Domestic Violence in Asian & Pacific Islander Communities National Summit 2002: Proceedings

Asian & Pacific Islander
Institute on Domestic Violence



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OCS thanks the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence for its pioneering research and presentation of concepts, research findings and programs that are culturally relevant to eradicating domestic violence in Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

Finally, OCS recognizes the staff of LCG, Inc., the contractor, for their outstanding work and continued dedication.

DEDICATION

These proceedings are dedicated to the overwhelming numbers of women and their children who are abused or harmed by violence.

A report by the United Nations states:

Women constitute half the world's population
Perform nearly two-third of its work hours
Receive one-tenth of the world's income
Own less then one-hundredth of the world's property

We ask:

How much of the world's suffering do they endure?

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	iii
Sponsor/Co-sponsor	ix
Foreword	xi
API Institute's Steering Committee	xiii
About the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence	xv
Executive Summary	xvii
Panel I: What Does Violence Against Women Look Like in Our Communities? The Story of the Unknown Woman by Huma Dar	5
Panel II: Domestic Violence & Cultures of Patriarchy Building Human Rights Through Popular Culture by Mallika Dutt	27 30
Panel III: Domestic Violence Related Homicides Who Gets Killed, and by Whom? Who Gets Harmed, and by Whom? by Firoza Chic Dabby. Homicide, Gender, and Culture by Shamita Das Dasgupta. Lessons from API Domestic Violence Related Homicides and Suicides by Judy Chen One Woman's Death: One Community's Response by Leni Marin. Holding Our Communities Accountable by Debbie Lee	47 52 59
Panel IV: Children, Youth & Their Abused Mothers Our Failure to Protect by Firoza Chic Dabby The Political Landscape Outside the Home by Grace Huang Organizing Strategies at Systemic, Familial and Advocacy Levels by Emma Catague, Pusi Sa'au and Beckie Masaki	67

Questions for Roundtable Discussions	74
Afterword	76
APPENDIX	
Fact Sheet on Domestic Violence in API Communities	-3
Directory of API Agencies & Programs	3

FOREWORD

BY WILLIAM D. RILEY

Three years ago, we invited about 20 members of the Asian and Pacific Islander community of networks to Washington, D.C. where we met at the Hotel George. For three days members of the community's nascent Steering Committee on Asian Domestic Violence met, developed a plan and committed to domestic violence issues they wanted to address. Energy, commitment and passion were the products of that conference. We knew we were on the right road and that the formation of the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence (API Institute) was near.

Since that initial organizational meeting, the API Institute has been involved in a number of important efforts in the movement against domestic violence, including the development of its Resource Center and its contributing work on a national policy agenda. Looking ahead, an important goal of the API Institute will be its Critical Issues Model. Development of the model will represent a major collaborative step forward in their efforts against domestic violence. The model will require much hard work and collaboration with different organizations in Asian and Pacific Islander communities. The Institute Director, Firoza Chic Dabby and her colleagues have taken on these difficult tasks and are succeeding in their efforts. We are very proud and appreciative of their work and we are committed to continuing to support their work, mission and goals.

The context in which our support for the API Institute occurs is within the funding for a number of Institutes and programs, including the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence; the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community; the National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence; the Women of Color Network; the National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women; the Domestic Violence Resource Network; and the National Domestic Violence Hotline. All these entities work together and collaborate across communities and organizations. Their collaboration is vital to making progress on these issues. We may not all think the same and we may not all have the same particular issues; however, first and foremost there is an issue to which we all adhere – safety for women who are being abused and prevention of the problem.

ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER INSTITUTE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS* June 2002

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ABOUT THE ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER INSTITUTE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ver the last four decades, public discussion of the problem of domestic violence has increased. In 1995, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), providing funding for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence; and for funding the criminal legal system's responses to them. Domestic violence is now recognized as a major public health problem.

However, the need to discuss domestic violence and its intersections with race and culture has long been overshadowed by the assertion that domestic violence is not unique to any one community. While it is true that the problem exists in all communities regardless of class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identification; responses to the problem of violence against women cannot be effective without acknowledging differences in racial and gender dynamics, cultural values, and perceptions of the problem within our communities.

Information on Asian and Pacific Islander (API) and other immigrant communities to address domestic violence is still sorely inadequate or nonexistent. According to the National Violence Against Women Survey, Asian and Pacific Islander women are least likely to report sexual and physical assault victimization. Based on the survey, the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control concluded that more research is needed to determine how much of the difference can be explained by a respondent's willingness to report information to interviewers and how much by social, demographic and environmental factors.

Despite the paucity of data since the early 1980s, Asian and Pacific Islander activists in the battered women's movement have struggled to address the problem of domestic violence in their ethnic communities. Since the first shelter program for API women and children started in Los Angeles in 1981, services and advocacy to support Asian battered women have slowly emerged across the country in New York, San Francisco, Chicago, San Jose, New Jersey, Boston and Seattle. In California in 1997, Asian Women's Shelter in collaboration with Nihonmachi Legal Outreach, Narika and Cameron House, organized a statewide conference on domestic violence in Asian communities. Over 400 advocates and activists attended the conference. Additional efforts have followed: a Korean conference in Los Angeles, a South Asian conference in New York, and a pan-Asian one in Ohio. Although ethnic-specific data continued to be unavailable, community interest in addressing domestic violence had begun to increase.

In 1997, the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF), the Family Violence Prevention Fund and Asian Women's Shelter formed a partnership to address the need for a national vehicle to bring together the many local efforts by Asian anti-domestic violence activists. Members of the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community, a national group supported by the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), generously provided technical assistance about organizing the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence.

About the API Institute xv

In 1998, after monthly teleconferences, voluntary organizing efforts and travel support from DHHS, a group of women from our fledgling organization met for the first time in Washington, D.C. They strategized to build a network that would facilitate sharing ideas about service models for Asian battered women and children; influence data collection and research from a participatory action model; and impact policy, fund development and research at the national level. Members also identified the need to promote national discussions on critical issues such as community perceptions of domestic violence, community responses to the problem, and the cultural values that intersect both.

On August 28 1999, over 80 people attended the first national meeting of the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence in Chicago; in conjunction with the *Next Millennium Conference: Ending Domestic Violence*. The Institute meeting was sponsored by the Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families; the Ms. Foundation for Women; and the Vanguard Public Foundation.

In October 2000, the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence was funded with a five-year grant by the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Community Services (OCS), Family Violence Prevention and Services Administration (FVPSA). This marks the formal establishment of the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence. It is part of the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF) a national policy advocacy organization advocating for the health and well being of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

By Firoza Chic Dabby

he Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence was established with funding through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with the support of Bill Riley, Federal Project Officer for DHHS, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services; the devoted work of Asian and Pacific Islander advocates; and the organization's Steering Committee. DHHS funding formally established the Institute in October 2000, after almost two years of planning. We thank them for their support of the Institute and for sponsoring this Summit.

The Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence is a national network of advocates; community members; professionals from health, mental health, law, education, and social services; survivors; scholars; researchers; and activists from public policy, community organizations, youth programs, immigrants' rights networks, communities of color, women's groups, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender communities, and other social justice organizations. It serves as a forum for, and clearinghouse on information, research, resources and critical issues about violence against women in Asian and Pacific Islander communities. Our emphasis is on ending violence against women through socio-cultural transformations that go beyond improving services or tinkering with systems.

At its inception, the Institute focused on prevention, intervention, research and policy issues affecting Asian and Pacific Islander (API) abused women. But, it soon became clear that we needed to focus on critical issues – domestic violence related homicides for example – and then consider prevention and intervention strategies, and research and policy implications. Out of this model came the inspiration for the first *National Summit on Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities*.

So, on June 28-29, 2002, the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence convened its first National Summit in San Francisco, California. Over one hundred Asian and Pacific Islander advocates attended, bringing their power and leadership to our anti-violence movement. We came together to have deep discussions about the complexity of our work, to identify trends and critical issues, to understand our successes and failures, and to be inspired by our collective knowledge and expertise. We came to keep our movement political, radical, and strong.

Our goals were to:

- (1) Enhance our understanding from a pan-Asian perspective of the critical issues that affect API battered women;
- (2) Weave the strands of community organizing, prevention, intervention, research, and policy advocacy into the fabric of our work;
- (3) Promote and build women's leadership in our communities; and
- (4) Develop strategies about changing cultural norms that affect social transformation.

Executive Summary xvii

The Summit's format was amazingly successful. We devoted half a day to each topic: a panel set out the issues, followed by roundtable discussions between groups of 10-12 participants. We wanted to create spaces that were thought provoking, raised problematic questions, stimulated discussion, and drew upon our collective ideas and experience. We looked at four topics: the kinds of intra-familial violence API women face, the intersection of culture and domestic violence, homicides, and children/youth.

PANEL I: WHAT DOES VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN LOOK LIKE IN OUR COMMUNITIES?

Huma Dar's powerful poem brought the realities of anguish and fear straight into the heart of the conference. Chic Dabby presented two models developed by the Institute: the Lifetime Spiral of Violence and the Coiled Spring of Domestic Violence; and the analytic frameworks of patriarchy and gender oppression that inform our work. Advocates representing the Hmong, Japanese, Hawaiian, Korean, Lesbian, Indonesian, Pakistani, Chinese, Filipino, Transgender, and Vietnamese communities enumerated the specific forms of violence their women face. Mimi Kim presented findings and questions for future consideration from her report *Innovative Strategies to Address Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities: Examining Themes, Models and Interventions.*

PANEL II: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CULTURES OF PATRIARCHY

Mallika Dutt showed her award-winning music video, *Rhythms of the Mind*, and linked antiviolence struggles to a human rights framework as an introduction to the second panel. The compelling images and messages of liberation from violence were inspiring. Sujata Warrier elaborated on traditional and contemporary views of culture, questioning who defines culture and justifies its practices. Val Kalei Kanuha stripped away the claims that colonization is to blame for domestic violence and strengthened her argument by drawing parallels between the strategies of colonizers and those used by men to justify violence against women. Leti Volpp analyzed the use of "cultural defenses" in the community and in the courts by raising questions about our role in spreading notions of culture and negotiating between sexism and racism.

Panel III: Domestic Violence Related Homicides

Chic Dabby framed the extent of the problem by enumerating the range of killings that are conceptualized as domestic violence related deaths, and the harm done to children and surviving family members. Shamita Das Dasgupta discussed how culture should not be implicated in gendered homicides and described her research on domestic violence homicides in the South Asian community. Judy Chen talked about institutional and community responses to homicides or threats of homicide; fatality reviews; understanding fatalities in the context of systems failure and community complicity; and recommended changes in systems, community responses, and advocacy strategies. Leni Marin and Debbie Lee gave examples that simultaneously emphasized community organizing and system accountability.

PANEL IV: CHILDREN, YOUTH AND THEIR ABUSED MOTHERS

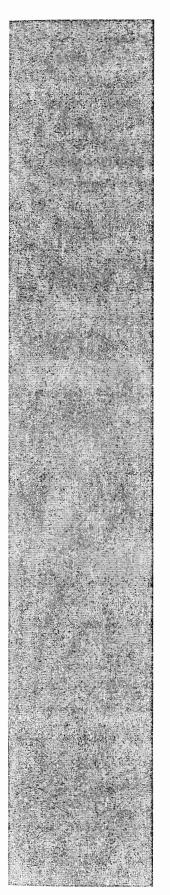
The final panel opened with performances by the Young Asian Women Against Violence Project and dramatically showed the effects of intra-familial violence on our youth. Chic Dabby conceptualized the issue as that of "our failure to protect", asking where power and powerlessness rest and shift within the family. She then described the violent landscape within the home. Grace Huang described the political landscape outside the home, taking up policy

issues regarding TANF, marriage promotion, and fatherhood initiatives. Emma Catague and Pusi Sa'au described a model program that relies on community organizing and family participation. Beckie Masaki summarized our successes in building interventions at systemic, familial and advocacy levels centered on mothers and their children.

* * *

The Summit proceedings that follow emerge out of our efforts to place the safety and empowerment of abused women at the center of our concerns; to develop a contextualized gender analysis; and to employ community organizing as a philosophy and a strategy to end violence against women.

We want to acknowledge the power and courage of our battered women, our youth and children, and the outspoken members of our communities. They teach us to listen and act; they inspire us to struggle against enormous odds. We express special thanks to all our Asian and Pacific Islander advocates, our allies, summit participants and presenters – all of you who have made sacrifices and given so much of your time to be a part of this movement. We thank you all for the devotion, brilliance, and strength you bring to keep our movement powerful.



What Does Violence Against Women Look Like In Our Communities?

PANEL I

JUNE **28**, **2002**

WHAT DOES VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN LOOK LIKE IN OUR COMMUNITIES?

INTRODUCTION

The opening panel of the National Summit on Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities explored the topic: "What Does Violence Against Women Look Like in Our Communities?" Abused Asian and Pacific Islander women who contact our agencies for assistance are describing forms of abuse and intra-familial violence that differ from those we typically hear about in the general population. These differences are important to enumerate because they determine the kinds of responses we design and the analytic frameworks within which we understand violence against API women.

PRESENTERS

The Story of the Unknown Woman: Huma Dar Violence Against Women: A Lifetime Spiral, A Tightly Coiled Spring: Firoza Chic Dabby

Deepening Our Analysis of Violence Against Women: Firoza Chic Dabby
Enumeration of Domestic Violence in Different Ethnic Communities:
Nina Jusuf, San Francisco Women Against Rape
Susun Kim, Law Center for Families, Oakland, California
Anne Dinh, East Dallas Counseling Center
Val Kalei Kanuha, University of Hawai'i
Kabzuag Vaj, Hmong/American Women's Association, Madison, Wisconsin
Pusi Sa'au API Women & Family Safety Center, Scottle Washington

Pusi Sa'au, API Women & Family Safety Center, Seattle, Washington
Beckie Masaki, Asian Women Shelter, San Francisco
Mieko Yoshihama, University of Michigan
Hediana Utarti, Asian Women's Shelter, San Francisco
Norma Timbang, API Women & Family Safety Center, Seattle, Washington
Huma Dar, Narika, Berkeley, California

Innovative Strategies: Themes and Questions: Mimi Kim

THE STORY OF THE UNKNOWN WOMAN

By Huma Dar

bear quadruple burdens as a Muslim from Pakistan. I feel the violence that has been there for centuries—attached to patriarchy, attached to a crisis of masculinity; a violence that shows up as backlash and misogyny. The second burden I feel as a Muslim woman living in the United States involves hate crimes. Ever since September 11, 2001, when I am walking on the street and stop to cross the road, I have to look twice to make sure the person behind the wheel will not drive over me. I have never felt this fear before in my life. The third burden is that of massacres and genocide. When my sisters are raped, scorched, cut into pieces, or burned, I fear for the genocidal fury unleashed against women. My fourth burden is about the silence of victimization. Who knows what innocent women go through? Current pre-occupations center around veiled women - is that the only victimization the Western world can think of? Behind that veil lies a woman who lives, thinks, suffers.

My name is Hina.

I am the one pierced by a dozen bullets on my mother's orders in my lawyer's office

My sin: I had dared to ask for a divorce.

My name is Gauhar.

I am the one almost run over
by a truck, or is it okay to blame the truck driver?

My crime: my "Otherness" exposed in a land of the free
wearing a shalwar-qameez
for every one to see.

My name is Sultani.

I am the one who lost count after rapist number three or was it number thirty?

Faizan, my months old baby, kept on crying for hunger at the sight of my breast cut off My crime: I am a Muslim being cleansed, ethnically.

My name is Huma. I am the one whose stomach was kicked, child abused and kidnapped by a husband My sin: possession of a voice. Are voices contraband?

My name is Mariam.

I am the one whose remains they couldn't find My crime: being in the wrong place at the wrong time
Twin Towers, 9/11

My name is Kausar Banoo.

I am the one – nine months pregnant, raped, belly cut open, foetus on trident both burnt to ashes

My sin: being a Muslim in Gujarat.

My name is Sherbat Gula.

I am the one whose three babies didn't make it to age five in the land of the land-mines while my burqah was the talk of the town and my eyes green were labeled "ferocious" My crime: born close to warm waters and black gold
I am told

My name is Unknown
I am the one whose burnt face, cut at the nape,
couldn't tell my charred story
whose name, face or story didn't make the headlines
in the conspiracy of silence
My crime: they say we are "terrorists."

I am Unknown, I am Sherbat Gula, I am Kausar Banoo, I am Mariam, I am Huma I am Sultani, I am Gauhar, I am Hina

I am your mother, your aunt, your sister, I am your neighbor, your friend, your lover, I am you

Hold me Embrace me
Reclaim me Honor me
Love me Kiss me
Seek justice for me

For I am you

Huma Dar is on the Board of Directors of Narika, in Berkeley, California, a program for abused South Asian women.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A LIFETIME SPIRAL A TIGHTLY COILED SPRING

By Firoza Chic Dabby

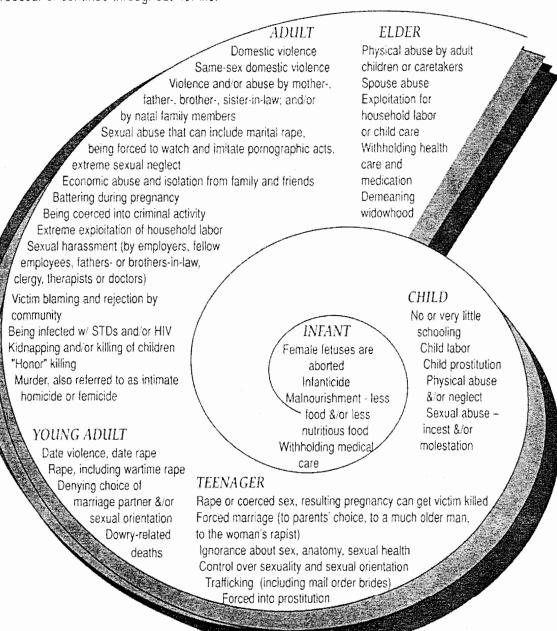
Iolence in women's lives is typically conceptualized as a series of abusive, horrible or tragic events; and domestic violence is explained as a 'cycle of violence'. But the cycles of violence women live with occur at different stages in their lives; lives marked by attacks and saturated with fear. We have conceptualized these realities in two ways: A Lifetime Spiral of Violence depicts the continuum of violence and abuse that female, infants, children, adolescents, adults and elders can experience at any or many stages in their lifetime. The Coiled Spring of Domestic Violence was articulated by rural women in India, to describe their experience of intra-familial abuse. The complexity of their model defies the oversimplifications of the 'cycle of violence'.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A LIFETIME SPIRAL

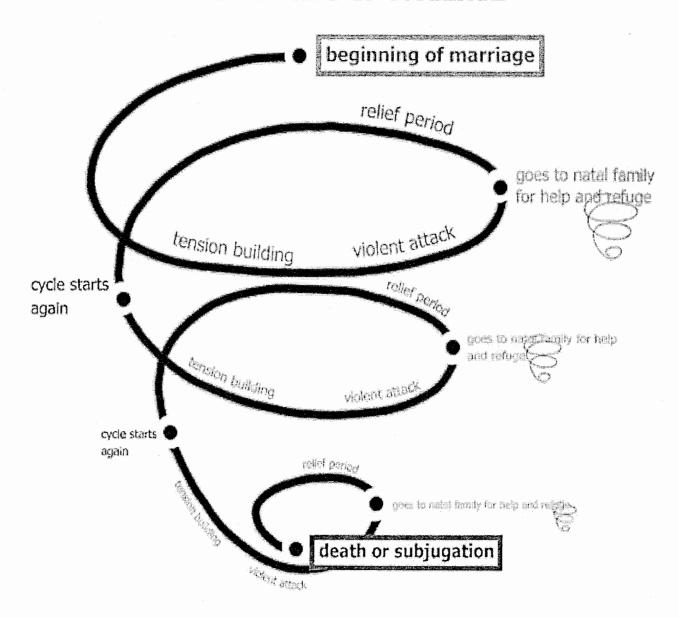
Domestic violence is just one amongst many forms of violence against women. From the aborting of female fetuses to intimate homicide, girls and women encounter numerous oppressions. Violence against women is more than physical, sexual, economic and emotional abuse; it is also about living in a climate of fear, misery, loss, humiliation and despair. The lives of abused Asian and Pacific Islander women are shadowed by the cultural burdens of shame and devaluation. These abuses are experienced in the context of additional oppressions based on race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, type of labor being performed, level of education, class position, disability, or immigration/refugee status.

A LIFETIME SPIRAL OF VIOLENCE

Although some of these occur at a specific stage in a woman's life, most can reoccur or continue throughout her life.



COILED SPRING OF VIOLENCE



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A TIGHTLY COILED SPRING

Masum, in Pune, India gets full credit for formulating the Coiled Spring of Violence. It was articulated by women in rural Maharashtra using Masum's services.

The local context:

Women in this rural area live in close proximity to their natal family and seek refuge there when the marital home is violent. The latter would typically house the husband, his parents, and other married and/or unmarried siblings with their families. Similarly, the natal home also houses an extended family.

The spring:

- □ Each coil of the spring represents a cycle of violence with its tension building, violent attack, and relief stages.
- □ This spring denotes repetitive violence in the marital home and the tightening of the coils.
- ☐ The smaller springs outside the central one illustrate the abuses women experience when they seek refuge in the natal home.

The violence – impunity, rejection and subjugation:

- □ Early in the marriage, after a violent incident the woman leaves to go to her natal family for help or refuge. Initially they are fairly sympathetic and take her in. She returns to her marital family a few hours or days later.
- As domestic violence incidents occur, the coils in her marital home start to tighten and she keeps returning to her natal home for refuge.
- □ As she goes back and forth, her natal family becomes less and less welcoming —they may force her to return to the marital home rapidly; and even become abusive refusing to feed her and/or even her children. This abuse is represented by the smaller springs.
- ☐ Thus, the periods of respite or refuge become shorter at best, and abusive at worst.
- Meanwhile domestic violence incidents increase in frequency and severity, represented by the downward spiral of the spring and the tighter coils of each cycle of violence.
- What is in fact happening is that family members in the marital home are abusing the woman with greater impunity because they see how the natal home is rejecting her. They derive validation from the natal family's abuse "See, even they don't want you, they think it's your fault."
- ☐ Yet again, the coils of the spring tighten
- □ The downward spiral of violence ends in the woman's subjugation or death.

Applications to our work in the U.S.:

How would we adapt or apply the Coiled Spring of Violence to describe our women's experiences of domestic violence in this country? Although the circumstances are not identical, there are some parallels. If an abused woman here is not going to her natal home, is she going to natural helpers in her community? Is she

coming to our agencies? Is she going to her teenage or grown children? How are these resources helping her to negotiate the landscape? What happens in this country, when she steps outside the spring, tries to leave her abusive home? Do the coils tighten when she goes back? Does this mean that she should get out when she can? And if that is the case does it mean that we should also focus on leaving as the best intervention?

The models of intervention the anti-domestic violence movement has established are premised on women leaving abusive relationships. If we accept that violence is a coiled spring that only tightens with time, then what are the implications of staying and leaving? The conditions in the U.S. are clearly different from rural India. So, are battered women's lives here ending in death and subjugation? We'd like to think not, what then are the alternatives?

Will Asian and Pacific Islander battered women in the U.S. find that it captures and describes their experience accurately? If so, can it mobilize them to seek help sooner? As advocates we could start to present the coiled spring – instead of the cycle of violence – to the women we work with. If they agree that it closely resembles the domestic violence and help-seeking situations in their lives, then it will deepen our understanding and affect how we formulate our interventions.

FIROZA CHIC DABBY is the Director of the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence. Before serving in this capacity, she was the Executive Director of Narika, a help-line for abused South Asian women in Berkeley, California. She has worked in the field of domestic violence and mental health for more than 19 years.

Marital rape; extreme sexual neglect; being forced to watch and imitate pornography; and being forced into unprotected sex, which can result in sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

Physical abuse can mean:

- □ Dealing with multiple abusers; severe isolation because a woman has left her home country and thus her support systems; complete abandonment; hyperexploitation of women's (including elderly women's) household labor; withholding healthcare and medication; and the mistreatment of widows;
- Mothers can be threatened with the kidnapping of their children; lose custody of their children because divorced women are so stigmatized or because of prevailing cultural beliefs that children belong to the father;
- Domestic violence related homicides encompass a broader range of deaths carried out through honor killings, contract killings, dowry (bride price) related deaths; killing of family members in the home country; and being driven by husbands and in-laws into committing suicide.

