Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence

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Abstract

Domestic Violence is a pervasive crime. It weaves itself into the network of our society. In Aotearoa/ New Zealand the Government has introduced legislation designed to reduce and prevent violence in the home and has seen an increase in reported domestic violence since its introduction. Despite some evidence to the contrary, when all types of violence are taken into account the majority of victims are women and children. Domestic violence can be best understood in terms of power and control in relationships, and gender relations in our society, and our socio-cultural-historical context. Given our current legislative context, policing is a critical dimension of effective intervention to reduce and prevent domestic violence. This research explores women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence in a rural, South Island locality. Alongside professional and university ethics, feminist research principles guided the researcher's engagement with women participants in semi-structured interviews. A narrative approach to research was used as a framework to gather, analyze and write up the accounts of nine women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence. Through this narrative approach a co-creative, fluid and dynamic relationship between the researcher and participants produced hybrid accounts and new insights and understandings in relation to domestic violence and the policing of this crime. Findings are presented as themes related to three clearly identified phases in the women's stories of policing: making contact, police responses and their impact, referrals and follow up. The research suggests there are still substantial problems for women's safety in relation to effective policing of domestic violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand from the standpoints of these women.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and review of the literature.

"So go to the women ... For you will hear nothing of women as long as you are bending them to your will." (Irigaray, 1991.p.39)

Contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand society has been described as increasingly violent with 63,685 violent offences reported to police in 2005 (N.Z. Police, 2006). For the calendar year ending 30 June 2006 violent crime had risen 10.2 percent (Statistics New Zealand, 2008). According to the Commissioner of Police, Rob Robinson (2003), this is a concerning statistic, all the more so as 45% of violent crimes reported are recorded as domestic violence. This issue is of grave importance to all of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The New Zealand Police strategic plan to 2006 notes an increase in violent crime and acknowledges:

"... a small number of people (mainly women and children) suffer a disproportionate level of victimisation for violence and sexual offending." (2002. p.11)

This statement implies that it is women and children who are suffering the most from violence. Statistics (NCIWR, 2007; Robertson, Busch, D'Souza, Lam Sheung, Anand, Balzar, Simpson & Paina, 2007), meta analyses (Kimmel, 2002), and anecdotal comment (pers. comm. Women's Refuge workers, NZCY&FS social workers, NZ Police family violence workers, 2006) also suggest that it is men who are the disproportionate perpetrators of this violence towards women and children.

The battering of wives has long been an issue for women. Not so long ago many women believed that to become the property of her husband was part of the natural order and part of becoming a wife. Constituent requirements of this natural order included her being controlled, directed and even punished by her husband (Dobash & Dobash, 1979, 1992, 1998; Edwards, 1989).

More recently, in Aotearoa/New Zealand, legislation (Domestic Violence Act, 1995), law enforcement policies and procedures (N.Z. Police, 1996), social service delivery (NZCYFS, Refuge & Police training, 1996), health (Fanslow, 2002; Hand, Elizabeth, Martin, Rauwhero, Burton, Selby & Falanitule, 2002; Heise, Ellsberg & Gottemoeller, 1999; King, 2000; Public Health Commission, 1994; Public Health Commission, 1995) and welfare (McMaster & Swain, 1989, NZ Ministry of Social Development (NZMSD), 2002) initiatives have recognised the social nature of male violence towards women. That is, violence against women is manifested, supported and maintained through social structures and social power relations.

According to Te Rito: the New Zealand Family Violence strategy, the cause of family violence includes:

"... systemic and environmental variables, such as inequality, patriarchy, the impact of colonisation, and discrimination; and variables, such as power imbalances/differences and personal/psychological characteristics/ traits/attributes." (NZ MSD, 2002 p.10)

Roma Balzer, New Zealand's National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) past Kaiwhakahaere/National Co-ordinator, comments that

"... *Women and children are dying at the hands of their batterer in greater numbers than ever before...* "(2004.p.8)

Women's Refuge statistics (NCIWR, 2007) and prevalence studies (see Kimmel, 2002 for an overview of these studies) show that the overwhelming majority of these acts of violence including murder occur at the hands of men. Crime victimization statistics that include all forms of violence and context variables such as sexual violence, violence by ex-partners and violence perpetrated by partners outside the home (Browne, Williams & Dutton 1998; Dugan, Nagin, & Rosenfeld, 1999; DeKeseredy, 2000; Gelles, 2000; Straus, 1999), indicate that men perpetrate the majority of domestic violence.

In the face of this evidence, some studies in Aotearoa/New Zealand (eg. Fergusson, 1998; Fergusson, Horwood & Ridder, 2005; Moffit & Caspi, 1999) have claimed that women are as violent as men. The way that domestic violence is measured may be the difference between studies that show gender symmetry and those that show that men assaulting women forms the majority of domestic violence. It appears that domestic violence has clear gender asymmetry when studies utilise measures that include context variables, whereas gender symmetry is seen in studies that utilise a measure called the Conflict Tactic Scale (CTS).

According to Kimmel (2002)

"The CTS simply counts acts of violence, but takes no account of the circumstances under which these acts occur. Who initiates the violence, the relative size and strength of the people involved, the nature of the relationship all will surely shape the experience of the violence, but not the scores on the CTS. Thus, if she pushes him back after being severely beaten, it would be scored one "conflict tactic" for each. And if she punches him to get him to stop beating their children, or pushes him away

after he has sexually assaulted her, it would count as one for her, none for him." (p.8)

The CTS is at the heart of the studies that purport claims of women's violence, and also at the heart of Kimmel (2002)'s critique of these studies. It is a decontextualising measure of domestic violence that assumes that an act of violence is discrete and can be measured without taking account of the psychosocial relationship in which it takes place. The CTS also has no provision for respondents to make reference to the emotional content of the act – so an act of self-defence, for example, is indistinguishable from an act of aggression.

"In sum, the gender symmetry found by CTS-based studies result from the omission of severity of injury, sexual assault, and assaults by former spouses. Some fail to adequately account for marital status and age. Including these would certainly make the gender asymmetry of domestic violence more clear" (Kimmel, 2002 p.14)

In public discourse and some contemporary research, the prevalent view is that women are less likely than men to report their use of violence and are more likely to report victimisation through violence. Contrary to this view, thorough analysis by Kimmel (2002) indicates that men are likely to underestimate their use of violence and women are likely to overestimate their use of violence. Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh, and Lewis (1998) concur with this assertion that women are more likely to overestimate their use of violence. They state:

"women may be more likely to remember their own aggression because it is deemed less appropriate and less acceptable for women than for men and thus takes on the more memorable quality of a forbidden act or one that is out of character" (p. 405).

Furthermore :

"women may also tend to underestimate their partners' violence given the norms of domestic life, which frequently find women discounting, downplaying, or normalizing their partners' violent behavior, or even excusing it since they "deserved" it. By the same token, in addition to underestimating their own violence, men may overestimate their partners' violence, for the same norms of masculinity" (Kimmel, 2002 p.10).

So we understand that violence in the personal lives of women is culturally manifested and maintained, rather than a private affair. These figures suggest that violence towards women is increasing rather than stemming. This violence towards women appears to be a reflection of the wider increase in violence in general. The majority of violence occurs by men, towards women and children, and men are killing more women today than ever in the history of gender relations, belying the object of family violence law in Aotearoa/New Zealand intended to*"... reduce and prevent violence in domestic relationships ..."*(Domestic Violence Act, 1995).

Domestic Violence as a Power and Control Issue

Most agencies in Aotearoa/New Zealand understand domestic violence through the power and control model of violence (Carswell, 2006; Morris, 1997; Oliver, 2001; Pence & Paymer, 1993; Robertson et al, 2007; Snively, 1994) . That is anger is a feeling that can be managed effectively like any other emotion. Violence however is a choice to use power and control over another person. Tactics of power and control can be physical, sexual and/or emotional/psychological (see Appendix 1 – Power and control wheel).

The theory assumes a humanist belief that we as human beings have free will and make choices which we can change. From this perspective power and control dynamics are used by a powerful person, generally to oppress a less powerful person. Statistics show that the oppressor tends to be male and the victims tend to be women and children. (Browne, Williams & Dutton 1999;

DeKeseredy, 2000; Dugan, Nagin, & Rosenfeld 1999; Gelles, 2000; NCIWR, 2007; Straus, 1999)..

Domestic Violence as a Gender issue

In reviewing the literature of domestic violence, changes in terminology appear to have changed the way in which domestic violence is conceptualised and as such changed the way that domestic violence is talked about and addressed. This phenomenon has also influenced the direction that domestic violence literature and research has taken.

Early writings and research spoke of gendered violence or male violence against women and wife battering (Brownmiller, 1975; Dobash and Dobash, 1992; Roy, 1977; Hancock, 1979; Metzger, 1976). Over time, or maybe through social and political change, the term domestic violence has become the dominant term used in naming the phenomena of violence against women by partners and ex - partners. This (de)gendering of violence within the home has served to hide the magnitude of violence against women, by men, in interpersonal relationships.[1]

By shifting the focus from violence against women to a generic 'domestic' or 'family' violence, we take the focus of responsibility away from men to that of 'the family' and from public to private. And as women have long born the brunt of responsibility for the private space of family (Tong, 1998; Walby, 1990) this shift once again brings women into focus as responsible for the violence that they and their children are subjected to in the home (Scutt, 1997). That is, encouraging the myth of gender symmetry in the perpetration of domestic violence (De Keseredy, 2000; Friedman, Bowden & Jones, 2003; Gelles, 2000; Kimmel, 2002; Scutt, 1997; Straus, 1999) leads to blaming the

[1] In making this claim, I am not disputing that there are also increasing incidents of women's violence within domestic situations. However, it is important to note that the overwhelming majority of domestic violence occurs by men against women.

victim for their victimisation, and interventions that expect her to take responsibility for managing the behaviour of the perpetrator of the violence (see NZCYFS, Refuge, Police training, 1996 for an in-depth explanation of this erroneous analysis of domestic violence[2]).

If we view violence as an outcome of a patriarchal social structure (as the Domestic Violence Act, the programmes, programme providers, domestic violence workers and researchers propose), and recognise gender as another component of this structure, how can we stop the violence if we only focus on the private sphere of the 'domestic' without a wider socio-cultural focus?

Domestic Violence as a Socio-Cultural issue

In Aotearoa/New Zealand, at the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (1995) in 1996, vast resources were poured into a public media campaign, with the view that the most effective way of intervening in domestic violence was through socio-cultural interventions and public awareness.

In 1997 the New Zealand police family violence marketing campaign won the New York Festival's international marketing effectiveness award in the public service category. This campaign recorded 92% public awareness and a doubling of arrests by police. Further results from this campaign, which gave impetus for receiving the award by the judges, included:

"... a dramatic 30% reduction in the annual numbers of women being murdered by their male partners." (Taylor, 1997.p.102)

When this award was announced project co-ordinator JJ Taylor stated:

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[2] This training was delivered by NZCYFS, Women's Refuge and NZ Police trainers throughout New Zealand as part of a collaborative approach to dealing with domestic violence under the Domestic Violence Act (1995).

"Our focus is on keeping women and children safe in their own homes" (in Taylor, 1997.p.102)

The success of this campaign utilising media to disseminate a socio-cultural discourse of criminalising violence against women implies that violence against women is at least partially culturally manifested and maintained. That is, if a public discourse of intolerance serves to reduce murders of women and increase the level of men seeking to take responsibility for their violence, then public tolerance of violence against women may well be involved in rising violence statistics.

Within feminist and social work literature, violence towards women has long been viewed as a social structure that perpetuates and maintains the oppression and marginalisation of women (McMaster & Bakker, 2006; McMaster & Lloyd-Pask, 1992, McMaster, Maxwell & Anderson, 2000; McMaster & Swain, 1989; Tong, 1998). Some feminists believe that male violence is the primary structure that disenfranchises women (Dworkin, 1974, 1981; Firestone, 1970; MacKinnon, 1987; Millet, 1970). Others utilise a cultural analysis in understanding violence against women, where patriarchy, as a cultural construct, disempowers women as an oppressed and marginalised group in society (Daly,1984; Jaggar, 1983; Warren, 2001).

Patriarchy, in this sense is seen as a phallocentric cultural value system that privileges some types of knowledge and practices over others. Patriarchal values are those centred on traditional masculine characteristics and traits, for example competition, aggression, dominance and getting to (and staying at) the top. Patriarchy flourishes best within hierarchical social structuring (see figure 1), which values competition and individuation (Dworkin, 1981; MacKinnon, 1987).

Furthermore, in Aotearoa/New Zealand we currently have a neo-liberal political climate that sees market forces and, inextricably, competition as the most productive way of developing as a country. This type of political climate manifests values that support and maintain patriarchy and concomitant violence against women (Jaggar, 1983; Mitchell, 1971)

Figure 1: Diagramatic Representation of Social Structuring of Patriarchy

(adapted from Shannon and Young, 2004; NZCYFS, Refuge & Police training, 1996)

From this frame of reference domination and control are privileged and non-patriarchal peoples and ways of relating, in this case women and women's ways, become devalued and disowned. The result of this is both men and women 'buying into' patriarchy and the 'might is right' dictum that typifies it. Examples of this include: women competing against women for the power attributed to men and men's ways of operating and women operating in increasingly male ways such as competition and aggression.

Therefore, discourse that purports increasing violence by women may be due not only to problems with measurement, but also problems with identity as women and privilege attributed to men and patriarchal systems that manifest violence.

According to Dobash and Dobash (1979) patriarchy is made up of both structure and ideology. The structural aspect is the hierarchical ordering discussed earlier and the ideology is the acceptance of this hierarchical order. As such violence against women can only be understood by:

"embedding our analysis of individual violent behaviour in the wider social and cultural context... by exploring the manner in which economic and social processes operate directly and indirectly to support patriarchal domination and the use of violence against wives." (p.x.)

Family violence law as a social structure

One aspect of the patriarchial social structure that has long been an issue for women affected by male violence is family violence law (Scutt, 1997). Family violence law has been seen as a private or domestic affair (McMaster, 1989).However feminists and people concerned with the rights of women assume that *"the personal is political"* (Awatere, 1981).

History of Women's Issues in Psychology

Historically the science and discipline of psychology has been intrinsically gender biased (Hare-Mustin & Maracek,1990; Nicholson, 1990), due to the fact that almost all of the published research and theory were conducted by men and using men as the subjects of study. As a result historical psychology has come to view women as either the same as men or completely different to men.

According to many women psychologist, feminist psychologists and feminists, problems with the first of these point of view include a lack of attention paid to the biological, social, gendered and power differences between women and men. When women have attempted to voice these differences through exemplifying their personal experiences they have often been seen as only acknowledging their own point of view and their methods as unscientific and flawed (Gergen, 1999; Rider, 2000). This then negates women's experience as subjective and therefore not 'real'. Women and women's issues have been at times overlooked within the mainstream discourse of psychology. According to Crawford and Maracek (1989) psychology has:

" ... not only omitted the consideration of women and women's activities, it has also validated the view that those activities in which men engage are the activities central to human life. It re-affirms that women are "backstage" to the real action" (p.149).

Furthermore this lack of attention to gender in psychology minimises women's issues as unimportant and/or imaginary (Scutt, 1997)

Domestic Violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Women's refuges

Women's Refuges are the key social services agency involved in domestic violence intervention and prevention in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The first refuge was established in 1973. Women's refuge became a political movement in 1981, with the establishment of a national body. (NCIWR, 2008)

Women's refuges role in the community is political, in both the public sphere by providing expert opinion and advice to government and community groups, and in the private sphere providing support services, including safe-house accommodation, support and advocacy with lawyers, police, welfare and both

social and government agencies, to women and children who have been affected by domestic violence.

From my experience of women's refuge in the early days of the refuge movement it was seen as a powerful adversarial and radical feminist movement that was the catalyst for bringing issues of importance for women to the public's attention through consciousness raising activities. This is reflected in the code of ethics adopted by women's refuge in 1985 (NCIWR. 2008). In recent times Women's Refuges have adopted a more collaborative style (NZCYFS, Refuge & Police training, 1996), working with government agencies to reduce and eliminate domestic violence. Alongside the government child protection service, New Zealand Child Youth and Family Services (NZCYFS) and the police, women's refuge has developed and delivered training packages, interagency collaboration, protocols and procedures, and numerous interventions into families experiencing domestic violence.

Legislation.

Historically, domestic violence law has been centred on the public/private divide mentioned earlier with violence within families seen as a family or private matter. (Busch, Robertson & Lapsley, 1992; Edwards, 1989; McMaster & Swain, 1989). Theories of explanation and models of intervention tended to be non-feminist and psychological. That is theories that focus on factors such as alcohol abuse, psychopathology, learned behaviours by the offender or theories that blame the victim (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; McMaster & Swain, 1989). Early sociological theories of explanation were also non-feminist and include social learning and family systems theories that again saw the problem as a family or private matter (McMaster & Swain,

1989). For this reason the law makers and enforcers found it difficult to intervene or interfere with family matters such as domestic violence.

Feminist movements both internationally and here in Aotearoa/New Zealand claimed these theories of understanding of violence towards women in intimate relationships by men, were shown to be ineffective and inadequate (Banks, Florence & Ruth, 1979; Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Pond, 2003). Consciousness-raising by second wave feminists highlighted deaths of women and children at alarming rates and increased the visibility of domestic violence (Banks, Florence & Ruth, 1979; Towns & Scott, 2006; Whittier, 2002). Since it's inception in 1973 women's refuge has lobbied for domestic violence law change in Aotearoa/New Zealand (NCIWR, 1993). This has resulted in change of attitudes toward domestic violence in the general public and significant law changes with the Family Protection Act (1982) and more recently the Domestic Violence Act (1995). (Oliver, 2001; Pond, 2003; Robertson et al, 2007)

Just a domestic

As a result of this consciousness raising and law change, the past 20 years has seen some significant changes in police attitudes towards domestic violence (Robertson et al, 2007). In the 1980's the general view of violence towards women in the home was of it being a 'private affair', that is "just a domestic". Juxtaposed with this cultural view was individual police officers' attitudes of violence within domestic relationships as private and therefore not a part of 'real' police work (Edwards, 1986). And beliefs of many police officers that women are either partially or wholly to blame for the abuse (Crowley, Sigler, & Johnson, 1990; Oliver, 2001; Robertson et al, 2007). During the 1980s there was an emerging worldwide body of research and policy development in relation to what constituted domestic violence, the prevalence of the crime,

how it was responded to, the effects of these responses (see these studies in Leibrich, Paulin & Ransom, 1995). This resulted in policy change within the police to one of arresting the offender in domestic violence cases (Ford, 1986; Oliver, 2001).

The policy requires police to arrest and charge offenders whenever there is evidence of an assault, of danger to the victim or of the breaching of a court order. (Victims Task Force, 1992, p.155).

Despite these changes in policy and attitudes in the police force, research indicates that many police still do not understand or implement police domestic violence policy effectively (Busch et al, 1992; Eigenberg & Moriaty, 1991; Robertson et al, 2007).

HAIP

The Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project (HAIP) was a ground- breaking study for domestic violence intervention in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The project was modelled on a similar project in Deluth, Minnesota. This project insisted agencies such as the police, women's refuge and child protection worked together in a collaborative approach as a model of intervention for domestic violence. (Busch & Robertson, 1994; Dominick, 1995). HAIP has been credited with changing police attitudes in a positive way by increasing their understanding of women's realities and the dynamics of domestic violence (Carswell, 2006; Gregg, 2007)

DVA (1995)

One of the most significant changes for all of those involved in domestic violence from the intimate partners, to police, refuges and child protection services, has been the Domestic Violence Act (1995) (Carswell, 2006; Gregg,

2007; Oliver, 2001; Pond, 2003; Robertson et al 2007). This piece of legislation provides specific guidelines for police and courts intervention. Furthermore it engenders a pro-feminist response to domestic violence in programme provision a collaborative approach in domestic violence intervention; and a pro-arrest and incarceration police policy (Carswell, 2006; Domestic Violence Act, 1995).

Women's Experiences of Violence

Feminists have written about violence towards women and women's experiences of domestic violence for a number of years. (eg. Dworkin, 1981; Friedan, 1974; Millet, 1970). In Aotearoa/New Zealand feminist agencies such as Rape Crisis centres and Women's Refuges utilise the publication of women's stories or experiences of domestic violence as an aspect of healing for the story teller and also for the reader (Banks, Florence & Ruth, 1979; NCIWR, 1988, 1993, 2006). Many feminists have also written about oppressive social structures such as the law, patriarchal attitudes and cultural value systems, and misogynistic practices within workplaces and institutions that serve to maintain patriarchy (Jaggar, 1983; Mitchell, 1986; Scutt, 1997).

Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence

Agents of the state mirrored the view of psychology in responding to domestic violence. That is their practices manifest the same attitudes of domestic violence being a private matter and a relationship issues. Furthermore blaming the victim of the offence for the violent situation and placing the responsibility for intervention on the victim (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Edwards, 1989; Hanmer & Saunders, 1993). In my experience of working with women it was often left to women's groups and women working with women to alert the powers that be and the wider public to these practices. And women's agencies seemed to be the only sources of women's accounts of domestic violence and

their experiences of the interventions that occur. (NCIWR, 1988, 1993, 2006) However until recently their has been little

Over the past ten years a growing body of formal research has been conducted with New Zealand police, refuge workers, health workers, and women who have lived in domestic violence (Gregg, 2007; Hindle, 2005; Oliver, 2001; Pond, 2003; Robertson et al, 2007). Furthermore, women who work with women have seen patterns in the issues for women in relation to the policing of domestic violence. These issues include:

Attitudes of the police
When their partner is a mate of the local cop
Police not arresting
Expecting women to do the monitoring and evidence gathering themselves
Not being believed
Been made to feel that I'm a whinger
Being told that I must do something to 'provoke' him.
Being told that they are too busy to respond
Being told not to waste their time, cos you'll only go back to him anyway
Being told that he's had a hard childhood so give him a break.
Police wanting to arrest but not doing so 'cos judges laugh them out of court when they have no physical evidence
Police told me to leave rather than him.
Police are scared of him.
Police saying it's just the booze and he'll be ok when he sobers up.
Police not believing that I cant defend myself.
Police blaming me for the kids being brought up in a violent relationship (pers. comm refuge workers, counsellors and social workers, 2007)

What are we doing about domestic violence? Is it working? How do the women who have utilised these supports understand their situations? Statistics and current discourse imply that we certainly have not 'fixed' the problem. What are the dynamics, relationships and understandings involved?

An analysis of women's accounts of police intervention into domestic violence incidents may give additional understandings of what is happening when police are called on to 'protect and serve' victims of violence. That is, according to women, who have called the police to intervene in their domestic violence situation/s, how is domestic violence being policed in Aotearoa/New Zealand? This question is the focus of the current research project.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

To begin this chapter, I reflect on my engagement with the domestic violence field, outline some rationale for my choice of methodology and locate myself as both researcher and research participant. As part of this contextualisation, I will outline the professional bases whose ethical codes my work is grounded within. I then continue this contextualisation by discussing why women's accounts of their experiences of policing domestic violence forms an important, and sometimes overlooked, discourse in understanding the nature and effects of police interventions into Domestic Violence here in Aotearoa/New Zealand. I then articulate an outline of my chosen methodology, standpoint theory, as a way of thinking about and analysing data, and narrative method as a way of gathering and (re)presenting data. These epistemological frameworks will likely provide challenges and depths of insight into the issue of policing domestic violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Locating myself

I come to this research project as a 40-something Pakeha woman who is married, a mother of two adult children, and became a grandmother during the time of this research. I am a survivor of domestic violence in my own childhood. As an adult I have worked within the domestic violence field in the following roles: a women's refuge co-ordinator, a CYFS social worker, a southern region domestic violence programmes approval panel member, a women's programme provider, a supervisor of men's programme providers, and an ACC and Family Court counsellor. These personal and professional characteristics, among other reasons, influence my reason for selecting this particular research topic as well as my choice of methodology.

Feminism and Psychology

As a feminist who is also an aspiring psychologist I feel as if I have a foot in two camps. These two camps are often seen as diametrically opposed, and at loggerheads with one another (Guba & Lincoln, 2004). I have strong feminist standpoint views (Harding, 2004; Haraway, 1991; Henwood, Griffin & Phoenix, 1998; Hill-Collins, 1991), yet also have strong alliances to the tenets of social constructionism and post-modernism (Foucault,1981; Gergen, 1999; Gergen & Gergen, 2003; Harre-Mustin & Maracek, 1994) within my disciplines of social work, counseling and psychology. My life is full of contradictions and diversity and in line with my feminism I cannot separate myself from this piece of work. In order to take on a feminist standpoint and produce feminist knowledge Harding (1991) asserts that *"the subject/agent of feminist knowledge is multiple and contradictory, not unitary and coherent..." (p.180)*

Therefore the philosophical underpinnings of the way that I conduct myself and this research must be congruent with the tenets of feminist research, have the ability to produce empirically robust research results and rest within the ethics of all of my disciplines.

