



# I-TRAC Newsletter

October 2009

## Word of the Month

**Descry** dih-SKRY Transitive Verb

- To catch sight of, especially something distant or obscure; to discern.
- To discover by observation; to detect.

## Tracking Domestic Violence Homicides/Suicides

I-TRAC receives information on domestic violence homicides from a number of sources. In early 2009, the number of murders occurring across North America became so overwhelming we decided to start keeping track of who and under what circumstances the deaths were occurring. Due to the fact that I-TRAC primarily receives this information from media reports, the numbers we will provide only reflect reported cases which indicate a domestic or intimate relationship. Keeping the entries up to date is a daunting task, but we will endeavor to provide those updated stats every month, beginning with this issue.

Between January 1, 2009 and October 31, 2009:

**527** incidents involving domestic fatalities occurred.

**964** fatalities resulted from incidents of domestic violence.

**412** women were murdered by their intimate partner.

**104** children were murdered by a male father figure.

**21** men were murdered by their intimate partner.

**16** women committed suicide in conjunction with an attack on their intimate partner.

**308** men committed suicide in conjunction with an attack on their intimate partner.

**103** individuals (friends, extended family, police officers, etc.) were murdered during an incident of domestic violence.

# **Criminal Harassment or Stalking**

**Provided by: Val Campbell**

Images of famed celebrities often come to mind when we hear the term “stalking”. In Canada however, the vast majority of stalking occurs in the context of intimate relationships, while only about 12% of victims are harassed by a stranger. Indeed, the specific *Criminal Code* offence of criminal harassment was enacted August 1, 1993 as a response to the increasing violence against women, especially women leaving a marriage or intimate relationship. Although anyone can be a victim of criminal harassment, Statistics Canada data show that about 8 out of 10 victims are women, and 9 out of 10 stalkers are men.

When criminal harassment occurs in the context of an intimate relationship, the risk of violence is greater than any other form of stalking. According to the RECON (relationship and context based) typology of an “Intimate Stalker” as developed by Mohandie et. al (2006). A prior relationship of intimacy such as marriage, cohabitation, or a dating/sexual partner characterizes this type of stalker. The Intimate Stalker is considered the most potentially dangerous of stalkers (i.e., highest risk). Intimate Stalkers often have a history of violence and substance abuse. They engage in more frequent and intense pursuit behaviours and have the highest potential for violence including threats, assaults, the use of weapons and suicidality. A prior history of sexual intimacy substantially increases the Intimate Stalkers risk of violence. Many will re-offend and will do so more quickly than the other types of stalkers. Their aggression is not a product of a major mental illness, with the possible exception of clinical depression, and they may have a diagnosable personality disorder. For information on criminal harassment and safety, see: [http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/fv-vf/pub/har/har\\_e-har\\_a.pdf](http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/fv-vf/pub/har/har_e-har_a.pdf)

# Alberta – News

## Alberta Communities encouraged to recognize Family Violence Prevention Month

November is Family Violence Prevention Month. During this year's *END the Silence. STOP the Violence.* campaign, Albertans are encouraged to take action to help end the cycle of family violence. "No one should live in fear in their own homes and we all share a responsibility to stand up for those affected by family violence," said Janis Tarchuk, Minister of Children and Youth Services. "If Albertans think someone they know may be dealing with family violence, they can find out how to help by calling the Family Violence Info Line at 310-1818. Help is available in more than 170 languages, 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

As part of Alberta's commitment to safer communities, which involves nine ministries working together to support people to live safely in their homes and communities, this year's Family Violence Prevention Month focuses on providing Albertans with an increased awareness of the resources available to stop family violence and help those affected. Resources are also available to Albertans to assist with increasing public awareness and education in their communities, including information sheets, posters, postcards and translated resources. Family Violence Prevention Month takes place every November in Alberta. For more information about what you can do to *End the Silence. Stop the Violence.*, available services and supports, a listing of events happening across the province, and to access Family Violence Prevention Month tools, visit [www.familyviolence.alberta.ca](http://www.familyviolence.alberta.ca)

<http://alberta.ca/ACN/200910/2717681D5D631-F866-B3D7-C25FAC4C6BEADC94.html>

## Woman jailed for attacking ex with broom handle

Helene Gagne was handed a 30 day jail term after pleading guilty in provincial court to assault with a weapon and mischief. In exchange for the guilty plea, a charge of uttering a death threat was withdrawn. Gagne, who is originally from Quebec, was also ordered to submit a DNA sample for the national DNA databank.