Same sex domestic violence in API couples carries greater threats associated with outing a partner in a community where homosexuality is ostracized.

Threats to immigration status are part of the pattern of abuse. They include:

- □ Threats of deportation, loss of children, making false declarations to the INS about her, withholding/hiding passports and other important documents, not proceeding with green card applications;
- □ After marriage in the home country women come here and sometimes have to contend with another partner her husband has: her vulnerable immigration status forces her to accept whatever arrangements he insists upon.

Abusive community norms

- □ Gender discrimination is directed at girls early in childhood (e.g., withholding proper nourishment, health care, or education);
- Community reinforcements that keep gender violence in place utilize victim blaming, silencing, shaming, and rejection of battered women who speak up or seek help;
- □ Covert or overt support and the lack of sanctions that accrue to batterers, only increase their impunity and entitlement to violence.

ENUMERATING INTRA-FAMILIAL VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED BY ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER WOMEN

By Firoza Chic Dabby

omestic violence in Asian and Pacific Islander communities has some different patterns, forms and dynamics of abuse. Some of these may be particular only to certain API ethnic group(s); some may be common to many of them. We are trying to develop a complex picture of what is happening in our communities, without essentializing or stereotyping them. What follows is a general description of the patterns, forms and dynamics of abuse we are seeing in Asian and Pacific Islander families; and then an enumeration by advocates of what is repeatedly reported to them.

Some of the Patterns, Forms and Dynamics of Abuse API Women are Experiencing

Dynamics we see in some API families include:

- Multiple abusers in the home: perpetrators may include mothers-, fathers-, brothers- and sisters-in-law, ex- or new wives, adult siblings or other members of a woman's natal family;
- ☐ Internalized devaluation and victim-blaming are that much deeper when there are multiple perpetrators.
- Our women describe "push" factors ("leave the house, give me a divorce, I can always find another wife," etc.) more frequently than "pull" factors ("come back to me, I love you," etc.);
- Gender roles are tightly prescribed and more rigid, minimizing female agency and shrinking the space within which women *and* men can re-define those roles.

Sexual abuse can include:

- Excessive restrictions designed to control women's sexuality: grave threats about sexual activity; being blamed for rape, incest or coerced sex; being forced to marry their rapist; being kept in ignorance about sex, sexual health and anatomy; and denied a different sexual orientation;
- □ Young women can be victims of trafficking: as mail order brides, sex workers, or indentured workers;
- □ Women face sexual harassment not only from co-workers but also from family members and clergymen;
- □ Forced marriages (not to be confused with arranged marriages) exacerbate abuse;

ENUMERATING ETHNIC-SPECIFIC Domestic Violence

By API ADVOCATES

To capture the range of the kinds of violence experienced by API women, advocates briefly enumerated some of these different kinds of abuse and significant dynamics they see in their specific ethnic communities. The lists below are not exhaustive (and avoid describing typical things like battering by intimates), but are intended to start understanding the complexities of intra-familial violence that API women face.

Indonesian women

- □ Abuse perpetrated by extended family members
- □ Wives/partners describe how they are used as servants and as "sex slaves"
- □ Victims of human trafficking for domestic work or sex work
- □ Religion is used to oppress rather than help
- □ Women have legal rights to leave or divorce an abusive partner, but they may not know that, or they may fear exercising these rights
- □ Mothers are forced to return to Indonesia and leave the children in the U.S. with the husband and/or his family
- □ Women who marry Caucasian or American men may enjoy a different status; and returning to Indonesia because of domestic violence brings them deep shame
- □ Marital rape
- □ Elder abuse
- □ Abuse through immigration status (e.g., not allowing women access to their passport)

Korean women

- □ Inter-family violence and conflicts: mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law who are very controlling and abusive
- □ Pressure from the woman's own family members to put up with or minimize domestic violence
- Children are considered as belonging to the father in the Korean family system, so abused mothers stay in abusive situations or they are pressured by their own family members to leave their children behind, and later to remarry
- □ Threats made regarding the custody of children
- □ Physical abuse against the children is fairly prevalent
- □ Religious institutions play a very dominant role in a lot of women's lives; instead of getting any meaningful kind of support from the church, women are often pressured into submitting to the situation at hand
- □ Financial abuse through joint business ownership. For Korean women who

- own and operate small businesses with their spouses, the husband takes complete control over the financial matters of the business
- ☐ Immigration status, particularly green card applications, become a source of abuse

Vietnamese women

- □ Violence stemming from mail order brides and forced arranged marriages
- □ Following the war in Vietnam, a lot of families have been separated. The husband often is in America establishing himself so that he can sponsor his family. The wife comes over later and that is a set-up often for domestic violence
- ☐ Immigration status: when he has permanent residency and she has conditional residency, it can be used against the woman
- □ Elder abuse arises when the children begin to feel the parent is more of a burden than an asset to the family
- □ Abuse by in-laws, especially when the victims are living in the same household

Hawaiian women

- □ Access to services is particularly difficult given the geographic isolation of a rural island state: Hawaii is 2,500 miles away from the nearest landmass (which is Asia and not North America)
- □ Escaping from violence is compounded for women in Hawaii because of the isolation from various kinds of support and services
- □ Crystal meth amphetamine ("ice") use is a tremendous problem, particularly in the native Hawaiian community increasing the amount of violence against women
- □ Battered women using drugs are losing custody of their children because of prevailing social policies across the U.S. regarding removal of children by child welfare agencies

Hmong women

- □ Community violence is included in family violence; given the smallness of the community, many members are family members
- □ Threatening and degrading letters, and community criticism follow women who leave their abusers
- □ Physical abuse is severe and can end in murder
- □ Sexual abuse involves sexual assault, rape, having to accept the husband's extra-marital affairs and/or his Internet affairs, being forced to watch pornography and to perform sexual acts sponsored by husbands
- Sexual harassment in the workplace or by landlords
- Polygamy exists unofficially: with marriage negotiators performing ceremonies here or when men go back to Laos to take another wife from there
- Economic abuse associated with polygamy has led to women losing property rights- because they are not legally married and they do not have their names on their husband's property
- Religion and emotional abuse in the community go hand in hand. Women are made to feel their depression is a sign that their ancestors are mad at them with shamans refusing to perform spiritual healing rituals for battered women and their children

Queer women

A compilation of feelings and experiences related by queer women: 1

I'm here. You're here.

I may be your gardener. I may be just the girl next door.

I see you. Can you see me?

I hear you. Can you hear me?

I'm hurting.

There is a knife by my pillow.

I know you know

the owner of this knife.

Will you help me if she's your friend?

Will you talk to me if she's your boss?

Will you help me if she's your cousin?

Will you talk to me if she's your teacher?

Will you talk to me ever?

Will you?

Filipino women

- □ Immigration status and green card issues are used to keep women in line
- Mail order brides, trafficking for sexual exploitation and/or for forced labor, and continued abuse in those relationships
- □ Sponsors and partners use racism to belittle and silence women
- □ Young men tricking their girlfriends or forcing them to become pregnant
- ☐ Incest and child sexual abuse: if occurring in homes where mothers are being abused, the silence around incest is greater
- □ Drug use in teen communities
- □ Homicide related to domestic violence claims many Filipina lives

Pakistani women

- □ Threats of honor killings
- □ Dowry deaths when the woman brings a dowry that does not satisfy the inlaws or the husband
- □ Bride price: historically, a gift of money promised to the bride by the intended groom; but her natal family is taking these gifts and effectively "selling" their daughter to the highest bidder and forcing their daughter to marry him
- ☐ Using and abusing children to inflict harm: threats of, or international kidnapping of children by family abductors; false accusations against mothers
- □ Community denial or silence
- □ Less attention paid to the education and nutrition of girl children; excessive restrictions on their freedom
- □ Forced marriages (not to be confused with the practice of arranged marriages) that women do not consent to but cannot escape from
- Victimization and ostracization of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender community
- □ Immigration related threats: withholding green card applications and petitions

¹Poem by Hediana Utarti

- Reproductive rights are abused: husbands force their wives to have abortions; or women are forced to have children and large families despite health risks
- Brothers have the authority to command and to discipline their sisters

Transgender women

The following story is illustrative:

A battered woman called the police, desperate for help to protect her from her violent boyfriend. Upon arrival, the police responded effectively and supportively, mentioning resources for her. As they proceeded to arrest him, he yelled out, "She's not a woman; she's a man," and he pulled her skirt off to expose her. The police were shocked and they simply left the scene, leaving her to brutal retaliation by the batterer. She sank into hopelessness and endured the abuse for many more years until she was able to get her operation. Then she gained confidence that as a whole woman people would believe her; and she could get the help she needed to leave her batterer.

- Do shelters have policies for services to transgender survivors?
- Do they discriminate against pre-op women who are indeed more vulnerable?

Japanese women

- Forced sex, or withholding sex, forced abortions
- Abuse by in-laws: they are not just passive, complacent bystanders but they actively instigate and push husbands into partner violence; and are perpetrators of gruesome acts of violence themselves
- Abuse due to immigration status: immigrants are taken advantage of, whether they are documented or not
- The importance of the meaning of a partner's acts. A "hit" is a hit across cultures, but how a woman experiences her partner's acts varies across cultures and specific situational contexts. For example, throwing water and salt is a deeply abusive act for many women of Japanese descent. The sociocultural significance of this act is that water or salt are used to purify things that are considered dirty or impure. For a woman to have water thrown at her is the ultimate insult and humiliation. In this context, if a person has humiliated you that deeply, it becomes very difficult to be affectionate and live in a family unit with that individual. This atmosphere of humiliation persists long after the act, regardless of whether there are subsequent acts of physical violence

Chinese women

- Extreme economic deprivation and control
- Immigration status related abuse, particularly around obtaining green cards; threats to notify the family in China that she is not a good or obedient wife and will be sent back, or pushing her family to 'recall' her
- As the relationship progresses or the couple ages, there is increased verbal abuse, and the belittling and criticism become relentless. Elderly women describe increased verbal harassment from their husbands
- Psychosomatic complaints as a result of the violence

And for all API battered women²

I'm here today. I was here yesterday. I'm here everyday I'm your hairdresser in the morning, your waitress at night I owe \$40,000

I keep your tip under the mattress

I sleep in nightmares of stormy seas

I live in nightmares of people speaking strangely to me

Now, I'm black and blue

When this man found I was pregnant with his baby

I was screaming

I was fighting

Neighbors watching

Blank faces

My words were just noise

Please help me

² Poem by Hediana Utarti

DEEPENING OUR ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

By Firoza Chic Dabby

The subordination of women's power and autonomy is perpetuated by the intersection of familial, communal and institutional structures. This is a quick overview of some of the analytic frameworks we encounter and use or reject in our anti-violence work.

Stress Theory — We need firmly to debunk the stress theory of violence: that men batter women because they are having or have had a hard time. Women have the same life experiences and stresses: they come from violent homes; they have childhood histories of abuse; they get cut off on the freeway; they get high or drunk; they get fired from their jobs; etc. And yet, women are not resorting to physical abuse. Non-abusive men are also subject to the same stressors. Women and non-abusive men do, of course, have personal and inter-personal difficulties, psychological problems, feel depressed, lack parenting insights, lack work or job skills, are constrained by enmiserating poverty, etc., and cope without resorting to violence. Finally, men, who may not have any of these difficulties or deficits, batter.

Power and Control – We all understand how power and control are an explanation for violence against women; and why empowering battered women is central to our work. But, power gets conflated with masculinity and we have very gendered notions of power: men's power is seen as abusive, arrogant and forceful; women's power is about finding her voice and the space to express it - limited notions indeed of women's power. What then *do* we mean when we talk about empowering women? Power needs to be conceptualized as a healthy and important force to have; it can re-shape economic, social and gender disparities. We need to move beyond gendered notions of power to include values like gender equality and equity into our work with abused women; we need to define what an empowered sense of power would look like for women and for men.

Patriarchy – Patriarchy is about the social relations of power between men and women and informs our work in deep ways. It is a system for maintaining class and/or gender privilege and the status quo of power. It relies both on crude mechanisms like oppression and subtle ones like the law. Although patriarchy is mostly about oppressing women, it is also about controlling men. The "rule of thumb" is a good example: it gave men legal permission to batter their wife; but by stipulating that wifebeaters could only use a stick no thicker than their thumb; it served as a way of controlling the extent of men's violence. In other words, you could beat your wife but you could not brutalize her. So male violence was legitimized, yet controlled by the

patriarchal structures of society. Patriarchy is thus an enforcer of traditional gender and class relations, and the most significant contributor to sexism and misogyny.

Culture – "Culture" is used by our communities to explain and justify domestic violence; and although "cultural freeze" as a result of immigration is common, we are typically encountering male-defined, frozen ideas of culture. Cultural defense claims then sound something like this: "People in my [Asian] culture behave this way, or believe women should be treated this way, so it's alright for me to do so". Supposedly these claims are defending the culture of Azerbaijan, or China, or Indonesia, or Vietnam, etc. But what is in fact being defended is the culture of patriarchy in Azerbaijan, China, Indonesia and so on. In other words, it is not the culture of a place/country that is being defended but the culture of patriarchy in that place; and the more rigidly it is maintained, the less space there is to push against it. (The next panel will address this subject in great depth.)

Feminism – The pithy wisdom of the bumper sticker will have to suffice: feminism is the radical notion that women are human beings. Feminism also is about understanding women's resistance to sexism and misogyny: how they use the power that is available to them; how they claim space where they can; how they build alliances; how they engage in acts of subversion and rebellion; how they ask others to bear witness to their pain. Feminism is met with strong backlash: evidence that women's equality and gender equity are considered radical and threatening.

Innovative Strategies: Themes & Questions

Ву Мімі Кім

sian and Pacific Islander domestic violence intervention strategies within the U.S. have arisen both as accommodations and alternatives to mainstream domestic violence programs. They have crafted innovations based upon necessity and, in some cases, vision and intentionality. To capture this information, the Institute has published a report entitled: Innovative Strategies to Address Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities: Emerging Themes, Models and Interventions.

Emerging themes as discussed by the API women interviewed for this report highlight a number of areas that capture our attention for further exploration. While the findings of this report bring up broad, diverse and, at times, contradictory policies and practices among API programs, the following categories summarize the themes.

Where We Start: Viewing the Survivor within the Context of Her Community

API programs were started with API communities and API survivors of domestic violence in mind. Even those programs that began as community education projects inevitably came into contact with survivors, abusers and witnesses of domestic violence who needed interventions. Safe access, effective interventions and expanding options became concerns for any API individual or organization addressing the issue of domestic violence.

Although the "helper" versus "client" or "us" versus "them" separation appears to characterize many API domestic violence programs, the divisions become less clear as workers and survivors in small ethnic enclaves in the U.S. often share the same cultures, languages, and even neighborhoods and families.

The importance of community and the complexities of community as a place of abuse and entrapment as well as familiarity and resources has led to innovative approaches to interventions and options.

Reshaping Intervention: Expanding Options

While the creation of API shelters has greatly expanded the options for API survivors of domestic violence, API intervention responses have created a variety of innovative strategies which de-center shelters as the primary intervention.

The importance of community as an emotional and material resource has shaped these interventions. Furthermore, the lack of access to resources for immigrant communities can make financial, educational and employment interventions at least as significant as those traditionally offered by domestic violence programs such as emergency shelter or restraining orders. In some cases the latter option may have a negative impact.

Community-based non-shelter programs often provide a complement of options for women who do not desire shelter, who may be unable to access shelters, or who may not be ready for shelter. Options may still follow standardized approaches such as legal advocacy or public assistance advocacy. Programs have developed innovative approaches for women regardless of their choice in terms of leaving or not leaving abusive relationships.

Intervention Approaches: Family-Style

Many API programs view their intervention approaches as "family-style." Despite the negative connotations of "family" within the context of domestic violence, API programs have embraced positive aspects of "family" to imply a greater level of intimacy and care in their interactions with survivors.

Generalist approaches are favored over rigidly defined roles and areas of expertise. Greater flexibility in terms of time, level of accompaniment and advocacy, and distribution of resources also characterize many API interventions. In some cases, boundaries around personal disclosure, gift giving and receiving, and social contact may be more fluid.

At the Edge of Safety: Redefining Survivor/Abuser Boundaries

The conceptualization of the survivor within the context of her community and the expansion of options to reach her where she's at has also pushed the edge of safety for API intervention efforts. Interventions reaching not only into the community, but also into the home have led to the questioning of mainstream boundaries between danger and safety, abuser and survivor.

While many API programs have accepted mainstream notions of safety and interventions which explicitly separate survivor from abuser, some are exploring options which transcend these lines, combining traditional programmatic approaches of batterer treatment and survivor support with complementary programs which include both survivor and abuser.

Community Accountability for Abusers

Community accountability for abusers as a complement or alternative to the criminal legal system is an area of great promise as well as challenge. Community accountability strategies may be contained within formalized community-based organizations. Or they may be led by community-based domestic violence organizations with the collaboration of community individuals, families, leaders or other institutions or organizations. Many instances of community accountability take place outside of formal domestic violence interventions. For example, family threats towards and confrontation of abusers have continued historically outside of formal legal structures and inside socio-familial ones. Some communities have meted out remedies through recognized structures of authority such as clan leaders.

Community Organizing

Many API domestic violence programs have rejected conventional servicedelivery models for approaches that actively engage the community. While community contact has been key to many programs, the levels of community participation have varied.

Redefining Domestic Violence

Effective domestic violence interventions require expanded definitions of domestic violence. Participants in relationships of violence may extend beyond an individual survivor and individual abuser. Extended members of the family, community members, and community institutions can be directly and actively involved in dynamics of abuse. Furthermore, relations of power and abuse such as racism, classism, homophobia, and imperialism intersect with gender oppression and sexism in ways that need further exploration.

Redefining the Vision

Visions guiding our work shift with experience, evaluation of results, and responses to changing conditions. Many API programs have adopted mission statements, which claim goals such as ending domestic violence, increasing survivor safety, increasing independence, and promoting women's self-determination. Practices may or may not concur with such stated goals. In this report, no consensus emerged regarding a vision that most effectively captures the overall spirit and everyday motivations for our work. However, questions regarding the relevance and effectiveness of previously established assumptions and goals revealed the need to reflect collectively and redefine the vision for individual organizations and for the movement.

Other Areas of Innovation

These definitions of innovative strategies are based upon the anecdotes and reflections of ten API advocates and activists. While common themes emerged, each individual lent a unique area of concern and enthusiasm.

Organization of a Pan-Asian Response

Organizations represented by these respondents reflected a broad range of local or regional responses to diverse pan-Asian or broader immigrant and refugee domestic violence communities and needs. Some were able to create ethnic specific or pan-Asian domestic violence programs. Others required more creative collaborative efforts due to scarce resources or to perceived efficacy.

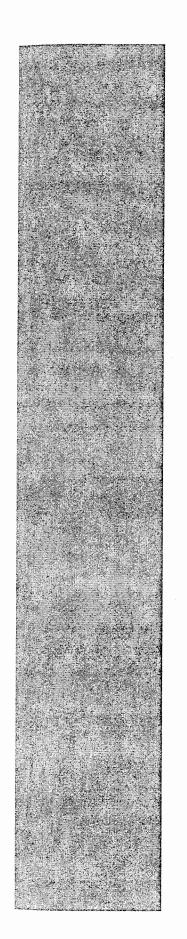
Children in API Domestic Violence Interventions

The issue of children and youth in the API domestic violence movement and in domestic violence interventions remains largely invisible in this report. It thus remains the task of the API Innovative Strategies Project to prioritize the documentation of existing work in supporting the health and safety of our children and youth. It must also address the gaps, which this absence implies.

API Men in Anti-Domestic Violence Movement

The issue of men's participation in the API anti-violence movement and in domestic violence interventions was raised by respondents. Some API programs include men as clients, allies, and active members. Participation of men may be, in some cases, formally structured and proscribed. The role of men remains an area of contention in the anti-domestic violence movement, in general, and is not unique to the API community.

Mimi Kim serves on the Steering Committee of the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence. She is actively involved in domestic violence issues affecting Korean women.



Domestic Violence and Cultures of Patriarchy

PANEL II

JUNE **28**, **2002**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CULTURES OF PATRIARCHY

INTRODUCTION

allika Dutt showed her award-winning music video Mann Ke Manjeere (Rhythms of the Mind) and linked anti-violence struggles to a human rights framework. Sujata Warrier elaborated on traditional and contemporary views of culture, questioning who defines "culture" and justifies its practices. Val Kalei Kanuha stripped away the claims that colonization is to blame for domestic violence and strengthened her argument by drawing parallels between the strategies of colonizers and those used by men to justify violence against women. Leti Volpp analyzed the use of the "cultural defense" in the community and in the courts by raising questions about our role in spreading notions of culture and negotiating between sexism and racism. The panelists presented ideas for examination and critique, to be viewed in their complicated forms, to be contested, and used as points of discussion.

PRESENTERS

Building Human Rights Through Popular Culture: Mallika Dutt Culture: What It Is, Who Owns It, Claims It, Changes It: Sujata Warrier Colonization and Violence Against Women: Val Kalei Kanuha Cultural Defenses in the Criminal Legal System: Leti Volpp

BUILDING HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH POPULAR CULTURE

By Mallika Dutt

ann ke Manjeere (Rhythms of the Mind) is an award winning music video produced by Breakthrough. It narrates the exuberant journey of a woman who flees her abusive husband and becomes a truck driver. Women of all ages and backgrounds get a ride on this truck: dancing and rejoicing as they traverse an arid desert.

Breakthrough is an international group that seeks to raise awareness about human rights through popular culture and education. We believe that it is very important to reach out to a general public and begin a dialogue about violence against women and human rights. For example, by raising the issues of domestic violence through a music album and music videos, Breakthrough is able to reach millions of people across South Asia and other parts of the world. The video, *Mann ke Manjeere*, was nominated for an MTV award and won the national screen award in India.

What has been particularly heartening is the realization that music videos speak a universal language. Just as we have always insisted that violence against women is a global phenomenon that has culturally specific manifestations, we have found that the music video, although located in an Indian context, appeals to a global audience.

We have linked the media product to our website,³ and we use the videos to conduct workshops on violence against women. In fact, groups around the world are using the videos for public education around domestic violence, women's access to non-traditional occupations and public space.

At Breakthrough violence against women is a human rights issue; and for us, human rights are fundamentally about values of dignity, equality, and non-discrimination. Human rights provide a universal framework about justice and equality: violence against women is one of the areas where one of the worst violations of these rights occur. With *Mann ke Manjeere*, we ask women to understand human rights not simply as a list of violations, but more importantly as a vision of where women want to go. Breakthrough is ultimately about building a human rights culture – a culture where respect for one another, the ability to live with dignity, food, shelter, and freedom from violence and discrimination is the ultimate goal.

In the anti-violence movement, we have often focused on the single issue of domestic violence without understanding its broader connections to social and

³ www.breakthrough.tv

economic issues, to class, religion and geography. We also tend to focus on providing better services to battered women rather than engaging in community education to end violence. We hope that a human rights perspective will help connect our anti-violence struggle to a larger movement for social justice.

MALLIKA DUTT is the Executive Director of Breakthrough, an international group that seeks to raise awareness about human rights and violence against women through popular culture and education.

Culture: What It Is, Who Owns It, Claims It, Changes It

By Sujata Warrier

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE

The term "culture" and culture itself have been studied for several centuries. Much of what we understand of the term comes from the formulations of Western colonialists and the participation of colonized people in accepting these formulations. As a result, we have come to understand cultures to be very stable patterns of beliefs, thoughts, traditions, values, and the things that are handed down from one generation to the next to ensure the continuity of these systems.

This understanding of culture has served the very purpose of the colonizers to "civilize" the "natives". Colonial empires relied on distinctions about "the other" as did local cultures to justify the processes of marginalization and inclusion, in order to maintain political and social power. An example of colluding with colonial claims of the differences of the "other" was the Indian response – "yes we are different, we are spiritual. The East is more spiritual than the West, therefore we are better than you."

Such reasoning does not get at what actually transpires in particular cultures, and permeates the ways in which we talk about culture. Often when we are invited to talk about who we are and what cultures we represent, the same collusion can be found behind the ways in which we understand who we are. We fail to look at the fact that cultures are not just about stable patterns that are handed down from one generation to the other. When you look at and study different groups of people, what you see are ways in which these traditions actually shift and change under changing social and political landscapes. So when we talk about culture, we are not really talking about stable patterns. We are actually talking about ways in which our experience(s) shape our commonalities. For example, my Indian ethnicity is not the only thing that differentiates me and I include the way my religion does or does not shape me; the class that I come from; my age; my immigration status; if I am disabled or not; my sexual orientation, etc.