Professional Ethics

In undertaking this research the foundation stones of professional ethics in social work (ANZASW, 1993, 2007), counseling (NZAC, 2001) and psychology (NZPsS, 2002) were at the forefront for me. In the first of these the client is paramount and safety is vital. As this research touched on sensitive issues and the research participants have had crimes committed against them, it was important that they were currently safe and had an established support network. For this reason it was important to recruit through the agencies that provide support for women. Also it was important that their confidentiality was and will continue to be maintained, and their stories were and continue to be treated with respect.

The second ethical consideration is client autonomy and independence. It was important for the women to frame their own stories and choose the aspects of their experiences that they deemed the most important. Therefore the interviews were conducted in an open and loosely structured way. In fact the interviewees tended to meander through their experiences of domestic violence and their experiences of police interventions within their violent relationships, which was natural and developmental. This ethical principle was foundational in my selection of research methodologies

Beneficence and non-maleficence were two further professional ethical considerations. In upholding these ethical considerations it was important for me to feel comfortable with my level of competence should the research trigger some difficult areas for the women who participated. It was important that I was able to suggest that they could have a support person with them should they wish, and that I could leave the interview with them feeling in a comfortable state. These aspects were checked with each interviewee and each left the interview process feeling positive. It was important that my professional ethics and choices of methodologies remained congruent.

Research ethics were also important and Massey University's human ethics committee approval was gained (PN protocol 04/49) and the university's guidelines and those of my professional bodies were followed.

Networking and Collaborative Approach

As mentioned earlier the interviewees were recruited through women's support agencies, such as women's refuges and other women's support agencies. As feminist agencies they also have an interest in the outcomes of the research, as client needs and interests guide their service delivery. This

mutuality of benefit aligns with feminist methodological principles of assisting the further emancipation of women, and assisting with not only personal, but organizational and political change (Oakley, 1993; Acker, Barry & Esseveld, 1991).

Feminist Research Principles

My rationale for introducing myself earlier is at least two-fold. Firstly, it feels right as a co-producer of this work alongside the women who have told me their stories (Riessman, 1993). Secondly, it is in-line with feminist principles of taking responsibility for what I write, and the influences that my own lived experiences have on this research project and how it has been conducted (Oakley, 1993). Letherby (2003) asserts:

Overall, we need to acknowledge the location of ourselves in research and writing in order to make it clear that the production of knowledge is a dialectic loaded in favour of the researcher (p.9.)

In conducting this research project, it was important to me that women in general, and specifically the women who have told me their stories, benefit from this research. As such I was aware of the power relationship involved in researching women with herstories of violence and the nuance of authority accorded to the university and the discipline of psychology from whence this project comes. Accordingly, I spent time within each interview attempting to build a relationship that was more equal and based on some shared understandings of ourselves as women who have survived violence. It was within this collaborative alliance that a new set of knowledges of the nature of police interventions in domestic violence were created.

According to Acker, Barry & Esseveld, (1991) feminist research has three emancipatory principles:

1... to contribute to women's liberation through producing knowledge that can be used by women themselves ...2. The methods of gaining this knowledge should not be oppressive ... 3.We should continually develop the feminist critical perspective that questions both the dominant intellectual traditions and reflects on its own development. (p.137)

It is with these principles in mind that this project is conducted.

On reflection of the past decade of my work as a social worker, counsellor and activist in the domestic violence field, I remember the huge amount of outrage, energy, debate, lobbying, cries for social justice, collaboration, conciliation, social action, and social and political change, made by women and men affected by domestic violence and the workers and agencies in the domestic violence field. Names like Neville Robertson, Ruth Busch, Ken McMaster, and Graham Barnes come to mind for me, as do the names and/or faces of many women who I have worked with as clients, colleagues, students and teachers, in activating these social changes.

The question that I, along with others who have been part of this social change, namely the instigation of the Domestic Violence Act (1995), pose is: What are women's experiences of this social change in general and for this research in particular, how have women experienced the policing of domestic violence since the instigation of the Domestic Violence Act (1995)?

Feminist Standpoint Theory

Feminist standpoint theory is one of the critical theories of social research, where the aim of research and inquiry is:

"the *critique and transformation of the social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender structures that constrain and exploit humankind ...*" (Guba & Lincoln, 2004 p.30).

According to feminist standpoint theory women see the world from at least one particular perspective derived from being and living as a woman in a patriarchal world (Henwood, Griffin & Phoenix, 1998; Unger, 2001). That is: women's perspectives of social problems, issues and life experiences are filtered through our experiences of the socio-political structuring of the world in which we live, where a patriarchal value system is still very much evident and research that does not acknowledge this cultural construct has:

... not only omitted the consideration of women and women's activities, it has also validated the view that those activities in which men engage are the activities central to human life. It reaffirms that women are backstage to the 'real' action. (Crawford & Marecek, 1989 in Nicholson, 1992 p.59)

Feminist standpoint is also known as women's experiences or cultural feminism (Unger, 2001). It is concerned with the production of new knowledges of the issues affecting women, by grounding our research and theorizing in the lived experiences of women. (Letherby, 2003). From this perspective, my role as interviewer is as co-creator of this research project acting as a conduit *"for hitherto unheard voices" or "untold stories"* (Unger, 2001 p.23)

Standpoint theory is a feminist experiential perspective that places emphasis on individual experience. People are viewed as experts on their own lives and authorities on their own lived experiences (Henwood, Griffin & Phoenix, 1998) As such standpoint theory counters positivist and empiricist perspectives of an independent unified reality that exists apart from individual

experiences. That is, it is a method for feminism that has as its central notion the idea that: "*material experience shapes epistemology*" (Hirchmann, 1997 p.84). Feminist standpoint assumes that individual lived experiences are one of multiple realities that may be different due to differing experiences and similar due to similar experiences. As a result standpoint theory data reveals a richness in depth and diversity which prioritises the concerns of the women whom tell their stories (Henwood, Griffin & Phoenix, 1998; Unger, 2001).

Standpoint theory also challenges the notion of objective scientific reality in that if our experiences are our reality then it must hold that our being at any time must be derived from that reality. Hirchmann (1997) suggests that this reality can be captured within standpoint theory as a "materialist moment" (p.84). She asserts:

A "materialist moment" suggests that while experience exists in discourse, discourse is not the totality of experience: since experience may be reinterpreted and redescribed, there must be something in experience that escapes, or is even prior to, language. (pp 84-5)

That is, knowledge and reality is dependent upon the experiences of the knower and is fluid, dynamic, adapts and alters in each moment.

In standpoint theory personal reality is also assumed to be political, not because it is a:

Straight forward evaluation of a pre-given experience [*rather feminists and women researching women have*] *made the personal political by understanding it in new ways (Stevi Jackson, 1998 p.45 [mine])*

Harding (2004) notes standpoint theory has had its fair share of criticism (Flax, 1992; Fraser & Nicholson, 1990; Grant, 1993; Grosz, 1993). According to the views of postmodern feminist critics it is essentialist, universalistic and *a*[3] form of feminist empiricism (Hundleby, 1997).

One enduring division between feminist standpoint and postmodernism is their views on 'material reality', which postmodernists argue does not exist beyond discourse, a view which feminist standpoint theory appears to contest when asserting:

Women's oppression is "real" and that it has an immediate, even tangible quality that pre-exists it's naming in language. Indeed the power of a standpoint is precisely its ability to name experiences that previously were defined in masculinists terms which made women's harm invisible. (Hirschmann, 1997 p. 81)

Many of the critiques of standpoint theory, according to Hirschmann (1997), can be resolved by asserting partiality of knowledge(s) and the juxtaposition of multiple feminist standpoints or multiple realities. Moreover, in addressing these criticisms Hirschmann (1997) asserts that each feminist standpoint is space and time specific i.e.

... a materialist moment provides feminists with a place to stand... It is the dual positioning of experience as both discursive and nondiscursive that makes feminist critique and resistance possible (p.84).

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[3] My italic here denotes this interpretation by Harding's critics of one essential feminist standpoint, rather than the multiple experiential standpoints that may denote feminist standpoint theory.

The fact that standpoint theory has had a lot of criticism is not surprising as standpoint theory may challenge the tenets of academia, science, psychology, and the very social structure that we are socialized to fit within.

It appears that women may need to challenge these tenets in order to have their own realities heard. Perhaps it is this challenge that gives new knowledges and understandings of issues of concern to women. According to Irigaray (1985):

When women want to escape from exploitation, they do not merely destroy a few "prejudices" they disrupt the entire order of dominant values, economic, social, moral and sexual. They call into question all existing theory, all thought, all language, inasmuch as these are monopolized by men and men alone. They challenge the very foundation of our social and cultural order, whose organization has been prescribed by the patriarchal system. (p.165)

Despite critiques of feminist standpoint, it is important that women's experiences of social issues are taken seriously, because it is these women's experiences that give us 'lived' and 'living' understandings of social issues such as women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These experiences may give us important understandings of the nature of domestic violence and the interventions undertaken by the police from the standpoint of each of these women's experiences. For as Harding (2004) notes:

... standpoint theory apparently is destined to persist at least for a while as a seductively volatile site for reflection and debate about persistent contemporary dilemmas. (p.63)

Therefore it seems logical that this persistent methodology be a cognizant framework to underpin this research about the persistent issue of women's

experiences of the policing of domestic violence in contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Social Construction

Contextualism

Developmental psychologists have often asserted that just as biologists cannot take a fish out of water to study it, social science researchers cannot take human experience out of context in conducting human research. They have suggested that de-contextualised experience 'loses' important variables that add to our understanding of human life (Gergen & Gergen, 2003; Goodson, 1995; Riessman, 1993). So how do we 'capture' these experiences within their contexts?

According to Sarbin (1986): "*... the root metaphor for contextualism is the historical event." (p.6)*. It is within this context that the idea of constant change is contained. In his ecological/contextual approach, Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls these changes over time the chronosystem, and postulates these changes shape and reshape our experiences and understandings of ourselves and our world. Contextualists assert that we cannot understand human life and development if we do not embed our analyses within their ecological contexts. (Gergen, 1999; Gergen & Gergen, 2003; Goodson, 1995; Polkinghorne, 1995; Sarbin, 1986). Vygotsky (1978) elaborates this approach by suggesting that human development occurs within a socio-cultural-historical context that is dialectical and fluid.

Sarbin (1986) asserts that the narrative contextualization of events historicisizes them. That is narrative is a storying of the events that attends to the constant change of the developing individual's context. Therefore within the current research project there are a number of contexts that shape the telling and retelling of these accounts, which I will elaborate on later.

This ability of narratives to shape and reshape understandings of ourselves and of our past experiences (Bruner, 1986; Gergen, 1999; Riessman, 1993; Sprinker, 1980) is due to narratives being "essential meaning making structures" (Riessmann, 1993 p.4). Goodson (1995) suggests that contextualizing our narrative research is an important political tool in countering patterns of domination He asserts:

We need to move from life stories to life histories. From narratives to ***genealogies of context,*** *towards a modality that embraces stories of action within theories of context: In so doing, stories can be "located," seen as the social constructions they are, fully impregnated by their location within power structures and social milieux. (p. 98 [my emphasis])*

According to narrative researchers telling stories of past experiences helps us gain understanding and new knowledge of these experiences (Bruner, 1990; Riessman, 1993). Psychotherapists agree with this view stressing the therapeutic value of telling and re-telling personal narratives of traumatic events(Schafer, 1992; White & Epston, 1990).

Therefore the women's experiences of policing of domestic violence, and their telling of these experiences within interview forums, are important contexts that shape and reshape their knowing and understanding of themselves and their understandings of police interventions for domestic violence. In this way this narration of their experiences is likely to have therapeutic value for the women who are involved in this research project. Alongside any therapeutic value, these narrations will have added value to those who implicitly and explicitly engage with the domestic violence field, as accounts of how police interventions have been experienced, and the meaning making that occurs for

the women who tell their stories, I as a survivor, practitioner and researcher, and those that read this work.

Reflexivity

I have implied that, within a research project such as this, there are important power differentials that come into play. According to feminist researchers (Acker, Barry & Esseveld, 1991; Letherby, 2003; Oakley, 1993) the ethics of social research must take into account the power imbalance between researcher and participants. As such engaging in reflexivity is an important strategy in legitimizing my part in this research project and the value bases that are inherent in my conducting this research (Unger, 2001).

According to contemporary critical psychologists (e.g. Russell & Bohan, 1999: Unger, 2001) reflexivity is the conscious and constant reflection of researcher on the socio-cultural-historical contexts of both self and research participants in the co-creation process that occurs in people researching people. Also both researcher and interviewee cannot be separated from our humanness and our personal histories, values, attributes and characteristics that form an ever changing aspect of the topic of study.

Embedded in both meanings of reflexivity lies the recognition that research is not an objective rendering of reality but a form of participation in the phenomenon under study. (Russell and Bohan, 1999 p.404)

Reflexivity is a constant component of this research project. Throughout, I have and continue to ask myself, 'how are/do my values influence my interactions, attention and interpretation of the women's accounts of policing domestic violence?", "How does the fact that these stories are being told to me influence their storying?" and so forth. This constant reflection and

questioning serves to embed both me and each woman involved in this project in the dialectic context of the policing of domestic violence in contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand society.

Social Power Relations

Counselors, social workers, critical psychologists and those that challenge the medical or disease model of therapeutic interventions have long since realized that working with people should be a process of collaboration rather than one where the therapist is seen as the only expert (Rogers, 1951; Yalom, 2002). McWhirter (1991) suggests a therapeutic alliance where therapist and client are seen as 'equal experts' in the relationship. That is:

... the counselor is acknowledged as the expert in the process of recovery, whilst the client is acknowledged as the expert on their life, experiences, relationships and goals (cited in Leslie, 2000, p.29).

For me, this model of equal experts fits with how I see the co-creation of this research project. According to Sprague and Zimmerman (2004) social researchers: *"must pay particular attention to our use of language"* in order to facilitate *"a constructive reconnection"* (p.56).

The facts that I am white, middle class, university educated, professionally trained and the person who has chosen this research project and the form it will take all lends a certain amount of power to my position as researcher (Letherby, 2003; Oakley, 1993: Unger, 2001). Being actively aware of these and other prospective power differentials and reflecting on the influence these have in the research relationship, legitimizes this research through reflection of the situated co-creations of meanings that have developed throughout the process. These characteristics alongside the characteristics of each woman

who has told me their story and the relationship we developed within the interview all shape what is created here.

Multiple Realities

As mentioned earlier, feminist standpoint theory and postmodernism have had their differences, insofar as their epistemological underpinnings have been portrayed (Guba & Lincoln, 2004). Early standpoint theorists (eg. Brownmiller, 1975; Harding, 1986, 1991; Hartsock, 1983; Jaggar, 1983; Spender, 1980) set their analyses in politics of difference, from Marxist, liberal and radical feminist views postulating that it is the unity of all women (as a homogenous group) that differentiates us from men and masculinist analyses of social issues. Many feminist scholars (Haraway, 1988; Smith, 1987; Sprague & Zimmerman, 2004) have become increasingly uncomfortable with this notion of sameness between all women, as it overlooks important differences between women (hooks, 1982; Jackson, 1998) and tends to displace scientific empiricism only to replace it with another universal reality. As a result of this discomfort some feminists have stuck steadfastly to feminist standpoint in its original sense and others have sought to remedy these problems through redefining standpoint epistemology with a differentiation between identity and experiences of women as points of privilege.

Stevi Jackson (1998) argues that postmodernism and standpoint theories are not necessarily exclusive. She states:

...giving up on grand narratives, as postmodernists would have us do, need not entail giving up on any understanding of the structural inequalities which produce patterns of dominance and subordination. Rather we should seek to develop situated knowledges from multiple standpoints which take account of the complexity of women's experiences and the differences among us. (p.62)

Therefore it is the storying of situated experiences of women that are privileged rather than the exclusivity of these stories as ***the*** only story that is/are real for all women. That is, the women whom have told their stories here are privileged as knowers in relation to the meaning and significance of ***their*** specific experiences in ***their*** particular social locations. It is these situated knowledges from the standpoints of the women whom I have interviewed that I will endeavour to develop within this research project in line with Fraser (1995)'s assertion:

...we might posit a relation to history that is at once antifoundationalist and politically engaged, while promoting a field of multiple historiographies that is both contextualized and provisionally totalizing (p.62 in Fawcett & Featherstone, 2000 p.12).

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry has become increasingly evident in the research of social scientists, including psychologists, over the past two decades (Freeman, 1993; Polkinghorne, 1995, Reissman, 1993; Sarbin, 1986). According to the narrative approach (Jackson, 1998; Polkinghorne, 1995; Riessman, 1993) all knowledge is partial, it involves selective attention and choices about what is (re)presented, as the totality of living experiences cannot ever be totally presented (see for example Riessman, 1993). Experiences are constructed in the telling and retelling of stories or narratives of these experiences.

For example, as I got up this morning, made my way to the kitchen, made coffee, and headed off to my study to continue my work on this thesis, my attention during this routine is selective and requires a number of choices. I notice the air temperature, decide whether or not to put more wood on the fire or turn on the heater. I notice the smell of the coffee and choose to foam the

milk for a cappuccino. Some aspects of my experience I tend not to notice, such as the feel of the carpet on my feet, and other aspects of my experience that I have not thought about. During my experience of my morning, I think about aspects of my experience, this in turn brings them into conscious awareness and constructs them. The telling of these experiences here (re) presents them and (re)constructs them, and then the reading of them re-(re)presents them, hence a weaving of multiple layers of representation is created in the process.

Reissman (1993) suggests that narration and our inclination to story our experiences is universal. That is, it occurs across cultures, socio-economic groups, and throughout the lives of human beings. According to Murray (1999):

... we are all storytellers and live in a storied world. Narratives or stories permeate our every day life such that we interpret the world and define ourselves through stories. (in Murray & Chamberlain (Eds.), 1999 p.47)

Therefore, story telling is a natural way of (re)telling and understanding our experiences in order to make sense of the experiences. The stories/narratives that we tell of our experiences are verbal representations that configure the time and space that we are in.

Narrative method of gathering and analyzing data fits with the feminist notions of consciousness-raising through the documentation and analyses of women's stories of their experiences and the proliferation and development of new know ledges from the bases of women's lived experiences. From a poststructuralist feminist perspective Jana Sawicki (1991) states:

Narratives of oppressed groups are important insofar as they empower these groups by giving them a voice in the struggle over interpretations without claiming to be epistemically privileged or incontestable. They are not denied the 'authority' of experience if, by 'authority,' one means the power to introduce that experience as a basis for analysis, and thereby to create new self-understandings. What is denied is the authority of unanalyzed experience (in Fawcett and Featherstone, 2000 p.11).

Likewise O'Leary (1997) suggests that many feminists (eg. Alarcon, 1990; Haraway, 1988) are developing a *"politics of engagement"* (p.50). One way in which this politics is developing is by focusing on *"multiple voiced subjectivity"* (Alarcon, 1990 p.358). O'Leary continues her focus on this development by advocating a 'refiguring' of standpoint theory as a means to *"establish the primacy of experience(as an interpretive category)"* rather than what has been heralded from the traditional standpoint theorists as *"primacy of identity" (1997 p.50).*

This primacy of experience fits well with narrative representation. According to Riessman (1993) the narrative approach *"gives prominence to human agency and imagination"* and this is why *"it is well suited to studies of subjectivity and identity"* (p.5). Riessman suggests that narratives have the capacity to reflect the culture of their telling. That is: *"... culture speaks itself through an individual's story" (p.5)*, therefore enabling an examination of *"practices of power" (p.5)* such and sexism, racism and other social power relations.

Consequently, the narrative approach to research incorporates women's experiences and the embeddedness of these experiences in a patriarchal cultural context. According to Polkinghorne (1995) *"Stories are particularly*

suited as the linguistic form in which human experience as lived can be expressed" (p.7).

Conclusion

The methodologies utilized for this research project, feminist standpoint and narrative situates the women whom have told their stories, myself as both researcher and participant, and those that read this work within the patriarchal context of women's experiences of domestic violence in contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand. The making of this (re)presentation has included multiple threads, some of which are: the patriarchal socio-cultural context, the collaboration of academic feminism and feminist agencies, the lived and living experiences of women, the influences of my disciplines of social work, counseling and psychology, the influences of feminist theorizing and knowledges.

Having situated this research, in the next chapter I relate the method/process taken in conducting this research.

CHAPTER THREE

Method

In the previous chapter I have outlined the theoretical, epistemological and methodological assumptions within which the current research project is grounded. Here I will outline the method taken to gather, record, analyse and (re)present these women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand. I begin by the steps taken in recruiting the women, and provide rationale for the number of research participants used in this write up. I follow with an introduction of the women interviewed as a group. Then I relate the process taken as we conducted the interviews where I outline the main ethical considerations and some unexpected issues encountered in this process. Finally I discuss my experiences of transcribing, analyzing and categorizing the women's stories in readiness for this write up.

Recruitment of Women

As mentioned earlier women were recruited through women's support agencies. Due to time, travel, financial and practical constraints the agencies that were selected to receive the advertisement and invitations (see Appendix 2 letter to support agencies, Appendix 3 & 4 advertisement and invitation to participants) to participate in this research project were located in the South Island of Aotearoa/New Zealand as am I, as co-producer of this work. However some of the women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence occurred in multiple locations including both South and North Island locations in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The recruitment of women to participate in this research project was more difficult than I initially expected. It appears that refuges have been inundated

with researchers wanting their time, statistics, knowledge and experiences. I therefore did not want to compound this work with the already heavy workload of services that they deliver to women and children experiencing domestic violence. As I had some networks with some of these agencies, they were able to tell me if this work would be inconvenient and many refuges said that it would be. In terms of the refuges involvement, I initially sought agreement from the national office of Women's Refuge by telephone, followed up by email (see Appendix 5 email correspondence to NCIWR research advisor, Sheryl Hann). I then rang each refuge and various other women's support agencies in the south island of Aotearoa/New Zealand, to discuss the research project and gain their consent to recruit through them and to send advertisements and information for participants. Upon their agreement, I followed this up with a letter to these refuges and support agencies.

Rationale for number of research participants

The 11 women who chose to participate in this research project did so in response to these invitations and/or advertisements. The women's support workers then gave them information sheet (see Appendix 6 information for participants), from which they contacted me to notify me of their interest in participating and negotiate times for interviews to take place.

Of the 11 women who chose to participate, 2 women decided to withdraw. One of these women was unavailable to repeat the interview after the recording failed in our first attempt and the other woman, did not return her consent to use transcribed information form, and when contacted did not wish to continue to participate in the research. This left 9 women who gave their consent to continue with the research.

As implied earlier in this work, the understandings presented here are not definitive. Rather they are an in-depth analysis of these nine women's

accounts of the policing of domestic violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand from my frame/s of reference. The results or understandings developed here are partial and therefore not intended to generalize to a wider population. According to qualitative researchers (eg Gill,1996; Morse, 2000) greater sample sizes tend to produce repetition and saturation of data rather than additional discourses and/or themes. During the eleven interviews that I engaged in, I experienced this data saturation. For this reason, I decided not to recruit further research participants when the two mentioned were not able to be part of the research. Furthermore, the two women whose narratives were not used impacted on my understanding of the policing of domestic violence and aspects of their experiences were carried with me in the subsequent interviews, my analysis and the write up of this research project.

Introduction of the women

The nine women whose experiences of the policing of domestic violence form the basis of this work are introduced here as a group to protect their identity. The names provided here are those that they have selected as pseudynoms. This has been done to ensure their safety and to protect their confidentiality. For this reason, throughout partners, ex-partners, ex-husbands, family, friends and neighbours and so forth have been identified as such, and not by name even when their names were used in the interviews.

All of the women interviewed have experienced domestic violence in heterosexual relationships since the instigation of the Domestic Violence Act (1995). The violent experiences of the women interviewed vary, but includes victimization in all the forms of violence outlined in the definition of domestic violence outlined in the Domestic Violence Act (1995) (see Appendix 7)[4].

[4] I also wish to note here that this is not the only definition of domestic violence. Some agencies and researchers define it more broadly and others more narrowly. The reason for the use of this definition of domestic violence is because it is the legal definition used by police in their family violence policy and it fits with the scope of this research project

All of the women interviewed have had experiences of either the police attending, or going to the police, in relation to incidences of domestic violence. Their experiences all include experiences with the policing of domestic violence in rural and/or South Island police precincts or districts. Some of the women also draw comparison with North Island experiences of the policing of domestic violence.

The women's ages range from their 20s to their 50s. They come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, yet all identify as New Zealand citizens. They are also from a range of socioeconomic groups and have a range of social, cultural, work and educational experiences. All of the women interviewed are mothers. The names that they have chosen for the purpose of this write up are: Samantha, Melanie, Amy, Megan, Jade, Dianne, Hazel, Sadie, and Gayle.

Conducting the Interviews

The interviews were conducted in line with social work, counseling and therapy process which includes three aspects of a working relationship. That is engagement, intervention and closure. Within the interviews, a relationship was established and continued to build throughout the interviews. We took time to introduce ourselves; I outlined the research project and ethical and safety guidelines. We then began talking about their experiences of domestic violence and moved naturally towards their experiences of the policing of domestic violence. Hence the interviews contained not only the women's contact and experiences of police interventions, but also the context of the women's lives, family, relationships, activities and socio-cultural beliefs that underpinned their experiences and understandings of the policing of domestic violence. At the end of each interview, I checked each woman's safety, gained their written consent to transcribe the interviews (see Appendix 8) and we said

our goodbyes and made tentative dates of when I would next be in contact and how they could contact me.