Crown Prosecutor Jim Stewart said the couple began arguing while talking about getting divorced and Gagne scratched El Sayed's face with her hands and then hit him in the body with a broom handle that ended up breaking in the process. El Sayed, who suffered minor injuries to his face, neck and chest, went to police and then returned to the home with an officer after getting a phone call from Gagne saying she "wanted him to come see what she had done." Stewart told court Gagne had "trashed" the place, causing more than \$5,000 in damage by smashing furniture and strewing the contents of the cupboards on the floor.

Defence lawyer Peter Royal said Gagne and El Sayed had lived together for 14 years and have four children who are currently living in Lebanon with El Sayed's family. Royal also said El Sayed is currently on probation after being convicted of assaulting Gagne.

Court heard Gagne is also facing a charge of attempted murder after being accused of trying to run him over with a car a day later. Gagne is also facing counts of dangerous driving, uttering death threats, and breaching the conditions of her release.

<http://www.edmontonsun.com/news/edmonton/2009/10/09/11351346-sun.html>

### **Man set home on fire after fight with wife**

An Edmonton man seen calmly smoking a cigarette on the front steps of his burning rental home after a fight with his wife was found guilty of arson by a jury yesterday. Court of Queen's Bench jurors also convicted Larry Bjornerud, 55, of assault for striking his wife. A sentencing hearing was set for Jan. 18 and a pre-sentence report on Bjornerud was ordered by Justice Donna Shelley, who also allowed the arsonist to remain on bail. Crown prosecutor Jim Stewart told court he would be seeking a period of incarceration. Bjornerud had pleaded not guilty to charges of arson, damage to property and assault.

Diane McHutchion and her daughter Lindsay testified last week they saw Bjornerud smoking on the steps of the 8721 150 St. house after spotting smoke billowing out of the home as they drove by and pulled over to call 911. Lindsay McHutchion told jurors Bjornerud walked over to their car while she was talking to the 911 operator and said the house had been burning for about 30 minutes and there was no point in trying to save it. The recording of the 911 call was played in court for the jury and Bjornerud can be heard saying: "I might have lost one dog and half a cat. That's it. No people."

In his opening statement, Stewart said Bjornerud struck his then-wife Krystal while they argued at a Shopper's Drug Mart at Meadowlark Mall on Nov. 10, 2007. Bjornerud left his wife at the mall and returned to the rental house they lived in and "deliberately started the fire that destroyed that house," said Stewart. Krystal testified Bjornerud had been drunk when he assaulted her and said he repeatedly called her from the home while she waited for police.

<http://www.edmontonsun.com/news/edmonton/2009/10/28/11549281-sun.html>

### **Not guilty plea entered in murder case**

A man charged with second-degree murder in the death of his wife is pleading not guilty to the charge. Tesfai Negasi, 52, is also charged with offering an indignity to a body. In July, a man walked into EPS headquarters and told police he killed his wife. Negasi's preliminary hearing is scheduled to start June 7th, next year. He was not in court when the prelim date was set and the plea entered, Wednesday morning.

<http://www.inews880.com/Channels/Reg/LocalNews/Story.aspx?ID=1151391>

### **Gunman's ex lived in fear**

The Edmonton man charged in connection with Wednesday's hostage taking drama at the WCB headquarters is an angry crack cocaine abuse, says his fearful ex-wife. And, in a recent court-filed affidavit in support of a restraining order, Kristy Clarke, the former common-law wife of

Patrick Charles Clayton, alleges he has harassed her and vandalized her home since they split up in 2005. "I am afraid that (Clayton) will continue to send me degrading and threatening text and telephone messages," says Clarke, 32, in the May 21 affidavit. "I am so afraid that he will continue to show up at my home and damage property that I have moved permanently to a different home," she writes. "Because of (Clayton's) drug abuse and unpredictable behaviour, I am also afraid that he may harm me physically," she says. Clarke has an emergency protection order granted on May 12, but it was terminated on May 21 and replaced with a restraining order. As per the order, Clayton is not allowed to be within 200 metres of Clarke and cannot contact her in any way now subject her to family violence.