Understanding culture requires looking at how all these things come together and connect, not just for individuals but also for groups of people. There are times when I share my Indian characteristics or South Asian characteristics; however, I also share characteristics with other people either because of my class, or because of my religion, or if I am anti-religion, or through other means and other formulations. We must understand that these are not very stable things but rather they constantly shift and change and our experiences and commonalities also shift and change. Culture is inclusive of all of these things. It is not just about ethnicity.

Often in our conversations, assumptions are made, for example, that as Chinese Americans and as South Asians we have much in common. Well, we do and we do not because there are numerous inter-ethnic diversities that make us different. Sometimes we do not recognize our diversities or we do not talk about them and how they can lead to contests within cultures. There are no clear-cut boundaries. Most boundaries are permeable and as Uma Narayan states there is no such thing as a "packaged picture of culture".

Most of us have been asked to present what domestic violence looks like in a particular Asian community. We get up and give a nice list of what it looks like. We give people lists of what they can do if they have encountered a Chinese woman, or a Korean woman, or a Cambodian woman; and we go away feeling pleased. These are the rainbow-colored panels that we have all been a part of. That is not to say that these lists do not have some value. But we must critique our presentations, examine *our* assumptions, and not connect back into a totalizing notion of culture. These totalizing notions of culture are in fact idealized pictures of our traditions; and as we know, traditions have both nurturing as well as oppressive elements.

It is important to shift our understanding away from totalizing culture to illustrating its diversity, contradictions, contrasts, ambiguities, and the interconnections between various internal systems that structure power.

Cultural Positions

The kind of cultural definitions we have been using puts us all in very problematic positions. Uma Narayan,⁴ a Professor of Philosophy at Vassar College, outlines the different cultural roles that we often occupy. I will outline them here so we can see the ways in which we have all occupied each of these positions:

The Emissary Position – This position proclaims how wonderful each of our cultures and its traditions are. These claims are designed to counter either totalizing (how people lived, ate, thought, dressed, etc.) or negative (e.g., the status of women – issues such as veiling, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, etc.) characterizations of culture by Western colonialists. The emissary position surfaces more so with migration; as immigrant communities hang on to cultural practices and traditions to preserve identity and resist homogenization. This portrayal denies the realities of oppression, of class and/or gender differences, how power is structured, and how privilege is conferred.

The Mirror Position – This position also facilitates "Westerners" taking an interest in "our culture". Here, we try to take how the West has looked at us, then turn it around and say, "Let's look at how they are and show that they are a mirror image of what we are." The most common example of this position is to claim that "this is the way most cultures operate, and you have the same forms of violence after all." So, by pointing to the mirror image we become inadvertently trapped within the

⁴ Narayan, Uma 1977. Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions and Third World Feminisms. New York: Routledge. 121-157

Western gaze; a defensive protectiveness of our own culture that inhibits discussions about what is happening within our communities. This differs from the previous position in that while the former is laudatory, this provides the mechanism to sustain and provide confirmation on the global predations of the West.

The Authentic Insider – Finally, in this position, we can claim knowledge about our culture, offer explanations, critique traditions, and engage in struggles for change. While this position has merit, it is problematic when there is no reflection. For example, who invites us in as an authentic insider and for what purposes? Where are we seen as authentic insiders? Are we crafting and defining policies, say on child welfare, or are we just commenting on API perspectives? We are asked to come in and fit into a picture that already exists rather than being invited to shift the picture and to engage in a dialog that examines the ways in which violence against women may be expressed in different communities. Furthermore, it is often a single voice that is representative of a diverse whole. The contradictions, conflicts, disagreements in our cultures are not allowed to surface because there is no space in which to discuss these differences. "We" then appear monolithic and seamless. Additionally, limits are also placed on what we can talk about. For example, when called to a meeting on child welfare we are only asked to talk about Asian and Pacific Islander issues and any critique or reflection of the child welfare system as a whole is understood to be outside the bounds of what we have been invited to speak on. The other difficulty with this position is that we are invited to introduce and enhance the notion of "difference" which means that we have to be a "true native" and fit into the picture of "difference" that already exists.

CONCLUSION

I am not pointing this out to say that all of these positions are bad. Instead, to show that we have all occupied them. Sometimes we have even praised traditions in our own communities that we know are detrimental to women because we are put in particular positions or there is a particular reason why we are doing what we are doing. What is important is to understand is why we are presenting a particular picture of culture in a certain way; to what audience; for what purpose; and to know what the ways are in which these three positions connect with each other.

I want to end with a quote by Himani Bannerji⁵ in her book *Returning the Gaze* "The struggle is for a fundamental change in social relationships rather than a per community quota for representation in the parliament of racism and ethnicity. We are engaged in politics – linking theory to practice, examining ideologies through our lives, and our own lives through revolutionary ideas. We are not shopping in the market of cultural differences."

Sujata Warrier is the Director of the Health Care Bureau, State of New York Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence.

⁵ Bannerji, Himani. 1993. Returning the Gaze: An Introduction. Toronto: Sister Vision

COLONIZATION AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

By Val Kalei Kanuha

COLONIZATION OF NATIONS AND SOCIETIES

It was not until the very end of the 20th century that then President Bill Clinton apologized to the Hawaiian people, but given the damage that has been done, it was a little late. My comments are based on my understanding of the institution of colonization as it has occurred in the Hawaiian nation and in the Hawaiian Islands. Most of us, especially as Asians and Pacific Islanders, have experienced or know about the effects of colonization in our countries of origin. In this discussion of colonization, I would like us to think in terms of the domination of a particular nation, community, society or peoples by a foreign or outside nation, society, force or country. To have been colonized is to have been dominated, to have been taken over systematically, institutionally, historically, and politically as a nation of people by another nation of people, usually from the outside but not always.

Let us examine what happens culturally in a colonized nation. Local people are romanticized: this was especially true of Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, seen as inhabitants of a tropical "hula" nation. Women are exoticized: the colonizer's gaze is directed at local women rendering them into solely beautiful, sexual beings. These constructions are applied then to the entire place, resulting in the feminization of a country. This is what happened to our people. Colonizers portrayed our entire country as a stereotypical Pacific Islander woman: bare breasted, feeding men, having sex with them, etc., and overlooking how everyday life was lived by men and women, in order to privilege notions of native women acting in the service of foreign colonizing men.

In our own cultures, pre-colonial life is idealized, and its disruption blamed as a cause of violence against women. We cannot agree to the notion that our colonized countries were mythically ideal until the bad invaders came in from the outside. We, meaning the anti-domestic violence movement, have to reject the explanation of colonial history as the cause of violence against women. To accept it is to admit we have become part of the colonized mind. Furthermore, we cannot characterize all colonizers as "Westerners". I am part Japanese American and we know that the Japanese certainly have a history of colonization, reminding us that many of our own people, not just Westerners, or Europeans, or white people, are colonizers.

MYTHS ABOUT ASIAN AND PACIFIC CULTURES

We all know the myths and stories that are told about what our societies were like before the big bad colonizers came in. We need to challenge whether or not these claims are made to justify violence against women. Is it really true that we were all peaceful, loving people until the colonizers came upon us? I don't think so. Who then is going to take the lead in casting a serious critical gaze at this question and

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challenging the usual answers? It has to be done by us because we do not want people from the outside to come in and say to us: "You know what, you guys have just as many problems as the rest of us; so don't use this colonization excuse to say you were all perfect until we came along and colonized you." So, let us then embark on our critique by examining myths that idealize our cultures.

The first myth is that many of our cultures were matrilineal and therefore, before colonization, all of us respected, loved and had a very important place for women in our society. There is a simple retort to that. Just because a society is matrilineal does not mean it is not patriarchal. Matrilineal structures decide only how inheritance rights, land and other forms of wealth are passed on within the family. They do not say anything about who really controls the status of those women's positions in inheritance, in history, and in politics. By saying we are matrilineal, we are somehow equating it with being a society that reveres women, and places them above men. If you really think about it, many of our societies are matrilineal; however, many of our societies are still very oppressive to women and have always been so.

The second myth is that we did not have domestic violence, or violence against women, until we were colonized. If you listen to the stories that many advocates and others talk about today concerning the different forms of violence against women that occur in our society, my guess is you will find that many of these forms of gender violence existed before outsiders came into our societies. If we look at our old texts, our legends, our own myths, histories, our writings, our art forms, and music, you will find them filled with oppressive denigrating images of violence against women – images that pre-date any kind of contact from the outside. It is hard to argue that most societies were just wonderful toward women before they were colonized.

The third myth is that colonization is at the root of violence against women and in a hierarchy of oppressions, colonization is the most important form of oppression. Furthermore, that sexism, classism, homophobia and other kinds of oppression are not as critical or as harmful as the oppression of colonization. This third myth claims that the most important kind of oppression is colonization for us as people of color. There is another simple retort to this point. If, in fact, we believe that colonization really is at the root of violence, how then do we explain that colonized women are not violent against men since all of us were, after all, colonized together? Why are there still a disproportionate number of men of color – men in our communities – who are violent against our women? Hawaiian women were dragged to the docks to serve British soldiers and sailors and all the whaling ships that came into our ports. Women were victims of colonization. But, Hawaiian women do not abuse Hawaiian men at the same rate that they [Hawaiian men] abuse us. Perhaps we can say that colonization had different effects on women versus men but that is not an adequate explanation for men's violence against women.

COLONIZATION AND PATRIARCHY

Geraldine Moane, an Irish political scientist and sociologist who writes on gender and colonization,⁶ points out that systems of oppression and domination that

⁶ Moane, Geraldine (1966). *Gender and colonialism: A psychological analysis of oppression and liberation*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

colonize states, nations and people are identical to the strategies men use to dominate women. Here are a few examples.

The first one is the strategy of claiming ethno-cultural superiority, historically used by colonizers to justify domination because their intelligence, their gods, their way of life and rationality was superior. This strategy has really done a good job of keeping us in our place. Male superiority is used in exactly the same way. Men's ways of thinking; men's ways of knowing; men's drive toward autonomy versus women's wimpy ways of wanting to be in relationships – these ways of 'superiority' are what men use to oppress women.

The second strategy of colonization is differentiating "the other". One of the ways colonizers keep us in our place is to say they are the center of the universe and all the rest of us as people of color are "the other". If you think about what happens with women and men, you will see that men use this very notion of women as "the other" to keep women marginalized and to keep themselves at the center.

A third strategy of colonization is the use of all forms of violence – physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual – by the colonizer against the colonized. Many of us were, and some still are, forbidden to use our native languages; told not to pray in a certain way; told not to study; and told not to be in families in a certain way. These are ways that colonizers kept families separated from themselves, from other families, and from their cultures. Here again, we see the parallels of male domination through multiple forms of violence against women.

A fourth strategy is the seizure and control of economic resources. The taking of land – a very important part of who we are as a people – the using of land, and the misuse of land and natural resources by the colonizers is one of the ways in which the colonizers remove our people from the things that are most sacred to them. So, economic exploitation and capital accumulation go hand in hand. Historically, in Hawai'i, we did not understand the notion of land ownership: we lived on the land but we did not own it; we did not think it should be owned. So Hawaiians, like other colonized peoples, lost their lands. Similarly, abusive men control women's economic resources and constrain them from access to their social and familial resources. Women, too, may unwittingly give up their wealth, or their familial and community ties because they miscalculate the importance of holding on to them.

A fifth strategy is the control of culture – it involves patrolling the boundaries of the colonialists' culture and defining what is acceptable/exotic about the invaded culture. The same thing happens for us as women. Men control almost all the images of women in the media, the ways that we learn about ourselves through education, culture or politics. Our culture is dominated by male images of women and male images of what a society is supposed to be.

The last strategy is the exclusion of native people from access to power. For many of us as Asians and Pacific Islanders and for many of us as people of color, we know who occupies the leadership and positions of power. It is usually not us. If you look at what happens in relationships between men and women and who is in power, it is mainly men and not women.

These notions and strategies of colonial domination are used by patriarchy to continue male dominance over women. We need to counter claims that

colonization has led to violence against women, by pointing out that there is in fact a tight connection between colonization and patriarchy. Some would even say that you could not have colonization without patriarchy. Who after all were the colonizers? They were mostly men (that is not to say women cannot be colonizers). The institutions of colonization rely on political power, access to resources, strategies of oppression and mobility – all the things men seem to have. Therefore, we cannot say it is because of what white people have done to us that there is violence against women in our cultures. Patriarchy and colonization go hand in hand and it is this nexus that keeps the structures of gender violence so well entrenched.

CONCLUSION

As I look around at the audience, I see it is composed primarily of women and it occurs to me that most of us are not excusing male violence because of colonization. In fact, it is the men in our communities who use this argument in their own defense: because they cannot, or will not, or feel threatened about, taking responsibility for their violence against women. So, they resort to blaming the white colonizers. We must take a strong and active position and not allow that analysis to dominate. We must resist the ways that our own communities – led largely by men – force us to silence, hurt, oppress, and disrespect the voices of women we live and work with; and all of our mothers who came before us; and all of our children who will come after us. It is up to us to push against the notion that colonization is at the root of violence against women, it is up to us to ensure that women's suffering, struggles and strengths are not dishonored.

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Cultural Defenses in the Criminal Legal System

By Leti Volpp

eti Volpp opened her address by crediting a study group at Asian Women's Shelter, San Francisco in 1992 that developed her ideas on the concept of the "cultural defense", as did further discussions with individuals at the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence. Her remarks focus on the legal system, which presents us with very stark choices about how to talk and think about culture; forces us to examine our interactions with the legal system; and our roles in purveying, disseminating and spreading different visions of what we think of as culture.

CULTURE AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM

The context in which many of us may have interacted with the legal system around the question of culture may have to do with questions of child welfare and with immigration. For example, we may have filled out affidavits on behalf of battered women concerning cancellation or removal. We may have helped with visa petitions. Affidavits may have been written for women who are seeking gender based asylum or asylum for other reasons. Affidavits also may have been written on behalf of women fleeing persecution in other countries. We also are interacting with the legal system around criminal cases and cases involving inter-personal violence.

There are two main types of cases where questions of culture have emerged around inter-personal violence: (1) The first type involves male violence against women – when a man kills, rapes or assaults a woman. (2) The second type involves attempted parent-child suicide – where a mother kills or tries to kill her children and then is unsuccessful in actually killing herself. It becomes attempted parent-child homicide when the mother survives and she is prosecuted for either killing or attempting to kill her children.

What occurs in both types of cases is that criminal charges are brought and the defendant then tries to use culture to explain his or her behavior and says, "I should be treated more leniently. Consider what was going on in my head when I committed these acts. There is something about my cultural background that had an influence on my behavior." Advocates against allowing cultural defenses say the acts are completely inexcusable and they do not want to let any information into the courtroom that would call this behavior cultural. They want to ban culture from the courtroom and not have any consideration of culture there.

These questions are actually more complicated than such an analysis suggests. Basically, our legal system provides particular rights for criminal defendants. For example, someone who is facing an indictment and possibly will be convicted of a

particular crime is provided with an attorney by the government at no cost to the defendant. This is very different, for example, from the immigration system where, if you appear in immigration court, you have to pay for your own attorney. The rationale for this is that the consequences of being a criminal defendant are so severe that we want to try and provide some protection for people. (We could argue that deportation is a very severe consequence but there are a lot of bad laws that say deportation is not punishment so you do not get a free attorney.) Another of the rights you get as a criminal defendant aside from an attorney provided by the state is the right to admit evidence in your defense that is considered relevant - meaning information that is potentially useful. So long as information is relevant – its probative value outweighs its prejudicial effect and does not have the tendency to mislead the jury – it will be admitted as evidence. The threshold for admitting evidence into a case is very low. One kind of evidence that can be admitted into a criminal case is the defendant's beliefs and values that influenced his or her behavior, when his or her mental state is at issue in the case. Legal arguments that incorporate the defendant's beliefs and values in this manner are referred to as cultural defenses (it is more accurate to talk about cultural defenses as opposed to a single cultural defense).

CULTURAL EVIDENCE IN THE COURTROOM

Some people have argued that keeping cultural evidence from entering a criminal case is problematic because it discriminates against people of color. For example, if mainstream culture is already present in the courtroom and it is invisible in the ways that we have talked about, if we do not let cultural evidence into the courtroom, it could be considered racial discrimination. The system is set up so there are basically three parties that are potential lever points, who play roles in these cases:

- (1) The first are defense attorneys who represent the defendant and who are ethically mandated to represent their clients zealously. They are supposed to do everything they can to get their client a better deal or to get them less time in prison. Generally the culture of criminal defense attorneys is that they do not focus on the broader questions that we are struggling with. Their sole ethical obligation is to one person. Community groups and people who work with battered women may have more leverage with the other two parties, namely prosecutors and judges. (Although there are cases where we may work more closely with a defense attorney when the case involves a defendant we are actually trying to assist, for example, in a parent-child suicide case.)
- (2) In terms of judges, there is a lot of work that people have already done about of their education. Once evidence is admitted as relevant, which is often in the form of expert testimony, the judge has to decide how much weight to give to the testimony. The Family Violence Prevention Fund has put out a book called *Cultural Considerations in Cases of Domestic Violence*, which was specifically written for judges to help them think about questions raised here.
- (3) Lastly, there are prosecutors, the individuals who are working for the state and who are prosecuting crimes. We have an important role in educating them, through our serving as experts and in pressuring them to rebut the problematic way that defense attorneys are presenting depictions of culture. For example, if a defense attorney is presenting a story where an individual said: "My culture made me do this because I come from 'X' culture and everybody knows that 'X' culture condones domestic violence", it is very important for prosecutors to

step in and say: "Here I have an expert from 'X' women's shelter who is asserting that in the 'X' community there is in fact a lot of opposition to these practices as manifested by the very existence of the shelter".

CULTURAL DEFENSES

Cultural defenses have been used in the two kinds of cases I mentioned, and there has been a lot of publicity around a handful of cases the media has chosen to cover. They are very interesting to the public and we have a situation where politically expedient stereotypes of culture have been forwarded by attorneys on behalf of defendants, which play into already existing notions of how barbaric are a lot of the cultures from which we come. Perhaps the most notorious case of this sort took place in New York City in 1987 when a Chinese immigrant beat his wife to death with a claw hammer. His attorney put on the stand a professor from Hunter College, named Burton Pasternak, who testified that because the defendant, Dong Lu Chen, thought his wife was having an affair, it was not surprising that he would react in this way because a Chinese man would react in a more volatile way than an average, meaning white, American. Parenthetically, we do not know if it is true if the wife was having an affair because we only know the facts from the husband. The judge, presumably attempting to be sensitive, sentenced the defendant only to probation. The prosecutor only weakly tried to dispute the evidence and failed to provide any rebuttal testimony by an expert who could have contested the idea that this was an accurate representation of Chinese culture.

The second kind of case, involves a Sikh woman from India, Narinder Virk, who tried to drown her two children and herself a couple of years ago. She is being tried right now (June 2002) in Ventura County, California. The previous attorney who represented her spoke with the media a couple of years ago when she was first arrested. The description of what that attorney planned to present was quite stark where basically she said that the defense theory she would use is to show Narinder Virk is from a culture that values complete subordination of women, as evidenced by arranged marriages, dowry deaths, bride burnings, and female infanticide, and that Virk's culture drove her to madness.⁷

Issues of Cultural Stereotypes

This raises some difficult questions for us. What do we do about this? What do we do about the descriptions that get invoked in these two different kinds of cases? I would ask us to think about what we want to accomplish in these situations and I want to present five issues that we might think about in considering these questions.

The first issue we face is the strong tension between helping an individual person and the broader effects of employing stereotypes. That is very apparent in the Virk case, as the information was depicted by the media two years ago. In other words, we might decide we actually want to use stereotypes on behalf of an individual. But we should think about what the effects will be. There may be women like Narinder Virk

⁷ In September 2002, Narinder Virk was found guilty of attempted murder but legally insane at the time of the crime, sparing her a prison sentence. Jurors interviewed in the press reported that the testimony of experts, including cultural evidence, was persuasive.

in the context of an apparent child suicide case that we want to help. Also there may be cases where we are actually writing affidavits to explain why a woman is trying to leave a particular situation. We may argue, for example, that she is fleeing certain cultural traditions in her home country in the context of an asylum case. We also may argue that somebody did not flee her situation because she is passive, and because she comes from a particular culture. We may argue that she behaved in a way that seems irrational, but she did so because she comes from this particular culture. These are interesting and troubling questions concerning the role of culture in explaining acts that are shaped by historical ideas about culture and humanity in the United States and Europe. The idea of what it means to be human developed largely around the idea of people who had the capacity to reason; who could think rationally; or with the development of psychoanalysis, if you did not act rationally, it was because you had a psychological problem. However, there is an assertion that there is a whole other group of people in the world, who if they do not act rationally do so because of their culture.

What do we do then if we want to help an individual woman? Do we want to say that her "horrific, barbaric" culture that condones these practices from which she has absolutely no escape, led to these bad acts or led to her being trapped, or led to her not fleeing? Are we using racism to get rid of sexism? Is there a way in which we are relying on certain kinds of problematic descriptions that buy into already existing preconceptions about our communities to help individual women? We know there are broader stereotypes out there and that is why we think they work and that is why we might use them. We need to consider these implications.

The second issue is that even if we decide it is worth it to stereotype in order to help a particular woman, we should consider that it might mean we are actually creating frozen descriptions of what a woman from a particular culture is, and therefore, other women who come along may not benefit from those frozen descriptions. Let me give three examples: (a) There are women in the criminal context who have not be able to get access to cultural evidence because the judge says, "Well, only traditional people who have traditional beliefs, which are "X", "Y" and "Z", should be able to use this cultural information to explain their behavior. (b) Do the affidavits written on behalf of South Asian women that describe them in terms of being passive, victims, helpless, and virginal before marriage, come to bite us in the back in the context of a spate of cases of South Asian woman who have murdered their partners?⁸ Is the fact that they are considered so unlike this prevalent stereotype of the South Asian woman involved in their getting severe punishment? (c) A third example is to look at women who fit assumptions about what a bad woman is, who may not get access to cultural evidence. If we create these frozen notions of what someone is so they can get access to cultural evidence, we may be creating difficulties for ourselves. Part of the problem is that the legal system really likes fixed categories. They want to slot people into something and they do not like things that are contextual and complicated. We may have assisted in creating a system where the focus sometimes becomes more on someone's identity than on their acts.

The third issue concerns whether it is ever correct to use stereotypes on behalf of a woman. When we use cultural terms to explain a particular individual's behavior,

⁸ Shamita Das Dasgupta was credited with providing this example.

what falls out of the picture? We know how culture is popularly conceived for people of color, for Asian Americans, for Asians, for Pacific Islanders. Mainstream culture is considered invisible unless it is "high culture" (like opera) or "civilized culture", in contrast to minority communities that are presumed to be motivated by cultural dictates. As Sujata Warrier said, culture is thought of as a series of homogenous, unchanging practices that have gone on for millennia. We are all familiar with the claims of what 'X' Asian culture is about, even though when one speaks of Asia, we are not talking about a single nation but a huge region with 50 percent of the world's population. Asian culture is "X" and Pacific Islander culture is "Y". These massive generalizations do not even begin to deal with internal contradictions, nor with the different ways people are located within communities, and how this shapes their experiences. Culture for Asians and Pacific Islanders also is talked about in terms of rituals, traditions and practices - very anthropological terms that suggest we are always objects of anthropological study. If culture is not seen as unchanging rituals, traditions and practices that have been handed down for millennia, what might we instead see? Here are some examples of stereotypes: (a) She comes from a passive culture; she did not call the police. What is missing from this portrayal? It could be that the police do not speak her language; or she has witnessed police brutality; or she knows that the police do not pick up people from her community. She could know that the police are racist against people from her community; or her partner is a police officer. There are certain ways in which we may make assumptions about why somebody did something if we rely on certain kinds of notions of culture. (b) A second example: Asian American and Pacific Islander women face cultural barriers in accessing services. What falls out in this description? Mainstream shelters may not provide culturally appropriate services; they may not have people who speak various languages; they may not have staff with Asian or Pacific Islander backgrounds; and their materials may not be translated into Asian languages. What falls out when we use these certain very limited notions of culture is the power system that is involved. Power affects the ways that, as minority communities within a mainstream community, our existences in this country are shaped by the latter.