By the time I came to conduct the interviews, I had had a number of conversations with each of the women on the phone, to arrange appointments that suited us both. Due to this I felt as if I was not approaching the interviews cold.

The interviews took place over an extended period due to my becoming a grandmother, my father's death and my subsequent bereavement, and shifting house. The times and venues of the interviews were mutually negotiated between the interviewees and me. As implied earlier, it was important that the women felt safe and as comfortable as possible; as such the location was selected by each participant. All of the women in this research project chose to be interviewed in their own homes.

Each of the women offered me their hospitality and took me to a comfortable space that was quiet and free from interruptions (although two of the interviews had breaks due to children, who needed their mothers and the mothers responded to them). As the interviews were recorded on audiotape and later transcribed verbatim, I placed the tape recorder on a table or the floor and turned it on. In one of the early interviews the tape recorder failed to record the interview, which I will discuss later, consequently leading me to take time to test the tape recorder at later interviews. Although I made this adjustment it did not prevent the batteries running out at a later interview, which was not able to be conducted again.

The interviews were loosely structured and conducted in an informal way within a relationship of mutual respect that developed throughout the process. The relationships all developed to quite a depth very quickly as the women

related their experiences of domestic violence and their experiences of police personnel, practices and service in the policing of domestic violence. The interviews lasted for about 2 hours with breaks when needed. The interview tended to naturally take the form of the research questions (see Appendix 9 research questions) which we used as a loose guide. Although their scope also covered the women's experiences with the court system, programmes, other abuse experiences, therapy and further education. As the interviews were nearing the end the talk came back to the present day and in the here and now. At this point I asked how the women were feeling now and began to close the interviews, reiterating how they could get in touch with me and/or the university and I let them know that I would be back for them to read the transcripts and gain their consent to use aspects of this material and for them to think of a nom-de-plum for themselves (see Appendix 10 participant consent to use transcribed material).

Ethics and Safety

The information sheet gave the women a brief introduction of me and the research project. Within the interviews I also introduced myself in similar ways to that in which I have located myself within this write up (although I was not a grandmother for all of the interviews). I explained the confidentiality requirements held within my professional bodies and the university and explained the complaints processes to them. Subsequently, we discussed the research process and necessary forms giving their permission for me to conduct the research and restating that they could stop the interview and/or withdraw from it at anytime during the process. I then checked that they were still willing to participate and gained their agreement. The women then introduced themselves and we shared some commonalities between us as a way of creating a shared language from which the conversations about their experiences of domestic violence and of the police interventions in their

situations developed. The interviews lasted between one and a half to two and a half hours, depending upon the needs of each of the women. I was also aware of needing to ensure that the women were feeling comfortable before I left.

At the end of the interview we spent some time talking about their plans for their futures, and discussing possible pseudonyms that they would like me to use in the write ups, in order to ensure their privacy and confidentiality.

Hic Ups and Hold Ups

As mentioned earlier this research project has developed within a wider socio-cultural context. This project reflects the dynamics and fluidity of this context, as unexpected situations and unanticipated life events occurred during the construction of this project. Two of these were overt and had clear impacts on the development of this research project, my father's death, the birth of my first grandchild, and the tape recorder failure for one of the interviews mentioned earlier.

Dads Death

As mentioned earlier the data collection and analysis phases of the research project took place over a longer than expected period, due to my father's death and my consequent bereavement. This aspect of the project undoubtedly impacted on what has been produced as this report. For me, this has added aspects of my relationship with my father into this work, which for me includes a personal quality that is quite emotional.

Grandson's Arrival

As my daughter has experienced domestic violence in her life, her decision to have and parent her son on her own has been an interesting dynamic,

alongside gathering and analyzing these narratives. For me this dynamic has added an aspect of generations and the impact of family to this work.

Equipment Failure

One of the interviews that I conducted was plagued by problems. The first time that I arrived to conduct the interview, Hazel was not there and it transpired that she had had a flat tyre and got home late, therefore the interview was rushed. Later, I went to transcribe the interview to find that the interview had not recorded. After some deliberation, I rang Hazel let her know what happened and asked her if she wanted to repeat the interview. She said that she would like to and so we met again and tape recorded the interview successfully the second time. Despite my attention to checking my equipment before the interviews the tape also failed in another interview. As this woman was unable to fit me in to her busy schedule we were unable to repeat the interview.

Analysing and Representing Women's Stories

People have told me that I have a social work world-view or way of seeing the world. I see social power relationships and the political in everything (Focault, 1981; Hirchmann, 1997; Marx, in McLellan, 2007; Millet, 1970) and assume everything to be political. I also see each person, including myself in socio-cultural-historical context (Brofenbrenner, 1979; Gergen,1994; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore as I am conducting this research this world view or tint of my glasses undoubtedly colours my analyses, and as I have mentioned earlier, adds another thread to what is produced here. As Letherby (2003) notes as feminist researchers we

"take away their words and then analyse the data from our own personal, political and intellectual perspective." (p. 78)

Transcribing

After completing the interviews, I had the time consuming, although interesting task of transcribing the interviews.

According to Riessman (1993) transcription is the third level of representation within a research project such as this. Prior to this the women in this project have attended to their experiences, choosing what they deemed to notice within their situated experiences of the policing of domestic violence. The selection of aspects of these experiences will have been partial, actively constructing their reality of these experiences by thinking to themselves. Then within the interview each woman and I collaborated to produce or construct a narrative through talking and listening.

In transcribing the interviews I chose to note pauses and voice modulations as I believe that these aspects of the interviews contain implicit meaning for the women involved and this helped jog my memory of the conversations in the context/s of the women talking to me. This also allowed me to reflect on the impact that my intonations and questions had on the direction/s of the interview/s. The process of transcribing also held the emotions of the women's words and I was amazed at their abilities to survive and get through when often they were given little or no encouragement or incentive. In this process of examining the interviews in depth I was always interpreting and analyzing and themes and threads began to immerge based on my engagement with the women and the material I was transcribing and in my analysis of these women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence.

Reconnecting with the women

When I finished transcribing the interviews I sent these to each of the participants, as we had agreed. I gave them each some time to read and digest

the transcripts before telephoning and/or going to see each of them. Some of the women sent back the permission to use transcribed material quite quickly along with additions, deletions and nom-de-plums. Others asked me to talk with them about issues and understandings that had become apparent for them during the research process. Although I am aware that this reconnection and additional consent is not usually necessary (Highlen & Finley, 1996), I felt ethically obliged to use this additional step in the research process to ensure that the women were comfortable still participating and contributing to the research project in life with non-oppressive processes (Acker, Barry & Esseveld, 1991; Letherby, 2003; Oakley, 1981).

Analysis

As implied, throughout the interviews, transcribing and reading of these I had begun analyzing the women's experiences. I also have made choices and interpretations of these women's stories in constructing narratives from the transcribed data. These choices reflect my understandings, *"... values, politics, and theoretical commitments ... "* producing a *"hybrid story"* (Riessman, 1993 p. 13), which are further (re)presented in your reading of them in this report.

In analyzing the transcripts I was in a constant state of reflexivity. I was constantly questioning my own experiences values and beliefs and highly aware of the power variables in the relationships between the women and I. In this process of reflexivity themes were created that blended the women's stories with my understanding to create my analysis.

I also needed to ensure that I was appropriately identifying women's stories within the interview transcripts. I turned to a structural analysis of narratives to address the question: how do I know that I have collected stories in the talking we do within an interview session?

Structural Analysis of Narratives

Narrative researchers suggest that stories or narratives can be located in the vast data of interview transcripts by utilizing specific strategies (Hyden, 1994; Labov, 1997). They assert:

Temporality is usually seen as a defining characteristic of narrative... A typical narrative contains a beginning, a middle, and an end. (Hyden, 1994 p. 101).

In telling their stories of their experience of policing of domestic violence, each woman has gathered together scattered aspects of her lived experiences and constructed them into narrative form to make meaningful totalities of these experiences (Riessman, 1993). Within the interview my engagement with each woman has added another thread in the co-construction of narrative which is partially captured in the interview transcripts. My repeated readings of the transcripts continues to add threads or layers to the narrative constructions, as does my representations of the women's stories in this write up. Finally as you read this thesis you will add another layer of representation in this myriad of co-construction (Cheals, 2002; Oliver, 1998).

In contemporary narrative research and literature (Cheals, 2002; Hyden, 1994; Linde, 1993; Oliver, 2001; Riessman, 1993) the work of linguist Labov (1972, 1997) is cited in relation to the narrative structure that organizes human experience. His model of narrative structure is comprised of six elements: abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution and coda.
I have used Labov (1972)'s structure of narratives as a legitimating strategy to enable me to conclude, "Here is a story that was told in the interview" and "I know it's a story because it has (four-six) characteristic parts of an oral narrative as described by Labov".

Abstract

When storying our experience we don't always provide an abstract, however it happens often enough to call it a component of a full narrative. According to Labov (1972) an abstract can be recognized as a summary of the narrative that consequently follows.

In my interview with Samantha, she provides a number of examples of narratives with abstracts that tend to delineate one event from the next within the whole interview. Some of her abstracts do this quite clearly whilst others are less clear. One of the more clear abstracts follows:

I rang the police and he (ex-partner) said you better not ring the police, you better not be ringing the police, rah, rah, but I did and they came and they were horrible. (Samantha)

In the interviews each woman gave me both verbal and non-verbal cues that they would elaborate on this summary.

Orientation

In our storying of our experiences we are likely to describe some information that locates the narrative. That is, we tell who, where, when and what was going on. Labov (1972) calls this component of narratives the orientation as it orients the listener to the context. In some cases the women gave this information at different times in the interviews and due to my minimal encouragers took that I understood the context.

Samantha provides some orienting information in the abstract. For example she implies that the people who were involved were her ex partner, herself and the police. She also suggests that the event took place in her home.

***I** rang the **police** and **he** (ex-partner) said you better not ring the police, you better not be ringing the police, rah, rah, but I did and **they came** and they were horrible. (Samantha)*

In a preceding narrative she had suggested that her daughter and flat mate were also involved:

*I went and hid at the back of the house and **my flat mate** said he heard him (ex partner) say, "I'm not leaving I'm just going to sit here forever until you bring **her** (daughter) to me. (Samantha)*

Later in the narrative she also says that her flat mate's sister was involved:

*...and even though my flat mate and **his sister** both said (Samantha)*

The 'what' question was also answered by Samantha in her abstract where she states:

I rang the police (Samantha)

In her preceding narrative, she provides rationale for the what question by briefly indicating the domestic violence incident that she called the police to:

And then he came right up to the door and he said "I'm going to slit your throat; I'll slit your fuckin' throat". (Samantha)

Complicating Action

The complicating action is a sequencing of the events that took place. According to Labov (1972) the complicating action of a narrative answers the question, what happened next? The events are ordered in a temporal series that gives meaning. Changing this temporal order can change the meaning of the narrative.

The complicating action in Samantha's narrative of events followed immediately after the abstract and went like this:

They were really horrible. They said, "Well you can understand why he's mad you wouldn't let him have his daughter." And I said yes, but I let him know that, I texted him and I'm doing what my lawyer advised me to do. And they said, "Oh well we get people threatening to kill us all the time". And I was absolutely in tears, I was just bawling my eyes out and so I said, "Fine, just go then, don't worry about it, I can't be, just leave if that's the way it is". And they said, "No, now that you've done this we'll, well you know, you need to come down to the police station with us right now. And I said, "No I'm not doing that." And he said, "You need to come down and make a statement". And I said, "Well, I'll come down in half an hour when I've calmed down and rung my mum and stuff". And they just ... and it just felt horrible, they just stood there and the other policeman, one of the guys said, "It will depend on what we find out whether or not we'll do you for kidnapping for not handing her over". {Diane: What?} Yeah, and I just went, "What?" I just couldn't believe it. Yeah they thought that I was just so overreacting. (Samantha)

Evaluation

Our storying of our experiences tends to reflect the context of the events and the social relationships that are part of this context. During the course of describing our experiences we tend to use the language and linguistic resources that are available to us to evaluate our experiences. Sometimes this evaluation is explicit, yet other times it is implied. That is, we evaluate our story by utilizing a wide range of culturally derived linguistic devices and display these to imply the significance of the narrative or why we are telling the story of this particular event (Labov, 1972).

An example of evaluative information in Samantha's narrative is when she initially states that the police intervention was *"just horrible"* and then goes on to describing the ways in which it was horrible and reinforcing the impact of the police actions with an evaluative statement:

And they just ... and it just felt horrible(Samantha)

In the final sentence of the complicating action example she also makes a social evaluation of her action:

Yeah they thought I was just so overreacting.(Samantha)

Also Samantha implied evaluation throughout the interview by her use of voice modulation and emphasis. In her telling of the series of events she used her voice and prolonged eye contact to provide evaluative information. For example when she was relating the statement made by the police in relation to

them threatening to charge her with kidnapping her voice sounded incredulous and she emphasised certain words:

"It will depend on what we find out whether or not we'll do ***you*** *(Samantha's eyes begin to widen and she seeks prolonged eye contact with me. Her voice modulates reflecting a feeling of incredulity) for* ***kidnapping for not handing her over****"(Samantha)*

After all, Samantha's partner was violent, so she was attempting to keep her daughter safe and be a good mum and then the people that she asks for help imply that she is wrong in doing this.

Resolution

The resolution component of a narrative is akin to the grande finale of a play. That is it is the end product or culminating event of the story, which all of the complicating actions lead to.

In Samantha's narrative of this particular experience of the policing of domestic violence (she also had others), she concludes with:

And I felt just absolutely gutted. The first time that I'd been to the police after four years of violence and the police officer didn't see what the big deal was.(Samantha)

In the interviews with the women involved in this project I could often feel a certain level of uncertainty. Sometimes the resolution components of their narratives felt like a relief and other times they had a sense of "well that's just how things go".

Coda

The coda is Labov's final component of a fully formed narrative. Not all narratives have this element; however, from my frame of reference as a therapist, it is one that I believe to be very important as an ultimate procedure in the research process. The coda of a narrative is often bound with the resolution and transpires when the narrator implies the end of a narrative and 'comes out of' the story back to the present or a step on the way to the present.

In this particular narrative, Samantha relates the effect of the experience of this particular police intervention and the consequences that her experience has had on her seeking legal assistance in the future:

So yeah, I want the police but I wouldn't go back and I can't! I want a protection order but I won't get one.(Samantha)

In the first sentence of this example she returns to the here and now and addresses the audience (me) directly. Then, in the second sentence she begins a new train of thought leading into the next narrative.

Narrative Analysis and Representation

As suggested earlier, the stories that you read here are multiple layers of co-construction. They are influenced by the fact that I am white, middle class, married, a feminist, a psychologist, a mother, grandmother and so forth. That is, my position within this work can be understood as:

... self as reflexive – able to be both subject and object, to reflect upon itself – and intersubjective, constructed through our interactions with others. Hence the self is social and always in process (Jackson, 1998 p.51.)

The narratives constructed here also reflect the politics of contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand and the social power positions of women experiencing domestic violence in this country and the New Zealand police who are charged with 'protecting and serving' their communities. These narratives have the potential to (re) present the politics of their context. They also:

... have the power to effect change, to bring about new ways of understanding the social world and ourselves (Jackson, 1998 p.61).

I have had some difficulty with this process of (re)presenting other women's accounts of their experiences. I would have liked to be able to simply present the women's stories *for* them. According to Letherby (2003):

There may be a tension between the desire to give women a voice and the making of knowledge. (p.78)

However I am aware of my embeddedness in this research project and the embeddedness of this project within it's socio-cultural-historical contexts in which it has developed. I am also aware that even the raw data is influenced by it's telling to me and my responses, both verbally and non-verbally, within the interviews. Furthermore, the words available to us as research participants within an interview are bound with the socio-cultural political context of our everyday lives and the way our society is structured. Riessman (1993) suggests that political conditions constrain the words available to us. Stevi Jackson concurs with Riessman stating:

The existence of differences among women, and multiple feminist standpoints, should sensitize us to the ways in which narratives are shaped by the social location of their narrators and the cultural resources available to them (1998 p.49).

Post structuralist feminists (eg. Gallop, 1982; Hirschmann, 1997; Jackson, 1998) imply that it is important to analyse women's narratives within the context of a patriarchal social structure in order to politicize them. It is only through the recognition of the patriarchal social structures and consequent social power relations within Aotearoa/New Zealand that our understandings of women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence in this country can accurately be analysed. That is, a politically engaged analysis of the issue of the policing of domestic violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand must include the politics of power that is evident in patriarchy. This is an important component of the analysis in relation to the emancipation of women for it allows us to:

"... understand degrees of power and privilege that cohere to particular "differences" by holding onto the material reality of oppression." (Hirchmann, 1997 p. 86).

According to narrative researchers, interpretation is also socially situated. (Riessman, 1993) The women that tell their stories here, myself as researcher and you as reader all make interpretations and/or represent experience/s. All of our interpretations are subjective and made within our personal/political contexts. According to Riessman (1993):

"Meaning is ambiguous because it arises out of a process of interaction between people: self, teller, listener and recorder, analyst, and reader." (p.15).

In order to clarify and explicate the social situatedness of this research project, I need to set my analysis within a critical feminist framework that recognizes patriarchy. According to contemporary feminist researchers (e.g. Hirchmann, 1997; Jackson, 1998; Letherby, 2003) the doing of feminist research is a political endeavor. That is: *"feminist research is feminist politics" (Glucksmann, 1994 p.150).*

Therefore alongside the lived experiences of women within a patriarchal context, my analysis and representation of these women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence reflects the patriarchal structuring of the socio-cultural-political context of its creation. This became increasingly evident to me whilst interviewing, transcribing and analyzing the women's stories. Perhaps this is due to my own politics influencing the research and analysis, and/or perhaps it may be a reflection of these women's engagement with refuge workers and other feminists in their own journey of self- understanding and reflexivity.

Consequently, the women's narratives have been loosely categorized based on these emerging themes in order to reflect the patriarchal context of their creation.

Themes

A number of themes emerged during the interviews, they become clearer with my transcribing and first reading of the transcripts and I have chosen to use these themes as interpretive categories within which to conduct my analysis of the women's stories. Categorizing the women's narratives under these themes was an extremely time consuming and frustrating process, a feeling that was often evident in the women's telling of their experiences of the policing of domestic violence. That is the narratives of policing were not discrete and in

the telling of their experiences the women needed to talk about the incidents of domestic violence and the personal, social and cultural contexts in which they occurred in order to give their narratives their full meaning. In my analysis too I needed to include context in order to give the lived meaning told to me in the interviews.

There are no doubt other possible themes or ways of analysing these experiences of the policing of domestic violence. I have selected these themes as they are those that emerged for me. If others had been involved in the interviewing, transcribing and analysing processes they may have chosen different themes and indeed in the reading of the analysis other themes may emerge for you. These themes that emerged for me are socio-political in nature and come from my interpretation of the women's experiences. They are: Making contact, police response and impact, and what now: follow up and follow through. As mentioned earlier the women's stories cannot be separated from their context/s if they are to remain rich in the depth of meaning relayed to me in their telling and for this reason some extract could easily have fitted under additional categories or sub-categories, their placement is subjective from my interpretation of what I was told in the interviews and my analysis of them.

Threads

Like the women's narrative the policing of domestic violence themes were not discrete but instead were enmeshed in the context of domestic violence, cultural, social and family beliefs, values and understandings of each of the women interviewed and their (ex) partners. Throughout the initial engagement with the women, conducting the interviews, transcribing the interviews, re-engagement with the women, and writing up this work the themes appeared to emerge for me. These themes were blended with my understandings to create the interpretive categories that I have chosen to use to frame this work.

The interpretive categories were also not discrete and once again I felt the sense of repetition and frustration evident in the women's accounts of both the violence in their lives and their experiences of the policing of domestic violence. The final choices from all the possibilities that I saw as interpretative categories were those that resonated most clearly my understanding of these nine women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence in the South Island of Aotearoa/New Zealand. They were also able to be organized to fit with a narrative temporal order by starting at the beginning, representing the complicating action of policing responses and finishing with events that happened afterwards. These themes are: *Making contact – to ring or not to ring; Police response and impact; and What now – protection orders, referrals and follow up.* These interpretive categories were then used as a framework to analyse the women's narratives using words extracts and implicit messages from the women's narrative as sub-themes in each interpretive category.

In the next section of this write up I will use these interpretive categories to represent these nine women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis - Making Contact – To ring or not to ring

All of the women that I interviewed avoided making contact with the police. For them going to the police implied that they were not able to cope and couldn't manage their relationships. Previous research suggests that women tend to minimize domestic violence against them, both to the outside world and to themselves: they are often plagued with thoughts of wasting police time, that there are other women out there worse off than themselves, and that they are making something out of nothing or crying wolf, alongside fears that they won't be believed or the police will also see the situation as their fault (Edwards, 1989; NCIWR, 2006). The overriding message I received throughout the interviews was that it was a huge step for these women to make contact with the police about the domestic violence that they were experiencing in their lives. The sub-themes in relation to these women's experiences of making contact with the police were: *How serious is serious enough? Don't cry wolf; Why I rang – the straw that broke my back is not the whole load; and Neighbours and friends.*

How serious is serious enough?

Some women experience many incidences of violence that they have minimized. Also family members, friends and/or their abusers tell them that they are to blame or that they have exaggerated the severity of the violence (Edwards, 1989; Hand, et al, 2002; NCIWR, 2006; Oliver, 2001). For many of the women that I interviewed the question of 'how serious is serious enough?' provides a real dilemma. Although the Domestic Violence Act says that psychological violence is a crime, it may not always be taken seriously, so how can she know whether or not she is being victimized? The stories of the

women interviewed here imply that this dilemma is far from resolved in their experiences of the policing of domestic violence. For example Samantha had experienced four years of physical, verbal and psychological violence by her (ex) partner, and when he threatened to kill her she took the step of ringing the police:

...and then he came right up to the door and he said, "I'm going to slit your throat, I'll slit your fucking throat" ... And I rang the police and he said, "You better not ring the police you better not be ringing the police", rah, rah. But I did and they came and they were horrible ... they said, "Well you can understand why he's mad you wouldn't let him have his daughter" and I said, "Yes, but I let him know that, I texted him and I'm doing what my lawyer has advised me to do". And they said, "Oh, well we get people threatening to kill us all the time". And I was absolutely in tears. I was just bawling my eyes out and I said, "Fine just go then don't worry about it, I can't be, you know, just leave if that's the way it is"...I just couldn't believe it. Yeah they thought that I was just so overreacting (Samantha)

As a result of the police response to a threat that she interpreted as severe psychological violence, Samantha became confused about what constitutes domestic violence and developed a sense of hopelessness in relation to the policing of domestic violence.

Sadie likewise had experienced a number of incidences of physical and psychological violence over an extended period in her second domestic relationship. She had also experienced physical and psychological violence in a previous relationship, where she had not sought help from the police. When she did call the police their actions appeared to be inconsistent and this inconsistency left her confused as to how serious the violence needed to be for the police to arrest her abuser.

In my first relationship there was definitely no police, but there was definitely abuse – it came on gradual then went on to worse situations. Then in my second relationship, with the girls' dad, they weren't very helpful at all ... Different bits and pieces were happening and threats and I'd been assaulted by his partner at the time. . Some of the police were good, like one of the guys advised me to move out of (town). So I was moving and he'd had the girls for access that day and I hadn't told him I was moving, cos they said just move. And someone had told him and he wouldn't return the children to me. So I phoned the police and they came, cos I had a thing through the lawyer ... and (he) sat on the fence outside the house just swinging his legs and they said, "We will arrest you." And he said, "Well arrest me." This went on for an hour... And he threw stuff at me and got pretty abusive. So the police weren't helpful at all, and he sat there and said, "You arrest me" and they didn't ... (Sadie)

From their involvement with women's refuges, family and friends and their professional training in the definition of domestic violence and the objectives of the Domestic Violence Act (1995) both Samantha and Sadie knew that psychological abuse was a form of violence. Even so, they hesitated to involve the police due to shame and their own sense of ambivalence regarding their children's fathers and the fact that they had love/d and entered into an intimate relationship with a man who turned out to be life threatening to them. Their ambivalence was further compounded by the feelings of confusion as a result of having their experience minimized or inconsistently addressed by the police.

Melanie has also experienced domestic violence by being physically assaulted, and psychologically abused on numerous occasions by her (ex) partner. She had the experience of a family member minimizing her abuse. Likewise she

minimized the violence herself for much of the relationship. She first contacted the police after being severely assaulted. Yet like the other women interviewed she still questioned herself as to whether this incident of violence was serious enough.

I had blood all down my white t-shirt and his mother came out and I was crying and I was trying to dial the police number, I couldn't remember 111. I said, "I'm ringing the police, what is their number?" and she said, "What happened to you?" and I said, "(ex partner) belted me up". And she said, "What did you do to deserve that?" I couldn't believe it. I asked myself if it was serious enough, but I was in heaps of pain, my eye was cut open to this bone here, and even to this day I can hear bone grinding around in it. So I rang the police and he came... (Melanie)

Although Melanie's account of this incident of violence indicated severe physical violence and she overcame her hesitance to call the police, it transposed that she had good reason to hesitate as she still does not have a protection order and has been threatened with charges of making false claims.