Clayton, 38, was charged by police yesterday with nine counts of unlawful confinement, six counts of pointing a firearm, possession of a dangerous weapon, careless use of a firearm, and using a firearm in the commission of an offence.

Clarke says she and Clayton lived together from 2001 until Dec. 13, 2005, and they have a six-year-old son who lives with her. Clarke alleges Clayton has admitted to her that he has used crack cocaine regularly since before 2001 and says his harassing behaviour in the past has increased when he was abusing drugs. She says he plugged the toilet of her home by studding it with their son's baby pictures. Since they separated, Clarke alleges he has come over to her home and harassed her on 10 separate occasions. Beginning in February, Clarke alleges Clayton has been leaving her harassing phone and text messages and says some of them are "insulting" and call her names like "fat, whore, ho and cow." She says she has received as many as 30 phone messages or 20 text messages in one day.

<http://www.edmontonsun.com/news/edmonton/2009/10/23/11498366-sun.html>

### **Calgary police chief says transfer of EMS to province puts investigations in peril**

Calgary police Chief Rick Hanson said officers' work is being hindered by new rules that block them from immediately getting basic information from paramedics. "It results in those things like ... where investigations are put at risk, or even more importantly, we're not made aware of a significant issue like a shooting or a knifing that occurs, or even more around domestic violence." Hanson said the provincial government is expected to bring down the wall on information sharing by March, but expressed concerns some cases will fall apart if the obstructive rules continue until then.

When Alberta Health took ambulance services in April, EMS crews were told they have to follow the Health Information Act, which prohibits release of patient information. Before that, paramedics followed the Freedom of Information Privacy Act, which allowed them to share crucial information right away.

Hanson said in one instance police officers were barred from taking photographs of a victim's injuries at a hospital. "Fortunately, there were family members there, who took it upon themselves that the photographs of the injuries were taken," said Hanson. In one incident, health officials delayed notifying firefighters, who may have been exposed to a contagious disease while helping a victim.

<http://www.calgarysun.com/news/alberta/2009/10/01/11224326-sun.html>

### **Men suffer from stalking, too**

Picture a stalker. Chances are, you conjured up a seedy-looking guy lurking around some innocent woman. Statistically, you're right --a major study found that 87 per cent of stalkers are male. But new research shows males are also victims of stalking, and that their tormentors may be female.

According to Stefanie Wigman, writing in the Summer 2009 issue of the International Journal of Men's Health, "males' victimization experiences are largely ignored in the former-intimate stalking literature, and when they are researched, the occurrences are often interpreted as less serious and of less concern than cases involving female victims."

A mid-1990s U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey of 8,000 men and 8,000 women found that one in 12 women and one in 45 men had been stalked. Experts differ on the precise definition of stalking, but to qualify, the attention has to be unwanted and persistent. For this research, a person had to be "very frightened or fear bodily harm" to be a stalking victim. The U. S. Department of Justice says stalking is behaviour that "would cause a reasonable person to fear death or serious bodily injury."

Aside from the risk of physical harm, the mental health implications of being stalked can be very serious. A paper just published in the journal Trauma, Violence and Abuse notes that "research suggests there is a link between being the victim of stalking and psychological distress." Authors Logan and Walker of the University of Kentucky add: "Stalking victims are reminded every single day of the loss of control over their lives, and they have no idea what to expect next or when the stalking might end."

Who stalks guys? The American survey found 60 per cent of the stalkers identified by male victims were also men. Restraining orders don't work for guys --81 per cent of the male stalking victims who obtained one said their stalker violated it. Males are also more likely than females (36 per cent versus 23 per cent) to be stalked by a stranger.