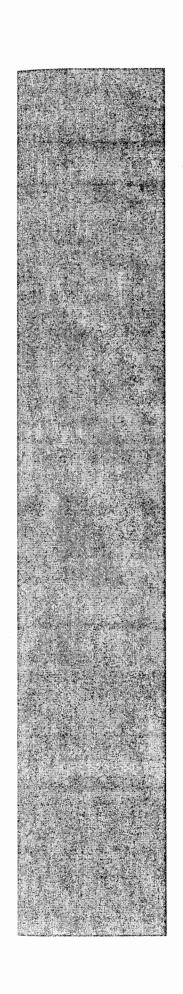
These ideas about rituals, traditions, practices, etc. are an incomplete way of describing what influences a woman's life. Because these stereotypes are so dominant, other factors become invisible. The problem is this reduces the possibility for social change. If you think of something like violence as the effect of time honored practices within communities or the reason that someone cannot access services is because she comes from a culture that has been passive for generations, the solutions that you look for are going to be limited. The notion of culture becomes de-politicized when stripped of its economic and political implications. It is necessary to assert the economic and political realities of racial and gendered power when talking about culture.

The fourth issue is: What narratives or descriptions about culture work? What do people believe? What has traction? This is germane to the Narinder Virk case where Inderpal Grewal is supposed to testify as an expert witness to assist the defense. We were struggling with the question concerning what kinds of information should Grewal provide: should she try to explain why Narinder Virk did this; and how to conceptualize it. What if Grewal says Narinder Virk was very marginalized; she spoke no English; she was starving; she was dumpster diving; for six months of the year there was no support by the state or by the community or by her family for her or her children. Her family owed his family money. She felt she could not return to India.

Her husband was a police officer. Her husband was with other women. She had nowhere to turn and that is why she felt like she had to do this. There also is the question of what the attorney was asking Grewal to testify about: that in India they have arranged marriages and dowry deaths. Given that the Virk family is a traditional Indian family; a traditional Punjabi family; and a traditional Sikh family, they expect complete female subservience. Part of what we are struggling with is that we are reinforcing popular stereotypes, which actually will work in Virk's defense. If this is what people believe explains the experience of every single Indian woman on this planet, will that actually be the winning narrative to use to help her get the better deal? We do not know what the answer is but it is a work in progress and we muddle forward.

The fifth and last issue is: What do we do about the fact that the ways that we think about cultural practices are not just mainstream assumptions, this is also how culture is talked about within our own communities? The women we work with use particular stereotypical descriptions of the cultures that we feel various affiliations with. These are descriptions that have traction, that they feel to be real. We need language to describe cultural specificity. Not all violence is the same. We use a lot of universalizing language. It is as if we are coming to the universal from our particular space. There is a particular demonstrated by the ways that violence is experienced, is practiced, and the kinds of contexts we come from. It is not identical in every particular context. There is something very specific. It is not just about ethnicity but also our class background; are we disabled; what is our immigrant status; what is the role of the state; what is our particular history; our family; etc. There must be a way that we can talk about particular experiences and deal with social practices. There must be a language that grapples with these problems. In all of this, there are no answers. We need to think about this with more consciousness and consider the ramifications of what we are doing.

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Domestic Violence Related Homicide

PANEL III

JUNE **29**, **2002**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED HOMICIDES

INTRODUCTION

hic Dabby opened the panel discussion by framing the extent of the problem and enumerating the range of killings and deaths that are conceptualized as domestic violence related homicides and the harm done to children and surviving family members. Shamita Das Dasgupta discussed how culture should not be implicated in gendered homicides and described her research on domestic violence homicides in the South Asian community. Judy Chen talked about institutional and community responses to homicides or threats of homicide; fatality reviews; understanding fatalities in the context of systems failure and community complicity; and recommended changes in systems, community responses, and advocacy strategies. Leni Marin and Debbie Lee gave examples that simultaneously emphasized community organizing and system accountability.

PRESENTERS

Who Gets Killed, and by Whom? Who Gets Harmed,
and by Whom?: Firoza Chic Dabby
Homicide, Gender, and Culture: Shamita Das Dasgupta
Lessons from API Domestic Violence Related Homicides and Suicides: Judy Chen
One Woman's Death: One Community's Response: Leni Marin
Holding Our Communities Accountable: Debbie Lee

Who Gets Killed, and by Whom? Who Gets Harmed, and by Whom?

By Firoza Chic Dabby

INTRODUCTION

he Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence decided to focus on domestic related homicides involving Asian women because we saw that Asian women were disproportionately represented in victim statistics. (We are not quite sure if this applies to Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women.) However, it is clear from the research being done on this issue that *all* women of color are disproportionately represented in the statistics. So, this issue affects all women of color.

The term domestic violence related homicide or domestic homicide refers to a wide range of killings by intimates, of their partner, children, family members, bystanders, etc. The term femicide has been suggested to denote the killing of women on account of their gender. These terms establish a connection between domestic violence and murder but they have some inadequacies. There are intimate homicides where there is no evidence, prior history, or information about domestic violence, e.g., an elderly couple's "suicide pact" could well be a homicide-suicide, and is less likely to be seen as such if there is no evidence or history of physical abuse. Then again, sometimes the abuse that precedes a homicide may not be typically seen as domestic violence e.g., being virtually imprisoned at home and forced to watch and imitate pornographic videos.

In many API communities, there is a readiness to conclude that the woman must have done something to deserve her murder. In the precedent-setting Tarasoff⁹ case, a South Asian man killed Tanya Tarasoff (she was not Asian). He had interpreted their relationship -apparently the exchange of a single kiss- as a romantic commitment. The killer's father later commented to the effect that she had deserved her fate because in his [Indian] culture, women, if they date a man, belong to him. Blaming the victim acquires another ugly twist when intimate homicide involves an interracial couple. After an Asian man killed his African American girlfriend, racist sentiments echoed the view that if he had not hung out with "one of those" this would not have happened. In many API communities, victim blaming runs deep, and when combined with racism, or homophobia, or class elitism, it runs even deeper.

⁹ This killing resulted in the Tarasoff Ruling that mandates therapists to disclose (and not hold confidential) their patients' stated threats or intentions to harm another individual. The intended victim must be notified of such threats.

WHO IS GETTING KILLED AND WHO IS DOING THE KILLING?

- Women killed by their abusers are the largest group of victims of intimate homicides. They include elderly women; lesbians; rural women; disabled women; pregnant women; sex-workers; women in the armed forces; married, divorced or separated women; professional women; immigrant, refugee or native-born women, etc. In Asian and Pacific Islander families, they could be killed by other family members with or without the consent of their partner. Fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law and mothers-in-law may participate in the killings; or the family hires someone to do the killing. Some API women have expressed their fears of being killed here in the U.S. or being sent back to their home countries and killed there.
- □ Women and men in same-sex relationships are victims of domestic violence related homicides, although such cases may be overlooked as intimate homicides.
- Suicide Pacts Many deaths in elderly couples are seen as suicide pacts or mercy killings; however, we should look carefully to see if they are domestic violence related homicides. In most of these deaths, it is the man who does the killing. If it is a botched suicide where the man does not die, then we should be particularly alert to the possibility of an intimate homicide. Elderly women in long-standing abusive marriages may be coerced into a suicide pact. The adult children of a couple dead in a suicide pact may also offer resistance to investigating the possibility of, or ruling out, homicide.
- □ *Killing her family members* API women describe threats against and/or murders of their family members in their home country, which are typically carried out or ordered by the batterer's family.
- ☐ Homicide-Suicide These can involve single or multiple homicides of an intimate partner and/or children followed by the abuser's suicide. Sometimes a "police assisted suicide" occurs where the killer forces a showdown with the police and is killed in the ensuing shootout.
- Abetted Suicides Abused women are committing suicide. Although this does not amount to homicide, they are being driven to suicidal desperation. E.g., Central Asian, Tajik brides are being tormented early in the marriage into committing suicide by self-immolation. In India, husbands and in-laws can be arrested for the felony offense of abetting a suicide. Women, who are tortured, depressed and severely isolated by batterers and by the community are ending their own lives.
- Mother-Child Suicides These cases involve mothers with long histories of severe domestic violence who attempt a joint suicide of themselves and their children. These cases differ from those where fathers kill their children and commit suicide: men typically use guns; kill their children while they are sleeping or in front of their mother; kill the partner they had been abusing; and kill themselves. Mothers in most of the cases we know about, are holding their children close to them and then jumping, mostly into water, or off a building, or using poison. What can happen in the mother-child suicide cases is that none, or one, or more of the children die, and the mother may or may not die in the suicide attempt. These mothers talk about feeling safer in jail than they did in their homes; about horrible prolonged abuse; about their deep despair; and the fear that no one would have cared for their children. One husband commented to the effect that his wife was sitting in air-conditioned comfort in the jail and "I'm left with this terrible child." As deep as a battered women's desperation may be, we do not condone mother-

child suicides. They raise difficult and problematic questions as we struggle to prevent them from happening.

- Honor Killings A woman brings dishonor to her and/or her husband's family by disobeying their wishes (regarding choice of marriage partner, trying to divorce or escape from her batterer, or stepping outside culturally prescribed gender roles). A family member kills her, or orders her killing, to restore honor to her family and her husband's family. Mothers of the slain women are often implicated in honor killings: they may arrange and give the orders for a contract killing, or participate in the killing with a male family member. Brothers, fathers and contract killers mostly carry out honor killings.
- □ *Contract Killings* A batterer or a family member hires someone to kill his partner or one of her family members.
- □ Threats against partners that parents disapprove of Women and men in our communities have reported that parents have sometimes resorted to forcing their adult children into marriage by threatening a current partner: particularly if she/he is of a different class or religion; or non-Asian; or lesbian or gay. The parents do not approve of the relationship and make death threats to end it.
- □ Children and Teen Killings Children and teens also are being killed by their father or their mother's partner in domestic violence related deaths. Some teenage girls express fear about being sent back home and possibly killed when their parents discover that they are in a relationship or are sexually active. The danger increases if they are pregnant.
- □ *New intimates* of a women get killed by her abusive ex-partner.
- □ *Batterers Killed* Batterers get killed by their female partners and sometimes by their teenage children who are trying to stop them from abusing their mothers.

HARM DONE TO SURVIVING CHILDREN

The children of a murdered battered woman can become invisible. Our advocacy and interventions need to focus on the issues that affect them, such as:

- Dealing with the grief and trauma of their mother's death;
- ☐ In a multiple homicide or a homicide-suicide, they will be dealing with grief and the traumatic loss of siblings, both parents or other family members;
- □ Witnessing the homicide(s) and or suicide inflicts double trauma: that of witnessing the murder of a mother and the homicidal attack of a father;
- □ Discovering their mother's body and/or the bodies of other victims;
- Dealing with their own physical injuries if they had been targeted;
- ☐ Fears about being in further danger, especially if the killer has not been apprehended;
- □ Fears about their future and who they will live with; and if there are teenage or young adult children, they worry about how they will provide for the family and keep it together. If it is a large family, the siblings might be split up and placed in different homes;
- □ If they have been living in a household of multiple batterers who had victimized their mother, their fear and lack of trust in caregivers is heightened;
- □ If there is a wide age range among siblings, they will have different reactions to loss, trauma and even victim-blaming. Older siblings may be expected to look after younger ones, and their own emotional needs may get overlooked;

- □ Children and teens may be overcome by feelings of helplessness or failure because they feel they could not stop the homicide;
- □ Testifying in court if they witnessed the killing can of course re-ignite the original trauma. To say nothing of the fears and difficulty of testifying against their own father, or step-father;
- Custody battles: What we are finding out in many of the cases is that children become the focus of custody battles between the two families. If the case was a homicide-suicide, then the battle can be fiercer. The battered woman's family can lose custody of their grandchildren because they (the grandparents) might be residing in the home country, and/or because they are uninformed of the legal proceedings here, or because they have less power and financial resources than the husband's family.

OUR ADVOCACY NEEDS TO FOCUS ON

- Preventing domestic violence related homicides;
- □ Collecting more data on what is happening in our communities;
- □ Addressing the effects on surviving family members and children.

HOMICIDE, GENDER AND CULTURE

By Shamita Das Dasgupta

DECOUPLING GENDERED HOMICIDE AND CULTURE

hen violence occurs within the family in our API communities, it is immediately thought to have occurred because of the implicit or explicit dictates of our cultures. Lately, I have started to think about culture as learned behavior as opposed to biologically determined behaviors. So if culture represents behaviors that are learned and nature represents those that are biologically determined, then domestic violence becomes cultural. However, most people and institutions here do not view culture in terms of learned behavior when they talk about India, Japan, Guam, Bangladesh or any of our API cultures. When discussing "minority" cultures, they refer to the symbols, nuances, guidelines and teachings of our cultures that condone and even encourage men to abuse the women related to them. Having stated that, I will try to decouple these issues a little later.

We, as activists and advocates, sometimes get confused about the origin of violence in our communities. I have heard many advocates fall into the trap of saying "your culture." In my case, South Asian activists and advocates say, "our culture condones this" and "our culture teaches us woman-abuse." In our effort to explain woman-abuse, we regularly evoke culture – especially when homicide occurs in our communities. Many non-activists and many of our own community members also speak about culture; however, they speak about it in a different way. They use culture to say woman-abuse has been imposed on us and we are in fact, these good and peaceful people. They say the behaviors of the Euro-American world, colonization and violent American culture is corrupting our peaceful one. Class and religion as cause and variables also are implicated in these arguments. We say it is "those people" or "that religion." This finger pointing goes on in very interesting ways.

I will attempt to decouple the notions of domestic abuse and culture by talking about domestic violence related deaths, specifically focusing on the South Asian community. I have collected data and information haphazardly. I started literally by collecting newspaper articles and throwing them into a folder, which I did not review for about 10 years. Then I started putting the information in the computer because the folder had become very thick. Once I began doing that, I literally started crying because of all the reports of women being killed – until then I had not recognized that so many South Asian women were being killed. It was just horrendous. I have started gathering information more carefully now. However, there is no systematic data available about domestic violence related homicides in our communities. Newspapers report incidents carelessly, the stories are often misleading, and only a story that some reporter thinks is interesting or knows something about gets reported. Much of the information reported is suspect and suicides that are obviously related to domestic violence never get reported as such. It is a pretty dismal situation.

Domestic Homicides in the South Asian Community: What the Data Reveals

In the South Asian communities of the United States and Canada, individuals have been killed, suicides have occurred, there have been attempted murders, suspicious disappearances, and individuals have been killed by the police. The following information was collected from ethnic [South Asian] and local newspapers.

SUMMARY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED LETHAL AND NEAR-LETHAL INCIDENTS IN NORTH AMERICA

USA 1981-2002

	Murder	Suicide	Attempted	Suspicious	Killed by	Total
			Murder	Disappearance	Police	
Women	38	2	8	3		51
Men	8	10			2	20
Children	13	1	4			18
Others	4					4
TOTAL	63	13	12	3	2	93

Canada 1986-2001

	Murder	Suicide	Attempted	Suspicious	Killed by	Total
			Murder	Disappearance	Police	
Women	15		3			18
Men		2	1		1	4
Children	1					1
Others	10					10
TOTAL	26	2	4		1	33

WHAT THE DATA SHOWS IS:

- Men Killing Heterosexual Partners, or Intended Partners These killings target the wife, ex-wife, lover, ex-lover, or a woman this man may be pursuing. A number of killings have occurred where the woman does not know the man but he has been pursing and sending her letters or telling his friends he was going to marry her. In some cases, the man was pressuring the young woman's brother, saying he wants to marry the sister. He eventually ends up killing the woman.
- □ Women Killing their Heterosexual Partners All of the instances that I collected indicated the woman was being battered.

- Murder-Suicides Most of the instances involved a man killing his wife and then himself, or the man killing himself and the children. There was one rare instance I found of a woman killing her whole family, which included her husband and children. There also were two incidents of battered mothers trying to kill their children and themselves. There are pieces missing here because many of these killings of children as well as mothers and children were reported later as accidents.
- □ Men Killing Adult Family Members, Mothers-in-law, Fathers-in-law, and Others Related to His Spouse Often men are not killing their partner but attacking the mother-in-law, father-in-law and related people who are probably providing support to the woman.
- ☐ *Men Hiring Killers to Murder their Wives* In only one instance, I have a report of a woman trying to hire killers to murder her husband.
- □ Fathers-in-law Killing Daughters-in-law The newspapers reported the reasons for these killings as being misogynistic. The incidents involved fathers not wanting their son to be married to their chosen partners because she was of another culture. (Most times the killings occur because the woman is of another culture, not another race.) In cases that involve property, there was fear that the woman was going to go away with a lot of property and the son would be left a pauper.
- □ Teenage and Adult Children Killing Parents The reasons why teen and adult children kill their parents are unknown. None of the newspaper reports offered an explanation. Suspicions are that abuse in the home perhaps of their mother and/or of themselves may have been occurring; however, it is not clear.
- □ Sibling Killing All of the newspaper reports showed brothers killing their sisters.
- □ *Domestic Worker Killings* Female domestic workers were reported in the newspapers as being killed by their employers.

Some Observations

The methods of committing homicides varied – by setting women on fire, shooting, bludgeoning, poisoning, beating, stabbing, strangulation, etc. These deaths appear to be much more brutal when the man is doing the killing; for example, one woman was bludgeoned 60 times, one had 16 stab wounds on her body.

I have not found in our community newspaper, articles involving same-sex domestic violence related deaths, which probably indicates that they are not being labeled or reported as such. There is no record, for most of the South Asian women victims and perpetrators of domestic homicide, to show that they sought help from a domestic violence agency or other community-based organization (CBO). We must ask why that is, given that there are now 22 domestic violence organizations across the country serving South Asian women. We also must recognize the fact that many small API-specific CBOs do not have the capacity to deal with these kinds of complex cases.

What we need to do is look at obituary columns and see what is happening there in terms of suicides. We also should go into neighborhoods, interview individuals and listen to community "gossip". The latter can be a useful, but is not always a reliable way of gathering information about what might have been happening in particular families.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURE

I could not find instances in the newspaper where cultural issues played a part. The only questionable area I found involved mother-child murder-suicides where culturally held beliefs about motherhood may have some impact. However, we are missing the issue of the immigrant status these women have and the isolation they face. Immigrant status and isolation may play a crucial part in the woman's decision-making. For example, perhaps the woman is trying to kill herself to take herself out of her abusive situation and she could not find alternate caretakers who she confidently believes would care for her children. Would she have tried to kill her children if there were caretakers she could entrust her children to? That is a question that remains unanswered.

Unfortunately, culture is evoked at every level in these cases; and when they appear in the courtroom, by the media and larger community as well. Typically, culture is used to mitigate the actions of the male perpetrator and to vilify the female when she is the perpetrator. Interestingly, the ethnic newspapers pick up the theme of culture also. For example, in a couple of cases with which we have been closely involved, the local newspapers called us immediately after the death occurred and said, "Oh, we understand this was an arranged marriage." We were able to dissuade them from using "arranged marriage" as an explanation. However, the ethnic newspapers that are familiar with Indian and South Asian immigrant communities reported the cases using quotes such as, "Arranged Marriage" and "Dowry". Rather than focusing on the prevalence of abusive men or abused women in our communities, these deaths were portrayed as anomalies having cultural associations and origins.

Most community members do not discuss cultural arguments openly. When we go to community settings to talk to groups, they tend to absolve men's violence by placing the blame squarely on women. The implicit idea of culture, teaching, and socialization of men also comes up when activists and researchers are called to provide expert witness testimony in court. Usually, it is defense attorneys – but sometimes prosecutors also – who are calling and asking for expert cultural testimony. They present individuals as cultural experts and not as domestic violence experts. When API experts are called, they are told, "You don't have to talk about domestic violence. We have [white] people coming in and doing that. But you are going to explain culture." That gets repeated over and over again, and it puts us in a double bind. If we accept the invitation to go and present, we are perpetrating this notion that there is something different about our culture and that it is problematic.

When we find ourselves having to go to court; we have to face several thorny dilemmas, particularly since the court system itself is based on the ethos of the dominant culture. So should we, or should we not, provide expert testimony? Refusing may mean we are abandoning the woman to her fate. The first imperative we have as a group is to collect information because we do not know what has happened in these homicide cases. The work performed by homicide review boards is not sufficient because they review only official documents. Pertinent information goes missing in these reports. For example, in New Jersey there was a murder in a Latino community. Right after the woman's murder, the Immigration and Naturalization Service made a number of sweeps into the community because they discovered the woman was undocumented. That type of information is never going

Service made a number of sweeps into the community because they discovered the woman was undocumented. That type of information is never going to make any of the official documents; however, it is critical in reviewing subsequent cases in that neighborhood.

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

So, what should we do? Should we try to eliminate culture totally from our work? If so, then what would be our strategies and tactics? Should we retain some elements of these cultural based arguments and use them to support victims and battered women who use violence? Which elements should we keep and how should we keep them? What unintended consequences can we anticipate in retaining parts of our culture and cultural arguments? How are activists and experts contributing to perpetrating cultural stereotypes? How can we provide cultural testimony to support individual women while not jeopardizing the safety of other women who will come through this system in the future? If we eliminate the cultural argument totally how can we justify the existence of CBOs? How can we use public education effectively to stop extreme and all other forms of violence in our communities? Do you as advocates and community workers think the larger society, community members, and women we work with view domestic violence issues and nuances as cultural phenomenon? How can we use this perspective to end violence? How can we use culture for our purposes or would taking it on mean going down a slippery slope?

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Lessons from Asian & Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Related Homicides and Suicides

 $By\ Judy\ Chen,$ Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence 10

The findings presented below are from the Washington State Coalition's Fatality Review Project, which is staffed by Kelly Starr, Fatality Review Project Coordinator, Joanne Gallagher, Fatality Review Project Specialist, and Margaret Hobart, Fatality Review Project Advisor.

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW PROCESS

omestic violence fatality reviews are a grand experiment in effective systems change. Domestic violence advocates and systems representatives examine a battered woman's homicide, but not from the viewpoint of "What was wrong with the abuser?" "Was she a drinker?" or other attempts to understand the violence by looking at the victim or the perpetrator. Instead, the fatality review process is designed to ask, "What are the circumstances that surrounded the woman's death?" and to view the homicide from a systemic, not just personal, framework.

In Washington, our statewide fatality review project is set up to examine the death through the victim's eyes, looking at how the system responded to her attempts to get help and to keep herself and her children safe. The fatality review process is also designed to identify how criminal justice and other systems attempted to hold the batterer accountable, by collecting and examining related data, such as protection orders and prior arrest history. When we review a fatality, project staff enter the information into a comprehensive database and then create a chronology of events, to trace the times the victim attempted to get help, and when either party interacted with the system. Protection orders, tapes and transcripts of 911 calls are some of the items in the public record that we may track down. Also, we may add information received from local domestic violence programs, clergy or other individuals who knew something about the people involved and the homicide. The information reported by individuals in local programs might differ from the official accounts.

¹⁰ The Coalition is a non-profit, statewide coalition of domestic violence victim service programs in Washington State. The primary source document is *Honoring Their Lives, Learning From Their Deaths: Findings and Recommendations from The Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review,* by Margaret Hobart, published by the Coalition in December 2000. To view the executive summary, go to www.wscadv.org.

The statutes related to domestic violence fatality review in Washington State require the review team to include law enforcement officials, medical examiners, the prosecutor's office, and other institutional representatives, as well as community advocates. We also attempt to involve other community members, such as the woman's clergyperson. It is an interesting experience to hear review panelists talk about the case, because often the policies and procedures that institutional representatives describe are different from what we as advocates experience. Fatality reviews are an opportunity to engage in dialogue about policy versus practice.

We also try to contact the victim's family in a non-intrusive manner, by sending a letter to let them know that we are looking at the case. We offer an opportunity to share information with us, if they so choose. It is important for families to know that someone cares about what happened.

A Cascade of Multiple Systems Failures

In our state, we have examined several fatalities of limited English speaking women, primarily Asians and Latinas. Many of the victims made extraordinary attempts to get help from the criminal and civil justice systems, which failed them dramatically and repeatedly. My colleague Margaret Hobart, the original staff for our fatality review project, has called this "a cascade of multiple failures."

The cases we have looked at during the fatality reviews have not thus far indicated what some call a "cultural" problem of domestic violence. Most of the barriers identified indicate a lack of appropriate institutional response to the danger that these women faced. These are the typical system failures faced by battered women in general, and in particular, by those who are immigrant, refugee, limited English-speaking, or of color:

- □ A lack of access to helping systems;
- □ A lack of appropriate advocacy and intervention;
- □ A lack of a strong criminal justice intervention to hold the perpetrator accountable and prevent further victimization.