Another phenomenon that was evident in the women's talk was self-blame, and a belief that they in some way 'provoked' the violence. This also plays a part in their reluctance to contact the police when attempting to deal with the violence in their lives. Hazel provides an example of this self-blame:

Oh but I aggravated him, I pushed him too far. And it wasn't until I talked to another man and he said, "I got pushed too far one day and I hurt my woman and I had to pay". But ... I was bought up to fight. I don't know when I'm being right or wrong anymore .... I did find with that person that I had that violent incident with he was the one guy I thought that was gonna be the major

one that was gonna put me in hospital ... It was actually the most scary attack I've ever experienced and it was unpredicted (Hazel)

Like Melanie, Hazel has not been protected by police responses and both perpetrators in these cases were not charged with these assaults.

When participants talked about the theme 'how serious is serious enough' they revealed problems with the policing of domestic violence. The women interviewed minimized the domestic violence that they have experienced, and blamed themselves, at least in part, for the violence in their relationships. They resisted contacting the police and only rang when they felt that their (ex) partner had clearly broken the law and that their safety and/or their children's safety has been severely compromised. When police respond inconsistently or by justifying and/or minimizing the violence, women are left feeling confused as to what constitutes domestic violence. As a result Samantha, Melanie and Hazel have been left feeling confused, unprotected, frustrated and with a sense of hopelessness regarding the policing of domestic violence

Don't cry wolf

One of the biggest deterrents to ringing the police for the women interviewed was their belief that they would not be believed, they would be accused of wasting police time, and that they would be 'crying wolf'. This theme is connected to that of the question of how serious is serious enough, and includes assumptions about complaints women make to the police that have an additional social judgment component.

Hazel demonstrates this assumption.

One thing that I've never wanted to do is just call the police on a boyfriend just to control him and I think that's absolutely terrible ... I know that I have

only ever called the police when I feel I have been in danger ... I mean I've seen some men that get victimised by women that call the police for an assault charge that didn't even happen. Well that's, I've known of cases where there was no violence ... well there would have been ... but then you've gotta look at the whole picture sometimes (Hazel)

Even though she believes that some women do make false complaints, she implies that calling the police may have prevented the physical violence from happening and that by "looking at the whole picture" perhaps it is not the case that the women are actually making a false claim.

Jade also implies that smaller incidents can escalate, yet her advice to women reading this work makes reference to a particular kind of woman to whom police do not respond well. To avoid being one of these women she recommends not calling the police for 'minor' incidents and attempting to manage it first.

Just don't cry wolf too many times. They're there to help you but make sure you put things in place too so they know that you are serious. Cos they will get sick of coming around everyday, just for little spats, but I don't know those little spats can get outta hand too. But then when something serious happens they think, "Oh it's just another one of those women" (Jade)

Conversely, Gayle implies that continually calling the police - until they "get sick of it"- is one way she found useful in that the police became frustrated and finally make an arrest.

Yeah, yeah they took him away once. Yeah once when I think they started to get sick of it, you know (Gayle)

The message 'don't cry wolf' seems to have an enduring impact on the women's confidence in the policing system. They also experience confusion as to why and when to call the police and often feel frustrated and hopeless if they are not believed by the police. Samantha's narrative reflects this hopelessness

I've only been to the police twice and that's been in the last two months. I could have, like he was stealing stuff off my property, and the stuff all through the relationship, but you know ... if he can manipulate the court system and it's supposed to be impartial, and he did manipulate... um I think he did ... I mean, I really feel like I can't win, no matter how honest I am and how much I say this keeps happening and nobody believes me (Samantha)

Despite growing professional and public understanding that psychological, emotional and physical violence within a domestic relationship is a crime, women's experience of enforcement of the law leads them to believe that they can safely contact the police only when they have experienced serious physical violence that they cannot manage. Many women feel that they are crying wolf or wasting police time if they contact the police before trying everything they can by themselves to stop the violence in their relationship.

Two problems emerge from the 'don't cry wolf' theme – firstly the victim of violence is charged with the responsibility of managing the violent behaviour of the perpetrator rather than the police holding the perpetrator accountable as is their responsibility under the Domestic Violence Act (1995). Secondly there seems to be no room for her to contact the police for protection before the violence escalates. When the victim of violence is held responsible for managing the perpetrator's violent behaviour it discharges his responsibility to stop his own violence and the police responsibility to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable. When women use their energy and conflict

management strategies to attempt to de-escalate the violent behaviour of their (ex) partner and the violent behaviour escalates anyway they are left feeling that they have failed and often it becomes too unsafe call the police even if they are still able to do so. A clear response of what constitutes domestic violence, an attitude that it is unacceptable at all levels of seriousness, and that it is not the victim's fault, alongside a clear and consistent process of law enforcement would help women's confidence in the policing of domestic violence. According to the Taskforce on action for violence within families (2006) this is a key strategy in eliminating and reducing domestic violence. Indeed this document states:

"We need to ensure that people affected by family violence are safe and those responsible for it are accountable for their actions." (NZMSD, 2006. p. 20)

Furthermore, this report also implies that domestic violence is unacceptable at all levels of seriousness. (NZMSD, 2006)

Why I rang : the straw that broke my back is not the whole load

Often women have endured a number of incidents of physical and or sexual assault and on going patterns of psychological violence including threats and intimidation towards themselves personally and involving the children and/or pets and/or other family members. However the catalyst for ringing the police may be a minor incident that simply tipped the balance in terms of their ability to cope with the abuse or their frustration with the situation that they cannot manage. Other reasons that drive women to contact the police are the impact of the violence on their children, or threats to their children.

Some women have endured threats, intimidation, verbal attacks, and other forms of controlling behaviour by their (ex) partners over a long period of time before they ever let anyone know what they have been experiencing in

their domestic relationship. Gayle talks about being really scared of the violence for two years before involving the police

Well we'd fight and he'd get really violent and I'd get really scared... this all went on, within like 2 years ... (Gayle)

Megan also talks of being isolated for nearly a year before seeking any outside help:

... He was very, he became very obsessed in who I'd seen, all my friends left, I was completely isolated and all I saw was him. I used to live up the road in a cottage that was surrounded by trees and no-one saw me for nearly a year, apart from my workmates (Megan)

And Samantha had been in a violent domestic relationship for fours years before calling the police to a violent incident:

The first time I'd ever been to the police after 4 years of violence (Samantha)

As outlined in the introduction, the types of violence that are seen as psychological violence are outlined on the inner portion of the power and control wheel (see Appendix 1). They include: intimidation; emotional abuse; isolation; minimizing, denying and blaming; using children; using male privilege; economic abuse; and coercion and threats.

Gayle's (ex) partner used psychological control tactics including having affairs which left her feeling 'not good enough' or in some way to blame for her (ex) partner's infidelity.

And um what I think started it off for him was that he started having an affair with a chick down the road, and then started to be really distant and horrible .He was really horrible and I'd be like "what's wrong?" and he'd blame every thing else or he'd say nothing and he could go for days and days and days and not talk - saying nothing - just leaving me like... (Gayle)

Social isolation was another tactic that was used by Amy and Megan's (ex) partners as a way of controlling them.

And I couldn't do anything with anybody else ... when we were on the dairy farm that was where he was his most abusive, because I was very isolated out there ... I was stuck at home I was like to the point that my friend lived down the road on the same street across the road from the farm if I was not allowed to go down there and see her, she was allowed to come to me but I couldn't go down there. (Amy)

he would signal to me if I was allowed to talk ...most days I had to look at the ground ....My car broke down all the time and I was reliant on him; I tried to get away, twice and he chased me out of town, before I could ... and one day I tried to run out the gate but he got me before I even got to the gate (Megan)

Gayle, Amy and Megan initially avoided calling the police as the incidents of physical violence were isolated. These physically violent assaults occurred when the women's efforts to manage their (ex) partners' emotionally and psychologically violent behaviours had failed. Gayle talks about violent incidents that occurred before she contacted the police as 'nothing really', yet also 'messy and horrible and really violent':

Before that there were like isolated incidences, that would be called not too good but they were nothing like, they were nothing really ... like what started

to happen ... it was really messy and horrible and really violent... And I'd have one chance during the day to see what the matter was and if that didn't work then you'd blown it for the day and there was no point in even trying (Gayle)

Her narrative reflects the multiplicity of meaning that some women have in relation to the violence in their relationship. This confusing array of meanings may underpin the confusion and frustration they feel, prompting them to continue seeking to fix the situation without involving the police. Furthermore Amy's narrative reflects the common view held by the women interviewed, that involving the police would likely make the situation worse for them:

he'd thrown me to the ground and pulled my hair and you know ... And he used to demean in lots of ways like any other girl was so much better I was, you know. I was always not good enough, but yet I could never be free from him... I never really had anything to do with the police down here, just because I never wanted to get the police involved, because it would be worse for me (Amy.)

This view of involving the police escalating the violence has been borne out by many of the women interviewed, and also in contemporary research and literature (Hand, et al., 2002; NCIWR, 2006; Oliver, 1998). Yet Megan's narrative, below, reflects the helplessness felt when the violence continues:

Okay, well I think, when the domestic violence started, I didn't see it as violence for a start and, I don't know why, well, initially it was more things like he would boot a coffee table across the room or he would throw cups and I would kinda, I minimised it and then you know... but I didn't like it and we talked about it and it just never got any better (Megan).

As mentioned earlier, the women often saw the violence as their own fault in some ways and their partners' strengthened this belief through psychological tactics of minimization, denial and blame, reflecting the power and control tactic describe in the introduction. An example of this tactic is implied in Gayle's narrative, where her (ex) partner would ask 'what's wrong with her', when she asked him questions about his behaviour or confronted him. The impact of his denial on Gayle was feelings of confusion and self-blame. In retrospect she knew he was having an affair and turned the blame back on her. Consequently, she also begins to think that maybe it is in some way her fault.

and he'd keep saying to me:" what's wrong with you?", and I'd be like "well what is wrong with me?" what am I doing wrong' cos it's not happening? ...and he'd keep telling me that there was something wrong with me and that's all he'd say. He'd say like, "it's you", but that's all he'd say, like you know like I'm sick or something. And I'd be like "oh no, what's happening, what am I doing". But he'd keep asking me that question so it really confused me, he'd keep saying those things first and so I'd think it must have been something wrong with me ... (Gayle)

In Amy's narrative that follows, an incident of violence led her to walk away on one occasion and to ring the police on another. Interestingly, Amy regards the time she walked away as one in which she was strong.

One day, ... he ended up putting up a rock through the window [of the car] and it just smashed straight across me and it was like fuck!... and he dragged me out of the car threw me over it and the stupidest thing was like he grabbed like my face with his hand and I was like well yea what's that suppose to do? But it made me really angry and I was just like "fuck this" and I started walking home. And he come down and was like, "I'm so sorry I'm so sorry for doing that I didn't mean to". I was like, "nah I don't want to fucken hear it ra

da ra". I was very strong for all like 10 minutes you know... (then one day) he started getting real abusive and throwing me around and throwing my things around and I said I was going to call the cops and I went running into the bedroom and called 111 and then he hung up. Then ten minutes later the cop turned up. (Amy)

Gayle's, Megan's and Amy's narratives show that there is a considerable history and multiple incidents of violence sustained by women before the police are ever involved... Women tend to view calling the police as a last resort, even though they know that the violence is escalating:

I like I justified some of the bruises, it was like, well, I handled that and that was alright, but I knew it was getting worse (Megan)

Sadie's extract, below, tells of continuing this attempt to manage the violence in the relationship, all the while being somewhat aware that the violence is escalating:

probably about 10 months living with him, seeing him for just about a year and a half and we are up here ... and he was sitting there it had been brewing, he'd been brewing for weeks and it was just getting to the point were he was going to explode... (Sadie)

Often women are so busy trying to keep themselves functioning, and keeping themselves and their children as safe as possible they can't see any chance to get out and call the police, and often an attempt to leave sees an escalation in the violence:

And really serious violence first started when I wanted to leave the relationship. We didn't live together, we had separate places and we worked

together, he was ...extremely difficult... he was very, he became very obsessed in whom I'd seen, all my friends left, I was completely isolated (Megan)

Due to Megan's experiences of severe physical violence, isolation, intimidation and so forth escalating after an attempt to leave and despite her awareness that the violence was escalating, she felt she needed to choose her escape timing carefully to ensure her safety. This once again shows that the incidents that become the catalyst for women to leave and/or contact the police may be only a small aspect of the domestic violence that they have endured.

The biggest catalyst for women to call the police may have little to do with the severity of the violence and more to do with the needs and wishes of the children. Samantha experienced four years of violence before this relatively small incident, involving her daughter's property motivated her to ring the police.

Um he picked up (daughter)'s ... plant from the day she was born. I had it specially – I've carted it everywhere with me and he destroyed it, threw it all over the ground and stomped all over it ... Like she watered it, it was her plant and she knew... I'm trying really hard to get it to live again but, um we'll see how it goes again it the summer. So I rung the police and he said, "you need a Protection Order". ...He said, "There's nothing we can do. He didn't touch the pot. If he had of smacked the pot then yes, but there's nothing we can do we ..." (Samantha)

In Sadie's case, her children were very clear about their need to leave the violent situation, becoming the catalyst for Sadie to make the final break from her violent (ex) partner.

Cos by that stage the girls had done a programme and with phoning the police and my daughter said that she's going to phone the police and I said, "No don't, don't", it would have got him worse especially if she had done it. So she said ... Well she was eight at the time, nearly nine and she was quite cute. She had the girl, packing her suitcase and my other daughter had tipped her sock drawer into her suitcase and her undies and things so she was ... but she said Mum we're going to go to a safe place and, I said, "go to (neighbour)'s and stay there", so they went up the road, five or six houses up and (the neighbour) wasn't even there but the girls had waited on her porch ... in the meantime the police were coming because I had phoned them about the abuse.(Sadie)

When women finally make the call to the police they find it very frustrating when the police don't respond. For example Dianne put up with being beaten, but when her child was taken by her (ex) partner this was the catalyst to her ringing the police, only to have the police not respond and give her a low priority rating.

The other experience was in (small south island town) and my ex had come around he hit me a couple of times but he ended up taking my eldest daughter and he said he wasn't going to bring her back so I rang the police and they said "well hang on we know about this guy we'll get back to you" ... so I waited and I waited... and eventually (my ex) turned up by himself at the door and was threatening to smack me over ... I don't know he was by himself ...but I had my now husband there and his uncle and cousin and because they were there he didn't come in or anything like that but while they were talking to him. I rung the police, and the police said that there was nothing that they could do. This happened on a Sunday and there was nothing they could do til Monday because they didn't have the staff there and they would need more than one person there for him (Dianne)

So the police would not risk taking on this violent man on their own, which is fair enough. However they in turn expected Dianne to manage the violent situation for twenty four hours. For the women, situations where the police do not respond to their calls for help, cause them to become frustrated and disillusioned with the system. An extract from Samantha also shows this frustration at police minimization and trivialization of the domestic violence incident.

The first time I'd ever been to the police after 4 years of violence and the police officer didn't see what the big deal was. (Samantha)

When women have had this long history of violence before making contact with the police, it is often difficult for them to know where to start and how much to tell the police when being interviewed. They also have the feeling that if they open up too much emotionally that they will not be able to close the flood gates. Therefore the theme for the women interviewed was that you just gave them 'the main ones'. Megan has an explicit narrative about this aspect of the policing of domestic violence:

I gave (the policeman) the basic three main ones, and he said to me, 'Was there anything else?' And I said, 'Not really.' At that stage I seen all the other abuse as nothing... Yeah, I didn't actually see it as that because I managed to manage it and the three main big ones it was different, there was nothing I could do. I just had to take it how it comes, there were other ones too but I just had to take it how it was coming as well, but they were minor compared to these ones, three main ones lasted for hours it wasn't short (Megan).

So, despite Megan having endured daily physical, verbal, psychological and sexual violence, the police only heard the three 'main' incidents of violence. This is a heavy example of *the straw that broke my back is not the whole load.*

In this section the women have demonstrated that they have survived and managed substantial psychological and physical violence before they make contact with the police. The catalyst for ringing the police may be a minor incident, however the narratives presented here show that they do not take the step of calling the police lightly. 'The straw that broke my back is not the whole load' is an important factor in the policing of domestic violence. It has taken a safe, supportive and confidential environment for the women to relate their stories to me over a two or more hour timeframe and reassurance that they would not be identified and that they would have the opportunity to edit their transcripts. And even with this level of safety and support, I am sure that they have more incidents that they have not related. Therefore it is imperative that police create a supportive, safe and respectful environment if they want to determine the full story of women's experiences of domestic violence.

Neighbours and Friends

As implied in the previous sections women are reluctant to contact the police to intervene in their domestic violent situations. This may be the result of fear, shame, confusion about what constitutes domestic violence, ambivalent feelings about their (ex) partners and/or the fathering of their children, minimization of the violence by their violent partner, families and them selves, and/or unhelpful or inconsistent experiences with the police on previous occasions. For this and other reasons women may look to friends and neighbours as their first port of safety. Often it is these neighbours, friends or perhaps family members that make contact with the police. Extracts from Hazel and Jade demonstrate this theme, citing friends as the instigators of calling for police intervention

Now most of the time I haven't called the police. Most of the time it's been friends that have seen my bruises and they've said, "You can't let this go" (Hazel)

One time my ex-partner had come round with the kids at about seven in the morning after an access visit ... and he nutted out to the extent of throwing furniture and trapping me under it. My friend ended up ringing the [police]. He was still nutting out (Jade).

Women sometimes use the support network of friends and neighbours to leave their violent partners without contacting the police at all:

We went to my friends and we sat there and she, her husband and her kept on looking at each other and looking at me and I just didn't have enough guts to ask her for help, and my daughter's saying "Ask!, Ask now!' and I whispered, 'No, we better get going back home, I need to get home.' We went home, and all the way my daughter was saying, 'Go back Mum, go back.' I got to my gate, I just knew, I just felt it in my throat that he was going to kill me that night. And I said, 'Okay, we're going to go inside,' and I was terrified. 'We're going to go inside and we're going to get all our clothes,' I said, 'Don't turn the light on! If you turn the light on or we're gone – he'll be here in a second, if he's not here already.' ... Cos the other thing was, he used to, he used to sit in the trees, outside my place and watch... We went in and we grabbed some sleeping bags and grabbed as much as we could in the dark and we pretty much ran all the way to (friend)'s place (Megan).

Other times women use this support network to enable them to feel safe and able to ring the police themselves:

I was sorting my second eldest he came in and told me to put her down so I put her in her cot then he started beating me up pulling my hair and stuff like that ...and then after awhile he dragged me from room to room by my hair I can remember that but ...but when he eventually left I went to my neighbour and she took me to another neighbour and I rung the police and the police showed up ... (Dianne)

These narratives reflect a consistent theme of friends providing empowerment through support and validation, allowing the women to recognize that what they are experiencing is 'not OK'.

Some of the women also believed that the police were more likely to believe other people rather than themselves. This was borne out for Jade in her experience of the police not attending when she rang, but then attending when her friend went to the station

But they didn't come... I mean when I first rang asking them to come around cos he's abused me, they said there was nothing they could do cos he hadn't done anything, cos he'd left at that stage, but then he came back 10 minutes later... To have the second go and that's when my friend came round and he threw something at her and he was just ranting and raving, and that's when she just went down and walked into the station and said, "look she's already rung you and said that (he)'s been there and nutting out. He's there again now. What are you going to do about it? She's got her baby in the house", and that's when they came. (Jade)

So even if women feel disinclined to ring the police friends, neighbours and family can sometimes be the instigators of women making contact with the police:

... First well we went to the police station, cos I was sober driving with my brother ...and his girlfriend so we went ... we'd been talking about it and in the end we all went together. (Sadie)

Friends and Neighbours often provide women with the support belief, respect and safety that assists them in leaving a violent relationship. These relationship variables are recognized in psychological literature as those that assist therapeutic change (Paterson & Welfel, 1994; Rogers, 1951). It is important for women to feel supported, respected and believed as they make a huge life changing decision about their relationship.

CHAPTER FIVE

Analysis - Police Response and Impact

The strongest influence on women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence comes from the police's responses and the impact this has on the women and their domestic violence situations. Prior to 1987 New Zealand Police, like others internationally, saw domestic violence as a family matter and low priority. However both Te Rito and the New Zealand Police Family Violence Policy highlight a change in direction, emphasizing high priority police response and appropriately responsive policing within a multi-agency approach to domestic violence. (New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, 2002; NZ Police, 1996) Contemporary research indicates that women are most in danger when they have called the police and/or are attempting to leave a violent relationship (NCIWR, 2006). Therefore it is critical for the safety of women that they are able to have confidence in police responses to domestic violence. The sub-themes that incorporated the most common concerns for the women that I interviewed were: *Timeframes; Timing; Who attends; Being believed, Being protected; Being respected; Respect him; Alone/support; What about the kids; Blaming the victim; Country hicks; Understanding/knowledge of DV dynamics; and Boundaries and collusion.*

Time frames

Nearly every woman interviewed had something to say about the amount of time it took for the police to respond to their calls for assistance in domestic violence. In relation to the appropriateness and priority response required the Police Family Violence Policy states:

"victims of violence were (to be) provided with appropriate and timely support and offenders were (to be) arrested." (NZ Police, 1996 p.1)

The violent (ex) partners of the women interviewed often used the delay in police response as a form of threat and intimidation. Jade's narrative reflects this experience:

I didn't have much faith in that (protection order) 'cause he used to always say to me, "it takes them that long to get here I could kill you by the time they got here". 'Cause they never used to respond straight away. They were always about 10 minutes, quarter of an hour, at the least (Jade).

Having decided to ring the police, the women I interviewed talked of frantically planning and judging the length of time that they can keep their partners at bay for the police to arrive. They expect instant response from the police because the police and other agencies tell them that they will give domestic violence top priority. For Melanie and Dianne this did not seem to be the case:

And he came but he didn't come straight away ... I was sitting there for ten or fifteen minutes and he lives about one and a half minutes away (Melanie).

Dianne and her family were expected to wait nearly twenty four hours for protection by the police, even though Dianne had a protection order and the police knew about the severity of her (ex) partner's violence:

so I rang the police and they said... we'll get back to you... so I waited and I waited... and eventually (ex-partner) turned up and while (my family) were talking to him I rung the police ... and the police said.....that there was nothing that they could do ...til Monday ...I thought that was pretty crap because I needed them right then and there.. There was no apology or anything like that (Dianne).

There is an obvious inconsistency in response times of between 10 -15 minutes and "maybe tomorrow". Yet, from these women's perspectives neither is adequate when they fear for their lives. When police have responded quickly it has come as a shock to the women and they have been impressed and gratified. They also felt a sense of confidence in these police and kept up contact, to allow them to eventually leave their violent partners safely. Amy notes how she was impressed by the haste of the response of one particular rural policeman:

he started getting real abusive and throwing me around and throwing my things around and I said I was going to call the cops and I went running into the bedroom and called 111 and then he hung the phone up. Then ten minutes later the cop turned up... which was quite impressive (Amy).

Likewise, Dianne's account of policing of domestic violence in the North Island shows stark contrast to her later experience of being told by police to wait until Monday:

They only took 5 minutes ... yep the police up there were wonderful ... they just responded so quickly and well (Dianne).

Overall, the women interviewed saw the time in which it took the police to respond to their domestic violence situations as a major problem in the policing of domestic violence. This view is most clearly reflected in this extract from Jade's narrative:

the biggest problems with the policing of domestic violence would be (not) quickly responding ... (Jade).

The lack of expediency in the policing of domestic violence reflected in Jade's discourse is mirrored by most of the other women interviewed. Although the police have indicated domestic violence cases will be given priority, women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence has shown inconsistency in the timeframes involved in police attending domestic violence incidences. In these women's experiences, their violent partner may use this lack of urgency in police responding as a means of threatening and intimidating them. The result of this lack of urgency, for the women, is that it increases their reluctance to call the police as they know that it is taking a risk with their safety: if the police do not attend or give a low priority response as the violence is likely to escalate to a point where they cannot manage it.

Who attends

Another aspect of the police response to domestic violence that had a huge impact for all of the women interviewed concerned who attends the police call out. The women had very different views about who should attend domestic violence situations, in terms of gender, physical appearance and police/non-police. Despite this divergence in views the sense of safety, respect and being believed are all attitudinal components that the women identified as critical to their sense of confidence in police responses.

Some women, like Melanie and Megan felt the physical presence of big male police officers gave them a sense of being protected. Melanie talks of her analysis of protection by the police in relation to their physical appearance:

I think there needs to be two big strong policemen. When you said one woman, one man, I was thinking, "oh no". It needs two big men like when I was interviewed by a tall, quite muscularly sort of man. And the detective that was overseeing him was little; when he walked in the room, it was like, "oh you're a waste of time". The bigger, stronger looking the better, because what was going through my head was, "can you take (ex-husband) on?" If the police

were going to end up between me and him, I wanted someone who could protect me, and I've seen (ex-husband) take four men on (Melanie).