Researchers, including Jennifer Storey of Simon Fraser University, have been probing the reasons why stalkers do what they do. It turns out there are at least two different types of stalkers. Some are simply "lovesick," seeking "to establish or maintain close, positive relationships with victims." Those people generally don't have the characteristics of a psychopath. Then there are stalkers who have what Storey and colleagues call "boldness and coldness" and who do test as psychopathic. They "tended to show escalation in the frequency, severity and/or diversity of their stalking, they were noticeably unrepentant regarding their actions, and they selected victims with financial or employment problems." Storey writes that "it may be that psychopathic stalkers were motivated by status, using stalking as a means of (re-) establishing a sense of agency or interpersonal dominance and control, in many cases following a narcissistic injury, perceived as solely caused by the victim."

In Canadian law, stalking is called "criminal harassment" and is mentioned in section 264 of the Criminal Code. Penalties can include up to five years in prison, and certain cases of cyberstalking also qualify. If you're a victim, remember to keep a good diary of what the stalker does and says, as well as how it made you feel, and contact the police.

<http://www.canada.com/life/suffer+from+stalking/2054909/story.html#>

### **Animal shelter urges change to abuse law for pet protection**

Sarah Davies, who runs the Calgary Humane Society's violence prevention program, said anxiety over leaving beloved pets behind is a major reason that some victims don't leave their abusers. That's why the society has its own emergency shelter for pets in abusive homes. "It gives victims peace of mind that their pets are safe," she said. The 21-day service is free, but there must be a referral from a women's shelter, and it's only for household pets. Davies is launching a campaign to pressure the provincial government to change laws so judges can include animals in emergency protection orders. Presently, she said, Alberta law doesn't give judges authority to bar domestic abusers from going near family pets or farm livestock.

<http://www.calgarysun.com/news/alberta/2009/10/11/11370446-sun.html>

### **Calgary police welcome proposed law requiring health workers to report suspicious wounds**

Proposed legislation that would make it mandatory for health workers to report gunshot or stab wounds to police will help victims, says the head Calgary's police union. The proposed bill--the Gunshot and Stab Wound Mandatory Disclosure Act -- was introduced in the spring and will be heard during the fall sitting of the legislature, which starts today. If passed, health-care workers would be required to report all gunshot and stab wounds to local police, except in cases where they are accidental or self-inflicted. Under current rules, reporting is discretionary. But that can leave the victim, and staff, in danger, John Dooks said. If it passes, health workers will have to provide the patient's name, type of wound, the location of the facility or where the victim was treated by paramedics if they aren't brought to a hospital.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/Calgary+police+welcome+proposed+requiring+health+workers+report+suspicious+wounds/2144899/story.html>

### **Domestic Violence in the Workplace**

Statistics Canada (2006) estimates the annual national cost of domestic violence, including lost productivity, to be billions of dollars. With the country's highest rate of domestic assault, Alberta pays a particularly high price in terms of absenteeism, reduced productivity, decreased staff morale, and liability costs. For every workplace, a sound domestic violence policy has become the new benchmark in both risk management and employee wellness. *Everyone's Business* gives Alberta workplaces the tools to create policy and procedures for addressing the effects of domestic violence. From October-December 2009, this website and the Toolkit are being pilot-

tested across the province. Call the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters for more information or to arrange for a presentation: 780-456-7000.

<http://www.acws.ca/workplacedv/index.php>

### **Matt Logan on Threat Assessment and Officer Safety**

Any small run-in with the RCMP could have set off James Roszko, says forensic psychologist Matt Logan, a retired RCMP investigator who studied Roszko's mindset. In the days after the mass murder of four RCMP officers on March 3, 2005, Logan was called in to determine why Roszko, a man with a long history of conflict and violence, had decided to kill police officers on that particular day. He went through Roszko's personal papers and conducted interviews. Most such killers carefully select the individual they want to kill, but to Roszko the individual wasn't important, just that the target was an RCMP officer. Logan is writing a book, *Charming the Snake, Policing the Psychopath*, about how to best handle psychopaths. It will be out in 2010.