Consistent Themes Regarding Experiences of Women with Limited English Proficiency¹¹

- Law enforcement agencies failing to provide translation at the scene even when their official policy is to call the AT&T Language Line (for interpretation by telephone), resulting in a lack of prosecution;
- Lack of advocacy in the woman's first language within protection order offices and/or prosecutor's offices;
- □ In several cases, women had made multiple attempts to enlist the assistance of the criminal justice or civil justice systems;
- It appeared that immigrant women resorted to calling law enforcement only when they felt that their lives or the lives of their children were literally endangered;

¹¹ This section is from a report by Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence by Margaret Hobart, Fatality Review Project Advisor.

- When limited English speaking abusers were convicted, they often were not required to attend batterer's treatment because none existed in their language but they did not face any alternative consequence (such as jail time), so from the victim's point of view "nothing happened";
- Many of the cases we reviewed involved active homicide and suicide threats with loaded guns prior to the murder, but prosecutions and follow-up to these threats by the criminal justice system did not adequately respond to the seriousness of these threats;
- Contacts with the criminal justice system were critical points of intervention for the battered woman, but generally did not result in women getting support or realistic safety planning because of a lack of court-based advocates.

Several homicides were preceded by the abuser making homicide and suicide threats, threats with loaded guns, and threats at the victim's place of employment. Many people witnessed these incidents and yet, nothing happened to stop the abuse. There were instances when law enforcement failed to seize weapons from the perpetrator, and when no charges were filed. The system could have made a difference, and perhaps we, as advocates, could have made a difference with safety planning – if we had been linked with these victims in the first place.

"Culture" - or Systems Failure?

A common statement made about battered women from our communities — particularly refugees and immigrants — is that, "They won't get help, they won't call the police." However, the women in the cases we reviewed made repeated attempts to get protection orders, to call 911, and to do everything they could to get help and safety — but they did not encounter an adequate institutional response. While it is well established that oppressive cultural values and gender roles sustain domestic violence in any culture (including mainstream American culture), API cultural beliefs and practices did not seem to be the root problem in the homicides we examined.

A tendency exists in the majority culture in the U.S. to blame domestic violence fatalities in immigrant/ refugee communities on "culture." Such characterizations distract from the significant problems identified: lack of access to services, lack of meaningful advocacy, and lack of strong criminal justice intervention to domestic violence in general. One of the common threads between cases involving immigrants/refugees and cases involving U.S.-born individuals was a general lack of effort by the criminal and civil justice systems to control the batterer and keep the victim safe. A focus on an immigrant/refugee's culture also ignores the fact that the bulk of domestic violence murders in Washington are committed by white, U.S. born, English-speaking men.¹²

Our findings point to institutionalized racism, and a failure of the system in general to hold safe victims of any background. Thirteen percent of the reviewed cases involved victims and families who spoke English as a second language, and were immigrants or refugees to this country. While all the murdered women faced significant barriers in attempting to access help from law enforcement, courts, medical providers, social services, and domestic violence programs, review panels noted that this set of victims also faced additional and daunting barriers, including:

¹² Hobart, p. 45.

- The reasonable expectation of encountering bias and racism when seeking help;
- Institutional and individual racism on the part of professionals involved in the community response to domestic violence;
- A lack of translation;
- □ A lack of language-accessible, culturally appropriate services.¹³

Our government – and we as a movement – has invested significant resources in creating a criminal justice response that does not work for many battered women. This is not to say that arrest, prosecution, and court ordered treatment or jail time never stops a batterer's abuse; thousands of women have found safety through the system and we should never forget that. However, so much more must be done to compliment the criminal justice approach to stopping abuse, and to make this system focus on victim safety.

Doing so will require more advocacy outreach, more systems advocacy, and more work within our own communities to hold batterers accountable. It also may require pushing the criminal justice system, publicly funded health care providers, and social services to offer basic translation and interpretation services, at least to the minimum levels provided for in their own policies. Our priorities for ensuring interpretation should be for law enforcement response at domestic violence scenes, 911 emergency responses, and health care.¹⁴

If we look at institutional response to battering through the eyes of those who experience it, we see that institutions are sometimes not enforcing even their own policies and procedures about domestic violence. We must find constructive ways to address this. For example, we should let the police chief know when a 911 operator does not follow guidelines in responding to a limited-English speaker's emergency, or when officers use children to interpret at the scene of a domestic violence incident.

As safety audits have shown, the helping systems that victims and perpetrators encounter are not truly set up to prioritize women's safety and to hold the perpetrator accountable. This is a "good people working in bad systems" issue, where our expertise and advocacy can make a change. For example, we as a movement have said that protective orders can help victims be safer. However, there may be significant barriers for limited English speaking women to obtain court orders. Let's say an immigrant woman decides to request an order: she has to find someone who reads and writes English well to go with her; take a break from work; find the courthouse and the appropriate line; and after all that, may not have time to obtain or complete the paperwork before returning to work. Will she ever try again? Advocates should examine the process of actually asking for help in order to see what changes would support API women's attempts to stop the abuse.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ One example of an innovative API community response to domestic violence in health care is the domestic violence initiative at the International Community Health Services (ICHS) in Seattle, Washington. ICHS is a community health organization with a focus on serving limited and non-English speaking patients. ICHS offers interpretation in 14 languages on-site, a telephone menu with direct first language access to interpreters, and a multi-lingual, multi-cultural staff. In 2000, ICHS began a pilot project with the statewide Perinatal Partnership Against Domestic Violence. ICHS now offers domestic violence screening for all pregnant and postpartum women who come into their clinics, on-going training for medical and non-medical staff, and an on-site advocate.

How Does the Community Organize to Protect Women?

Fatality reviews are just one of the tools available to the community to take action. Others include lawsuits, pickets and protests. Fatality reviews, along with safety audits and task forces, are experiments and only part of the total approach needed to ensure that:

- ☐ The ways that institutions respond to domestic violence are based on community needs;
- Battered women's safety and access to justice are central to everyone's efforts;
- □ Advocates have a place at the table when funding and policy decisions are made.

Let's look at some of the community-based responses, in addition to fatality review. The most common community-based response is what women living with the violence do to protect themselves. Before a murder, women often have a clear understanding of the danger posed by their abuser. They are creating their own safety plans, however limited in scope, with their friends, families, and co-workers. We know that only a small percentage of all battered women are calling us, the community advocates who can help them navigate the system, as well as assess lethality, find shelter, find help for their children, get financial assistance, and provide support. In the cases of victims with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) that we examined, many of the murdered women had not contacted a battered women's program. Many of them did not seem to know about us. We need to connect better with women's homegrown responses, and with the people who are helping them. We will need more money to do this, given the high prevalence of domestic violence versus our small programs and budgets.

In my own experience at an API community-based program, after a domestic violence murder in the API community, there is so much that community members want to do to help. For example, holding vigils, forums, and dialogues among the leadership. Sometimes there is intensive media attention, usually focused on cultural reasons for the murder, rather than the ones described above. There may be a community spur for new kinds of responses, new kinds of services, and new kinds of commitment. This is an incredible opportunity for us as API advocates and organizers to seek change, to let them know that domestic violence happens all the time, not just in this one case, and to do some organizing and mobilization.

Here also are some tremendous challenges. Frequently, our ethnic community leaders are very interested in stopping violence and murders. Most of them can agree that these are bad things. But they are not necessarily interested in gender equality. They are not usually demanding women's liberation. Sometimes it seems that the only way for us to get communities interested in this issue is when a woman dies. And yet, is that the only way?

Battered women's deaths raise important questions for us as activists: How do we hold the formal leadership accountable, especially the elder male leaders? How do we ensure the community's response is based on a woman's safety and her own decision-making, and that we are not just transferring control over her from the batterer to community leaders? How do we hold ourselves accountable for working effectively in our own community, when it is so hard? What are we concretely doing

to create leadership opportunities for survivors, and for young men who are interested in being part of the solution?

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVOCACY

What can API domestic violence homicides teach us about advocacy? I suggest that there are implications for systems advocacy, suicide and lethality screening, and safety planning.

First, we need to be more complex in our thinking about limited English speaking women and getting help from law enforcement. It is important for us to challenge the idea that limited English speaking women will not call 911. I have been guilty of perpetuating this idea myself, in an attempt to advocate for a culturally appropriate response, i.e., "Our women don't call the police, so alternative methods are required for intervention." The data in our state suggests that LEP women are indeed calling the police – but perhaps only when LEP women believe their lives are in immediate danger. We should think about what it means if women in our community do make that kind of contact, and what systems changes are required so that their desperate calls for help are not in vain. For example, should we have a discussion with law enforcement that says, "If you get this kind of call, it means that the situation is even worse than you are seeing with mainstream women, and this is what we want you to do."

Second, in regards to Chic Dabby's presentation on API homicide and suicide, we should routinely screen for suicidal ideation, especially by the abuser, and perhaps by the victim, in the same way we ask women about sexual abuse from their partners. Are we warning women about the danger that a suicidal abuser poses to them? When we ask what her abuser says about committing suicide, are we also asking if she's thought about suicide herself or killing her children in order to protect them from abuse?

Our fatality review research has found that suicidal abusers pose a high level of danger to their victims, and that there is a pattern of inadequate response from professionals and institutions to this risk. In regards to API suicidal abusers, what do we need to know and do? Among other actions, perhaps we should advocate for some kind of Tarasoff warning¹⁵ for mental health professionals who come in contact with suicidal abusers. This would require them to warn the woman of the lethal danger she may face.

Third, we need to find out if there are lethality factors significant and specific to APIs. For example, what does it means for a woman from a particular culture and home country experience to disclose partner sexual abuse to law enforcement – what is she telling us about the danger she is facing?

Also, with our safety planning, we should consider speaking more frankly with women about the possibility of their deaths. How do we do this in a way that does not make the women seeking our help turn away from us? What does it mean to do safety planning around this issue with those API women who are very unlikely to leave their abusers?

¹⁵ A Tarasoff warning refers to the duty of certain professionals and advocates to warn an intended victim of imminent harm or threats made against them. It overrides the confidentiality of what would otherwise be a privileged communication between a therapist and a client.

There is so much that we do not know, but must find out. We need to collect and analyze data about these cases. Even small programs can help. When I worked at an API domestic violence program in Seattle, we collected newspaper clippings of API domestic violence homicides, and discussed these with the domestic violence coalition (where I now work) every year. The coalition provided data for our community education work, which helped us show the API community that domestic violence does happen in our families, and is not just an "American" problem.

Lastly, I have a question for you as advocates. What do you all need to better address API domestic violence homicides in your community? What do you need from the Institute and from others? For example, do you want a packet on what to do after a death in your community, or training on working with the media, or support for working with API community organizations? What is it that we could be doing to assist you?

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ONE WOMAN'S DEATH: ONE COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE

By Leni Marin

laire Joyce Tempongko was a Filipina immigrant woman who was stabbed by her ex-boyfriend in front of her two very young children in October 2000. Claire had called the police repeatedly before the incident. In fact, even a year before the incident Tari Ramirez, her batterer, had served at least six or seven months in jail for domestic violence. He was released on probation, and he began to harass her. Claire obtained a temporary restraining order. She expressed her fear of her ex-boyfriend to her family and her family was helping her. He continued harassing her. At one point when she called the police, they had come and picked him up. He was only charged with disorderly drunken conduct. He came before a judge on the arrest charges. However, missing from the packet that was presented to the judge was the fact that he was on probation and had earlier been charged and convicted for domestic violence – a huge missing piece. The ex-boyfriend was released and ordered to perform community service. Two weeks later Claire Joyce was dead. He had come back and killed her. Her children were witness to their mother's murder. There was shock, outrage, and fear.

WHEN THE SYSTEM FAILS

In looking at the things this woman tried, it is obvious she was in great danger. She called the police and got a temporary restraining order. The ex-boyfriend had been arrested for domestic violence. Right now, Tari Ramirez is still at large. He has not been caught.

Similarly, ten years ago, we also were involved in the case of a Fijian immigrant woman who was killed in San Francisco. The same thing happened. She called the police and tried everything. She got a restraining order and the man came after her while he was on probation. She was dropping her son off at school. He killed her there. He committed suicide after killing her in front of their son.

The Asian Women's Shelter organized a vigil and rally in front of the Hall of Justice for Claire Joyce. The event mobilized anti-domestic violence activists, the local Filipino community, as well as the community at large. The demand for justice was very clear. People wanted the system to be accountable because clearly the system had failed.

MAKING SYSTEMS ACCOUNTABLE

How did we make the systems accountable? In Claire Joyce's case, we held the criminal justice system, the probation department and the police department accountable.

In meeting with the criminal justice system, we first organized what we called the Committee for Justice for Claire Joyce Tempongko. The Asian Women's Shelter, the Family Violence Prevention Fund and other community organizations were involved. The first order of business was to demand a meeting with the Chief of Police and the Mayor, which we were able to do. In the meeting with the Chief of Police, we asked: "What are you going to do about looking for the batterer? It is ridiculous that he is still at large." We pushed them to organize community posting of the batterer's picture. He was well known in his neighborhood. Also, people repeatedly called the woman's family, saying they had seen him. The police said it was not true and they believed he went to Mexico. We then stepped up our efforts and demanded that the reward be raised. The Mayor agreed and the reward was raised from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

We said from the very start that this tragedy could have been prevented. In addition, we recognized a flaw in the fatality review process. There appeared to be a sentiment among them that they were not going to point fingers. They were just reviewing the case for the sake of reviewing it and not saying what went wrong. They were not addressing questions concerning who is accountable and what corrections need to be made to prevent a repetition of certain system failures. Community organizing occurred around the points of taking further action because we recognized that fatality reviews are not the answer to preventing homicides.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AS THE KEY

How did we support the family and how did we mobilize the community so they could have an opportunity to express their outrage and shock and be a part of the demand for justice?

We offered post-traumatic stress therapy for the children who witnessed the murders. The children were still attending the same school. We worked with the family to move the children to another school right away. We were concerned that the batterer might come for them there. We also were concerned about security, even after the children were moved to another school. We wanted to make sure the teachers and police knew the situation. The police were not thinking about those kinds of things for the family.

We worked with the media to broaden – beyond the Filipino and the advocacy community – the impact and the knowledge about the homicide. The Family Violence Prevention Fund organized a campaign called "Not in My Home, Not in My Town", which collected pledges from members of the San Francisco community. We organized luncheons that involved key women leaders and supporters of the Consortium on Domestic Violence, a leading organization in San Francisco. Organizers of the "Not in My Home, Not In My Town" campaign and the family worked together to collect names at organizational meetings and at churches. Claire's mother – Clara Tempongko – has been very visible in the campaign.

RESULTS

Concrete results came from our efforts. Together with the Mayor of San Francisco and the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women (which did a fatality review and conducted a hearing), we held a news conference and the city devoted \$12 million for a major overhaul of their system. For example, the probation

department did not have computerized linkages with the San Francisco police department. With all the high tech that is supposed to be in Silicon Valley, they were in the dark. We collected more than 5,000 pledge cards and we demanded that open positions in the domestic violence investigation unit be filled. There were only ten people working in the unit at a time when they had funding for 20 positions, four of which were supposed to be for multi-lingual workers. Those are just some of the concrete results we experienced. We were proactive and realized that community organizing is the key to preventing domestic violence.

Leni Marin is Managing Director at the Family Violence Prevention Fund, a national organization dedicated to preventing domestic violence, where she has worked since 1983. She directs the Fund's Battered Immigrant Women's Rights Project. An immigrant from the Philippines, she has provided advocacy and education to improve the lives of abused immigrant women and children for 15 years.

HOLDING OUR COMMUNITIES ACCOUNTABLE

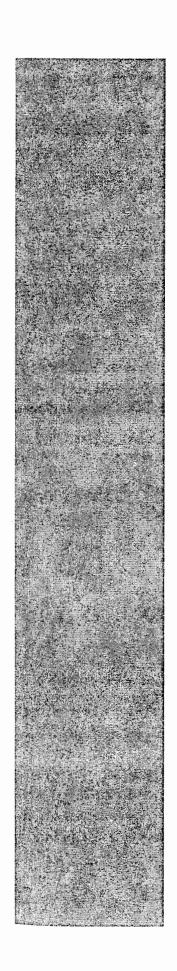
By Debbie Lee

epeatedly, we see studies done in which Asians are left out. When homicide studies are conducted, data on Asians is excluded because of the view that "the numbers were not that big and so we just didn't do any analysis in that category." We cannot continue to accept this. We must collect the data within our urban centers and other places where there are Asian populations so that we can better understand the nature of these homicides. We must do this in addition to collecting newspapers articles and clippings, as was suggested earlier.

We are called to put a larger portion of our time into working with our community leaders, despite the frustrations we might face. We sometimes may not be able to talk about our feminism up front. However, we can still build an understanding of domestic violence in our communities. We can do that through bringing data and repeated stories that show domestic homicide is not an infrequent circumstance and that it was not the woman's behavior that caused her death. We need to come up with plans for developing public education campaigns and for helping those already in leadership to become more outspoken about domestic violence.

With our ideas and the information we collect, we can assist our communities by showing them what they should do next to respond to domestic violence homicide and to prevent these kinds of deaths.

Debbie Lee has been with the Family Violence Prevention Fund for more than 20 years. She is an Associate Director of the FVPF and oversees its National Health Initiative on Domestic Violence which seeks to strengthen the health care response to domestic violence through development and promotion of model training and response programs, public policy reform, health education, and prevention efforts.



CHILDREN, YOUTH AND THEIR ABUSED MOTHERS

PANEL IV

JUNE **29**, **2002**

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND THEIR ABUSED MOTHERS

INTRODUCTION

The closing panel for the National Summit on Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities examined the topic: "Children, Youth and Their Abused Mothers". The panel opened with a spoken word performance by youth from Young Asian Women Against Violence. Dedicated to peer leadership, youth addressed intimate partner violence through rap performances at high schools and conferences. The performance dramatically showed the effects of intra-familial violence on youth. The first panelist, Chic Dabby, conceptualized the issue as that of "our failure to protect"; asking where power and powerlessness rest and shift within the family; and described the violent landscape within the home. Grace Huang presented the political landscape outside the home taking up policy issues, especially Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), marriage promotion, and fatherhood initiatives. Emma Catague and Pusi Sa'au described a model program that relies on community organizing and family participation. Beckie Masaki summarized our successes in building interventions at systemic, familial and advocacy levels centered on mothers and their children.

PRESENTERS

Our Failure to Protect: Chic Dabby
The Violent Landscape Inside the Home: Chic Dabby
The Political Landscape Outside the Home: Grace Huang
Organizing Strategies at Systemic, Familial and Advocacy Levels:
Emma Catague, Pusi Sa'au and Beckie Masaki

Our Failure to Protect

By Firoza Chic Dabby

SHIFTING THE ONUS AWAY FROM BATTERED WOMEN

Then Child Protective Services intervenes in a home where there is domestic violence, they typically remove children from the home, citing the mother's failure to protect. They proceed on the policy that children exposed to domestic violence are victims of abuse; and it is the mother who has failed to protect her children from abuse. This practice is problematic, because the logic of it penalizes battered women with the loss of their children. Failure to protect implies having the power to protect. Women in abusive homes are powerless to stop their own abuse; or to stop their children from witnessing domestic violence; or protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual abuse at the hands of an abusive father or family member. Citing a battered woman for failure to protect erroneously puts the onus on her. How does separating children from their mother because they have seen her being abused, protect them?

Indeed, there *is* a responsibility to protect children in an abusive home; and we have a responsibility to develop interventions that do so. Current systems and strategies are often failing abused mothers and their children. The onus of protective strategies falls on us, their advocates. So, if we shift the responsibility onto ourselves; if we begin to examine *our* failure to protect; what would interventions – within the family and within the child welfare system – that simultaneously focus on children, youth and their abused mothers look like?

How is the practice of removing children affecting API families? We know that at a minimum it compounds a battered woman's shame because she is blamed for the removal of the children. How should we, as API advocates, approach the issue, at systemic and familial levels? What interventions protect the child; protect the mother?

THE VIOLENT LANDSCAPE INSIDE THE HOME

The landscape of intra-familial violence that children and youth live in is alarming. The list below is not comprehensive. It describes some of the abuses we are hearing about in API families (but of course they do not occur in all API homes):

- □ Witnessing domestic violence: although much is said about the effects of witnessing maternal abuse, little is said about the effects of witnessing paternal brutality.
- Gender discrimination: boys are privileged over girls in many API cultures. Historically this can be explained by the fact that boys were seen as future wage earners and girls as burdens to be married off but the practice of devaluing girls persists despite changed social conditions.

- Separating mothers and children is a continual theme in the experiences of API women – be it through threats of deportation, child abduction, or other sophisticated manipulations by the batterer (like making false allegations about her to child protective services). Indeed, mothers can be coerced or tricked into returning to their home country; or the children are sent back to the home country to live with paternal relatives and cut off from contact with their mother.
- □ Neglect: There can be severe neglect, by either parent, of children from previous marriages.
- □ Homicides: Children and youth can be killed in domestic violence related homicides or can be witness to family killings.
- □ Children are trying to intervene and stop the violence, sometimes by calling the police¹6 or by restraining the abusers.
- □ Forced marriages: Young girls get forced into marriages with older men, or are abducted or tricked into leaving the country to be forced into such a marriage in their home country. When they resist successfully, they risk being abandoned by their parents.
- □ Trafficked children/youth: are being exploited for labor and/or sex by traffickers in their home countries.
- ☐ Incest: There is silence and denial around incest in API families.
- When children or youth reveal they are being abused, parents can engage in victim blaming, particularly if their adolescent children divulge sexual or physical violence.
- □ Sexual orientation: Teens who come out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning can face severe rejection and emotional abandonment by their parents.
- □ Sexuality: Teens are kept in sexual ignorance; female sexuality is tightly controlled; and the affirmative aspects of sexuality are not discussed in many API families.
- Mental illness: Given the stigma attached to mental health problems, children with mental illness may not get proper care.¹⁷ There are high rates of suicide among API teen girls with Filipina girls having the highest rate of suicide amongst teenagers.

On a positive note, we need to acknowledge strength and empowerment: family members can provide a powerful system of moral, emotional and financial support. We also need to pay tribute to teens in violent homes: for caring deeply and being outraged; for helping their mothers cope with, or leave, their violent homes. Many of them deal with their own trauma, but they also become empowered as they navigate through systems unfamiliar to their mothers; and mobilize them to leave, get assistance or find safety.

¹⁶ When a son calls the police on his father, does the latter see it as betrayal, as crossing the lines of patriarchal authority?

¹⁷ Women are often expected to care for mentally ill family members or cover up the fact that there is mental illness in the family.

THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OUTSIDE THE HOME

By Grace Huang

POLICIES AFFECTING BATTERED WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN

The House of Representatives passed House Bill 4737, which is the Republican House version of the TANF¹⁸ Welfare Re-authorization Bill. Highlights of the bill include: (1) a frozen level of funding for the program; (2) a \$1 billion increase over five years for child care programs around the country; and (3) a \$100 million matching grant for healthy marriage promotion. The healthy marriage component of the bill allows states to access the money by using matching funds from their state dollars to promote healthy marriage in the state. Additionally, they are allowed to use their TANF dollars – the money they get from the federal government to provide services to low-income families – to match the healthy marriage money. This means states can take money away from direct services for low-income people while matching dollars to get healthy marriage money. The \$100 million annual fund for research and demonstration projects for healthy marriage programs nationwide includes \$20 million to fund programs promoting paternal relationships in TANF families.

The House of Representatives version of the welfare reform bill appears to be pushing fatherhood versus non-custodial parents, and dollars are being made available for the effort. Also, there is an effort to have everyone engaged in work, up to 40 hours a week, regardless of the age of the child. The focus eliminates vocational education as a primary work activity that can be counted among the required work hours. It fails to restore benefits to legal immigrants who have been in the U.S. for less than five years; and it also requires states to completely terminate families that are not complying with the work requirements, rather than allowing for partial reductions, such as providing for child-only grants.

The Senate Finance Committee passed along their recommendation to the full Senate. Although the recommendation is not ideal, it does have a few provisions that are better than the House bill, including allowing states to restore benefits to immigrants. The recommendation increases childcare dollars by \$5.5 billion over five years as opposed to the \$1 billion in the House bill. It allows 30 hours a week in work activities rather than the 40 hours proposed by the House. Also, there are efforts in terms of the healthy marriage promotion program, which involve not allowing incentives for marriage promotion. It will be interesting to see the final Senate version

¹⁸ Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

because there is a lot of pressure on Republicans to toe the line and keep some of the same provisions listed in the House bill.