As Melanie suggests here, the presence of physically strong police men may lend a sense of protection to some women who have seen the full force of their partner's physical violence. Megan also saw this strong physical appearance as important to her sense of confidence, and also talks of additional important personal characteristics:

For me, it was really important... (the policeman) was a really tall man, and solid. It was really important to have a big man there... and he was extremely quiet in nature, he wasn't abrupt, he was very respectful... he believed me and told me that they would get him ... I felt protected ... (Those things were) hugely important because I knew I had taken a huge risk by even being there (Megan).

So for Megan an attitude of respect, an air of calmness, trust in her version of events and confidence that they would hold her abuser accountable were important police characteristics alongside the policeman's physical appearance.

Other women felt that it is important to be understood and they implied that women officers are more likely to understand them and more able to provide an environment that enabled them to talk about what happened in the violent situation:

Send a female officer or something yeah. It's hard to sort of give a statement to a male. Some of them can be good though (Jade).

Some women also talked about the need for a non-police presence from women refuge staff as well as police women. Hazel's narrative highlights this need:

If there was a domestic violence situation I always feel there needs to be a woman there ... I mean a police woman ... And also coming into the situation, women's refuge on the premises straight away (Hazel).

Conversely Amy implies that it is important for individual women to have police personnel that they feel most comfortable with and even then they may not talk honestly and openly due to the consequences for themselves and/or their partner:

I would take them apart for one, and I would get a female officer to talk to the female but then a lot of females are more prone to open up to men than they are to open up to women, like I am more prone to open up to men than I am to women ... but you've got to be careful, every situation is different, like mine is just a minor to what is out there. Like when I first started out I would lie and there's gonna be plenty of women out there that are gonna lie to save their man (Amy).

The women differed in their opinions of the most desirable gender and physical appearance in police attending domestic violence. However they all wanted to feel protected and safe. Therefore it is important that police attending domestic violence are physically able to manage the violent offender. Also it is important to have police personnel who are able to listen well and provide an understanding, empathic, respectful and supportive environment for the woman to feel safe and able to talk. A number of women agreed with Hazel's view that it would be best to have women's refuge trained workers at every police callout of domestic violence.

Believe me

As Megan stated in the previous section, and implicit in other previously cited narratives is the need for women to be believed by attending police officers. Melanie, like all of the women interviewed, implies that not being believed was a real fear for her when she made initial contact with the police:

And the stupid thing about it, I was sitting there and the one thing that was going through my head was; "what if he doesn't believe me?" (Melanie).

Jade and Samantha's narratives show the frustration and the helplessness that women feel when they have not felt believed by the police. Jade has a sense of hopelessness when it comes to police believing her. She felt that she was never taken seriously:

... they believed him, that's why they never used to take me seriously ... yea he was just looking out for the kids, you know and she's on the piss all the time...I mean when I first rang asking them to come around 'cause he's abused me, they said there was nothing they could do 'cause he hadn't done anything, 'cause he'd left at that stage, but then he came back 10 minutes later... (Jade).

This sense of hopelessness is also reflected in an extract from Samantha's narrative:

So ... I really feel like I can't win no matter how honest and how much I say this keeps happening and nobody believes me (Samantha).

The 'believe me'sub-theme is a critical one in the policing of domestic violence. According to Jocelyn Scutt (1997) women are seen as "incredible" or unbelievable in terms of the law. This view has been borne out by the

women interviewed and also by women that I work with each day. Often violent partners have threatened them that they wont be believed by the police, other professionals, friends and family as a way of keeping the violence in house and isolating the women from support. Also, as is evident in the experiences of women interviewed here, some of the incidents of violence are so horrific that they feel incredible for the women and may seem incredible to those that are intervening in domestic violence situations. As stated here by the women that I interviewed, being believed is a very important factor in utilising police support and intervention.

Protect us

Prior to having experienced the policing of domestic violence, all of the women interviewed had the belief that the police had a protection role in the community. This is why they rang the police, rather than any other community or social service, to intervene in their domestic violence situations. When the police have not responded protectively the women are left feeling confused and angry. This confusion and consequent anger is reflected by Sadie:

(The police) threatened time and time again (to arrest him). And then when I drove away he goes like this, you know, he pretended to shoot me... the bloody police are still sitting in their car and all that sort of stuff ... they are supposed to help me because I'd been assaulted. They are supposed to help! (Sadie).

Similarly Jade has a sense of anger at the police attitude of disregard for her own and her children's safety and protection, despite her protection order:

I do remember that they were mongrels down here when I was leaving. They were too busy having their smokos or something and they wouldn't even come round while I packed gears for the kids. They reckoned that he wasn't that much of a problem and like he was driving round like a nutter... there was no

way that they could stop (ex-partner), two women, two refuge workers. If he wanted in he'd just push straight through them (Jade).

Consequently, Jade made an official complaint against the local police, yet never heard back about it from the Police Complaints Authority. Although her refuge worker told her that they were contacted about the complaint and police said they would try to do better.

Protection is the main thing that the women interviewed wanted from police. The reason that most of them rang the police was the belief that police are in our communities to protect us from violence and other crimes. When they are not protected they feel confused and angry.

Respect me

To be respected is a tenet of human rights. Respect or lack of it is conveyed by attitude, behaviours, and treatment in general. In terms of domestic violence, women have been treated with disrespect in their intimate relationship and many believe that they are not worthy of time, energy or even basic human rights such as respect.

I always felt that I was a hassle, because I had that with everyone, not just the police. I felt like I was a burden or a hassle or a problem or I wasn't good enough or why should they be worried about me and so I had that attitude ahead of them, not to burden anyone. It felt like almost that I didn't have a right to help. So I had that, sort of feeling (Melanie).

Melanie's narrative tells of seeking intervention when her self-confidence and sense of entitlement has been ground down to a level where she believes that she is unworthy of intervention. For this reason professional ethics and standards of practice are imperative in creating an environment of respect and human rights. It is important for respect to be conveyed by professionals

intervening in domestic violence. For the women interviewed a feeling of being respected correlated with positive views of police interventions into domestic violence.

In (larger south island city) they were quite good, like respecting who we are without the boys brigade stuff (Hazel).

Hazel then went on to apply for and get a protection order and enforce it with the ongoing support from these police.

When respect was not conveyed to the women by the police, this had the impact of further increasing their sense of worthlessness, added weight to their belief that they are in some way to blame by feeling judged, and ultimately deterring them from calling the police into their domestic violence incidents. Hazel's second experience of the policing of domestic violence was in a different town where the police did not protect her and their intervention was in stark contrast to her previous experience, leaving her feeling disillusioned and disrespected:

They wouldn't help me ... and they didn't want to lay any charges all they wanted to do was get me out of the situation and away from their precious person that they were protecting... they never had any women's refuge ring me up the next day to help me out they had not documented it at all. I don't believe they had done any work, I just believe they had just got me out of the situation ... I felt like I got treated like some kind of virus (Hazel).

Sadie, like Hazel felt disillusioned with the policing of domestic violence due to an attitude of unresponsiveness by her local police:

Because they make you feel like you are wasting their time, you shouldn't be there you are wasting their time (Sadie).

Dianne has a clear piece of advice for police attending domestic violence incidents:

Listen to the woman and don't judge her (Dianne).

Professional standards and codes of ethics recognise the importance of respect being imparted to clients. Respect is conveyed by attitude and also behaviour. When the women interviewed felt respected by police they were able to utilise the policing system more effectively and had more positive outcomes and evaluations of policing interventions. When the women experienced an attitude of disrespect they felt further disempowered and an increased sense of worthlessness. The theme of respect is imperative in ensuring effective interventions in the helping professions therefore if the police are to intervene, an attitude of respect for those involved is critical to effectiveness.

Respect him

Contrary to the view that women who have been abused by their (ex) partners are 'vindictive' and set on revenge, participants saw it as important that their (ex) partners were also treated with respect by police intervening in domestic violence. Jade reflects on this aspect of police attitudes as she is talking about what worked well in her experiences of the policing of domestic violence:

I think its 'cause she's (policewoman) straight up and she's just really good to talk to and goes beyond the call of duty, like she has with this family anyway ... she can be hard ... well she's got no time for losers, well that's just her, you piss her off and you deal with her. I found her good when we needed someone there. When the time was right I knew that she was the one to ring... she was never really hard on (ex-partner) either, never really ..., she was

brassed off with him, but she still talks to him and she doesn't look him up and down like a piece of crap, and go; "oh yeah I remember what you .." She allows for people to change I think... Yeah, and she gives them that chance to move on with their lives. And like, she supports the changes that they make (Jade).

In Jade's narrative respect includes treating the whole family with an ethic of care, being direct and straight up, being polite, demonstrating a belief in people's ability to change and providing support for those changes. Other women also implied that police need to respect all parties in domestic violence, without collusion with either the victim or the perpetrator. One way that this respect is conveyed is attempting to attend to cultural needs of the parties involved, as is reflected in an extract from Hazel's narrative:

They were good there, you know understood things like respecting who we are without the boys brigade stuff ... they got a Māori cop to come and talk to (ex-partner) you know cos he's a Māori boy and you know they thought that if they got a Māori cop... that they might've been able to talk face to face and they might've been able to connect(Hazel).

In summary, respect is an important component of effective policing of domestic violence. The women interviewed thought it was important for respect to be conveyed by police to both themselves and their violent (ex) partners. It appears that different towns are different in their ability to convey respect to the victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. Respect is a basic human right and very important in the policing of any crime including domestic violence.

Country Hicks

In the previous two sub-sections there is an implied view that the culture of individual police regions influences police responses to domestic violence. An

extract from Hazel's narrative makes this view of inconsistent response in different policing regions explicit.

(Up north) they were quite firm but (here) its like hick land where they have quite a different law of their own... like America they've got states with different laws, well (here) I think they do think they've got a whole law of their own down here ... that we're so small that we don't need to be accountable (Hazel.)

Jade and Melanie believe that connections between their partners and the police through sport and other groups in small towns interfere with the policing of domestic violence:

one of the officers, they used to sit and talk league together (Jade).

Oh yeah I've also seen the Masonic lodge stuff ... 'cause it just seems funny that (ex-husband) has Masonic connections and he's even hinted that there's something like that going on with him and the cops out there (Melanie).

Furthermore Gayle implies that these connections between police and her (ex) partner leads to collusion and a sense that the violence is being rewarded:

... and you see he had 2 guys in the police force that were his mates, you know they were pretty into it... Yeah, there was this one police officer who would, that took him away one night ... oh no he let him drive his own car into town, 'cause we were out at the beach and he stopped at the gas station and gave him 20 bucks to put gas in his car, and it was so long as he didn't come back, and I was like, "that's not right, he's rewarding him" (Gayle).

The impact of this, for Hazel, has been a lack of confidence in her local police and that she needed to drive elsewhere if she wanted domestic violence to be taken seriously.

And um I just had to get out. I mean we'd called the police before and I just felt that it was just a cycle that was never going to end and the police weren't doing anything ... so I got in my car and drove to (another town) (Hazel).

Likewise Dianne talks about her experiences of different police regions and the inconsistency that she found:

... all cops seem set in their ways but down south they seem worse for some reason .. maybe if you took half from the south and half from the north and swapped them around yeah and they learned from each other that way ... Yep that would be great if the police from (small south island town) could've just done what those guys in (large north island city) did I'm sure a lot more women would phone in (Dianne).

Additionally Jade found attitudes of a small rural police force more patriarchal than those in a city:

No in (large south island city) they were good but down south ... I just got the feeling that (the police) thought if I knuckled under and did what he told me I'd be fine ... yeah I'm a lippy woman (Jade).

Throughout the interviews there was a pervasive thread suggesting that the southern region of New Zealand has different methods, attitudes and beliefs in relation to the policing of domestic violence. When this happens women feel angry at the system as they have not been treated the way that they are told victims of domestic violence will be treated. The impact of the country hicks

theme is that women will often drive to larger cities, flee the South Island with the help of family and/or women's refuge or even leave the country, in order for their domestic violence situations to be taken seriously.

Alone/Support

As implied earlier, one of the critical areas of policing of domestic violence for these women is feeling safe and protected. Having professional support systems brought in to support women who have left a violent relationship is important. According to the New Zealand Police (1996) family violence policy a collaborative approach is best in managing domestic violence cases:

"Successful models for responding to family violence suggest the implementation of a coordinated and interagency approach within a framework of locally developed protocols. The principles of 'consistent messages' and 'no gaps in services' should underpin local responses." (p.2)

For the women interviewed there was a lack of support. This made the process of contacting and dealing with the police more difficult for various reasons. Firstly, many women may have been isolated from their personal support network due to the dynamics of domestic violence. Melanie talks about this when she recounts being at the police station:

Yeah, I think, the lady, the receptionist I think she might have asked me did I want to ring Mum or Dad or anyone and I went, 'no, they're up in the north island' and that was it, there was nothing after that, there was no-one to ring anyway, because ex-partner had cut everyone off ... (Melanie).

Secondly they may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed and unable to contact friends and/or family. Amy's (ex) partner had taken her away from her family and friends and also blocked phone calls and any other contact made by them. She thought that they had abandoned her:

I hadn't heard from my family at all and I had thought that they'd like disowned me and you know because I had let this happen to my mum and I didn't come home you know and like it went to the point where my sister's boyfriends were going to come up and they were going to grab me and put me in the boot and take me home then they realized that in the end I'm just gonna keep going back you know because "I love him and he was my world" (Amy).

Thirdly, women may not have the capacity to really understand or concentrate on the process of domestic violence interventions and just agree with authority figures, despite being unsure. This is how they have learned to respond to power and control. For this third reason, support people with in-depth knowledge of domestic violence and its effects are imperative supports for both the women and the police. Megan's narrative tells of this collaborative approach between the police and women's refuge:

He did advise me- before advising me to get a protection order - of going to Women's refuge and that there were some really great people down there ... counseling ... he asked me how my support systems were... (Megan).

Whereas Melanie found the process lonely and difficult without support:

And he seemed to leave me there for so long, and I was like, 'this guy has forgotten about me,' and eventually he ambled out and he said, he seemed not really concerned, he said, 'are you okay? Do you need a the doctor, 'cause you look alright,' and I was like I didn't need a doctor, so I suppose it was natural for him to come to that assumption, but I don't know...I don't know, I just felt like I wanted someone, I actually was screaming out for someone just to be there, I'd have given anything for someone to speak to at that moment ...

No he didn't ask me if I wanted women's refuge or anything like that. He just left me out there for ages (Melanie).

Feeling supported and understood is critical in establishing a relationship. The need for support is a consistent theme throughout the interviews that I undertook. Women are often socially and emotionally isolated from friends, family and any social contact. They can also feel too scared, ashamed or embarrassed to talk to those support people. For these reasons it is important that police collaborate with women's refuges to provide this specialist support.

What about the kids

A whole thesis and body of research could be conducted in relation to domestic violence and children. Women are often placed in a difficult position by general society, the courts, the police, child welfare and their abusive (ex) partners. They are aware and are told continuously by courts, the media, child development experts and so forth the benefits of having fathers in their children's lives. Yet on the other side of the coin they are held to blame for the effects of violence on their children when they stay in a violent relationship. This dichotomy is reflected in Samantha's story:

I always get her out of the car and say go inside before I say anything to him 'cause I know what he's like. ... and I've tried really, really hard 'cause I keep thinking that he is (daughter's) dad but she doesn't need this (Samantha).

Even after women have left and their children are having access visits this dilemma is apparent for them. For example Melanie talks of her current situation with access visits:

But I look at my kids and think, 'I just wish they could just have a normal, happy, life instead of going backwards and forwards to their dad. Their dad is

part of their identity, I understand that, they need to have a relationship with dad and they do need to identify with him and they do need their father in their life, I understand that. But they're getting abused, not just physically but emotionally, mentally and I'm getting run down to them and degraded and called a liar and my little boy is going to grow such a warped view of me and confused and stuck in the middle (Melanie).

Also it is usually after the violent partner has left that children overtly display the effects of domestic violence (NCIWR, 2006; pers. comm. Invercargill and Gore Refuge Workers, 2007). So once again many women blame themselves for their children being affected by domestic violence, even when they have left:

My daughter had been ...looking back now, she is very protective of me, like I'm her property and through (ex-partner) she just learnt a new way of manipulating me...she's become violent and physically aggressive towards me, so we're kind of going through that and with meeting (psychologist), she's helping us, so that's really good. That was probably one of the most important things, because my kids weren't violent before. I know now that that is an effect of his violence, even though they didn't see (the violence) as such, but they seen (ex-partner) stand over me and that's what started it (Megan).

It is important to consider women's dilemmas as mothers. Women whose children are involved in the domestic violence situation with them are acutely aware of the duel edged sword evident in relation to protecting their children. The 'what about the children' theme is connected to women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence as their lives as mothers are intrinsically woven through their experiences in their relationships. The women interviewed here were acutely aware of their children throughout the process of living with, leaving and managing access in their violent relationship. In the

policing of domestic violence it is important to remember that women are considering their own safety and needs whilst also considering the needs and safety of their children.

Blaming the victim

Throughout the interviews a clearly obvious issue was one of victim blaming. According to literature (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; NCIWR, 2006; Sinclair, 1985) victim blaming statements and attitudes are 'myths' that serve to reinforce and maintain domestic violence in our society. Women have been blamed for the violence by their (ex) partners, their families/friends, and then by the police who intervene in the violence. According to Sinclair (1985) seeing the victim as culpable for the domestic violence is a myth that serves to perpetuate domestic violence. She further implies that when people (including the police) blame the victim it leads to inappropriate assessment and interventions and ultimately a failure to stop the domestic violence. More recent research (Robertson et al, 2007) implies that a police attitude of victim blaming is a problem in the policing of domestic violence as it "*encourages women to see themselves as part of the problem*" (p.168).

Jade describes her experience of being blamed for her (ex) partner's violence:

And the police were like, "huh, he's alright the only time he acts up is when she has been on the ran-tan". But he'd been driving round the streets and going to all my friends' houses for that whole week threatening them and my family (Jade).

Victim blaming is also evident in this extract from Hazel's narrative:

here in (south island city) I found them to be um very intolerant towards the woman ... the focus was like, "what did you do to him?" (Hazel).

One result of these experiences is that women tend to blame themselves and other victims of violence. Other results are a lack of intervention by police, and women feeling a sense of hopelessness, questioning their own mental state and ultimately being deterred from asking for police interventions. Samantha's narrative demonstrates this point:

They said I've got to try harder to communicate with him, but I can't, I've tried everything ... and its just hopeless (Samantha).

As Melanie implies victim blaming can lead women to mistrust reality and begin to question their own mental state:

I was starting to question my own mentality, I was actually thinking to myself like, "did this happen?" 'cause the police and then also the court they said that I was transferring and I was, there was something else they called it ...transferring and dissociation I think, that I was transferring all my childhood abuse onto (ex-partner) and they said that I was, I thought it was him and that I, and that it was basically a mental condition ... but I now know that it was not the case, but it really made me question myself (Melanie).

The Domestic Violence Act (1995) has as its objective to reduce and prevent domestic violence. Rather than the focus being how we stop the violence, the message conveyed by some police is why you (as the victim of violence) ***let*** the violence happen. This attitude is reflected in an extract from Amy narrative below:

so I grabbed my stuff, I jumped in the vehicle, and (the policeman) was like: "now why you let this carry on (Amy)?" (Amy).

These attitudes deter women from calling the police to intervene in their domestic violence situations and are not appropriate interventions from the women's point of view. After all the women understand that families are a privileged institution in Aotearoa/New Zealand and research, media and dominant discourse implies that a nuclear family is the best environment for healthy child development and children 'need their fathers'. Once again the participants' experiences suggest this is a myth.

... and I've tried really, really hard 'cause I keep thinking that he is her dad ... but they were really horrible. They said, "Well you can understand why he's mad you wouldn't let him have his daughter." And I said, "yes, but I let him know that, I texted him and I'm doing what my lawyer advised me to do". And they said, "Oh well we get people threatening to kill us all the time"... so I said, "Fine, just go then, don't worry about it..., just leave if that's the way it is". And they said, "No, now that you've done this, you need to come down to the police station with us right now. ... and it just felt horrible, they just stood there and the other policeman said, "It will depend on what we find out whether or not we'll do you for kidnapping, for not handing her over" (Samantha).

Samantha was shocked that she called the police to intervene in this incident of domestic violence, as suggested by her lawyer, only for the police to suggest that she was breaking the law by standing up to her violent (ex) partner. This lack of understanding is further demonstrated in Melanie's narrative where the police threaten her with filing a false complaint because her statement has some timeframes muddled:

And the police dropped the charges, They didn't go through with the three major statements they wanted an entire timeline, and when I did this it was all muddled, because the deeper I got into it the more I remembered the more

clearer things become, but also it was still muddled because my memory was jumping all over the place... but then they went and interviewed some of the people, and some of it fitted perfectly but some of it didn't. ...But they never came back and said, 'we need to fix this,' they actually blamed me for that and they said, 'you lied,' and they interviewed me and were thinking about charging me (with making a false complaint), and I was like, 'What?!' To this day, I'm still in a wee bit of disbelief. But they dropped it because they also knew that there was too much evidence to prove that there was domestic violence (Melanie).

The end result of blaming the victim is a feeling of being pushed and pulled by force. This feeling is reflected in an extract from Melanie's narrative

... (the police) did after that lay charges but it was like two weeks later and they said that they were going ahead without me and I didn't have a choice in the matter. And then they scared the living crap out of me because they said if you don't cooperate we might have to charge you, because you actually have to cooperate with us, otherwise you're withholding evidence, so I was freaked out no matter what I did, my (ex-partner) on one side and the police on the other (Melanie)

The victim blaming discourse is prevalent in the literature (Dobash, Dobash, 1992; Edwards, 1989; NCIWR, 2006; Robertson, , et al 2007). It is seen as a myth that maintains and perpetuates domestic violence. According to the myth cycle believing in myths such as victim culpability for violence leads to inappropriate analyses and ineffective intervention and failure in stopping the violence (Sinclair, 1985). It appears that victim blaming is also prevalent in women's experience of the policing of domestic violence. This is not acceptable if we want to reduce domestic violence. If women are seen as

culpable for the violence inflicted against them and are blamed by the very people whom they believe will assist them, they are deemed responsible for the violence. This in turn supports and maintains the violent partner's attempts to excuse and not take responsibility for his violence. It is sad and frustrating to hear this victim blaming discourse is still clearly present in the attitude of some police when intervening in domestic violence situations. This attitude indicates a lack of knowledge and understanding of the nature and effects of domestic violence.

Understanding/Knowledge of DV dynamics

The women interviewed had an expectation that all police officers have an in-depth knowledge of human behaviour and in particular a sound understanding and knowledge of the dynamics of domestic violence. They have an expectation that the police will pick up on subtle clues and relationship dynamics. Melanie's thoughts and behaviours whilst police attended a non-domestic violence call-out reflected this expectation:

the first time I seen the Police; [something else had happened]. And the police come out and they were funny towards me, saying, 'What's your story?' and I was freaking out, thinking that they knew, that someone had told them what (ex-husband) was doing to me, because I was black and blue from the collar down and I sort of got the impression that they knew something ... I just felt that they were watching me all the time... and they heard (ex-husband) the way he was teasing me, he was being quite degrading, he called me a stupid bitch in front of them, and I was bit jumpy because I had only had a hiding a couple of nights before that and I was just a bit jumpy ... But they left after that, you know, they looked at the shed and the lock and everything and they left and in some ways it was not their fault but I felt like, 'damn, they're not going to help,' because it was like they had been watching me and they didn't do anything and I sort of wanted someone to see. It sort of was a huge factor

in why I stayed for as long as I did. I thought that they didn't understand and they wouldn't help anyway (Melanie).

The reason most talked about in the interviews for not talking to the police was feeling unsafe. The women interviewed saw this as a gap in police knowledge around the understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence. Dianne has women's refuge training and from her experience and training she gives this advice:

And the police need to realize that things they ask, do, or say can put the woman in a dangerous situation for later on (Dianne).

Sadie and Amy give examples of how police lack of understanding of the risks and realities from the women's perspective deters women from talking to the police. Sadie's body was giving her very clear self protection messages whilst her (ex) partner was in sight. Yet the police officer could not understand her concern about answering questions with her (ex) partner so close:

I was sitting there being interviewed or interrogated, I not quite sure what you call it. I was sitting there shaking like a leaf, I can feel it now. Sitting there and the doors open and he walks past with the policeman and he's standing right there as she's asking the questions. I said, "Oh, I'm not answering you". I'm like pointing and saying that he's here and she said, "its alright he can't do anything, he's got handcuffs on." But he was just there on the other side and the door was open and I could see his back, I could still see his shirt, it was a cream shirt with stripes on it. And she was telling me it was OK, the door wasn't even shut, and I was like ....This is the feeling that I had .... She didn't have a clue. So that was horrible, absolutely horrible. In the end, it was finished and they said, 'Oh well, charge him" and, he was out. He didn't stay in the cells overnight or anything like that (Sadie).

The consequence of this for Sadie was another beating and a lack of confidence in the police and the system. The fear that women feel when calling the police is huge. Police need to remember that women in violent relationships understand only too well that some women and children get killed by violent partners so they are trying to protect themselves the best way they can and will only trust another form of protection when it is proven to work better than their own attempts, and for the women interviewed this was not the case. The lack of police understanding about the likelihood of retaliation has been the deterrent. Amy's story reflects this point.