The RCMP have failed to bring in a proactive program that would help them identify and safely deal with lethal threats to justice officials, such as mass murderer James Roszko, says retired RCMP forensic psychologist Matt Logan, who developed the program in response to the Mayerthorpe massacre.

Long before the Mayerthorpe massacre of March 3, 2005, Logan and forensic psychologists had developed a general program for RCMP behavioural scientists to evaluate threatening people, those who had come to their attention because of a complaint. This program is in place in "K" Division, says police spokesman Cpl. Wayne Oakes, and 250 individuals who are a threat to both the members of the public and the police have been identified, with plans put in place to safely deal with them. "K" Division has also created its own unit to assess and help manage these threatening individuals.

But in the wake of Roszko's mass murder of four RCMP officers, Logan has come to believe it isn't safe to just wait for a complaint in order to identify threatening individuals. Instead, Logan says, RCMP behavioural scientists should seek out police officers, judges, parole officers and Crown prosecutors and ask them to identify the hundreds of men and women who have made threats specifically against the police or other justice officials.

The level of threat posed by each subject would be judged on a template that Logan has developed. They would be scored for dangerousness by looking at different factors, including the person's level of psychopathy, history of violence, substance abuse, weapons offences, signs of a mental disorder and thrill-seeking behaviour. A handful of new RCMP risk assessors would have to be rigorously trained to do this work.

Cpl. Oakes says it would be too costly to constantly seek out and evaluate individuals who might pose a threat, even though it might be a good idea to do so if you had an ideal world with unlimited resources. There's also the issue of the police casting too wide a net and assessing too many people, bringing on accusations of a police state.

To come up with his new program, Logan — who retired in January 2009 and now works as a consultant and lecturer on psychopaths, and as an expert witness on sexually violent predators — studied FBI research on hundreds of cop killings. It showed most such murders aren't carried out on the spur of the moment. Instead, the killers have planned to murder a police officer.

All individuals identified under Logan's system would have an operational plan developed to instruct officers on how to deal with such people, something that Oakes says has been done already with the 250 currently identified as threats to the public and police. The program would help any officer new to an area or dealing with an unknown person.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/RCMP+slow+protect+officers+expert/2123794/story.html>

# Canada – News

## Fort St John Farmer Shot Dead by RCMP

A 41-year-old farmer has been shot dead by the RCMP. Cops said they were involved in a four-day standoff with the farmer before he got into a confrontation with the heavily armed police tactical team known as the Emergency Response Team, ERT.

Cpl. Dan Moskaluk said the events that sparked the fatal police shooting began on Sept. 26. “The incident involved a 41-year-old male resident of the farm who, during a domestic dispute, allegedly pursued a van containing his wife, his children and a friend, and using his own vehicle forced them to come to stop,” Moskaluk said. “He then allegedly shot out the front tires of the van which continued to a nearby residence where his family and the friend sought safety inside the house,” said the cop. “The male then allegedly shot out the rear tires of the now empty van and demanded that his wife and children return home with him,” Moskaluk added. “When denied access to the home, the male left and returned to his property while still in possession of the firearm.

At this point RCMP were called for assistance. “All attempts to communicate with the male by Fort St. John RCMP members were met with refusal. The services of a translator were also extensively used to ensure the German-speaking male understood the communications efforts being made,” he explained. “In addition, a family friend made regular contact with the male in an effort to persuade him to cooperate with police, but these attempts were also unsuccessful,” said the RCMP spokesman.

“On September 29th, a vehicle believed to be driven by the male attempted to leave the farm, but quickly retreated after the driver apparently spotted police,” he said.

On September 30th the Emergency Response Team arrived and contained “the property. The male was spotted numerous times on the property in possession of a firearm. Contact with the male was attempted with the assistance of an interpreter but was met with negative results,” he said. “At approximately 12:50 PM the male allegedly attempted to leave the property and had a confrontation with ERT members. Shots were fired by police striking the male,” he added. “Paramedics were brought in to the scene within approximately two minutes but despite their best efforts the male’s wounds were fatal.”