It is astonishing that such bills are able to pass through Congress, given our efforts as a domestic violence movement and as advocates on behalf of our communities. Our communities need to be more involved in these discussions. Our discussions also need to include the issue of class and how some segments of our communities are affected on a daily basis by these policies.

Welfare Reform

There are questions about the original Welfare Reform Bill regarding groups not covered and individuals not allowed to keep their benefits. Refugees, those given asylum, veterans, spouses, and active duty military were covered in the original Welfare Reform Bill. However, qualified immigrants, survivors of domestic violence, and other women who are vulnerable and in need of services were not covered.

- ☐ Is the reason the groups are not covered by the bill because domestic violence advocates in our community have not worked hard enough with community leaders to push for benefits for our low-income women?
- ☐ In the law, there is a clear presumption for certain groups, such as the Cuban-Haitians who have been able to preserve their benefits. Have we as a community not done our job in organizing around this issue possibly because we think that we do not have low-income people in our community?
- Regarding work requirements and the push for increased work requirements, have we been doing our job to make sure that English as a Second Language (ESL), education and training are factors and issues we need in our programs? Are we doing these things on a state level and making sure the programs are well implemented?
- Considering the impact of the House proposal to increase work requirements to 40 hours a week, how will individuals from our communities be able to attend ESL classes? Will they really be able to get out of poverty if they are in low-wage jobs and working 40 hours a week while trying to take care of children and deal with their domestic violence issues?

FAMILY VIOLENCE OPTION

We also must consider the Family Violence Option. A provision in the law allows states to adopt the Family Violence Option to exempt domestic violence survivors from some participant requirements of the welfare program. The provision requires states to screen for domestic violence and requires that participants be allowed to take part in other activities where they will be safe and not be victimized by domestic violence.

- □ Have we pushed hard enough as immigrant advocates within the context of the Family Violence Option?
- Have we asked for exemptions from the immigrant restrictions?
- Have we made sure case workers are making relevant referrals for service for our women?
- □ As we train caseworkers to screen for domestic violence and as they learn how children are affected by such violence, are clients and their children being turned over to CPS?

What does the adoption of family violence screening and the search for family violence protections really do for members of our community?

MARRIAGE PROMOTION

I do not know that we have taken a firm stand concerning what we feel about marriage promotion efforts. Pilot projects are starting to be developed around the country to address what it means to have a healthy marriage; so, what *are* healthy families? The model that is being pushed on us does not necessarily reflect what a healthy marriage or a healthy family looks like in our communities. There are different models of what a healthy family across communities looks like.

- □ What does healthy marriage mean in our communities?
- ☐ How are current discussions of marriage promotion efforts relevant to our communities?
- Do we have any input into the healthy marriage discussion at the national policy level?
- Are we at the table developing policies that reflect our different family structures?
- □ Are there pressures to have a family structure of husband and wife; and is that structure really important to us?
- ☐ Is the family structure model of husband and wife the most helpful in terms of getting our communities out of poverty?
- □ When there are immigrant families who are not eligible for benefits; when there is not enough money for language access; when there is not enough money for interpreters; and there is not enough money for childcare; why is there money for marriage promotion?

LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND ECONOMIC SERVICES

With respect to low-income families on welfare and the link between economic services and the child welfare system, there currently are various efforts to put money into new programs within child welfare agencies. One such effort is occurring around what is called the Green Book, which is a series of recommendations involving child welfare agencies, domestic violence agencies and survivors of domestic violence. Many of the recommendations appear wonderful on the surface, speaking to child welfare agencies needs to develop policies that do not punish victims of domestic violence. The recommendations iterate the need for collaborations between Child Protective Services, domestic violence agencies and court systems. Conversations also have begun concerning funding for the collaborations. One current issue is whether they should be using Victims of Crime Act dollars to fund collaborations of the Green Book Project.¹⁹ There are some interesting recommendations in the Green Book; how will these recommendations play out in our communities?

□ Women may be mandated into domestic violence programs that do not provide language access and they may feel unsafe or more isolated. Are women being coerced into interventions that may not be relevant?

¹⁹ Copies of the Green Book are available through the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Reno, Nevada.

- □ Is CPS making appropriate assessments and interventions in our communities? Are they using interpreters? Do they understanding the context in which family violence is occurring?
- What is the effect of placing children in foster care with foster families who may not be familiar with the child's ethnic background?
- □ What are the implications of pulling a child out of a community where she/ he feels safe and putting the child into a different cultural environment?
- □ What kinds of interventions are being developed for reconciliation, given that there now is a big push for reconciling children with their parents or immediate family members?
- What kinds of implications do these interventions have for victims of family violence, especially since some violence is being committed by other family members and not just by the father or the spouse?
- □ What about women who choose not to leave? Are they being punished for failing to protect their children? Are they being charged with neglect?

Grace Huang is the Senior Policy Analyst for the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Her areas of expertise include TANF, benefits for immigrants, and policies that affect battered women and their children.

ORGANIZING STRATEGIES AT SYSTEMIC, FAMILIAL AND ADVOCACY LEVELS

By Emma Catague, Pusi Sa'au and Beckie Masaki

mma Catague described organizing strategies at systemic and familial levels. She talked about the work being done using parenting classes for Samoan, Filipino, Cambodian and Korean communities at the Asian Pacific Islander Women and Family Safety Center in Seattle, Washington:

- □ The curriculum used for the parenting class *Strengthening Multi-ethnic Communities* is written by Dr. Marilyn Steele²⁰.
- □ Individuals facilitating parenting classes must first go through an intensive five-day training.
- □ Topics covered in the parenting classes are: (1) Child Development; (2) The Life Cycle; (3) Culture and Family Tradition; (4) Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; (5) Child Protective Services; (6) Juvenile Justice and Gang Involvement; (7) Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco; and (8) Conflict Management.
- Parents in the class are asked to indicate the topics they want to discuss. Once the parents' areas of interest have been expressed, facilitators bring in experts to address these topics, whilst they facilitate the parent discussion. Parents benefit from the expert presentations by being able to ask questions and get answers directly from the experts and at the same time connect with resources. Facilitators enhance their own knowledge of issues through the expert's presentation.
- □ Case studies are presented in the classes using actual cases from the community or hypothetical cases. During the case studies, parents are asked to give their responses to domestic violence as well as drug and alcohol abuse.
- □ Individuals who work with domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse, such as drug counselors and pastors, and who speak the native languages of local communities are brought in to assist with the case study dialogue.

usi Sa'au addressed issues of community leadership and development and talked about relationship-building within communities, speaking from her experience in establishing and working with parenting classes in the Samoan community and with the API Women & Family Safety Center in Seattle:

 Community leaders must be the voice, feet and ears of the community and must support the community through lobbying, caring and trust. These things

²⁰ Dr. Marilyn Steele is based in Los Angeles, California. She provides intensive trainings to certify facilitators using her curriculum.

- are very powerful and bring the community into relationships with the leaders.
- Conducting parenting classes requires that you be strong and have faith and hope. In Samoa, ministers are very respected and responsible for keeping the community's history and passing it on from one generation to the next. Those in faith positions and positions of control must not take advantage of people. Instead they must educate and communicate with the people as a way of creating healthy families.
- Developing relationships with the children of the community and in the church proves to be powerful. Children tell you what is going on in families. Also children cause parents to come together and become involved in parenting classes.
- Parenting classes assist both men and women in their healing and development as healthy family members. Parenting classes in Seattle's Samoan community attract about 50 percent men and 50 percent women. Male perpetrators frequently are referred to parenting classes by probation officers. There also are instances where women are charged with domestic violence after striking their children.
- Preparation and participation in the evening meal is a very important part of parenting classes. Children come to the dinner, giving the families a chance to talk together.
- At the start of the classes, parents frequently deny that their behavior toward their children is domestic violence and often cannot recognize they are continuing a cycle of violence they learned from their own parents.
- As the classes progress, many of those who would not participate in the discussions find themselves contributing to the conversation. Many say they were unaware of disciplinary methods outside of spanking their children.
- The classes advise parents to establish close communication with children at points when they feel discipline is necessary; and to use options like taking away privileges.

Beckie Masaki summarized our success in building interventions at systemic, and advocacy levels by presenting models and philosophies used by the Asian Women's Shelter in San Francisco to address the needs of mothers and their children:

- Although many shelters around the U.S. have policies that exclude teenage boys, the norm at Asian focused shelters is to accept them into the shelters. The philosophy at Asian shelters is to look at the whole family and what makes sense for them.
- In structuring its program to meet the needs of both women and children, Asian Women's Shelter decided to assign a separate individual to serve as an advocate for the women and a different individual to serve as an advocate for the children. Both advocates would work together with the family as a team with one having their entire focus on the child and the other focusing on the woman. We decided that separate advocates for the child and woman were needed because when there is one family advocate taking care of the whole family, often the needs and perspectives of the children get lost. In addition, the shelter has a family advocate who serves wherever needed, meeting the needs of both the women and children.

- Although solutions may not be at hand for some of the hard questions that are presented, our shelter's philosophy is to talk about issues and what we are attempting, to challenge ourselves, and be critical thinkers and have dialogues in ways not being done at the national level. By engaging in such dialogue, we will develop methods to reframe critical questions and reframe the ways issues are being discussed so that the community is placed at the center of the discussion.
- Community organizing and being in control of how the issue is framed cannot be overemphasized as an effective method of addressing serious issues. In San Francisco, public outcry caused the government and people to take action following domestic violence related murders of several women. We found that death review teams were so institutionalized: the identity of the team members was confidential, making it difficult to hold members accountable for the deaths occurring in the community. What had started out as system reform had in reality become system protection of the status quo.
- The shelter holds to the philosophy that families thrive when they have enough alternatives and basic needs such as food, housing and livable wages. Babies, children and teens at the shelter have transformed fear, hurt, anger, deep sorrow and trauma into resilience, joy and peace in a few short months, which we see as a tribute to the human spirit and the capacity to thrive.

EMMA CATAGUE is an advocate and community organizer at the Asian Pacific Islander Women and Family Safety Center in Seattle, Washington. Pusi Sa'au is a parent educator at the Asian Pacific Islander Women and Family Safety Center in Seattle, Washington. She works with the local Samoan community. Beckie Masaki is co-founder of the Asian Women's Shelter (AWS) in San Francisco and has served as its Executive Director since AWS opened in 1988. She is a Steering Committee member of the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence.

QUESTIONS FOR ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

PANEL 1: WHAT DOES VIOLENCE LOOK LIKE IN OUR COMMUNITIES?

- □ What kinds of analyses (patriarchy, sexism, racism, feminism, other '-isms) do you use to do your anti-violence work?
- Which of these analyses do you bring to your community? What works: why and why not?
- □ Strategy question: How do programs/advocates deal with conservative community members? How do you decide about bringing them along or not, when to do so, who should approach them, balancing confrontation with politeness?
- Strategy question: How are we affected when our sense of safety (through direct or veiled threats) and integrity come under attack? How does it affect our interventions?
- □ How do we discuss gender oppression, gender equality and equity with the battered women we serve?

Panel 2: Domestic Violence & Cultures of Patriarchy

- How does our own understanding of culture impact the work we do on violence against women? Are there ways in which a reconceptualization of the term, as outlined by the panel, enhances or detracts from the work?
- □ How do we talk about culture both within our own communities, in other API communities and within non-Asian communities? How does our position as an "authentic insider" impact the awareness of our cultures?
- ☐ How and when do we begin to debunk and resist explanations that privilege ethnicity over gender?
- □ How does change occur? Does it lead to changes in the patriarchal structures that contribute to violence against women?
- How do we work with the issue of cultural defense in the legal arena? How do "cultural" explanations work for the victim and for the perpetrator? Can we use these explanations for one and not for the other? How does this impact our attempts to come to a universal understanding of violence against all API women as well as for particular API communities?
- ☐ How do we critique our own inscriptions in the structures of power as we discuss the issue of violence against women in our own communities?

Panel 3: Domestic Violence Related Homicides

- □ What kinds of domestic violence related homicides are you hearing about in your ethnic and/or geographic community? What are the trends?
- □ What do we do in our interactions with the criminal legal system, especially about "cultural defense" claims?
 - o When the perpetrator(s) are batterers/abusive family members?
 - When the perpetrator is a battered woman?
- □ How does your agency handle requests for "cultural defense" "expert" witnesses?
- □ From a research point of view, should domestic violence related homicides be

- "counted" as API even when the killer is API but the victim is not; or only when the victim is API (regardless of killer's ethnicity)?
- □ Do you engage in community organizing following a homicide? What sort? What are the positives and negatives?
- □ What is the impact of domestic violence related homicides on survivors and other women you are working with?
- □ What's happening to women who kill their abusers?
- □ What's happening to women who attempt mother-child suicide?
- □ How are we getting information about domestic violence related homicides?
- □ Would you be willing to collect clippings from the local and ethnic press and send them to the Institute?
- What do you think about the media coverage in the mainstream and ethnic press following domestic violence homicide in your community? What are the advantages and disadvantages of typical coverage?

PANEL 4: CHILDREN, YOUTH & THEIR ABUSED MOTHERS

- □ Are we addressing the issue of kids witnessing abuse effectively in our communities? If not, why not?
- □ What is the relationship between children and parents like in violent homes?
- □ How are children used by batterer(s), by the system, by the mother?
- □ What would mother-focused, mother-empowering interventions look like?
- □ Do you have examples of innovative strategies to deal with needs of the mother-child-teen as a family?
- □ When you make a report to CPS, how do you engage the mother?
- □ How do the current proposals encouraging marriage affect battered women and kids in the API community?
- □ Are the models of "husband/wife" reflective of what API families look like?
- □ How are the immigrant restrictions on TANF and other benefits affecting our families?
- □ How are the proposed increases for more hours of work going to affect our community?
- ☐ Are the TANF Work programs user friendly/ culturally relevant/ provide language access? How do these programs affect women who are pre-literate?
- □ What would a TANF program that would really help API battered women out of poverty look like?

APPENDIX

FACT SHEET ON

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN ASIAN &

PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES

National Directory of API Agencies and Programs

AFTERWORD

By Firoza Chic Dabby

onfronting gender violence engages us in questions about women's safety, men's impunity, childhood and adolescent trauma, and community complicity. To resist gender violence means activism on several fronts: reaching out to battered women and providing them services; changing the behaviors and belief systems of abusers; advocating for systems change; and organizing our communities to replace oppressive practices with empowering ones. It means taking what we learn from the stories, strengths and courage of battered women to transform cultures. Not only Asian and Pacific Islander cultures, but cultures of violence, and cultures of patriarchy.

With this agenda in mind, over one hundred API advocates attended the first National Summit on Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities convened by the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence. Our goal was to engage in complex, thought-provoking, controversial discourses and to go away inspired and rejuvenated. And in doing so, strengthen Asian and Pacific Islander leadership in the anti-domestic violence movement.

In our presentations, we laid out important ideas and arguments. In our discussions, we asked many provocative questions and hope we answered some of them. We also forged new links and tightened existing ones. We learnt a lot. We shared ideas and strategies: asking ourselves what works, what does not work, why, why not, who and what do we overlook in our work? As leaders and instigators of change, where do the paths we travel lead?

Discourses and presentations from the summit were recorded and are presented here as a milestone work. These proceedings are meant to offer an authoritative look at some of the issues related to violence against API women; to stimulate research; and suggest further examinations of the problem. Our aim was less to provide definitive answers; but rather to contextualize vexing questions. The success of our work relies on subtle and complicated understandings of our cultures and our communities.

We hope these proceedings will serve all of us in the anti-domestic violence movement. We want anyone and everyone to use them: be it to organize discussions amongst agency staff or a group of advocates, form study groups, influence service programs, and plan community organizing activities. The summit was a stunning success. But, we want its ideas and discussions to enter into local and regional spaces, to acquire a life and inspiring vibrancy of their own. Now, that would be a far more profound measure of success.



Socio-cultural Contexts:
Research Series

Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities

FACT SHEET DECEMBER 2002

Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities FACT SHEET

DECEMBER 2002

INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is perpetuated by cultural beliefs and norms based on the devaluation of women. It is often legitimized, obscured, or denied by familial and social institutions.

Intimate partner violence is a pattern of behaviors that includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, economic, and/or psychological abuse used by adults or adolescents against (current or former) intimate partners, and sometimes against other family members. Domestic violence is also marked by a climate of fear in the home. It occurs in all communities regardless of race, class, faith, immigration status, education, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Asians and Pacific Islanders are no exception. This Fact Sheet has been compiled to raise awareness about what Asian and Pacific Islander (API) women are reporting and suffering, to contextualize the available data, and to influence the development of culturally specific interventions. Only within the past two decades, have researchers and advocates begun to gather data on domestic violence within API communities in the United States. Their findings reveal how cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and political barriers prevent API women from seeking help. The magnitude of the problem is therefore considerably greater than studies indicate.

1. Extent of the Problem

In a telephone survey of a nationally representative sample of 8,000 women and 8,000 men from all ethnic backgrounds conducted from November 1995 to May 1996¹:

□ 12.8% of Asian and Pacific Islander women reported experiencing physical assault by an intimate partner at least once during their lifetime; 3.8% reported having been raped. The rate of physical assault was lower than those reported by Whites (21.3%); African-Americans (26.3%); Hispanic, of any race, (21.2%); mixed race (27.0%); and American Indians and Alaskan Natives (30.7%). The low rate for Asian and Pacific Islander women may be attributed to underreporting.

¹ Tjaden P, Thoennes N. Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence: Research Report. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; July 2000. Available at: http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles1/nij/181867.txt, or 800-851-3420 (877-712-9279, TTY).

The National Asian Women's Health Organization (NAWHO) interviewed 336 Asian American women aged 18–34 who reside the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas, via telephone (NAWHO study, hereinafter)²:

- □ 16% of the respondents reported having experienced "pressure to have sex without their consent by an intimate partner".
- □ 27% experienced emotional abuse by an intimate partner.

2. Domestic Violence in Specific Asian Communities

Data for Pacific Islander communities is being compiled.

Cambodian

In a study conducted by the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence in Boston, using a self-administered questionnaire at ethnic fairs (Asian Task Force study, hereinafter)³:

□ 44–47% of Cambodians interviewed said they knew a woman who experienced domestic violence.

Chinese

In a random telephone survey of 262 Chinese men and women in Los Angeles county4:

- □ 18.1% of respondents reported experiencing "minor physical violence" by a spouse or intimate partner within their lifetime, and 8% of respondents reported "severe physical violence" experienced during their lifetime. ("Minor-severe" categories were based on the researcher's classification criteria.)
- More acculturated respondents (as assessed by the researchers) were twice as likely to have been victims of severe physical violence. (Although the author states "It is possible that traditional cultural values serve as a protective buffer against stressors engendered by immigration" (p. 263), higher rates among more acculturated respondents may be due to their increased likelihood to report abuse.)

Filipina

In a survey conducted by the Immigrant Women's Task Force of the Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services⁵:

20% of 54 undocumented Filipina women living in the San Francisco Bay Area reported having experienced some form of domestic violence, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, either in their country of origin or in the United States.

² National Asian Women's Health Organization. *Silence, Not an Option!* San Francisco, CA: Author; 2002.

³ Yoshioka MR, Dang Q. Asian Family Violence Report: A Study of the Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, South Asian, and Vietnamese Communities in Massachusetts. Boston: Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence, Inc.; 2000. Available at: www.atask.org.

⁴ Yick AG. Predictors of physical spousal/intimate violence in Chinese American families. *J Fam Violence*, 2000; 15(3): 249-267.

⁵ Hoagland C, Rosen K. *Dreams Lost, Dreams Found: Undocumented Women in the Land of Opportunity*. San Francisco, CA: Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services, Immigrant Women's Task Force; Spring 1990.

Japanese

In a face-to-face interview study of a random sample of 211 Japanese immigrant women and Japanese American women in Los Angeles County conducted in 1995 (Yoshihama study, hereinafter):

- 61% reported some form of physical, emotional, or sexual partner violence that they considered abusive -including culturally demeaning practices such as overturning a dining table, or throwing liquid at a woman- sometime prior to the interview⁶.
- □ 52% reported having experienced physical violence during their lifetime. When the probability that some women who have not been victimized at the time of the interview, but may be abused at a later date is calculated, 57% of women are estimated to experience a partner's physical violence by age 497.
- □ No significant generational differences were found in the age-adjusted risk of experiencing intimate physical, sexual or emotional violence⁸.

Korean

In a study of 256 Korean men from randomly selected Korean households in Chicago and in Queens (which then had the largest Korean population on the East Coast) in 19939:

- □ 18% of the respondents reported committing at least one of the following acts of physical violence within the past year: throwing something, pushing, grabbing, shoving, or slapping their wife.
- 6.3% of the men committed what the researcher classified as "severe violence" (kicking, bitting, hitting with a fist, threatening with a gun or knife, shooting, or stabbing).
- 33% of "male-dominated relationships" experienced at least one incident of domestic violence during the year, whereas only 12% of "egalitarian" relationships did. (Researchers classified couples into four types of relationships—i.e., egalitarian, divided power, male-dominated, and female-dominated—based on the respondents' answers about how the couple makes decisions.)
- Nearly 39% of husbands who were categorized as experiencing "high stress" perpetrated domestic violence during the past year, whereas one out of 66 husbands categorized as experiencing "low stress" did so. (This correlation does not necessarily mean that stress causes or leads to domestic violence. Women and non-abusive men are also exposed to 'high stress' and do not resort to domestic violence.)

In a survey of a convenience sample of 214 Korean women and 121 Korean men in the San Francisco Bay Area conducted in 2000 by Shimtuh, a project serving Korean women in crisis (Shimtuh study, hereinafter)¹⁰:

□ 42% of the respondents said they knew of a Korean woman who experienced physical violence from a husband or boyfriend.

⁶ Yoshihama M. Domestic violence against women of Japanese descent in Los Angeles: Two methods of estimating prevalence. *Violence Against Women*. 1999; 5(8): 869-897.

⁷ Yoshihama M, Gillespie B. Age adjustment and recall bias in the analysis of domestic violence data: Methodological improvement through the application of survival analysis methods. *J Fam Violence*. 2002; 17(3): 199-221.

⁸ Yoshihama M, Horrocks J. Post-traumatic stress symptoms and victimization among Japanese American women. *J. Consult. Clin Psychol.* 2002; 70(2): 205-215.

⁹ Kim JY, Sung K. Conjugal violence in Korean American families: A residue of the cultural tradition. *J Fam Violence*. 2000; 15(4): 331-345.

¹⁰ Shimtuh, Korean American Domestic Violence Program. *Korean American Community of the Bay Area Domestic Violence Needs Assessment Report*. Oakland, CA: Author; 2000.

□ About 50% of the respondents knew someone who suffered regular emotional abuse.

A 1986 study involving face-to-face interviews of a convenience sample of 150 Korean women living in Chicago found that 11:

- □ 60% reported experiencing physical abuse by an intimate partner sometime in their lives.
- □ 36.7% reported sexual violence by an intimate partner sometime in their lives.

South Asian¹²

The Raj and Silverman study of 160 South Asian women (who were married or in a heterosexual relationship), recruited through community outreach methods such as flyers, snowball sampling, and referrals in Greater Boston, found that¹³:

- □ 40.8% of the participants reported that they had been physically and/or sexually abused in some way by their current male partners in their lifetime; 36.9% reported having been victimized in the past year.
- □ 65% of the women reporting physical abuse also reported sexual abuse, and almost a third (30.4%) of those reporting sexual abuse reported injuries, some requiring medical attention.
- □ No significant difference was found in the prevalence of domestic violence between arranged marriages [typically refers to marriages arranged by parents or relatives of each member of the couple] and non-arranged marriages¹⁴.

Vietnamese

In a study of 30 Vietnamese women recruited from a civic association that serves Vietnamese women in Boston¹⁵:

- □ 47% reported intimate physical violence sometime in their lifetime.
- □ 30% reported intimate physical violence in the past year.

3. Types of Abuse

Project AWARE (Asian Women Advocating Respect and Empowerment) in Washington, DC, conducted an anonymous survey in 2000–2001 to examine the experiences of abuse, service needs, and barriers to service among Asian women (Project AWARE study, hereinafter). Using a snowball method, a convenience sample of 178 Asian women was recruited¹⁶:

81.1% of the women reported experiencing at least one form of intimate partner violence (domination/controlling/psychological, physical, and/or sexual abuse as categorized by the researchers) in the past year.