We've had the cops called on us like two or three times ... and at one point they took us back to the station and because I wouldn't talk and they had nothing, you know they couldn't really, could they? ... anyway, if I'd said anything it'd only make things worse for me, 'cause he's gonna get out sometime ... and then oh fuck ... I don't even wanna think about what would happen (Amy.)

Dianne also implies that friends of hers have not talked to the police due to their fears of retaliation from their partners.

I remember a couple of friends of mine who rang after domestic violence like they've called the police, the police have got there and then the women refuses to say anything. And then (the police) said to them, "well hey we're sick of you ringing up. If you don't do anything we're not going to respond" ... but the police don't understand how scared they are ... like most of us are told that we'll be killed if we ring the police (Dianne).

Another dynamic of domestic violence not understood by the police according to the women interviewed was the tactics of power and control used by their

violent (ex) partners. In Jade's case this dynamic involved her (ex) partner's use of the children:

And like if there are kids involved or even if they're not there and if he keeps coming to the premises ... you're not actually provoking anything and he's coming to your address, early in the morning... they've got to see that that's not normal. Like he used to have the kids over night and you don't take them back to the mother's place at 7 o'clock in the morning, normally they're just having breakfast then or whatever. It's not normal, it's like spying, that's when they should think, "hey this male is thinking along the lines of well 'who's she in bed with' or trying to catch her out doing something that he doesn't like. That's not ok" (Jade).

When police officers do understand these more subtle forms of psychological violence and act on them the women feel more satisfaction and confidence in the police, tinged with surprise. The following abstract from Sadie's story reflects this confidence

And he said," well actually I can charge you, something about breaching the protection order because you are psychologically abusing her by not returning this vehicle". I was sitting there like, I'm like, my jaw dropped because this policeman is actually using and understanding the law as I understand it. I was really impressed, with that mmmm, he was really good (Sadie).

As Gayle was reflecting on one police officer that was useful in her experiences of the policing of domestic violence, she implied it was his ability to understand the tactics of her violent ex partner that was the difference.

Yeah, there was one guy that was good ... And (ex) partner couldn't stand him, so there was something about this guy, he could see through him and he was the first person to use the word manipulator (Gayle).

This knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence and the women's realities as well as the people involved is also reflected in Amy's account of a successful police intervention into her domestic violent situation.

The cop knew me and knew (ex-partner) and knew what the abuse was like (Amy).

The dynamics of domestic violence are complex. It can occur in many different relationships and the causes are multiple. The women in this study all acknowledged positive aspects of their relationships with their (ex) partners and a very real commitment to 'make their relationships work'. They believe it is important that police and other professionals working with domestic violence understand that often it is not the relationship that they want out of their lives, but the violence. When this is not understood it acts, as in Gayle's case, as a deterrent to calling the police.

And they'd be like making you feel a bit guilty if you rang, because they'd come around and they tell you that you should not be seeing each other (Gayle).

Amy also felt embarrassed to call the police for subsequent domestic violence incidents as she felt that she would be seen as responsible for him beating her because she had not left

I had a wee scooter to get to work I went down to my best friends on the scooter and as I was going down (ex-partner) come past me and turned

around and he put his lights on full beam so I couldn't see anything so that you know tough shit if I crashed. Then the cop come up and so forth and by this time I'd apologized to (ex-partner) and said that I was so sorry and the cop told me to grab my stuff and leave. So I grabbed my stuff I jumped in the vehicle and he was like, "now why do you let this carry on?" and it was like well coz I love him you know, and (the policeman) took me down to (friends) and I stayed the night there and he stayed on the road so that (ex-partner) wouldn't come down (Amy).

Furthermore if police do not have a sound knowledge of the nature and effects of domestic violence they can put women in danger. An extract from Melanie's story reflects this point:

But it's just, they don't get it, like they come to pick you up and don't park your car around the back, you don't leave the car door open, you don't go talk to him and aggravate it because 'you don't have to go back to it,' but I do have to go back to it (Melanie).

The dynamics of domestic violence are complex and multifaceted. A sound knowledge and understanding of power and control, structural and feminist analyses alongside women's realities and the domestic violence laws is imperative in stopping domestic violence, which is the aim of police interventions into domestic violence situations. The women's accounts gathered here suggest a lack of knowledge and understanding of the nature and effects of domestic violence by police. This discourse leads to women feeling frustrated, powerless, helpless, and in danger of retaliation. Ultimately victim blaming also leads to the offender not being held accountable for his use of violence. Instead of saying 'why does she stay?' try thinking 'why does he keep hitting her?'

Timing

The women interviewed here understood that it must be frustrating for police and refuge workers to keep coming back to intervene in their domestic violence situations. Juxtaposed with this understanding is also the knowledge that the timing of exiting a domestic violent relationship is critical in terms of leaving safely. Two of the women believe that timing is imperative in successfully leaving domestic violence. Megan implies that there were windows where she could have left successfully.

No, no...it is definitely all of those things, about timing, it is about timing. I truly believe that some women miss their timing...there were a couple of times I think I could have safely got out but I believed everything he was saying (Megan).

For this reason women's refuge workers often build a relationship with women living in violent relationships, in order to make the most of those opportunities for exiting the relationship. Melanie reflects on one such occasion where she may have left her relationship with the protection of police if they had asked her about the violence when they were attending a non-domestic incident at her home.

I don't know, maybe even if when they had been going away, if they'd just asked the question and went in the car, I don't even know if I probably would have picked it up, I don't know, but at that stage we were only a short while into our relationship, about six months and I was screaming for help, not physically to people but I was screaming inside, it was like, oh, "what am I doing?" And then the first time the Police got called out, maybe if they had said something I would have taken the lifeline (Melanie).

Timing is an important aspect of successful interventions in domestic violence. It is important that the women's networks, self capacities and knowledge are supported and strengthened as they move towards the appropriate time for them to leave the violent relationship safely and within their own timing.

Boundaries and Collusion

In training programmes for people who work in the domestic violence field, a critical and difficult competency is a professional ability to respect the person who has perpetrated the violence without crossing the line into collusion. One of the themes that nearly all of the interviews held was lack of clear boundaries and collusion with the violent person by some police officers. Hazel clearly demonstrates this when describing her experience of the policing of domestic violence where the perpetrator of this violence was a high profile person in the town:

Yes it's special rules for men! If you're a man, if you're a doctor or you're an executive, or a lawyer, or you're a local profile (the police) have a different law for you, it's called sweep it under the carpet... Well you know the police would have to arrest him and if he goes to court for assault that he inflicted upon me ... there were multiple bruises, there were scrapes on my face, he was going to attack my dog ... I guess they don't really want a local celebrity ... being all over the newspapers because ... no-one would want to have him in their house and his life would be ruined. But that's what y' need. In my world if you do that (be violent) then you need to take responsibility for it (Hazel).

Samantha and Gayle suggest that police are not aware of the manipulation that their violent (ex) partners employ to get the police on side and collude with them:

One of the police officers went and spoke to (ex- partner) and then he rung me and said, "I can't see what the big deal is"... It just felt like (ex-partner) had just suckered him right up (Samantha).

As Samantha had lived with this manipulation for years and was seeing it as a form of power and control, she could not believe that a trained professional couldn't see this form of manipulation. Likewise Gayle saw how good her (ex) partner was at 'getting the police onside'.

One time they came and there was about six of them, 'cause he was trying to get through the window and get to me. Yeah, they were scared. And that really pissed me off, 'cause they'd stand off or they'd let him stand around out there on the street talking, 'cause he was really good at manipulating, and he'd stand there talking to them, saying, "oh yeah ya know mate", making the situation, you know, playing it down, you know... minimizing it all the time and then you'd see them "oh yeah mate, we know what she's like" and I'd be fuckin diving out the window or something crazy like that and they'd be like; "go back in the house", and so I'd be sitting there toeing the line like a mouse... .... He's just really really good at making (the police) see the best in him and none of the other stuff, he's just so good at manipulating (Gayle).

According to Jade some policewomen are aware that their male counterparts collude with the violent men. She suggests this in an extract from her narrative:

... at that time was one of the officers (policeman), they used to sit and talk league together, (policewoman) used to tell me that he used to have them round his little finger, they believed him that's why they never used to take me seriously (Jade).

Amy said that she was deterred from seeking police assistance because her (ex) partner's family was well known and that they were friends with police in the area that she first experienced domestic violence

I never involved the police up there 'cause they all knew him and his parents and they got on quite well (Amy).

This fear of the police colluding with their violent (ex) partner is reflected in Hazel's narrative, due to her (ex) partner's profile in the town.

And (the policeman) was like; "this is your warning nudge nudge" and this fellas sitting back thinking, 'I like who I am, I get so many perks', everywhere we went people would be giving him free stuff because they'd wanna be his friend so of course when it came to that incident of violence he was fuming at me (Hazel).

This fear was confirmed with the police failing to charge her (ex) partner and protecting the violent offender:

... it was blatant in the way they treated me ... and no they didn't want to lay any charges, all they wanted to do was get me out of the situation and away from their precious person that they were protecting (Hazel).

The impact of this for Hazel and other women is a sense of being re-victimised and held responsible for their (ex) partner's violence and that the police and other professionals are going to support and believe the man. As a result women are deterred from seeking assistance from the police, and also feel that the system supports the powerful.

because of who he was I was just another one of his girlfriends or female friends that they you know...you can't be ruining his career or his profile like that, and they were like, "its ok mate we'll sort her out". Very much like that, like the boy's brigade (Hazel).

A number of the women interviewed found this collusion and lack of clear protocol or boundaries very frustrating in their experiences of the policing of domestic violence. They acknowledged that it would be difficult for the police on the fine line between treating the violent person with respect yet drawing the line clearly in terms of boundaries and collusion. An example of this is when police expect the women and children to leave the home, rather than the police arresting their violent partners. An extract from Sadie's narrative clearly shows this situation:

'cause when I came downstairs they were sitting talking to (ex-partner) about the Olympics. They were both sitting at the table having this huge conversation with him about the Olympics, and he was sitting back in the chair, you know, nice and relaxed and they were sitting there, and I was racing round trying to get my stuff so that I could leave the house... I was the victim and I had to leave (Sadie).

The impact of this for Sadie was a lack of confidence in the police and their ability to understand the dynamics and psychology of abusers.

Another type of boundary violation used by the police in some women's experiences was police attempts to use the domestic violence situations to glean information from the women about their (ex) partner's criminal activities. These experiences of collusion by police lead to the women not trusting the police and a feeling of being manipulated and used by the people

who were supposed to be helping them. Gayle's narrative reflects this dilemma:

But then by the end of it they knew well and truly what was going on, and what (partner) was doing to me, and they sometimes used it on me, cos they'd come round and ask for information on him you know around the drug side of things, like; "didn't he sell and where did he" you know, and "who did he hang round with", rather than anything about the violence and what he was doing to me (Gayle).

Dianne even told the police that she did not trust them to deal with her situation of domestic violence:

He ended up in prison for an unrelated matter and the police got a hold of me and said hey look we know he's been bringing his mates round to your place and spotting up and they wanted to make a deal with me to find who dealers were and things like that and I told them that I didn't trust them because of them not showing up (Dianne).

The ability to trust people, especially authority figures, is compromised when women have been living in a violent relationship and experienced traumatic situations. (Briere, 2006; NCIWR, 2006). In order for a working relationship to engender this trust people working with people need to be clear, fair, consistent, and have sound professional boundaries. When police utilize the working relationship with victims of violence for professional gain, the women feel mistrusting, violated and that the system is stacked in favour of the powerful, in this case men.

CHAPTER SIX
Analysis –What now - Protection Orders, Referrals and Follow up.

After the initial contact with police, women are often at a loss as to what to do next. According to the women interviewed they have little knowledge of their rights, the law and the support services available to them when making the first step to call the police into a domestic violence incident. . The experiences of the women interviewed were all subsequent to the instigation of the Domestic Violence Act (1995). In my reading of the Act, the violent incidents experienced by the women interviewed would all have been classified as domestic violence. Yet only four of the women interviewed had gained a protection order. Sometimes women who have experienced domestic violence become aware of protection orders and that they may meet the criteria for this form of legal protection. The pamphlets and reading materials published by the Ministry of Justice and the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NZ Ministry of Justice, 2007; NCIWR, 2006) imply that the relationship can be maintained and the intent of protection orders is to protect the women from the violence. Women interviewed found the domestic violence law and how it was applied by the police and the courts confusing and they found that there was a real lack of information about protection given to them by the police. This chapter highlights women's experience of the policing of domestic violence with regard to women gaining information about obtaining and utilizing protection orders and on-going support. The sub-themes include: learning about protection-talk to me, tell me about my rights and how to do this; Call in the refuges; Ongoing contact with the police; Managing breaches; Learned powerlessness; Understand my risks and realities; Ongoing training and supervision – collusion, psychology and dynamics of domestic violence; Pick the good ones and ask for them.

Learning about protection: Talk to me, tell me my rights and how to do this.

Often women in violent relationships are controlled by their violent partner's playing on their fears or lack of knowledge about domestic violence law and how it is enforced, or feeding them inaccurate information about what constitutes domestic violence and the protection that they are entitled to. All of the women that I interviewed had sought legal protection from the violence in their lives. However only four of the nine women obtained protection orders and only one of those women has found it to be somewhat useful in eliminating domestic violence from her life.

Samantha felt hopeful when one of the policemen that she rang about an incident of domestic violence told her to get a protection order:

When I first rang one policeman was really nice ... he was only new and I expected him to be like, "oh big deal" but he was really, really good and he was like, "I want you to go to your lawyer". He said, "I think you should go to your lawyer on Monday and get a Protection Order", and he said, "I'll issue him with a trespass, where does he live?" (Samantha)

However Samantha still does not have a protection order and she is told something different every time that she calls the police. This inconsistent response has left her confused and feeling hopeless in regard to the policing of domestic violence. She has a sense that she would have had a protection order if the police had handled the earlier call outs more consistently and not allowed her (ex) partner to manipulate the situation. In the next narrative Samantha implies that the area domestic violence advisor from the police agrees that aspects of the policing of her domestic violence incident were 'unacceptable'.

After (the next police officer) had spoken to (ex) partner he was like, "You're making a big deal out of nothing". But my refuge worker had spoken to (the district domestic violence advisor for the police) and he said, "that's unacceptable. I wouldn't accept that"... I didn't speak to him personally but (refuge worker) spoke to him for me because the other officer had said to me, "It'll depend on the night whether we do you for (kidnapping) for not handing her over, and they that's what they said to me, "We're not going to do you for kidnapping this time". And I was just like, "what?" ...So I yeah I want the police but I wouldn't be going back and I can't ... I want a Protection Order... but I won't get one ... (Samantha)

After calling the police to an incident of domestic violence Melanie remembers feeling in a complete muddle. She was terrified of what her (ex) husband would do to her if he had access to her and she didn't know what to do:

I didn't know what I was, I didn't know who I was, I didn't know what I was doing. I had never had anything to do with the police before (her violent relationship) and so with the police officer I was wondering, "how do I handle things? Do I go out and speak to him? How do you do this? What do you do? Do you get in the car? What do you say to him? How do I get out? Who will help me?" (Melanie)

Despite her obvious need for assistance Melanie was given little information about protection orders, support people or the legal process.

(the policeman) said, you have an option ... you can go get a Protection Order through your lawyer, on Monday go along to your lawyer and ask... (Melanie)

At this point Melanie's main concern was her and her baby's safety and she had no idea what a protection order was and did not have any knowledge of lawyers. The police did not charge her (ex) husband with assault, nor did they arrest him.

And I said, "in the meantime?" He said, "well I don't think he's going to come near you and obviously he'll be busy with the shearing... (Melanie)

For Melanie, this lack of information and support are the main reason why she does not have a protection order.

... so yeah the police didn't tell me anything and I still don't have a protection order to this day. And I think if things were handled differently and I was put in touch with women's refuge and was told about the law ... then that maybe I would have one ... and I still to this day have (ex-husband) driving past my house... and they (the police) turn around and say, 'prove it.' I've had neighbours, I've had people in the community that will all testify about how often they hear him going past and I've recorded phone calls but it's still not enough ... (Melanie)

Furthermore due to a lack of support and information she felt left to do this on her own and she knew her (ex) husband's retaliation would be even worse than what she had already been through

And I was thinking if he gets locked up for the night he'll get out after that and I'm a dead woman ... and all I could think was," do I get him locked up for one night's safety or do I leave it and try to get out of it", I didn't press charges, I was pushing him over the edge. (Melanie)

Melanie's narrative is in stark contrast to Megan's in relation to the police providing information. Despite Megan being ambivalent in applying for a protection order, the police who came to her initial call out gave her information about protection orders and she had support to discuss her options and ultimately obtained a protection order. Interestingly, Melanie felt that she was not believed or supported by the police throughout, whereas Megan found the police very helpful and caring. She was also confident that they believed her.

... afterwards he advised me to get a protection order, I said, 'Well, he's left town,' he said, 'I'm still advising you to get one.' I hummed and hahed about it, I looked at the money and went, 'Well... I could get legal aid, but you've still got to pay it back" and then I just stopped and I looked at the whole thing and heard all the stories about me and I just knew it would be wise to...so I did. (Megan)

Likewise, Dianne's first experience of the policing of domestic violence was positive;

So the police took him away in handcuffs um and they took me to hospital and then um took me to refuge. (Dianne)

This however was not Dianne's experience of the policing of domestic violence in the South Island and she sees the lack of this type of helpful intervention by the police as the reason that women are reluctant to call the police in their domestic violence situations.

Yep that would be great ... if the police from (small south island town) could've just done what those guys in (large north island city) did I'm sure a lot more women would phone in. (Dianne)

Implicit in these narratives is the notion that good communication skills, giving information and advice, are helpful to women when experiencing the policing of domestic violence. Furthermore, it appears that women would like to have all their options explained as many of them have never been in contact with the police and find they are at a loss as to what to do after calling the police to intervene when their partner is violent.

Call in the Refuges

Having the police intervene in your life in a significant event. Often it draws on our notions of right/wrong, good/bad and safety/danger; all of which elicit strong emotional and cognitive responses. These responses coupled with a possible life threatening event and/or a pattern of sustained psychological violence takes a substantial physical, emotional and psychological toll on all parties involved. This is acknowledged by professionals involved in crisis situations, where critical incident debriefing policies have become common forms of safety for professionals (Moran, 1998). The women that I interviewed were not surprised when I told them about the increased risk to safety that occurs when women first leave or take a stand against domestic violence by calling the police (Robertson et al, 2007; Wilson & Daly, 1993). Each of them had felt the increase in tension and intensity of their (ex) partner's attempts to re-exert control over them at that time. Therefore women who have been the victims of these crisis situations are even more likely to need support in coming to terms with what has happened and information about their options, rights and sources of support.

Melanie believes that support would have been useful in not only feeling safe and supported in dealing with the police and having the option of safehouse accommodation, but also being able to leave the relationship at that point and get the legal protection she needed.

... he didn't offer women's refuge ... the lady I think she might have asked me did I want to ring Mum or Dad or anyone and I went, 'no, they're up in the north island' and that was it, there was nothing after that, there was no-one to ring anyway, because (ex)partner had cut everyone off...but I don't know, I just felt like I wanted someone. I actually was screaming out for someone just to be there. I'd have given anything for someone to speak to at that moment ... for someone to tell me what was happening and how to get through this ... I actually didn't know about refuge. I still didn't have a clue. I didn't realise actually until like a couple of years later, it was like, " oh, that's an option". Like it never occurred to me that women's refuge was an option for me... and I really think I could have left then if I'd had that option given to me ... Like, when I finally made the break, it was because I knew about Women's Refuge, I had a lifeline. And the last two times I ever left him it was because I knew I could go to Women's Refuge. (Melanie)

Like Melanie, Hazel believes that women victims of domestic violence need women's refuge workers on the scene immediately and that the police should not only be providing that option but have a worker there with them at the call out.

And if there was a domestic violence situation I feel that women's refuge should be called to just be there with an ambulance as well, if it was necessary .... I believe that a support woman from that network (refuge) should be there at all times and that woman should be paid substantially enough to stay by that woman's side and become that woman's advocate right from the word go... So that woman documents everything that happens, witnesses the photos being taken, legal action, everything. And I believe that if that's what happens there'd be more women that would leave the violent situations like that. (Hazel).

Gayle has recently learned more about refuge services and believes that she would have felt safer had a refuge worker been present.

Yeah, refuge would have been good 'cause they (the police) need to make the women feel more safe. (Gayle)

The police advising Megan about women's refuge for ongoing support gave her a sense of support and although she did not use the refuge safe house service when the police were first involved, she did contact them for support in applying for a protection order, going through the justice system and counseling for herself and her children later.

(The policeman) did advise me to go to Women's refuge and that there were some really great people down there....and they could refer me on to counseling and give support with lawyers...he asked me how my support systems were... I went down to Women's Refuge and seen what was there and that's where I met (counselor) as well (Megan)

Furthermore the support given by refuges counteracts the minimization of the violence that is commonly experienced by women seeking legal intervention. This is apparent in Sadie's narrative.

I finally knew that the violence was more serious than the police thought 'cause I'd been to Women's Refuge, and they did the assessment. (Refuge worker) came and saw me after she did the assessment that they do at Women's Refuge. And she was very concerned for my safety 'cause it was up at the very top level, and I was thinking that what was going on was nothing. I really did believe that we were just down here at the bottom, you know, the bottom rung but we were actually way up at the top and she was quite concerned. So she actually came and spoke with the Police with me... (Sadie)

Sadie's narrative also highlights the specialist tools and training accessible to women's refuge workers. In Gayle's case the police sent a person from victim support that she describes as 'nice' but did not have the ability to build a professional relationship with her and only went to see her once.

I had one guy once came around, from Victim support and oh you know. I'd be just like, "you know people like yourself counselors and programmes out there, I'd be such a non believer" ..., but well to ask for help, people just don't ask for help. Even when you probably really do need help you just don't (ask), you don't ask because you just don't. You feel like just an absolute failure. So when I'd get a pamphlet from the police, I'd think "yeah right". You don't ever ring them and once they sent a guy round, and he was a really nice pleasant guy and he stayed for a while and then I never saw him again (Gayle)

If we accept the old adage that 'knowledge is power', providing women with information about the law, protection orders and their rights and options would likely redress some of the power imbalance inherent in domestic violence situations. Some of the women I interviewed had never dealt with police and had little or no knowledge of their legal rights, support services or police responsibilities in the policing of domestic violence. In relation to these women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence, it appears that victim satisfaction with police interventions is positively related to the information and advice given to them by the police. The Domestic Violence Act (1995) and Te Rito (MSD, 2002) both strongly advocate a collaborative approach to dealing with domestic violence between women's refuges, CYFS and the police. Furthermore, the elimination of violence in their lives is more likely when the police provide victims of violence information about protection orders, support services, refuges and the legal system.

Ongoing contact with the police

In conversations with police officers in my work with victims over the years, I often hear the view that women victims of violence use the protection order as a weapon. Research also reveals this view held by some police officers in their experiences of the policing of domestic violence (Oliver, 1998).

Hazel had been granted a protection order in relation to a previous relationship. In this earlier experience she found that the police would sometimes be responsive and police breaches of the protection order when they involved physical violence. However, when she called the police earlier in the incident, before it became physical, she found them inconsistent and they implied that she was manipulating the law.

Its inconsistent, like down here the police were, you know, "you've got to enforce the protection order" ... I felt quite offended the way that (the policeman) had said I had been using the protection order as a sword ... as a sword not a shield. (Hazel)

Due to this inconsistent response, Hazel stopped ringing the police when breaches of her protection order occurred. Likewise Melanie's narrative suggests that she has confidence in the police when dealing with non-domestic situations, but not in their policing of domestic violence:

... but when it comes to whether I could ring (the police), because I was burgled – yeah. But could I ring them up because (ex-husband) had just come and give me a hiding – No way! (Melanie).

And although Gayle continued to ring the police to intervene when her (ex) partner was violent, she reported that the intervention was ineffective.

I rang them so many times in that period ... they were never much good. (Gayle)

Sometimes police officers didn't believe participants and minimised their reports of ongoing psychological violence. In Samantha's narrative, police did not believe her despite her flat mate corroborating her statement. She then thought that she couldn't prove the psychological abuse. She may have been able to, however the police simply minimised the violence and disregarded her statement backed up by a witness.

Even though we know how damaging psychological abuse is, there is no way to prove it. It's a, he said, she said, and even though I've got my flatmate here and he hears everything that happened... it doesn't carry any weight so (sigh)... Whereas it should,... What the Act actually says is Psychological Violence is a crime and people should be convicted of it. (Samantha)

Psychological violence damages people's sense of self and when it is further disregarded and minimised by the police it further compounds her feelings of frustration and learned helplessness. Furthermore as Melanie's narrative implies, women get a sense of the police supporting the violent offender and minimising the violence even though she is not the only one who has told them about his violence

Its like, no all those fifteen people are lying and (ex-husband) is telling the truth (Melanie).

