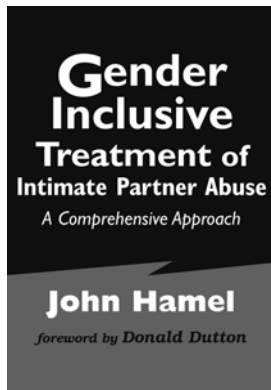
- Albert R. Roberts, PhD, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey

“Hats off to Hamel who has written *the* manual for responding to this complex problem.”

- Linda Mills, PhD, JD, MSW, New York University

“This is the best book I have read on the topic of domestic violence treatment.”

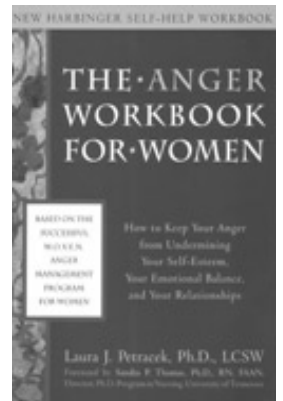
- Terri Moffitt, PhD
University of Wisconsin



By John Hamel

“Finally, a comprehensive anger workbook for women– thoughtful and informative... a must for any woman who struggles with constructively expressing anger...This exceptional book will help women stop destructive patterns of anger, whether they lash out or hold it in, and have healthier, happier lives and relationships. I am thrilled to have such a great resource for my clients.”

-Valerie Coleman, PhD, Psychologist and adjunct faculty member, Loyola Marymount University
By Laura Petracek



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Family Approaches to Domestic Violence:

A Guide to Gender-inclusive Research and Treatment

Edited by John Hamel & Tonia Nicholls—Springer Publishing (August, 2006)

With chapters written by: Julia Babcock, Michael Carolla, Tom Chapman, Valerie Coleman, Don Dutton, Irene Frieze, Jennifer Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Kathleen Malley-Morrison, K. Daniel O’Leary, Darlene Pratt and Murray Straus.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

FAVTEA BULLETIN is published in April and October. For annual subscription, complete this form with check for \$10 made payable to “FAVTEA.” Send to: John Hamel, LCSW, 1226 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

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