¹¹ Song-Kim YI. Battered Korean Women in Urban United States. In: Furuto SM, Renuka B, Chung DK, Murase K, Ross-Sheriff F, eds. *Social Work Practice with Asian Americans: Sage Sourcebooks for the Human Services Series*. Vol. 20. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. 1992; 213-226.

¹² This term refers to those who trace their origins to the countries or diasporic communities of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

¹³ Raj A, Silverman J. Intimate partner violence against South-Asian women in Greater Boston. *J Am Med Women's Assoc*. 2002; 57(2): 111-114.

¹⁴ Raj A, Silverman J. Unpublished data.

¹⁵ Tran CG. Domestic violence among Vietnamese refugee women: Prevalence, abuse characteristics, psychiatric symptoms, and psychosocial factors [dissertation]. Boston, MA: Boston University; 1997.

¹⁶ McDonnell KA, Abdulla SE. *Project AWARE*. Washington, DC: Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project; 2001. Available at: www.DVRP.org

- © 67% "occasionally" experienced some form of domination/controlling/ psychological abuse; 48% experienced it "frequently" in the past year.
- □ 32% experienced physical or sexual abuse at least "occasionally" during the past year.
- Of the 23 women who reported not having experienced intimate partner violence themselves, more than half (64%) said they knew of an Asian friend who had experienced intimate partner violence. Smaller proportions of respondents reported that their mothers (9%) and sisters (11%) had experienced intimate partner violence.
- □ 28.5% of the survey participants knew of a woman who was being abused by her in-laws.

4. Service Utilization

- Berkeley, California: Over 1,000 telephone requests per year were made to Narika, a Bay Area domestic violence help line for South Asian women in 1999 and 2000. Callers included victims of domestic violence, friends and family members calling on the victim's behalf, and other service agencies/providers requesting information and assistance¹⁷.
- San Francisco, California: Over 4,000 Asian women and children from across the country utilize a range of services provided by Asian Women's Shelter each year¹⁸. AWS turns away 75% of the battered women who call for shelter because of lack of shelter space¹⁹.
- □ Chicago, Illinois: In 2000, 28 API women used shelter services at Apna Ghar, a domestic violence program for South Asian women in Chicago; 106 received legal assistance, counseling, and case management services; and 253 API women called Apna Ghar's hotline. In 2001, the numbers were 31, 142, and 230 respectively²⁰.
- □ New Jersey: 160 South Asian women received services between July 1996 and June 1997 from Manavi, a service program and shelter for South Asian women. The number of women receiving assistance increased to 252 (July 1997 June 1998) and 258 (July 1998 June 1999)²¹.
- □ New York: Over 3,000 women who are abused by their partners (including being bitten, punched, stabbed, shot, threatened with knives or guns, or denied food and money) call the New York Asian Women's Center for help annually²².
- □ Austin, Texas: Saheli (a domestic violence program for South Asian women) received 388 calls in 2000 and assisted 68 cases, providing counseling, referral, and advocacy²³.

¹⁷ Narika. Changing Voices. Newsletter, 2001; 1(1). Available at: www.narika.org.

¹⁸ Asian Women's Shelter: Unpublished internal statistics.

¹⁹ Campbell DW, Masaki B, Torress S. Water on rock: Changing domestic violence perceptions in the African American, Asian American and Latino communities. In: Klein E, Campbell J, Soler E, Ghez M, eds. *Ending Domestic Violence: Changing Public Perceptions/Halting the Epidemic*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 1997; 64-87.

²⁰ Email message from K. Sujata, Executive Director, Apna Ghar: March 18, 2002.

²¹ Dasgupta SD. Charting the course: An overview of domestic violence in the South Asian community in the United States. *J Soc Distress Homeless*. 2000; 9(3): 173-185.

²² Eng P. Domestic violence in Asian/Pacific Island communities: A public health issue. *Health Issues for Women of Color: A Cultural Diversity Perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 1995:78-88.

²³ Email message from Saheli: March 12, 2002.

5. Attitudes toward Domestic Violence

In a telephone survey of a national random sample of women and men conducted in 1992 by the Family Violence Prevention Fund of San Francisco where 18% of the respondents were Asian (156 Asian women, 161 Asian men)²⁴:

□ Asian women tended to be less likely to categorize various interactions as domestic violence than women of other ethnic groups.

The Asian Task Force study found that 25:

- Older Chinese respondents were more tolerant of the use of force and more likely to justify a husband's use of violence against his wife. Immigration status and level of education were not associated with the likelihood of justifying the husband's use of violence against his wife.
- The average score for all respondents on male privilege was 8.5 out of 24; for Vietnamese respondents it was 12 out of 24 (the highest score amongst the different ethnic groups in the study). The higher the score, the more an individual believes in male privilege. The average score of 8.5 is a low score indicating that overall, respondents do not believe that a husband has the right to discipline his wife, can expect to have sex with his wife whenever he wants it, is the ruler of his home, or that some wives deserve beatings.
- Cambodian participants of a focus group felt that "surviving the genocide in their native country has left people more vulnerable to stress and depression, which may contribute to domestic violence" in their community.

In a population-based study of a random sample of 211 women of Japanese descent living in Los Angeles in 1995:

□ 71% of the respondents reported that their Japanese background influenced their experiences with their partner's violence. They identified the following aspects of their Japanese backgrounds as having influenced the way they responded to their partners' violence: conflict avoidance, the value of endurance, acceptance of male domination, the value of collective family welfare, and an aversion to seeking help²⁶.

In a telephone survey of 31 randomly selected Chinese men and women in the San Gabriel Valley in Los Angeles County²⁷:

- Respondents (men and women) overall did not agree with the use of domestic violence as an effective means of solving problems.
- Respondents (15 women and 16 men) tended to agree that physical and sexual aggression (e.g., slapping, pushing, throwing objects, and insisting a spouse have sex) was an indicator of violence between spouses. However, they were less likely to consider psychological aggression or financial abuse as indicators of violence between spouses.
- Respondents were more likely to implicate individual factors (e.g., inability to control one's temper, inability to talk to one's spouse) and environmental factors (e.g., job pressure, acculturative stress, alcohol) as the causes of domestic violence; than structural

²⁴ Klein E, Campbell J, Soler E, Ghez M, eds. *Ending Domestic Violence: Changing Public Perceptions/Halting the Epidemic*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 1997: 79.

²⁵ Yoshioka and Dang. Asian Family Violence Report.

²⁶ Yoshihama M. Reinterpreting strength and safety in a socio-cultural context: Dynamics of domestic violence and experiences of women of Japanese descent. *Children Youth Services Rev.* 2000; 22: 207-229.

²⁷ Yick AG, Agbayani-Siewert P. Perceptions of domestic violence in a Chinese American community. *J Interpersonal Violence*. 1997; 12(6): 832-846.

factors (e.g., women working outside the home, breakdown of traditional family roles) and cultural factors (e.g., women's lower status in Chinese culture, belief that men are the heads of households).

In a study of 20 Vietnamese women (10 were known to be in physically abusive relationships and another ten were not known to be battered) conducted by Bui and Morash in 1999 (Bui and Morash study, hereinafter)²⁸:

□ 70% of the women reported that their husbands believed that men should dominate women, while 90% of the women believed that men and women should have equal rights in the family.

In the NAWHO study of 336 Asian American women aged 18-3429:

□ 18% of the respondents did not believe that rape occurs between people who are in a relationship.

6. Attitudes to Seeking Help/Intervention

In the Project AWARE study³⁰:

- □ 45% of the Asian women surveyed reported that they or other Asian women they knew to be abused did "nothing" to protect themselves from abusive events. (The report's authors noted that "Doing nothing can serve as a strategy of resistance in an attempt [to] avoid or lessen abuse.")
- □ 34% sought help from their family, and 32% sought help from friends. Only 16% reported that they or the person they knew to be abused, called the police and 9% actually obtained help from an agency.
- □ Although the majority of women (78%) who confided in someone about their experience of abuse felt better afterwards, 35% indicated that they felt ashamed.

In the Asian Task Force study³¹:

- □ 29% of Korean respondents said a woman being abused should not tell anyone about abuse; higher than the rates for Cambodian (22%), Chinese (18%), South Asian (5%), and Vietnamese (9%) respondents.
- □ 82% of South Asian respondents indicated that a battered woman should turn to a friend for help, whereas only 44% of Cambodian, 37% of Chinese, 41% of Korean, and 29% of Vietnamese respondents agreed with this statement.
- □ 74% of South Asian respondents supported a battered woman calling the police for help, whereas 47% of Cambodian, 52% of Chinese, 27% of Korean, and 49% of Vietnamese respondents agreed.

The Raj and Silverman study of 160 South Asian women found that³²:

□ 11% of South Asian women reporting intimate partner violence indicated receiving counseling support services for domestic abuse.

²⁸ Bui HN, Morash M. Domestic violence in the Vietnamese immigrant community: An exploratory study. *Violence Against Women*. 1999; 5(7): 769-795.

²⁹ National Asian Women's Health Organization. Silence, Not an Option!

³⁰ Bui HN, Morash H. Domestic Violence in the Vietnamese immigrant community: An exploratory study. *Violence Against Women*. 1999; 5(7):769-795.

³¹ Yoshioka and Dang. Asian Family Violence Report.

³² Raj and Silverman. Intimate partner violence against South-Asian women in Greater Boston.

In the Yoshihama study of Japanese immigrant and Japanese American women³³:

- U.S.-born respondents, compared to their Japan-born counterparts, were more likely (83% vs. 43%) to seek help from friends; to confront their partners (86% vs. 68%); and to find these methods more effective.
- □ Japan-born respondents were more likely to minimize the seriousness of the situation as a strategy to cope with abuse (90%) than U.S.-born respondents (58%); and rated this strategy as more helpful than did the U.S.-born respondents (3.1 vs. 2.3 on a four-point scale).
- □ Although only 19% of women who had experienced partner violence (both U.S.-born Japan-born respondents) used counseling, those who used counseling reported a high rate of satisfaction with it (3.3 out of 4 points).

In the Bui and Morash study 34:

☐ Most women (90%) did not view family violence as a private matter and favored governmental intervention. (Despite this belief, few women called the police when they were abused due to language barriers and fears of husbands being arrested and subjected to racial discrimination.)

7. Abuse Witnessed or Experienced as a Child

In the Asian Task Force study³⁵:

- □ 69% of the overall respondents reported being hit regularly as children. The proportion of respondents who were hit regularly by their parents as children varied slightly across ethnic groups: Cambodian (70%), Chinese (61%), Koreans (80%), South Asians (79%), and Vietnamese (72%).
- 27% of the Vietnamese respondents witnessed their fathers regularly hit their mothers; whereas 15% saw their mothers regularly hit their fathers.
- □ 30% of Korean respondents reported witnessing their fathers regularly hit their mothers, and 17% reported that their mothers regularly hit their fathers.

In the Yoshihama study of Japanese immigrant and Japanese American women in Los Angeles County:

- 13% of the respondents reported having experienced physical and/or sexual abuse during childhood³⁶.
- 36.4% of the first generation respondents (those born in Japan and immigrated to the U.S. after age 13), and 13.2% of the 1.5, 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation respondents, reported that their father abused their mother ³⁷.

³³ Yoshihama M. Battered women's coping strategies and psychological distress: Differences by immigration status. *Am J Community Psychol.* 2002; 30(3): 429-452.

³⁴ Bui and Morash. Domestic violence in the Vietnamese immigrant community.

³⁵ Yoshioka and Dang. Asian Family Violence Report.

³⁶ Yoshihama and Horrocks. Post-traumatic stress symptoms and victimization among Japanese American women.

³⁷ Yoshihama M. Model minority demystified: Emotional costs of multiple victimizations in the lives of women of Japanese descent. *J Hum Behav in the Soc Environ*. 2001; 3(3/4): 201-224.

In the Shimtuh study in the San Francisco Bay Area³⁸:

□ 33% of the respondents (women and men) recalled their fathers hitting their mothers at least once.

8. Domestic Violence-Related Homicides

- □ 31% (16 out of 51 cases) of women killed in domestic violence-related deaths from 1993-1997 in California's Santa Clara County were Asian³⁹, although Asians comprised only 17.5% of the county's population.
- □ 13% of women and children killed in domestic violence-related homicides in Massachusetts in 1991 were Asian, although Asians represented only 2.4% of the population in the state⁴⁰.
- □ 6% of women killed by their abusers in Massachusetts in 1998 were Asian, a four-year low. During the same year requests for services to the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence increased by 36%⁴¹.
- □ 63 separate reports of murder and attempted murder of South Asian women in the U.S. and Canada between 1981-2000 were compiled from ethnic and local newspapers (not an exhaustive compilation). Although the majority of victims were women, the women's children and relatives were also killed in these domestic-violence related homicides, some of which were murder-suicides⁴².
- 7 domestic violence related homicides were reported in 2000 in Hawaii⁴³. According to the Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and Legal Hotline, 5 of the 7 women killed were of Filipina descent⁴⁴; a disproportionately high rate given that Filipinos represent only 12.3% of the total population of Hawaii⁴⁵.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Dr. Mieko Yoshihama, the intellectual force whose commitment to contextualize data imbues the presentation of these statistics.

³⁸ Shimtuh, Korean American Domestic Violence Program. Korean American Community of the Bay Area Domestic Violence Needs Assessment Report.

³⁹ Santa Clara County Death Review Sub-Committee of the Domestic Violence Council, *Death Review Committee Final Report*. San Jose: Author; 1997.

⁴⁰ Tong BQM. A haven without barriers: Task force is seeking a refuge for battered Asian women. *Boston Globe*. November 9, 1992; 17.

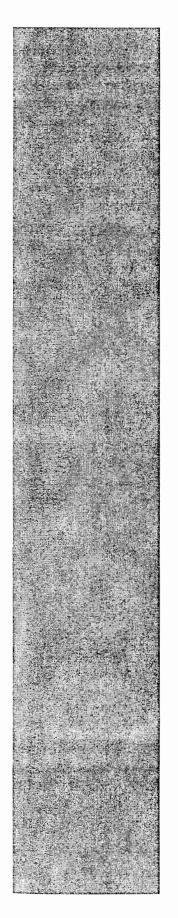
⁴¹ Malone H. Asian task force encouraged by drop in domestic abuse deaths, group will hold its sixth annual fund-raiser today. *Boston Globe*. Sept. 25, 1999: B3.

⁴² Dasgupta SD. Data presented at the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, National Summit 2002, San Francisco. Summit proceedings will be available in January 2003.

⁴³ Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence. *Domestic Violence Deaths in Hawaii*, 2000. Honolulu, HI: Author; 2001.

⁴⁴ Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and Legal Hotline, Honolulu, HI. Email from Jennifer Rose: April 3, 2002.

⁴⁵ The Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism. *The State of Hawaii Data Book* 2000. Honolulu, HI: Author; 2000. Available at: http://www.hawaii.gov/dbedt/db00/index.html



Asian & Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Agencies & Programs

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JANUARY 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Continental U.S.

Apna Ghar, Chicago IL

Arab American Family Services, Chicago IL

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS),
Dearborn MI

ASHA: Asian Women's Self-Help Association, West Bethesda MD

Asians Against Domestic Abuse

Asian Americans for Community Involvement (ACCI), San Jose CA

Asian American Community Services, Columbus OH

Asian Family Center, Portland OR

Asian Human Services, Chicago IL

Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC), Los Angeles CA

Asian Pacific Family Resource Center, San Jose CA

Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project, Washington, DC

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach, San Francisco CA

Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, San Francisco CA

Asian and Pacific Islander Women & Family Safety Center, Seattle WA

Asian and Pacific Psychological Services, Oakland CA

Asian Pacific Women's Center, Los Angeles CA

Asian Perinatal Associates, San Francisco CA

Asian Resources, Sacramento CA

Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence, Boston MA

Asian Women's Shelter, San Francisco CA

Asian Women United of Minnesota (AWUM), St. Paul MN

Black, Indian, Hispanic & Asian Women in Action (BIHA), Minneapolis MN

Boat People S.O.S., Falls Church VA

Cameron House, San Francisco CA

Center for the Pacific Asian Family, Inc. (CPAF), Los Angeles CA

Chaya, Seattle WA

Chinatown Service Center, Los Angeles CA

Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, New York NY

Coalition of Women from Asia & the Middle East (CWAME), Los Angeles CA

Community Youth Center, San Francisco CA

Daya, Houston TX

HAWA: Hmong American Women's Association, Milwaukee WI

HAWA: Hmong American Women's Association, Madison WI

Hmong/American Friendship Association, Inc., Milwaukee WI

International Institute of the East Bay, Oakland CA

KAN-WIN: Korean American Women in Need, Chicago IL

Kiran: Domestic Violence & Crisis Services for South Asians in North Carolina,

Chapel Hill NC

Khmer Health Advocates, West Hartford CT

Korean American Family Service Center, Los Angeles CA

Korean American Family Service Center, New York NY

Lao Family Community Center, St. Paul MN

Little Tokyo Service Center/Asian Women's Center, Los Angeles CA

Maitri, Sunnyvale CA

Manavi, Inc., New Brunswick, NJ

Michigan Asian Indian Family Center, Farmington Hills MI

My Sister's House, Sacramento CA

NISWA: National Islamic Society of Women of America, Lomita CA

Narika, Berkeley CA

New Visions: Alliance to End Violence in Asian/Asian American Communities,

Ann Arbor, MI

New York Asian Women's Center, New York, NY

Peaceful Families Project, Seattle WA

Pragati, Inc., Forest Hills NY

Raksha, Inc., Atlanta GA

Saheli, Austin TX

Saheli, Boston MA

Sakhi for South Asian Women, New York, NY

SEWAA: Service and Education for Women Against Abuse, Philadelphia PA

Shimtuh, Oakland CA

Sneha, West Hartford CT

South Asian Network (SAN), Artesia, CA

South Asian Women's Empowerment and Resource Alliance (SAWERA), Portland OR

Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC), San Diego CA

Western Regional Asian Pacific Agency (WRAP), Los Angeles CA

Hawai'i

Pacific Islands (under compilation)

AGENCIES & PROGRAMS IN THE CONTINENTAL U.S.

Agencies* refers to organizations that focus entirely on domestic violence services and advocacy.

Programs refers to domestic violence programs in organizations that have other programs (e.g., medical services, youth counseling, etc.)

Apna Ghar, Inc.*

4753 North Broadway, Suite 518, Chicago, IL 60640

773-334-0173 (office)

E-mail: info@apnaghar.org Web: http://www.apnaghar.org

A domestic violence shelter and support organization that primarily serves South Asian women and children. (Languages: several South Asian ones)

Arab American Family Services

6441 S. Pulaski Rd. Suite 214, Chicago, IL 60629

773-767-3025 (office), 773-767-3027 (fax)

Provides information and referral to Arab and Muslim women and children regarding domestic violence, hate crimes, and discrimination. (Languages: Arabic)

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)

2651 Saulino Court, Dearborn, MI 48120

313-842-7010 (office), 313-842-5150 (fax)

Web: http://www.accesscommunity.org

ACCESS Community Health Center is the largest and most comprehensive Arab American community-based health and medical center in North America. It provides social services, mental health and family counseling, health services, employment and training, cultural arts, and domestic violence prevention and intervention.

ASHA, Asian (Women's) Self-Help Association*

P.O. Box 34303, West Bethesda, MD 20827

301-369-0134 (office) or 888-417-2742 (toll-free)

E-mail: AshaInc@aol.com

Web: http://www.umiacs.umd.edu/users/sawweb/sawnet/asha.html

A South Asian women's organization in the Washington D.C.- Baltimore metropolitan area providing support, information and guidance to women from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan. Services include referrals to short-term shelter, temporary housing, legal services, and medical and educational assistance. (Languages: several South Asian languages)

Asians Against Domestic Abuse*

P.O. Box 420776, Houston, TX 77242-0776

713-339-8300 (office)

E-mail: info@aadainc.org Web: www.aadainc.org

Works to prevent violence against women and to strengthen and promote equal and healthy family relations within the Asian community through public awareness, support systems, community empowerment, and collaborations with organizations sharing similar goals. (Languages: Arabic, Bengali, Hindi, Malayalam, Mandarin, Punjabi, Taiwanese, Vietnamese, and Urdu)

Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI)* Asian Women's Home (Shelter)

2400 Moorpark Avenue, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95128

408-975-2730 (office), 408-975-2739 (crisis line)

E-mail: info@aaci.org Web: www.aaci.org

Offers a range of linguistically and culturally competent services to battered women and their children, including shelter at Asian Women's Home. (Languages: Cambodian, Cantonese, Japanese, Laotian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese)

Asian American Community Services

57 Jefferson Avenue Suite 5, Columbus, OH 43215

614-220-4023 (office)

E-mail: asiancomsv@juno.com

Web: http://www.scu.edu/SCU/Programs/Diversity/asamcomm.html

Provides court advocacy; education and prevention; cultural competency training for service providers; interpreter training; self-defense classes; and community education. (Languages: Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean)

Asian Family Center

10301 NE Gleason Street, Portland, OR 97220

503-234-1541 (office), 503-234-1259 (fax)

E-mail: irco@mail.irco.org Web: http://www.irco.org/afc.htm

The mission of the Asian Family Center is to provide and promote culturally relevant services to pan-Asian families and to contribute rich cultural values and unique experiences to all communities, through partnerships with others, in order to enhance the overall quality of community life.

Asian Human Services

4753 North Broadway Suite 700, Chicago, IL 60640

773-309-0525 (office), 773-728-4751 (fax)

E-mail: info@asianhumanservices.org Web: www.asianhumanservices.org

Provides services such as mental health counseling, health care, advocacy, legal assistance for domestic violence, youth mentoring, and employment guidance for the Asian American community.

Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC)

1145 Wilshire Blvd, 2nd Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017

213-977-7500 (office), 213-977-7500 (fax)

Web: http://www.apalc.org

The largest organization in southern California that provides the Asian and Pacific Islander community with multilingual, culturally sensitive services and legal education. Programs include immigrant welfare, family law and domestic violence. (Languages: Cantonese, Mandarin, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese)

Asian Pacific Family Resource Center

625-F Wool Creek Dr., San Jose, CA 95112

408-299-1500 (office), 408-298-2482 (fax)

Web: http://www.scu.edu/diversity/apf.html

The Asian Pacific Family Resource Center provides a variety of services in Asian languages, including ESL, family and parent support groups, youth leadership, Living Without Violence Program and mental health counseling. (Languages: Tagalog, Cambodian, Samoan, Hindi, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Korean.)

Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP)*

P.O. Box 14268, Washington, DC 20044

202-464-4477 (office)

E-mail: info@dvrp.org Web: http://www.dvrp.org

Provides direct services to battered women and their children, works collaboratively with service providers serving API communities, and conducts a public awareness and education campaign on domestic violence. Encourages community dialogue between Chinese, Koreans and Vietnamese.

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach

Formerly, Nihonmachi Legal Outreach (NLO)

1188 Franklin Street Suite 202

1212 Broadway, Suite 400

San Francisco, CA 94109-6852

Oakland, CA 94612

415-567-6255 (office)

510-251-2846 (office)

E-mail: info@apilegaloutreach.org Web: http://www.apilegaloutreach.org

Non-profit law firm that focuses on family law; immigration; and domestic violence, particularly elder abuse. It has a domestic violence prevention program for API youth. (Languages: Cantonese, Tagalog, Mandarin, Cambodian, Thai, Vietnamese, Japanese, and Korean)

Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence*

450 Sutter Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94108

415-568-3315 (office), 415-954-9999 (fax)

E-mail: apidvinst@apiahf.org Web: www.apiahf.org/programs.DV/html

A national network and resource center publishing information, providing technical assistance, and collecting data about violence against women in API communities.

Asian and Pacific Islander Women & Family Safety Center*

P.O. Box 14047, Seattle, WA 98114

206-467-9976 (office), 206-467-1072 (fax)

E-mail: apiwfsc@apialliance.org

Programs include community organizing; multi-lingual access model; safe housing alternatives; domestic violence information; and referral, training, and technical assistance. (Languages: Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean)

Asian Pacific Psychological Services

431 30th Street, Ste. 6A, Oakland, CA 94609 510-835-2777 (office), 510-835-0164 (fax)

E-mail: info@appweb.org Web: http://www.appsweb.org

A community-based mental health agency that provides linguistically and culturally competent mental health services to the Asian Pacific community, particularly immigrant and refugee families. The APPS Family Violence Management and Prevention Program focuses on the following components: prevention and education (through counseling and education for children and youth); and services for survivors (crisis intervention, individual and family therapy, medication treatment, case management). (Languages: Cantonese, Mien, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Korean, and Japanese)

Asian Pacific Women's Center*

1145 Wilshire Blvd, 1st Floor, Suite 102, Los Angeles, CA 90017

213-250-2977 (office), 213-250-2949 (fax)

E-mail: E-mail@apwcla.org Web: http://www.apwcla.org

Services include affordable housing for domestic violence survivors, child care for residents, life skills, multilingual counselors and case managers, support groups and individual counseling, job training and career development, and legal and medical referrals. Dedicated to the development of affordable, transitional housing for women and children who are survivors of domestic violence.