<http://www.vancouverite.com/2009/09/30/fort-st-john-farmer-shot-dead-by-rcmp/>

## Surrey dad pleads guilty in killing of wife

A Surrey father of two who shot his wife to death and wounded his 22-year-old daughter during a quarrel in their 72nd Avenue home last year unexpectedly pleaded guilty to manslaughter Monday in B.C. Supreme Court. Harpaljit "Paul" Sandhu, 54, underwent three psychiatric exams but was committed to stand trial for the second-degree murder of Manjit Kaur Sandhu and the attempted murder of their daughter, Sabrina. In August, Sandhu's lawyer said Sandhu was having paranoid thoughts such as believing jail staff planned to harvest his organs for profit.

<http://www.theprovince.com/news/Surrey+pleads+guilty+killing+wife/2070316/story.html#>

### **'Three gone to Neverland' scrawled at scene of Merritt triple-child murder**

A killer left cruel messages scrawled in blood last year at the murder scene of three young children. A video played Thursday at the murder trial of the children's father, Allan Dwayne Schoenborn, showed the killer had written "Forever Young" in blood on a pillow case and "Gone to Neverland" on the flip side. "Forever Young" was also written in large letters on a living room wall above the TV, the video showed. (Prosecutor Glenn Kelt told the judge there will be an admission today that soy sauce was likely used to write the words in the living room.) The video camera then panned across the room to the couch, where two young boys appeared to be cuddled together, sleeping on the couch. The boys were dead, as was their older sister, who was found beneath a bloody blanket in a back bedroom on April 6, 2008. The girl had been stabbed to death. The boys had been suffocated.

The video was shown at the opening day of Schoenborn's trial. He has pleaded not guilty to three counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of his 10-year-old daughter Kaitlynn Schoenborn, his eight-year-old son Max, and five-year-old son Cordon.

The children had moved with their mother to Merritt in the summer of 2007, after Schoenborn threatened his former common-law wife, Darcie Clarke, resulting in his arrest and a court imposing a peace bond against him. The father had come for an overnight visit with his kids before the murders. Clarke had made arrangements to stay elsewhere that night — April 5, 2008. She came home after 2 p.m. the next day to find her children dead and Schoenborn gone.

The sombre silence in the courtroom was broken at one point when Schoenborn blurted out from the prisoner's box: "A couple of brothers in arms." At another point, while an RCMP officer was recounting taking dozens of photos at the murder scene, including a closeup of plastic wrap and a bloody razor blade, Schoenborn loudly asked: "Saran wrap or a plastic bag?"

Schoenborn wasn't arrested until April 16, 2008, after an extensive 10-day police manhunt. A local trapper, Kim Robinson, found him, emaciated and dehydrated, hiding in the bush near a highway rest stop overlooking Merritt on the road to Kelowna. Schoenborn seemed surprised to learn Darcie Clarke, the children's mother, had not killed herself, Robinson said. "He asked, 'Isn't she dead?' " Robinson testified. "He was surprised she wasn't dead. I saw agitation when I said that."

The Crown's theory is the murders were revenge killings to make his former common-law wife suffer.

The defence is expected to focus on the mental state of the accused at the time of the murders.

Before the murders, Schoenborn had several run-ins with the law. Police arrested him three times in the week before the murders, including for allegedly uttering threats at his children's

elementary school. There was a restraining order restricting him from contact with his wife, although neighbours said Schoenborn had been staying with the family for about a week. Schoenborn is also facing charges of uttering threats, escaping lawful custody and breach of recognizance stemming from incidents prior to the murders.

Under cross-examination, she agreed she told police--even after the children were dead--she never thought Schoenborn would harm the kids. She feared for her own safety at times, she said, even though Schoenborn never assaulted her. Clarke told the court that Schoenborn would scream at her and throw and break things when he was intoxicated.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Three+gone+Neverland+scrawled+scene+Merritt+triple+child+murder/2081983/story.html>

<http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Canada/2009/10/08/11346216-cp.html>

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/Father+killed+kids+because+loved+them/2105452/story.html>

### **Man Accused of Killing Wife, Step-Daughter, 2 Others on Trial**

Charles Kembo is accused of first degree murder in the killings of his wife, step-daughter, girlfriend, and business partner over a three-year period starting in late 2002. His wife's body has never been found. Kembo was arrested shortly after the body of his step-daughter was found in Richmond, B.C. in July 2005. He was ordered deported to his native Malawi in 1994 after a fraud conviction, but wasn't removed from the country because Citizenship and Immigration didn't have a "danger opinion" that proved he posed a threat to Canadians. His trial started October 13 and could last up to eight months.