Furthermore Melanie had the feeling that the police totally disregarded evidence pointing to domestic violence and implied that they believed her violent (ex) husband's accusation of her self-harming:

And he told them that I had picked up a radio and hit myself in the head with it ... but we didn't even have a radio at that time, but they weren't even interested in looking at the facts (Melanie)

And in Jade's case this minimisation of the violence and lack of support from the police continued even though the refuge worker also asked them to intervene.

(one of the refuge workers) asked them to have a patrol car come round while I packed gears for the kids. They were too busy having their smokos or something and they wouldn't even come round while I packed gears for the kids. They reckoned that he wasn't that much of a problem and like he was driving round like a nutter and he'd done all the other stuff. (Jade)

The women I interviewed all felt this minimization of psychological and other forms of violence at some point of dealing with the police in relation to the domestic violence in the relationships. Dianne aptly reflects the women's needs in regards to this in the following narrative

Prioritize domestic violence as the top priority, change their attitudes, and believe the woman, even if it doesn't look like there is any evidence there. Cos lets face it women actually minimize this stuff, they tuff it out ...(Dianne)

The outcome this lack of police is a sense of learned helplessness and a sense that they need to handle this on their own as is reflected by Samantha and Melanie in the following narratives:

But its constant stress its like now but I keep thinking I'm waiting for someone else to come in and help me cos every time he does something I race around

and I try to get protection or help or something but I can't, I can't stop him doing it to me and the police [silence]... well you know... (Samantha)

we live relatively normal life, there's been no bad incidents except some phone calls. I try not to go through that any more, because it's happened so much now and nothing happened (from the police) and I realized, 'oh, well I'll just leave it and see if anything happens but it's not a nice way to live... But really, I can handle it (Melanie)

Dianne, once again, captures the need of the women in her wishes:

I wish they'd make domestic violence a priority, especially in small towns. We don't make this stuff up (Dianne)

Ongoing contact has left the women interviewed here with a sense of learned helplessness which is considered in detail below. In conducting the interviews and writing up this research I have had a sense of repetition and this certainly has been an underlying thread implicit in women's experiences of ongoing contact with the police. Some women feel that they need to keep repeating their needs to police in order to get action and this leads them to feel frustrated and to either feel resentful about the lack of support and understanding by the police or to give up. This then feels to them similar to the fight or flight response inherent in victimization.

Managing Breaches

Recent research has highlighted problems with police management of breaches of protection orders (Robertson et al, 2007). As only four of the women I interviewed for this research project were granted protection orders, so the issue of managing breaches did not take significant space in the women's narratives. Never-the-less, there was sufficient implicit evidence in some of the women's talk for this issue to emerge as a theme. Furthermore,

managing breaches is an important component of the policing of domestic violence (see NZ police family violence policy, 2003) and the prevention and elimination of domestic violence objectives stated in the Domestic Violence Act (1995).

The first concern women have with managing breaches is the risks that women take in calling the police regarding a breach. These risks and feelings of intense fear are evident in Dianne's narrative:

Well basically you've got a protection order but you're so fearful of that person when they show up, it's hardly likely that you're going to ring the police against them. (Dianne)

Melanie found her initial contact with the police made calling them more difficult, and her fear of the consequences of calling made applying for a protection order far less likely for her.

They seem to think that by going to the Police that it's the end of it or it's a way of breaking free, but it actually just made him a hundred times more violent and he's more cunning. (Melanie)

Moreover, women sometimes find it difficult to discern what constitutes a breach of protection order, due to the inconsistency of information they received mentioned in earlier chapters. The following extract from Sadie's account of her experience of the policing of domestic violence reflects her confusion and ambivalence around police management of her (ex) partner's breaches of her protection order

They only done three breaches and oh yeah when he breaches they mostly go and talk to him and then you've gotta go in and file a complaint or they'll

come out to you and they'll file a complaint ... I've kept a record of the complaints and I have filed complaints... but there are complaints when I think it's a waste of police time and money and effort really and I sort of feel they've got more important things to do but I do have a record book ... some of the police here are reasonably good but some of the police are not regarding breaches seriously enough ... when I told them about some of these emails (the policeman) told me to keep a record of every anything that is a breach. I asked the police what can I do to prevent him from doing this and the policeman said the only thing you can do was go to a solicitor and threaten him with a civil case... and then I tend to think blething heck this is breaching as far as I'm concerned... So I took out my protection order and read it and the intimidation and harassment is breaching. They normally do, if I go in and make a complaint, they certainly do something but if it's just sort of a little breach I just keep a record of it (Sadie)

Sadie seems to be left with responsibility for deciding what is and isn't a breach on her own, and although she is aware that the police will support her in some cases, her responsibility for the decision making means that she has to keep records despite it being clear to her that she is being intimidated and harassed. Due to feelings of fear of their (ex) partners and uncertainty in relation to the police management of protection orders some women feel that protection orders don't really work for them. Dianne's narrative highlights this belief:

So the onus being on the woman to keep ringing whenever they show up means that its not going to really work especially if the police don't turn up (Dianne).

In Jade's experience police management of her (ex) partner's breaches of protection order escalated the violence against her.

... like one specific time when he'd really gone over board and nutted out and I had two witnesses there he should have been locked up but because he had night shift and had to start work at like 5 o'clock that night so they let him out and he just came straight back round when I was bathing the kids and started again for another 2 1/2hrs (Jade)

In their lack of responses to the seriousness of Jade's situation and their leniency in not arresting the offender, Jade was exposed to increased intimidation and threat of physical violence. This lack of response and/or leniency towards the offender leaves some women feeling that they are to blame for the violence:

... but I think it would be my fault in the first place because I should never have had him come back (Sadie).

Some offenders use this leniency to minimise their violence and/or blame the woman for their use of violence. as is evident in Jade's experiences of police management of breaches.

he used to pick his moments, he'd always used to wait til I just got home from the pub or just the next day or something and then he'd start, he'd start over something really stupid just so he could tell the police she was on the piss again last night he used to make it sound worse than what it was and say oh all I'm worried about is my kids and only (one policewoman) could see right through him.(Jade)

Ways that women have found to overcome these issues with the management of breaches of protection orders have including seeking the help of women's refuge advocates to ring the police

So finally after I had women's refuge ring the police and they rung the top policeman. They phone him and the refuge said that (the policeman)'s just told him that if he's going to breach they'll arrest him. He said what he's doing is breaching and they will arrest him (Sadie).

Or drive to other places in New Zealand to find police that will respond to their need for safety.

I drove to (inland town in the South Island) and the police there rang and had him arrested ... I'd tell women to get in their car and drive to a bigger centre and keep going to the North Island.(Hazel)

Police management of breaches of protection orders has been inconsistent and ineffective in these women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence. In order for the women to feel safe enough to ring the police before violence escalates out of control it is important that police respond consistently by arresting the offender and jailing him even if the breach appears insignificant. Some women have found this issue to be localised to some south island police forces and drive to other centres in order to have the law upheld. Others have found advocacy by women's refuge to be useful in ensuring police follow their family violence policy guidelines.

Learned Powerlessness

Implicit in the previous sub-theme and in previous chapters is a sense of powerlessness when police have not responded or responded in a way that may escalate the risks for women in violent relationships. Learned powerlessness and/or learned helplessness is a symptomatic effect of living in a controlling relationship, as victims of violence try everything they can to stop the violence in their life (Briere, 2006; Giariantano, 2004; Harvey, 2004). Without support from understanding refuge workers and effective enforcement

of the law by police women are likely to have their sense of powerlessness compounded.

Melanie has been told that she had a 'victim mentality' and her following narrative reflects this belief or lack of belief in herself and her management of domestic violence.

I know now, because I've been told that I had a victim mentality and that's why I couldn't get out (Melanie)

Amy's narrative also holds this implicit message of self-blame by not having left or fought back. She also uses disparaging language in accounting for her 'natural response' to severe violence; she describes herself as stupid and cowardly. Yet she also has a sense of resisting the violence and asserting her rights according to her account.

... he got really really pissed one night and like really agro and it was all towards me and it was all my fault and I didn't know why. I didn't understand and he was telling me I was hurting his manna and I was doing all this stuff and I was like "fuck you" in my head but I was this stupid coward in this corner (Amy)

In Hazel's narrative she implies that it is a lack of strength in the woman that is the problem in protection orders not working. Yet she alludes to women being able to manage eliminating violence from their lives if *'the woman can ... get her head back... '*. Hazel implies that professionals and the court need to assess and enforce protection orders.

I think a separation order is necessary, so that the woman can try to get her head back and know that by law she can't go near him until she is until the

counselor feels that she is strong enough to be in the same room. Because I feel not only is it a protection order but it's a separation order to keep them from seeing each other privately. That protection order works but it only works when you enforce it, I think the courts need to just enforce it. (Hazel)

However, Megan implies that powerlessness is not a simple consequence of victimisation, but is more about how difficult it is to leave a violent relationship. From her perspective it is the context of domestic violence that is the issue rather than any 'weakness' or 'victim mentality' in the women.

The awful thing was I never understood why women would get into a situation like that and I never understood, like to me, it was like, oh, you know, why don't they just leave? And now I think I was so, how rude...how rude...they had no idea and I was one of the ignorant people that had no idea. Because it was really tough for me (Megan)

Jade believes that lack of appropriate police response is the reason women feel a sense of powerlessness in relation to the policing of domestic violence.

... that's what there supposed to say, you ring the police dial 111, they'll be there to assist you and they're not (Jade).

Despite not being believed by the police and even threatened with being charged with making a false complaint Melanie wants the police to have more powers by being able to issue protection orders. In the following extract from Melanie's account she highlights the mixed feelings involved and implies that police need to utilise their power because women have been disempowered through their (ex) partners' manipulation.

I don't want them to not to be able to lay charges. The alternative is letting off offenders. If they had actually put a Protection Order in place, things would have been different ... I'd be safe... I'd like to see them to have the power to step in and just say, 'You need help,' have those Protection Orders put in place so that the women can't lift them, so that the men can't manipulate the women, because they do and if it hadn't been in my to power to lift it things would have been different (Melanie)

It is important that police responding to domestic violence are aware of some women's sense of learned powerlessness. By the time they ring the police they would have exhausted all other forms of surviving and de-escalating their partner's violence. They feel disempowered and at a helpless. How police respond can either counter a woman's sense of helplessness and disempowerment or compound it.

Understand my risks and reality

A key issue for the women interviewed in relation to ongoing contact with the police was a sense that police personnel did not understand the risks that women are taking when they involve the police and other support and legal systems in their domestic relationships. According to women's refuge research and statistics, violence escalates and becomes more prevalent and perhaps more insidious once women seek intervention from outside the relationship (NCIWR, 2006). The women participating in the current study used their interviews as an opportunity to directly and indirectly request that police gain an understanding of the risks and realities of intervention from their point of view. Police interventions can escalate the violence and this is reflected in the extracts or narratives in this sub-theme.

Amy was very aware that her (ex) partner's violence would escalate if she involved the police

I never really had anything to do with the police down here, just because I never wanted to get the police involved, because it would be worse for me ... (Amy)

Furthermore, Samantha's narrative implies that her partner would put on a really good front for the police and courts to belie her claims of ongoing psychological violence

Everyone says stand up to him and it will stop, but they don't know what he's like and he's not gonna show them... (Samantha)

Even though verbal violence, threats, intimidation, mind games and tactics of control may seem minor to police attendants at domestic violence callouts, the effects for the women and children are far-reaching and pervasive. The ongoing pattern of psychological violence has devastating consequences that women carry for some time after the bruises and scars from physical attacks. Sadie wants police to be aware of this in when they are assessing and intervening in domestic violence cases

... if he'd given me a good smack and I was really hurt that would mean my bruises healed, those bruises healed, I don't have them anymore. But the other stuff is still there .. And the police don't see that stuff ... I just wish they really saw the effect that the ongoing mind games have (Sadie)

Alongside police understanding of the reality experienced by women in domestic violence Melanie would like police to be aware that things that they do can escalate the violence and make the situation more difficult for the women. Even if women have left the relationship they may need to deal with their (ex) partner in relation to custody, access and parenting of children and/or matrimonial property and other issues.

But it's just, they don't get it, like even, they come to pick you up and you don't park your car around the back, you don't leave the car door open, you don't go talk to him and aggravate it because 'you don't have to go back to it,' but I do have to go back to it.(Melanie)

According to Jade many of these issues in the policing of domestic violence would be addressed with guidelines that were clear so that consistent responses to domestic violence were maintained

Maybe if there were some clear lines, like if this happens we will do this, this and this ... all the same ... then we'd know where we stand (Jade).

Police understanding of the risks and realities of women living in violent relationships, whether they are still living with their violent (ex) partners or needing to maintain a relationship for parenting or other purposes is very important. Despite police policy and training in domestic violence, the evidence from these accounts is that there are still serious issues of implementation that need to be addressed. Calling the police to attend a domestic violence situation is a very big risk for women who have been abused by their (ex) partners. If police are not cognizant of the risks and realities for the women some things they inadvertently do may escalate the violence and deter women from calling the police or using support systems.

Ongoing training and supervision - collusion, psychology, and dynamics of DV

This chapter has highlighted gaps in police training and supervision in relation to collusion with violent (ex) partners, the psychology of perpetrators and the dynamics of domestic violence. Recent research findings (Robertson et al, 2007) support the need for police to be more aware of these issues. When asked what could be done about the problems that they had experienced in the

policing of domestic violence, the responses from the women interviewed tended to focus around ongoing training and supervision for police attending domestic violence incidents. Jade and Dianne clearly state this in the following narratives.

Dianne had been involved in women's refuge training and is aware that police have thorough initial training in domestic violence issues. She believes that ongoing training and supervision is necessary for effective and culturally sensitive interventions with the offender/s.

I'm sure they have training in police college around domestic violence, but I think they really do need to have refreshers every 6 months to a year... and supervision so that they can have their culture challenged (Dianne.)

Jade elaborates on the type of training needed and her narrative implies that training or supervision needs to be ongoing.

... more training around domestic violence ... to be more open minded and not biased ... : Just let them see it from the women's point of view, maybe with the women (survivors of domestic violence) doing the talks at the training, or like videos and just show them the reality of what can happen to some women through domestic violence, like I suppose they see it anyway, but by then its too late... and they're the women that get killed through domestic violence or the kids... (Jade)

All of the women interviewed had some problems in relation to how domestic violence incidents were handled by the police. Although Jade and Dianne were the only two that clearly saw this as a police training issue, the other women agreed when I asked them directly about it. From the women's perspectives ongoing training and supervision would be useful practices in the policing of

domestic violence that may overcome issues experienced by women in these cases.

Pick the good ones and ask for them

Finally, some of the women that I interviewed found it useful and/or necessary to find specific police personnel that they had heard about from other women and/or their networks. The advantage of taking advice from other women was that they could identify police officers who were supportive and consistent in their approach to domestic violence and keep asking for them. Nearly all of the women would recommend this to other women attempting to deal with the police intervening in domestic violence.

Jade talks about a specific policewoman and the qualities that she has found useful in this officer's handling of domestic violence.

She's just really good to talk to and goes beyond the call of duty, she has with this family anyway... She's sort of climbed that ladder too, people say that its gone to her head, but I don't really find her any different. Yeah she can be hard ... well that's just her, you piss her off and you deal with her. I found her good when we needed someone there, when the time was right I knew that she was the one to ring (Jade)

These qualities were also those identified by Dianne and along with decisive action they helped her regain confidence in the police

So I rang (policeman) and he got on to it straight away ... it's helped me regain my faith in those policemen (Dianne).

However, as Gayle points out, the strategy of asking for police personnel that have provided useful intervention in the past depends on particular officers being available, which is not always possible.

Yeah, there was one guy that was good and the next time I asked for him he was off work for 3 months ... And (partner) couldn't stand him, so there was something about this guy, he could see through him and he was the first person to use the word manipulator, and it was like yeah that's it, he's manipulated the whole thing (Gayle)

Gayle implies that this policeman was not affected by collusion and understood the psychology of abusers and the dynamics of domestic violence. Unfortunately Samantha did not find police who were this helpful. As a result she resorted to enlisting the support of her women's refuge worker in taking the issue to the domestic violence co-ordinator at the police.

Now I would get my refuge worker to talk to the domestic violence policeman (domestic violence co-ordinator) (Samantha)

Some of the women interviewed believed that domestic violence policing now involves more understanding and support of the woman's reality. This is reflected in the following extract from Jade's interview:

So it was like 10 years down the track... It was a lot better, I can't remember the policeman that came around, but he knows (ex-partner) really well. He sort of knew him from years ago and had been around and he didn't hesitate to remove him. He warned him first (pause) several times, told him just to leave. He was too busy yelling and screaming and that's when he, the policeman, said to me, "you've got a protection order haven't you?" And I said, "yes but I don't think I should use it, I mean I just want him to leave."

And then (ex-partner) was smart and said "oh go on then arrest me". And they did and he had to go to court and is on his final warning, so that was his fault.(Jade)

This extract also shows signs of problems with the justice system in dealing with breaches of protection orders. That is, the police may be deterred from arresting the violent (ex) partner for breach of protection order, if all that is going to happen in court is a warning. Furthermore the violent person may not see arrest for breach of protection order a punishment if he experiences judges warning him rather that enforcing stronger penalties. This interface of the police and courts may be another thread that indirectly impacts on women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence

Finding police who are knowledgeable and supportive of women's realities of domestic violence is a strategy used by some women to overcome issues that have found in their experiences of the policing of domestic violence. This strategy has been found to be somewhat useful, however not guaranteed. In contrast some women utilize the advocacy services offered by women's refuge in dealing with policing issues in domestic violence. Finally some of the women interviewed acknowledge that police interventions into domestic violence are improving.

CHAPTER SEVEN
Conclusion

The personal is political is a catch phrase of radical feminism (Jackson, 1998; Tong, 1998). The accounts presented of the policing of domestic violence are examples of the political nature of women's experiences of social issues relating to them. These accounts are important knowledges in a full understanding of social problems such as domestic violence.

In the contemporary push towards objectivity and professionalism experiential knowledge can be overlooked or seen as less important or 'real' due to the subjectivity inherent in these accounts of women's experiences (Harding, 2004). Yet it is precisely these subjective knowledges that allow us to represent moments of knowing (Hirschman, 1997) that form a deeper understanding of the nature and dynamics of domestic violence.

This depth of understanding developed through the engagement with women's subjective realities can help broaden our understanding and assist us in more effectively intervening in domestic violence situations. Furthermore, this knowledge can assist us in meeting the objectives of the Domestic Violence Act (1995): the prevention and elimination of domestic violence.

The police play an integral role in the prevention and elimination of domestic violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand. They have the responsibility to enforce the Domestic Violence Act (1995) and to protect individuals and communities from harm through domestic violence. Women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence have revealed a number of factors that impact on not only their sense of safety and integrity, but also on our ability to prevent and eliminate domestic violence within our families, communities and society.

In this conclusion I will highlight the key insights that I have found in my engagement with nine women and the themes emerging from the narratives created as a result. The insights I have gained concern the complexity of the issue and the sense of repetition felt by those who engage in this issue.. Following on are the key themes from my perspective. They are: *initial contact with the police; police responses and their impacts; police follow up and follow through.*

Complexity

Domestic Violence is a complex personal/social/political issue, which is deeply personal for those involved as well as being highly political as a reflection of gender relations in society. The nine women's experiences have merged with my experiences in the interview settings to create the transcriptions that form the base of this work. The themes and narratives produced here have been embedded in a myriad of dynamics inherent in women's subjective experiences of everyday life. Incidents of domestic violence and its policing are not parsimonious, rather they are 'caught up with' everything else in women's lives and have a depth that is elaborate The themes that I have noticed and utilized in this piece of work are both personal and political to me from my experiences of the policing of domestic violence. Readers and researchers may create other understanding of the policing of domestic violence as their understandings merge with the women's understandings and mine.

Repetition

In undertaking the interviews; analyzing the transcripts; conducting the literature review; and writing up the work for this research, I have felt a sense of repetitively covering similar issues. In analyzing the interviews, I realized that continual repetition was also an unspoken theme in women's experiences of both the domestic violence in their relationships and the policing of domestic violence. This has given me a sense of the frustration that women

feel when they are seeking police intervention and having their accounts disregarded or trivialized or not heard. Furthermore I have also encountered a sense of wanting to 'give up' due to the impact of this frustration. My belief is that the sense of repetition felt is pervasive and may affect all people involved in dealing with domestic violence. It has the potential to result in learned helplessness for the women and for those involved in intervening in domestic violence incidents.

Initial Contact

Women's initial contact with police forms an important part of their experiences of attempting to eliminate domestic violence from their lives (Robertson et al, 2007). Their understanding of what constitutes domestic violence and the levels of seriousness perceived by themselves, their friends, families and support people all play a role in making initial contact with the police. Often women's experiences of the initial contact with police are due to severe domestic violence. Women tend to hold off ringing the police and instead attempt various methods of de-escalating the violence themselves. Therefore it is only when the violence has escalated out of control and/or the women have grave fears for their own and/or their children's safety that they or friends and family resort to calling the police. Despite this, women are often unsure if the violence is serious enough for police intervention. This is partially due to the minimization that occurs by both the victim and the perpetrator symptomatic of domestic violence. However, another reason why women hesitate in calling the police is a fear of not being believed or that they may be seen as over-dramatizing the violence or 'crying wolf".

Inconsistency in the policing of domestic violence also confuses the women in regard to what constitutes domestic violence. The result of this is victims not being protected and perpetrators not being held accountable for their use of domestic violence. Therefore by the time women make an initial contact with the police they have usually endured the whole spectrum of power and control

tactics inherent in domestic violence and don't know where to start in telling the police about the domestic violence in their lives. So the police are often only given accounts of the most serious physical incidents of domestic violence experienced by the women without the patterns of ongoing psychological and emotional violence in many forms that makes up their experiences of domestic violence. The results of this are: firstly the police are given a parsimonious account of the domestic violence in their lives that lacks the pervasiveness and depth of their experiences; and secondly women often feel they have no room to contact the police before the violence escalates to a highly serious level threatening the women's personal safety.

Response and Impact

How the police respond to women's experiences of domestic violence is important as their response affects the way in which women understand domestic violence and therefore manage the violence in their lives. The timeframes in which police attend domestic violence callouts varies from ten to fifteen minutes to "maybe tomorrow" in these women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence. From the women's frame of reference, where they are in fear for their own and/or their children's lives and even the quickest responses of these reported responses can be alarming. The longer the time taken by police to respond the more dangerous and discouraging the response becomes. Also the participants' violent (ex) partners often use police lack of expediency as a threat further deterring the women from making contact with the police.

Key personal characteristics and skills became evident in women's experience of feeling positive about police attendance to their domestic violence situations. The most important personal characteristics that helped women in making contact with the police was police ability to have empathic understanding of women's realities in relation to domestic violence, to maintain a sense of respect for the woman and the ability to provide a safe and

supportive environment. The skills of police attending domestic violence callouts were also important. These included the physical ability to manage their violent partner and good listening and communication skills.

Women also feel a strong sense that police will not believe them, as often the violence that they have endured appears too horrific to be real. Moreover, their violent partners have told them that no-one would believe them as a tactic of power and control. When women are not believed by the police, which has been the experience of women interviewed here, it confirms their sense of helplessness and reinforces their violent (ex) partner's power in the situation.

In the experiences related in all of the interviews, women approached the police with the expectation that they would protect them and their children from domestic violence. However, a number of women found that this was not the case. This lack of protection resulted in feelings of confusion, anger and a sense of hopelessness on the part of these women.

Many of the women interviewed felt disrespected and judged by the police attending their domestic violence situation. For these women this resulted in further compounding their self-doubt and self-blame that their violent (ex) partners have created in using psychological tactics of power and control. Furthermore, feeling disrespected by the police deterred the women from talking about the domestic violence and manifested their sense of being unworthy of help and protection. When women felt respected by the police attending domestic violence, the process of eliminating the violence from their lives appeared easier and they were more likely to call the police for on-going support and intervention.

Many of the women also felt that it is important that their (ex) partner's were treated with respect. Examples given of how respect can be conveyed included

being direct and supportive without colluding, attending to cultural needs of the parties involved and having a belief that people can change.

According to some of the women interviewed here the problems they have experienced in the policing of domestic violence may be localized. They see the problem as a culture of rural southern towns and cities. However, recent research (Robertson et al, 2007) highlights similar issues across Aotearoa/New Zealand in relation to the policing of domestic violence.

Women's refuges provide support, information, education, advice, community visits and/or safe-house accommodation. Their workers have specialized training in relation to the dynamics, nature and effects of domestic violence, psychology of abusers, and so forth. It is imperative that the police work in collaboration with women's refuge staff in order for us to lower the incidents of domestic violence and provide more effective, safe and useful interventions. As women are often isolated as both a tactic and a consequence of domestic violence, they are often not aware of services available to them. Furthermore they may feel embarrassed or uncomfortable contacting family and friends.

Because the topic of this research was women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence, issues related to children were not directly addressed. Despite this, the impacts for these women's children were woven both silently and overtly throughout each of the interviews. Women find parenting in domestic violence very difficult. Women experience a dual edged sword; on the one hand they are told that children need their fathers, yet on the other hand are seen as culpable when their (ex) partner is violent. The result of this is a belief that they are failing as parents no matter what their decision about their relationship. Often violent (ex) partners play on this belief further deterring women from calling the police and or child welfare agencies. It is

important that police intervening in domestic violence understand mothers realities in ensuring that the best interests of their children are met.