Asian Perinatal Advocates

San Francisco General Hospital

1001 Potrero Ave, Bldg 40, Room 4101

San Francisco, CA 94110

415-206-5450 (office)

415-206-4778 (fax)

Family Support Center (Chinatown)

655 Clay Street

San Francisco, CA 94111

415-616-9797 (office)

415-616-9797 (fax)

E-mail: asianperinataladvocates@hotmail.com

Web: http://www.apasfgh.org/about/locations/locations.html

APA's mission is to promote healthy Asian/Pacific Islander children and families by providing family support services to prevent child abuse and domestic violence. APA is the only hospital-based agency offering in-home family support services specifically for Asian Pacific Islander families and children.

Asian Resources

5709 Stockton Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95824 916-454-1892 (office), 916-454-1895 (fax)

E-mail: admin@asianresources.org Web: http://www.asianresources.org

A social service organization focusing on the employment and training needs of the Asian immigrant population. Programs include ESL instruction, assistance promoting education in schools to reach high-risk youth, citizenship preparation classes, and youth and family violence prevention/intervention.

Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence *

P.O. Box 120108, Boston, MA 02112

617-338-2350 (office), 617-338-2355 (hotline), 617-338-2354 (fax)

E-mail: asiandv@atask.org Web: http://www.atask.org

An Asian battered women's shelter that conducts outreach, education, violence prevention, counseling, and advocacy programming aimed at ending domestic violence. Resources are specifically directed toward Asian families, providing much-needed multicultural and multilingual programs and information. (Languages: Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean)

Asian Women's Shelter*

3543 18th Street, Suite 19, San Francisco, CA 94110 415-751-7110 (office), 877-751-0880 (crisis line), 415-751-0806 (fax)

Website: www.sfaws.org

A shelter program for battered Asian women and their children. It has a comprehensive multilingual, multicultural program: which includes a women's component, a children's component, queer Asian women's services, citywide language access - the Multi-Lingual Access Model (MLAM), a volunteer program, and community education. AWS partners with several community-based agencies to offer a comprehensive network of resources; and to prevent domestic violence through community education and awareness. (Languages: Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Indonesian, Mien, Punjabi, Telegu, Hindi, Tamil, Thai, and Tagalog)

Asian Women United of Minnesota (AWUM)*

1954 University Ave, Suite 4, St. Paul, MN 55104

651-646-2118 (office), 612-724-8823 (crisis line), 651-646-2284 (fax)

E-mail: awum@awum.org Web: http://awum.org

Provides advocacy services for Asian battered women of all ethnic groups, a 24-hour multilingual crisis line, and community education on domestic violence. (Languages: Filipino, Hindi, Hmong, Lao, Thai, Vietnamese)

Black, Indian, Hispanic and Asian Women in Action (BIHA)

1830 James Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55417

612-521-2986 (office), 612-529-6745 (fax)

Email: info@biha.org Web: http://www.biha.org/

Provides advocacy, information, education and referral for women of color and their families on social issues and the impact these issues have on family stability. (Languages: Vietnamese)

Boat People, S.O.S.

6400 Arlington Blvd., Suite 640, Falls Church VA 22042-2336

703-538-2190 (office), 703-538-2191 (fax)

Email: bpsos@bpsos.org Web: http://www.bpsos.org

A Vietnamese community-based organization. with a program for battered women and victims of trafficking. (Languages: Vietnamese)

Cameron House

920 Sacramento, San Francisco, CA 94108

415-781-0401 (office), 415-781-0605 (fax)

E-mail: cameronhouse@cameronhouse.org Web: http://www.cameronhouse.org

A program for Asian battered women, that provides counseling, interpretation, legal information, case management, and community education. A mission of the Presbyterian Church. (Languages: Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Toishan, and Shanghaisen)

Center for the Pacific Asian Family, Inc. (CPAF)*

543 N. Fairfax Avenue #108, Los Angeles, CA 90036-1771

323-653-4045 (office), 323-653-4042 (hotline)

Services include 24-hour domestic violence/sexual assault hotline; and confidential emergency and transitional shelters for women and children who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. Services also include crisis counseling, case management, victim advocacy, TRO assistance, information and referral. (Languages: Cambodian, Cantonese, Tagalog, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Taiwanese, Thai, Vietnamese, and other Pacific-Asian languages)

Chaya*

P.O. Box 12917, Seattle, WA 98111-4917

206-568-7576 (office), 877-922-4292 (helpline), 206-568-7576 (fax)

E-mail: chaya@oz.net Web: http://chayaseattle.org

Chaya's mission is to serve South Asian women in crisis, specifically victims of domestic violence, and to increase awareness of domestic violence in the South Asian community. Provides peer support and counseling; information; advocacy; and referrals to shelters, medical clinics, legal and immigration services and South Asian service providers. (Languages: several South Asian ones)

Chinatown Service Center

767 N. Hill Street Suite 400, Los Angeles, CA 90012

213-808-1700 (office), 213-680-0787 (fax)

Web: http://www.aan.net/comm/csc.htm

Services include a family health care clinic, as well as a transitional shelter and counseling services for batterers. (Languages: Cambodian, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese)

Coalition for Asian American Children and Families

120 Wall St, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10005

212-809-4675 (office), 212-785-4601 (fax)

Email: cacf@cacf.org Web: http://www.cacf.org/

Advocates for social policies and programs which support Asian American children and families, with a focus on giving service providers culturally sensitive training and resources.

Coalition of Women from Asia and the Middle East (CWAME)

3450 Wilshire Blvd, #108, Box 98, Los Angeles, CA 90010

310-815-9968 (office)

E-mail: cwame@cwame.org Web: http://www.kamilat.org/network.html

Provides information and referrals to abused Middle Eastern and South Asian women.

Community Youth Center

1693 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

415-775-2636 (office), 415-775-1345 (fax)

Email: cyc@cycsf.org Web: http://cycsf.org

Programs include counseling services for intimate partner violence, drug education and prevention services, such as the Young Asian Women's Domestic Violence Prevention Project.

Daya*

P.O. Box 571774, Houston, TX 77257

713-914-1333 (office), 281-416-7980 (fax)

Email: info@dayahouston.org Web: www.dayahouston.org

Offers peer support, referrals, transportation, legal advocacy, outreach/education to South Asian women. (Languages: several South Asian languages)

HAWA: Hmong American Women's Association

2414 West Vliet Street

Milwaukee, WI 53205

414-342-0858 (office)

414- 342-0860 (fax)

E-mail: hawamlmoua10@hotmail.com

601 Bayview

Madison, WI 53715

608-256-7808 (office)

608-256-2386 (fax)

E-mail: refugeeproject@hotmail.com

Services to the Hmong community include domestic violence education and intervention. (Languages: Laotian, Hmong)

Hmong/American Friendship Association, Inc. Refugee Family Strengthening Project 3824 West Vliet Street, Milwaukee, WI 53208 414-344-6575 (office), 414-344-6581 (fax)

Web: www.hmongamer.org

Provides a multitude of services for the Hmong community in the greater Milwaukee area, including domestic violence education and intervention. (Languages: Laotian, Hmong)

International Institute of the East Bay 297 Lee Street, Oakland, CA 94610 510-451-2846 (office), 510-465-3392 (fax)

Email: info@iieb.org Web: http://www.iieb.org/res_women.htm

Provides essential social and legal services to immigrant and refugee communities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, and resources and referral services for immigrant battered women.

KAN-WIN: Korean American Women in Need*

P.O. Box 59133, Chicago, IL 60659

773-583-1392 (office), 773-583-0880 (hotline), 773-583-2445 fax

Email: KANWIN@Mcs.net Web: http://www.angelfire.com/il/kanwin/

Provides supportive listening, counseling and referrals by trained Korean-speaking volunteers through its crisis hotline; guidance through various legal, medical, public aid and social service procedures; and English translation for Korean-speaking clients. Also provides refuge; information on domestic violence, sexual assault and other women's issues to the community; and comprehensive case management services to Korean American victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. (Languages: Korean)

Kiran: Domestic Violence and Crisis Services for South Asians in North Carolina* P.O. Box 3513, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3513 919-865-4006 (office), 866-KIRAN-INC / 866-547-2646 (crisis line)

E-mail: kiraninc@hotmail.com Web: www.kiraninc.org

Promotes the self-reliance and empowerment of South Asians in crisis through confidential services such as outreach, peer support and referrals.

Khmer Health Advocates

29 Shadow Lane, West Hartford, CT 06110

860-561-3538 (office)

E-mail: mfs47@aol.com Web: http://www.hartnet.org/khmer

A Cambodian-American mutual assistance association, providing essential health services to survivors of the Cambodian holocaust living in Connecticut and Southern New England. Serves refugees suffering from mental and physical health problems, as well as post-traumatic social problems, including substance abuse, domestic violence, formation of youth gangs, and suicide. (Languages: Khmer)

Korean American Family Service Center, Los Angeles

3727 West 6th Street #509, Los Angeles CA 90020

213-389-6755 (phone), 213-389-5172 (fax)

Email: kafsc@hotmail.com Web: www.safenetwork.net

Counseling and advocacy for battered women, parenting classes, 52-week batterers intervention program, anger management classes, substance abuse counseling. (Languages: Korean)

Korean American Family Service Center, New York

P.O. Box 541429, Flushing, NY 11354

718-539-6139 (phone), 718-460-3695 (fax)

Email: contact@kafsc.org Web: http://www.kafsc.org

Promotes healthy relationships and addresses domestic violence issues in Korean American families in the New York metropolitan area through a wide range of bilingual programs and services.

Lao Family Community Center

320 West University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104

651-221-0069 (office), 651-221-0276 (fax)

E-mail: admin@laofamily.org Web: http://www.laofamily.org

Offers a domestic violence service program for the Lao community, in addition to a range of health programs. (Languages: Hmong)

Little Tokyo Service Center/Asian Women's Center

(Nikkei Family Counseling Program/Domestic Violence Project)

231 E. Third Street, Suite G104, Los Angeles, CA 90013

213-473-1602 (office), 213-473-1633 (hotline), 213-473-1601 (fax)

E-mail: a3m@ltsc.org Web: http://www.ltsc.org

Provides transitional shelter (up to 2 years) and batterers' counseling services. (Languages: Cantonese, Japanese, Mandarin)

Maitri*

P.O. Box 60111, Sunnyvale, CA 94086

888-8-MAITRI or 888-862-4874 (toll free helpline)

E-mail: maitri@maitri.org Web: http://www.maitri.org

Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, Maitri helps South Asian women facing domestic violence, emotional abuse or family conflict. The agency provides peer support and referrals to legal help, emergency shelters and counselors. (Languages: several South Asian languages)

Manavi, Inc.*

Ashiana (Shelter)

P.O. Box 3103, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

732-435-1414 (office), 732-435-1411 (fax)

E-mail: manavi@worldnet.att.net Web: http://www.manavi.org

A non-profit organization for women who trace their cultural heritage to Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Manavi's goal is to increase awareness of women's rights in society and encourage social change to end all violence against them. Assists battered women with referrals, advocacy, legal and translation services. It also operates *Ashiana*, a transitional home for women and children. (Languages: several South Asian languages)

Michigan Asian Indian Family Center

28650 11 Mile Road, Suite 218, Farmington Hills, MI 48336

248-477-4985 (office), 1-888-664-8624 (hotline)

Email: info@maifs.org Web: http://www.maifs.org

Provides shelter referrals and helps families facing crisis situations, such as family, drug and alcohol abuse, in the Detroit metropolitan area. Services available include crisis counseling for battered spouses, children and parents, temporary shelter for abused individuals, and language interpreters and translators.

My Sister's House (To open in 2003)*

2251 Florin Road Suite 108, Sacramento, CA 95822

916-424-8960 (office), 916-424-1077 (fax)

Provides a culturally and linguistically sensitive shelter program that addresses the needs of battered Asian and Pacific Islander women and their children. Its goals include eliminating domestic violence through the promotion of economic, social, and political empowerment of women and creating a violence free environment.

Narika*

The state of the s

P.O. Box 14014, Berkeley, CA 94712

510-540-0754 (office), 1-800-215-7308 (helpline), 510-540-0201 (fax)

E-mail: narika@narika.org Web: http://www.narika.org

A non-profit organization for and of women who trace their origins to the South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan. Narika provides support, information, help, and referrals to women and children in abusive situations. (Languages: Hindi, Punjabi, Malayalam, Gujarati, Konkani, and Urdu)

New Visions: Alliance to End Violence in Asian/Asian American Communities* University of Michigan, School of Social Work
1080 S. University Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48109
734-647-6255 (office)

New Vision Alliance to End Violence in Asian/Asian American Communities is a grassroots organization aimed at creating sustainable community initiatives to address and end violence against Asian women in Southeast Michigan. By engaging Asian community members as active partners in ongoing organizing efforts, New Vision Alliance to End Violence in Asian/Asian American Communities seeks to develop and implement innovative and socioculturally relevant strategies to end violence against women and to promote the safety of Asian women. In light of the enormous diversity within the Asian community, initial organizing efforts focus on Korean and South Asian communities. As the project grows, it will include additional Asian communities.

New York Asian Women's Center*

39 Bowery PMB 375, New York, NY 10002

212-732-5230 (office), 212-587-5731 (hotline), 212-732-5230 (fax)

E-mail: contact@nyawc.org Web: http://www.nyawc.org

Works with women and children whose lives are affected by domestic violence, enabling them to live safely and independently. Provides emergency food, household goods/clothing, medical expense assistance, and transportation (for shelter residents only). Assists in filling out forms to obtain crime victim compensation and public assistance; mental health care (counseling and support groups); and adolescent/youth support for domestic violence and sexual assault. (Languages: Chinese, Japanese, and Korean)

NISWA: National Islamic Society of Women of America

P.O. Box 1403, Lomita, CA 90717

310-782-2482 (office)

E-mail: info@niswa.org Web: http://www.niswa.com

Provides shelter and counseling for battered women of the Muslim community and their children, as well as intervention and referral services. (Languages: Arabic, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, and Farsi)

Peaceful Families Project

2400 N. 45th Street #10, Seattle, WA 98103

206-634-1903 (office), 206-634-0115 (fax)

Email:cpsdv@cpsdv.org

Web: http://www.cpsdv.org/DV/Peaceful_Families_Project.htm

PFP aims to systemically change individual and community attitudes about openly discussing and attempting to address cases of domestic violence within the Muslim community by providing training in peaceful family dynamics based in the Qur'an and Hadith (Islam's two scriptural sources); violence awareness; literacy about Islamic marriage contracts (extant since the 7th century C.E.) which are equivalent to pre-nuptial agreements.

Pragati Inc.

119-45 Union Turnpike, Lower Level, Forest Hills, NY 11375

718-459-4712 (office), 718-456-1543 (fax)

Email: prgtiinc@aol.com Web: www.pragati.org

A Queens-based organization whose goal is to empower women for economic independence and self-reliance.

Raksha, Inc.*

P.O. Box 12337, Atlanta, GA 30355

404-876-0670 (office), 404-842-0725 (hotline), 404-876-4525 (fax)

E-mail: raksha@mindspring.com Web: http://www.raksha.org

Serves immigrants from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan. Works with issues that involve family violence, divorce, problems of the elderly, children's issues, and adjustment and assimilation problems of immigrants. (Languages: several South Asian ones)

Saheli, Austin*

P.O. Box 3665, 1806 S. 5th Street, Austin, TX 78764

512-703-8745 (office)

E-mail: saheli@usa.net Web: http://www.saheli-austin.org

Provides assistance to Asian women seeking help in dealing with domestic violence and abuse. (Languages: several Southeast and South Asian ones)

Saheli, Boston

P.O. Box 1345, Burlington MA 01803

866-472-4354 (helpline) OR 866-4 SAHELI

E-mail: saheli800@hotmail.com, Web: www.saheliboston.org

A women's group dedicated to helping South Asian Women in the greater Boston area. Provides a wide array of support, resources and guidance in areas of career and health, as well as cultural and family growth. Assists women with domestic crisis by providing referrals to multi-service organizations, to health and legal professionals, and to shelters. (Languages: several South Asian ones)

Sakhi for South Asian Women*

P.O. Box 20208, Greeley Square Station, New York, NY 10001-0006 212-714-9153 (office), 212-868-6741 (hotline), 212-564-8745 (fax)

E-mail: sakhiny@aol.com Web: http://www.sakhi.com

Sakhi for South Asian Women is a community-based organization committed to ending exploitation and violence against women of South Asian origin. Working to empower women, particularly survivors of domestic violence, Sakhi strives to create a voice and safe environment for all South Asian women through outreach, advocacy, leadership development, and organizing. (Languages: several South Asian languages)

SEWAA: Service and Education for Women Against Abuse P.O. Box 43622, Philadelphia, PA 19106

215-627-3922 (office)

An organization that serves South Asian women. The agency provides information on legal assistance, therapy, and shelters; provides crisis intervention, translation services and education to prevent domestic abuse. (Languages: several South Asian ones)

Shimtuh *

Korean Community Center of the East Bay

4390 Telegraph Ave, #E, Oakland, CA 94609

510-547-2360 (office), 866-744-6884 (helpline), 510-547-3258 (fax)

E-mail: general@kcceb.org Web: http://www.kcceb.org

Shimtuh's helpline provides the Korean American community with referrals for shelter, legal help, and professional counseling, assistance with social service benefits. (Language: Korean)

Sneha

P.O. Box 271650, West Hartford, CT 06127-1650

860-658-4615 (office), 800-58-SNEHA (hotline for CT only),

860-521-1562 (fax)

E-mail: sneha@sneha.org Web: www.sneha.org

Serves South Asian women in the Connecticut area in education for empowerment. Also provides a support line and information about support services. (Languages: Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, and other South Asian languages)

South Asian Network (SAN)

18000 Pioneer Blvd, Suite 101, Artesia, CA 90701

562-403-0488 (office), 800-281-8111 (helpline), 562-403-0487 (fax)

E-mail: saninfo@southasiannetwork.com Web: www.southasiannetwork.org

Community-based organization dedicated to promoting the health and empowerment of people of South Asian origin living in Southern California. Offers culturally appropriate family support services with an emphasis on ending domestic violence through system-level interventions.

South Asian Women's Empowerment and Resource Alliance (SAWERA)*

P.O. Box 91242, Portland, OR 97291

503-641-2425 (office), 503-778-7386 (helpline)

E-mail: sawera@sawera.org Web: http://www.sawera.org

Promotes the independence and dignity of South Asian women through education, empowerment and solidarity. Provides free referrals to South Asian women domestic violence victims seeking shelter, legal help, job placement, childcare, and counseling.

Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC)

4328 54th Street, San Diego, CA 92115

619-229-6725 (office), 619-235-9002 (fax)

E-mail: info@upacsd.com Web: http://www.upacsd.com

Programs include a male batterers court-ordered group, domestic violence victim services program, and temporary restraining orders.

Western Regional Asian Pacific Agency (WRAP)

8616 La Tijera Blvd, Suite 200, Los Angeles, CA 90045

310-337-1550 (office), 310-337-2805 (fax)

E-mail: info@wrapfs.org Web: http://www.wrapfs.org

Services include a batterers' treatment program. (Languages: Cambodian, Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin, Taiwanese, Thai, Tongan, and Vietnamese)

Agencies & Programs in Hawaii

Given the population of Hawai'i all its agencies and programs, by definition, serve Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asians.

The Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and Legal Hotline publishes an excellent, comprehensive Resource Directory listing agencies and programs in Hawai'i. Please contact them to obtain a copy.

Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and Legal Hotline

P.O. Box 3198, Honolulu, HI 96818

808-534-0040 (office), 808-531-3771 (hotline), 808-531-7228 (fax)

Web: www.stoptheviolence.org

The Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and Legal Hotline (DVCLH) has been working to reduce domestic abuse in Hawaii for over a decade. It is the only agency in the State whose services are uniquely designed to provide civil legal assistance and advocacy to domestic abuse victims, and whose caseload is comprised exclusively of these victims. Founded in 1990 and incorporated in 1991, DVCLH is also the only agency in the State that accepts large numbers of high risk contested divorce, temporary restraining order, post decree, and paternity cases.

Agencies & Programs in the Pacific Islands and Jurisdictions

The Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence is in the process of compiling this list. Regrettably, it is not ready at this time.

If you have changes, additions or corrections, please contact us at apidvinst@apiahf.org or 415.568.3315

Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence
450 Sutter Street, Suite 600
San Francisco, California 94108
415-568-3315 tele
415-954-9999 fax
apidvinst@apiahf.org
www.apiahf.org/programs/DV.html

The Institute is part of the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum

ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER INSTITUTE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Tel: 415.954.9988 x315 Fax: 415.954.9999 E-mail: apidvinstitute@apiahf.org 450 Sutter Street, Suite 600, San Francisco CA 94108

June 2003

Dear Colleagues:

I am very pleased to send you a copy of the proceedings from the *National Summit on Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities*. Over one hundred Asian and Pacific Islander advocates came, bringing their voices, experiences and expertise.

The proceedings are a reflection of the depth of our collective knowledge and innovation as we work towards institutional change and community transformation.

Please also find enclosed a list of our publications and a description of our new website. I invite you to visit the latter at www.apiahf.org/apidvinstitute. Please contact me at 415-568-3315 or cdabby@apiahf.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Firoza Chic Dabby Institute Director

PUBLICATIONS LIST

Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence

450 Sutter Street, Suite 600, San Francisco CA 94108

Tel: 415.954.9988 x 315 Fax: 415.954.9999

E-mail: apidvinstitute@apiahf.org Web: www.apiahf.org/apidvinstitute

- 1. *Bibliographies* of over 300 references of articles, studies, and reports on domestic violence in Asian and Pacific Islander communities
 - Reference bibliography by author
 - Reference bibliography by ethnicity
- 2. Cultural Competency Curriculum for experienced trainers
- 3. Critical Issues Series
 - Trafficking: Considerations & Recommendations for Domestic Violence Advocates
- 4. Fact Sheet on domestic violence in Asian and Pacific Islander communities compiled from recent studies and reports.
- 5. Gender Violence
 - Lifetime Spiral of Gender Violence describes the range of violence women and girls face during the course of their lifetime
 - Coiled Spring of Domestic Violence depicts the intersecting experiences of intra-familial abuse and seeking help
- 6. Innovative Strategies A report on Innovative Strategies to Address Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities: Examining Themes, Models and Interventions.
- 7. Policy Paper TANF Re-authorization and its Effects on Asian and Pacific Islander Families
- 8. Research Series on Socio-Cultural Contexts
 - *Immigrants-in-context framework: understanding the interactive influence of socio-cultural contexts* by Mieko Yoshihama, Ph.D.
- 9. Resource Directory listing Asian and Pacific Islander service agencies and programs in the country
- 10. Summit Proceedings are on the following topics
 - What does violence against women look like in API communities?
 - Cultures of patriarchy and domestic violence
 - Domestic violence related homicides
 - Children, youth, & their abused mothers
- 11. Survivors' Resolution drawn up at the Multicultural Forum in Puerto Rico, July 2001
- 12. Translated materials & glossaries of domestic violence terms; power & control wheels in Chinese, Japanese, Tagalog, Vietnamese; and copies of translated materials from API agencies

ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER INSTITUTE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

NEW WEBSITE www.apiahf.org/apidvinstitute

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

- History
- Asians and Pacific Islanders: Definitions, Identities, Groupings

GENDER VIOLENCE

Analyzing Violence against Women

- Lifetime Spiral of Gender Violence
- Coiled Spring of Domestic Violence
- Describing the kinds of violence API women face
- Ethnic-Specific Information: This section presents domestic violence statistics, translated materials, multi-media resources, and bibliographic references about Cambodians, Chinese, Filipina, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender women, South Asians, and Vietnamese.

Statistics on Domestic Violence in API Communities

- Extent of the Problem
- Fact Sheet on Domestic Violence in API Communities
- Service Utilization Rates & Outreach Activities in API Programs
- Census 2000

Organizing to End Intra-Familial Violence

- Innovative Strategies to Address Domestic Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities: Emerging Themes, Models and Interventions
- Community Organizing