Not only are women blamed for the effects of their (ex) partners violence on the children they are blamed for the continuation of the domestic violence against them. Blaming the victim for their victimisation has long been an issue for women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979) and still exists in the policing of domestic violence in contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand society (Robertson et al, 2007).Victim blaming is a strong theme throughout these women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence. This myth supports and manifests domestic violence by leading to inaccurate analyses of the violent situations and consequently inappropriate or no intervention.

Victim blaming is one of many misunderstanding and knowledge gaps evident in these women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence. Women expect police attending domestic violence callouts to have an in-depth and thorough knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence and the psychology of abusers. They are surprised that police often don't even know the basic information that they have learned through refuges and/or education programmes for women. This knowledge not only deters women from calling the police but can also make the situation worse and in some cases life threatening. The women interviewed here acknowledged that their ex- partners are difficult to interpret due to their abilities to manipulate people and situations; however it is imperative that police have a sound knowledge of this dynamic of domestic violence as this is what the women live with, and this is what we need to effectively manage in order to reduce and eliminate domestic violence.

A pervasive theme in police responses and their impact is the realization of timing for women in exiting or calling in supports to manage a violent

relationship. Timing is critical for a number of reasons including women's readiness to tackle the difficult process of being dependant on external resources to manage their relationship and physical safety for them and their children. Women's Refuges have long-since been aware of this dynamic and seek to build professional relationships with women in order to support them effectively when the timing is right. For this reason it is imperative that police work with women's refuges and acknowledge their expertise is this field and also build effective relationships with women in violent relationships and the agencies that provide support. This collaborative approach has been outlined in the Act and various reports and trainings since the instigation of the Domestic Violence Act (1995) in 1996. However these women's experience of the policing of domestic violence highlights this as a gap in police procedures and practices.

It is a fine line in having respect for people yet not colluding with their abusive behaviours. Having clear boundaries is important in dealing with domestic violence. All people have positive characteristics and it is generally those characteristics that women saw when they entered into relationships with their violent (ex) partners. Furthermore their (ex) partners have developed behavioral tactics (outlined in the power and control wheel) that draw people into the dynamics of domestic violence, where the oppressor is seen as right and the victim as the problem. When police collude with violent (ex) partners it results in women feeling hopeless and helpless and it further victimises them. The women interviewed here can see why police can get "sucked in" by these behaviours as the psychology of abusers is that they are skilled at getting people on side. When the police use the domestic violence situation to get information about other illegal activities it also clouds the issue and women feel like they are once again being used for a powerful figure's gain. When dealing with domestic violence cases it is important that police are trained and skilled at recognizing these dynamics and attend on-going training and

supervision to protect them from blurring boundaries and buying into collusion and/or further victimizing the victim.

Follow Up and Follow Through

Women living in violent relationships are often unaware of domestic violence law, protection orders and women's refuges. The psychological power and control tactics of minimizing, denial and blame and isolation that their (ex) partners use has ensured that they have little knowledge and support of their rights available to them. Furthermore women have come to believe their (ex) partner's minimizing, denial and blame and see police and women's refuge as services for those in worse situations than they are in. Therefore it is very important that police give women clear information about the law, police and legal processes, available to them. Also it is important that all police are consistent in their approach to domestic violence call outs, and then violent (ex) partners cannot use this as a form of further psychological power and control in the relationship. Women then have clear guidelines as to what their options are; they can get support from women's refuge and begin the legal process with this support.

When the police are inconsistent in their response to domestic violence, women are left feeling muddled, confused and hopeless. They sometimes don't have enough information to make sound decisions and sometimes see going back to the relationship as their only option. Alongside a consistent approach to domestic violence intervention police need to use good interpersonal skills, listening, responding, and giving clear information and advice. When women are given information about the law, their rights, women's refuge services and support they feel supported and the process of leaving becomes easier and more of an option. Moreover, receiving support, information and advice is a sound sense of empowerment that engenders self determination for women who have been managing violence in their relationships.

Women's refuges are the specialist domestic violence agency in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The workers receive specialist training specifically focused on the nature and effects of domestic violence, the dynamics of domestic violence, women's realities, and so forth. It is this specialist knowledge that underpins effective interventions into domestic violence. It is imperative that police access the knowledge and services of refuge workers in a collaborative approach, in order to provide effective interventions in domestic violence situations. When this type of collaborative approach was used in situations experienced by the women interviewed, the outcome was more positive for the women involved. Often though women are not given the option of women's refuge support; they find the experience of the system difficult and sometimes give up fighting for their rights.

The women interviewed lacked confidence in the police's ability to provide ongoing follow up in domestic violence cases. They attempt to call the police to intervene in the violence before it becomes physical, only to experience an attitude of incredulity from the police in relation to their fear for their safety if/when the violence escalates. They feel overwrought at repetitively calling the police to ongoing psychological violence, only to have their experiences minimised and trivialized by the police. Even when women have evidence and/or witnesses to the psychological violence it is often not taken seriously in these women's experiences. This experience also leaves women feeling re-victimised, helpless and hopeless and it deters them from calling the police to domestic violence incidents.

Related to ongoing follow up is the police's management of breaches of protection orders. The women interviewed found that police did not realize the risks that they took in ringing them regarding a breach of protection order. In addition the women saw ringing the police as the beginning of trouble whilst

they believed the police saw it as the end of their troubles. These differences in perspectives imply that the police may need to work within the women's reality to effectively intervene in domestic violence.

By the time that women have a protection order they generally understand domestic violence law in quite some depth. Protection orders and pamphlets distributed by courts, women's refuge and other agencies all outline domestic violence law very clearly. Women who either need or choose to have some type of relationship with their violent (ex) partner often attempt to utilize the police to manage the violence in their relationship by calling them when the protection order has been breached. Policing breaches of protection orders appears problematic from the perspectives of the women interviewed. Women are told that certain acts are breaches of protection order only to find that the police do not arrest their violent (ex) partner for acts or even repeated acts of psychological violence. The results of this leniency and inconsistency in response by the police are: that women are left with the responsibility of determining what is a breach based on the often inconsistent response from the police; they become frustrated with ringing every time there is a breach of protection order with little or no consequences for the offender; and their (ex) partner's violence escalates and they are further deterred from calling the police. To attempt to circumvent this situation some women enlist the advocacy services of women's refuge who then contact domestic violence co-ordinators within the police to address the problem. Other women drive or move to other areas of Aotearoa/New Zealand where they have found the police more responsive.

Learned powerlessness is term used to describe particular impacts of oppression and marginalization. It is a reality for many women who have lived in violent relationships. Violent men use tactics of power and control to disempower and disenfranchise their (ex) partners. Many of the interviews

have a tone of this sense of helplessness. Women attempt many ways to manage violence in their relationships and only resort to outside help when it becomes unmanageable. When police respond to domestic violence it is important that they understand that some women may feel powerless and that if the police intervention still does not stop the violence this sense of powerlessness will be compounded.

Furthermore, women take a huge risk in calling in the police to domestic violence. They are aware that the phone call or certain things that police could say or do could be catalysts for escalating the violence if the intervention is inappropriate and/or ineffective. Violent men are often skilled at manipulating situations to put themselves in the best light to the outside world. Police understanding of the psychology of abusers and the dynamics of domestic violence is imperative in effective interventions to stop the violence and keep the women and children safe.

All of the women interviewed had problems with how the police handled aspects of the policing of domestic violence. Some women saw the problems with police follow up and follow through in domestic violence as a training issue and others as an issue of implementation. From the women's perspectives ongoing training and supervision is necessary in combating problems that they have experienced in the policing of domestic violence.

One way that women have found useful in having police intervene in domestic violence is by picking specific police personnel. They do this by talking to other women or people from their networks to find police officers that are known to be knowledgeable, supportive, consistent and fair. Some women also found that police may not be arresting their violent (ex) partners because of problems with judges not imposing penalties on violent men and simply warning them.

In summary, Domestic violence is still a serious problem in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Interventions into domestic violence and attempts to reduce the increasing level of violence in society are dependant upon how we analyse and understand domestic violence. Domestic violence can be understood, in part, by analyzing the situations in terms of the humanist lens of the violent person's choice to use power and control. Two other threads of understanding are woven into the fabric when we utilize gender and socio-cultural analyses to help us interpret domestic violence. In this body of work I have brought women's accounts of the policing of domestic violence as another important thread to be utilized in understanding and intervening in domestic violence. Unless we understand the realities of women we will not be able to offer effective interventions that serve to reduce and eliminate domestic violence in our society. I end with an extract from Dianne's narrative where she implies police need to gain understandings of women's realities by working in collaboration with feminist agencies and women who are survivors of domestic violence and by prioritizing domestic violence.

I think they really do need to have refreshers every 6 months to a year... with women's refuge and rape crisis ... and women that have been there ... so they have a better understanding, better able to empathize ... and (they need to) make domestic violence a priority, especially in small towns... (Dianne)

Women's Accounts of the Policing of Domestic Violence Appendices

Appendix 1 – Power and Control Wheel

(cited in NCIWR, 2006 p. 16)

Appendix 2 – Letter to Support Agencies

Re: Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence Research Project.

Dear Women,

My name is Diane Gillespie. I am a 41-year-old tau-iwi married woman of Scottish, English, Irish and Australian descent, with two children aged 19 and 22 years. I am currently undertaking a research project in relation to women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence, as part of my thesis for my Master of Arts in Psychology at Massey University.

My background in this field includes some years involved as a Women's Refuge co-ordinator, a domestic violence programmes approval panel member, a women's domestic violence programme facilitator and a NZCYFS social worker, and a child survivor of domestic violence. I am currently employed as an ACC and family court approved counsellor, and women's studies, social services and psychology tutor.

I am writing to ask for your support in helping me recruit women who would like to be involved in this important research project. As you are the people who are working on a day-to-day basis with women who have experience domestic violence and the policing of domestic violence, and are the experts in this field, it is important to me that I secure your support and assistance in the recruitment process.

How I would like your support and assistance is:

- Letting appropriate clients know about the project and disseminating the advertisement to them which attached to this letter;
- Placing the advertisement on your noticeboard for clients and workers information.
- Talking to your clients about the pros and cons of them being involved in this research project;
- Initial screening for dual roles with me that any of your clients may have (ie. That they may be related to me or I may have been their worker or tutor in their past or currently).
- Giving any interested women who meet the criteria (ie adult women, who believe that they are not currently at risk of violence from their partner, who have experienced police intervention/s into their domestic violence situation/s) the enclosed letter of invitation to participate in the research project and the information sheet for prospective research participants.

In the first instance I would like to ascertain your agencies willingness to be part of this research project as described above. You can let me know this by contacting me via any of the forms of communication listed below.

I also understand how busy social services agencies are and as such I will contact you within the next 2 months to see whether you and/or any of your clients are interested in participating in this research project.

Thank you very much for considering this request to be involved in recruiting research participants for this important project. I look forward to making contact with you.

Yours sincerely,

Diane Gillespie MANZASW
Massey University Student

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 04/49. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix 3 – Advertisement

Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence.

This is an important research project that is seeking adult women who have had experiences with police intervening in their situations of domestic violence. The aim of this project is to collect women's stories of their experiences of the policing of domestic violence since the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (1995) – that is since 1996. These stories will be published as part of my thesis for my MA(Psych.) degree, and also form part of a wider research programme run by the psychology department of Massey University during the past decade called the:

Domestic Violence Interventions and Services Research Programme.

If you are an adult woman who is not currently at risk of violence from your partner and have had an experience or experiences of the police intervening in your domestic violence situation, and would like to be interviewed about your experiences, please ask your Women's Refuge or Women's Support agency worker for more information.

They will be able to provide you with information regarding the project and how you can become involved.

Diane Gillespie. MANZASW.
Researcher.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 04/49. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 4 – Invitation to Participants

Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence.

Dear Prospective Research Participant,

My name is Diane Gillespie. I am a 41-year-old woman, who is married with two children aged 22 and 19. I am currently completing my masters degree in psychology and have been fortunate in being able to conduct this research project as part of my thesis. I have work in the violence and abuse fields for over 10 years, and am a child survivor of domestic violence. This is a field that I am passionate about, and I see this piece of research as an important step towards the wider public hearing the expert knowledges of women who have experienced domestic violence and the policing of domestic violence.

If you are an adult woman that is currently not at risk of further partner violence and have had a time that you have called the police to an incident or incidents of domestic violence, I would like to invite you to participate in a research project that focuses on Women's Experiences of Policing Domestic Violence.

The aim of this project is to gather women's stories of their experiences of the police intervening in their situations of domestic violence. So that these stories are relatively current, I would like to hear from women who have called the police to an incident or incidents of domestic violence since the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (1995) in 1996.

As it is important that this research does not harm women in any way, including both researchers and research participants I am asking you to participant only if you are no longer at risk from violence.

If you would like to find out more about the research project please read the attached information sheet.

If you would like to be involved and you meet the criteria outlined in this letter and in the attached information sheet, please make contact with the contact person within your local Refuge/Women's Support Agency in the first instance.

Thank you for your time in considering this invitation to participate in this very important piece of research. If you wish to participate in the research project I look forward to contacting you and our work together.

Yours Sincerely,

Diane Gillespie.
This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN 04/49_ If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, emailhumanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix 5 - Email from NCIWR Research Advisor Sheryl Hann

From: Sheryl Hann
To: 'digill'
Sent: Thursday, July 08, 2004 2:26 PM
Subject: RE: Research Project Women's Accounts of the Policing of Domestic Violence

Hi Di
I just tried to phone you again and having no luck to get to talk to you, but then looked at your message and you are away- of course its the holidays.
Your research looks great- really willing to support you in any way I can and also would be very interested in your findings. It would be good to talk through some of the details about the research.
The contact details for the refuges are on our wesbite.
Can you try to call me when you get back - I will be around- but if you don;t get hold of me leave a message with your office times so I know when to call back.
Look forward to talking to you
Thanks
Sheryl

Sheryl Hann
Policy Research Advisor
National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges
3rd Floor, CMC Building 89 Courtenay Place, Wellington
PO Box 11 074, Wellington
Phone: (04) 802 5078 Fax: (04) 802 5079
DDI: (04) 801 2707
www.womensrefuge.org.nz

Appendix 6 - Information for participants

Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence.

INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher(s) Introduction

Hello and Kia Ora, my name is Diane Gillespie. I am a 41-year-old Tau iwi woman of Scottish, English, Irish and Australian descent. I am married with 2 children aged 19 and 22. I am a Massey university student, currently completing my thesis for my master of arts in psychology [MA(Psych.)]. I work for Gore and Districts Community Counseling centre as an ACC and Family Court approved counselor, and also at the Southern Institute of Technology in Invercargill as a social services, women's studies and psychology tutor. My contact details are:

Address: *Diane Gillespie*
Phone/Fax: *(03) 2088390*
Messages: *(0800) 478839 ext. 795*
Email: *digill@xtra.co.nz*

Supervisor(s) Introduction

My academic Supervisor is Dr. Mandy Morgan, who oversees this research project as part of a wider research project called The Domestic Violence Interventions and Services Research Project. Mandy has been involved in supervising this project for nearly 10 years. She also has previous experience as an advocate for women experiencing domestic violence. She also has children, who are now adults.

My cultural Supervisor is Sonia Bragg (Ngai Tahu). Sonia is married with children and grandchildren. She is a counselor and consultant in the human and social services fields. Sonia has an extensive background in working with women within rape crisis and currently supervises counselors, social workers and psychologists, both as a cultural and a clinical supervisor.

Purpose of the Research Project

The current research project is designed to collect information relating to women's experiences of police interventions into domestic violence. It is our view that women's stories of their experiences of the policing of domestic

violence, will provide expert knowledge in the understanding of the domestic violence legislation and how it is working in it's aim to reduce and eliminate domestic violence in all of it's forms (i.e. physical, sexual and psychological).

The current research will take the form of interviewing women about their experiences of having police intervene in their incident/s of domestic violence. The interview will be recorded on audiotape (Participants have the right to ask for the tape to be turned off at any time during the interview). These interviews will then be transcribed (written up exactly from the tape-recording) and written up as a narrative (story) of each woman's experience of the policing of domestic violence.

Participant Recruitment

• *Recruitment method.*

If you wish to participate in this research project you will have been recruited by answering the advertisement that has been circulated within Women's Refuges and Women's Support agencies. You are now invited to participate in the research project. The next step will involve you giving your name and contact details to the contact worker to give to me as the researcher. I will then contact you to answer any questions you may have and set up a time to meet with you to discuss the research project in detail and negotiate a time and place to conduct the interview.

You also will need to sign a consent form outlining your name and contact details. This will be kept confidential and your name will not be used in the transcription or narrative of your interview.

• *Selection criteria (where relevant)*

Selection criteria will be based on participants volunteering to be involved in the research project in the first instance. These participants will be adult women, who are not currently at risk of further violence by their partner, who have experienced police interventions into their incident/s of domestic violence.

It is important that I do not have an already existing relationship with women who wish to participate in the Research. As I have been a Women's Refuge volunteer and co-ordinator, a NZCYFS social worker, a counsellor, and have worked with women as a tutor of social services, youth programmes, nursing and women's studies, I have made many contacts over the years. If you believe that you may know me in another role it is important that you discuss this with your Refuge/Women's Support worker.

It is important that you know that you have the right to exclude yourself from the research project at any time until the analysis is completed. You can

exclude yourself simply by telling me, or Mandy, that you wish to stop your involvement.

We have chosen to interview 12 women for this research project. The reason for this number is that we would like to obtain stories from women from a fairly broad demographic within Aotearoa/New Zealand, yet still keep the material manageable to transcribe and write up in narrative form.

• *Description of discomforts or risks to participants as a result of participation.* It can be mildly uncomfortable at times recounting experiences where we have had crisis situations in our lives. As such it is important that you feel ready and willing to do this within an interview. There is also a risk of the interview triggering negative emotions or thoughts therefore it is important that you feel comfortable with stopping the interview at anytime, and utilizing your supports. I would also like you to know that ethically and professionally, I would not leave you in an unsafe psychological space. I am trained and experienced in this type of work.

Project Procedures

The information gathered in the interviews will be included in my thesis, as stories of women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence. These stories will be analysed to help me ascertain what is working well for women with the policing of domestic violence, what could be done differently and how women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence effects their understanding of themselves and domestic violent situations.

I will transcribe (write out exactly) the information gathered on audiotape from the interviews. Each transcription will then be sent to the research participant to allow them to check it for accuracy and for any editing that they wish to occur. Then I will write each of the transcripts up as a story (narrative). Each story will be sent to research participant to check my interpretation and accuracy of content. These stories will then make up part of my thesis. All of the stories will then be analysed together to find similarities, differences, and shred and contradicting meanings in relation to women's experiences of domestic violence.

All information gathered for the research project including consent forms and tapes and transcriptions will be stored in locked filing cabinets, and subject to the rules outlined in the Privacy Act in terms of confidentiality of personal information.

The taped interviews will either be returned to the research participant or wiped depending on the wish of the research participant, upon the completion of the research project.

Each research participant will be sent a copy of the final thesis, and be informed of any pertinent publication dates.

Research participants will negotiate a pseudonym for use in telling of the story, and also any changes to details that could become identifying features of the narrative. Professional confidentiality will be maintained at all times in line with my professional codes of ethics as a member of ANZASW, NZAC, NZPsS and Massey University codes of ethics in relation to human research.

Participant involvement

I would envisage that participants would give the following time to the project:

- 10 minutes initial screening with the Refuge/Women's Support worker
- 10-15 minutes telephone consultation with me
- 20-30 minutes initial interview clarifying, agreeing and contracting involvement and negotiating times, dates and venue for the research interview to take place.
- 1-2 hours research interview
- 1-2 hours reading and checking transcribed material and the narrative.

That is a total of approximately 3-5 hours.

Participant's Rights

It is important that you understand your rights regarding participation in this research project. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- ***decline to answer any particular question;***

- ***withdraw from the study at any time;***

- ***ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;***

- ***provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;***

- ***be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.***

- ***I also understand that I have the right to ask for the audio/video tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.***

•***You have the right to decline to answer any particular question.***

Support Processes
You are welcome to have a support person/s with you during the interview. Should the interview trigger any uncomfortable emotions, thoughts, memories and or behaviours for you, you have the right to cease participation in the project and take the time to work through those issues with the researcher and/or your support person/s.

Project Contacts
Should you have any questions about the project you are welcome to contact me, Diane Gillespie and /or the project Supervisor Mandy Morgan by using one of the following methods of contact:

Researcher:	***Diane Gillespie***
Phone/Fax:	***(03) 2088390***
Messages:	***(0800) 478839 ext. 795***
Email:	***digill@xtra.co.nz***
Supervisor:	***Mandy Morgan***
Phone:	***(06) 35057 99 ext. 2063***
Email:	***c.a.morgan@massey.ac.nz***

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN 04/49_ If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, emailhumanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

If physical injury results from your participation in this study, you should visit a treatment provider to make a claim to ACC as soon as possible. ACC cover and entitlements are not automatic and your claim will be assessed by ACC in accordance with the Injury Prevention, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2001. If your claim is accepted, ACC must inform you of your entitlements, and must help you access those entitlements. Entitlements may include, but not be limited to, treatment costs, travel costs for rehabilitation, loss of earnings, and/or lump sum for permanent impairment. Compensation for mental trauma may also be included, but only if this is incurred
as a result of physical injury. If your ACC claim is not accepted you should immediately contact the researcher. The researcher will initiate processes to ensure you receive compensation equivalent to that to which you would have been entitled had ACC accepted your claim.

Appendix7 – Domestic Violence Act(1995) Definition of Domestic Violence

Definition of Domestic Violence from the Domestic Violence Act (1995)

In defining domestic violence section 3 of the Domestic Violence Act (1995) states:

"(1) In this Act, "domestic violence", in relation to any person, means violence against that person by any other person with whom that person is, or has been, in a domestic relationship.

(2) In this section "violence" means
(a) Physical abuse;
(b) Sexual abuse;
(c) Psychological abuse, including but not limited to, -
(i) Intimidation;
(ii) Harassment;
(iii)Damage to property;
(iv)Threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or psychological abuse;
(v) In relation to a child, abuse of any kind set out in subsection (3) of this section.

(3)Without limiting subsection (2)(c) of this section, a person psychologically abuses a child if that person –
(a) causes or allows the child to see or hear the physical, sexual, or psychological abuse of a person with whom the child has a domestic relationship; or
(b) Puts the child or allows the child to be put, at real risk of seeing or hearing that abuse occurring; - but the person who suffers that abuse is not regarded, for the purpose of this subsection, as having caused or allowed the child to see or hear the abuse, or as the case may be, as having put the child, or allowed the child to be put, at risk of seeing or hearing the abuse.

(4) Without limiting subsection (2) of this section,-
(a) a single act may amount to abuse for the purposes of that subsection;
(b) A number of acts that form a pattern of behaviour may amount to abuse for that purpose, even though some or all of those acts, when viewed in isolation, may appear to be minor or trivial.

(5) Behaviour may be psychological abuse for the purposes of subsection (2)(c) of this section which does not involve actual or threatened physical or sexual abuse."
(cited in CYFS, Refuge, Police Training, 1996.pp. 36-37)

Appendix 8 - Participant Consent Form

Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence.

Participant Consent Form

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me.

My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I wish/do not wish to have my tapes returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 04/49. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix 9 – Research Questions
Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence.

Interview Questions Summary

The following is a summary guideline of the questions that I will ask within the interview with research participants. It will be important to me to be flexible enough in my questioning to allow the interview to take shape from what the research participant sees as most important in her story. I will begin by introducing myself I some depth and uncovering some connections between the research participant and myself, in order to establish rapport and attempt to minimize the power imbalance inherent in a researcher/research participant relationship. These questions are unlikely to be asked in a linear fashion, rather will serve as a guideline and checklist to ensure I have information relevant to the research topic and methodology.

- Demographics – including age, ethnicity, marital status, primary employment (paid and unpaid)
- Key aspects of identity that she feels are important to her experiences of the policing of domestic violence.
- Can you tell me about a situation or situations where the police have turned up to an incident where your partner was violent towards you?
- When did those incidents happen? (Which years?)
- How come the police turned up?
- What happened in that incident? Or some of those incidents?
- How did you feel?
- What were some of your thoughts?
- What did you do as a result of your experiences?
- Before this experience of police intervention what were your understandings of policing? Of domestic violence? And of the policing of domestic violence?
- Have your experiences changed the ways you understand domestic violence? And police interventions? In what ways?
- If you could change things around the policing of domestic violence what would you change?
- Do you know of any ways that these things could be changes?
- What do you think works well in the policing of domestic violence?

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics
Committee, PN Protocol 04/49. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 10 – Consent to use Transcribed Material

Women's Experiences of the Policing of Domestic Violence.

Authority for the Release of Tape Transcripts

This form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview/s
conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used by the researcher, Diane Gillespie, in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name – printed

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics
Committee, PN Protocol 04/49. If you have any concerns about theconduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

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