<http://www.torontosun.com/news/canada/2009/10/13/11384376.html>

### **Grim Statistics on Domestic Violence Deserve Deeper Look**

The term is tombstone data – a static set of numbers, gathered but not used. The B.C. Coroners Service has produced these statistics: 73 homicides in 5 ½ years in B.C. due to domestic violence. Of those 55 victims were female, five victims were under the age of 19. If you wanted to find lessons in those deaths, you would need to dig deeper. How many of the victims were immigrants, how many were aboriginal? Who were the perpetrators? Were there warning signs: a divorce in progress, a previous history of abuse – that could have allowed authorities to head off the danger? Those details can tell us how to better detect risk, and where prevention services are needed most.

It's what the Ontario coroner's office aims to do. For the past six years, a panel of experts has examines every death linked to domestic violence. They've charted the patterns that weave the stories together, and produced tools to prevent similar deaths. It's their work on risk assessment that is now being used as the training model for police in B.C.

In B.C., the province's chief coroner also has the legal authority to look beyond the raw data. That power was used to set up a child death review unit. Over in Solicitor General Kash Heed's

office, a draft report urges B.C. to establish its own expert panel to study domestic violence deaths. The report has been gathering dust for years, never been made public. In February of this year, the B.C. Coroners Service started to track domestic violence for the first time. There are no plans right now to do anything with those numbers.

In the absence of action from that office, a large group assembled last week at the Saanich Police headquarters. It is a twice yearly meeting where police, victims services agencies and government officials address the gaps in the province's response to domestic violence. It's not an accident that Saanich played host to the session. It is one of the police forces in B.C. that is not waiting for a provincial strategy on domestic violence. Every time a domestic violence call comes in, the file is sent to a special review team. That team is responsible for assessing risk and co-ordinating appropriate safety plans.

What happens next highlights the weakness of B.C.'s ad hoc approach. If the team believes charges are warranted, it hands the file off to a Crown prosecutor who is not part of the team. And that is a problem, said Saanich Chief Constable Mike Chadwick. He'd like to see dedicated Crown counsel at the table. At the very least, the prosecutors who handle domestic violence files should have consistent training. "If it's a good idea that police have specialized training," he asked, "how could it not be a good thing for Crown counsel?"

For the provincial government to detect the fault lines, it needs to see the entire landscape. That's where a death review committee – backed by the powers of the coroner's office – can help put the picture together. "There is absolutely no way we can learn from tombstone date," the B.C. representative for children and youth said, "unless we have a multidisciplinary team that can subpoena records, we're never going to learn anything." The authority to establish a domestic violence review committee rests with B.C.'s chief coroner, a position that has been vacant since Aug 1. The Solicitor General appears to be in no hurry to fill the vacancy – the job hasn't even been posted yet.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/british-columbia/learning-from-death-grim-statistics-deserve-a-deeper-look/article1325328/>

### **Lack of comprehensive approach to domestic violence is the rule in B.C.**

A baton passing between two hands: a moment of co-operation, and of peril. That's the image of urgency embedded in the training materials for a pilot project that teaches police officers to make rigorous, consistent risk assessments in domestic violence cases – before they can escalate to homicide.

If it's a race, British Columbia is falling behind. The Langley pilot project, which ended in the spring, was supposed to become the model for how police, prosecutors and community support services can work together to protect victims of domestic violence. The results, however promising, are still under review by the provincial government – with no money in the budget for a province wide rollout. Next week the government launches a less ambitious successor to that pilot project, a short online-training program that will eventually give 4,800 police officers instruction on the essentials of investigating domestic violence.

In the spring of 2008, the attorney-general of the day, Wally Oppal, promised B.C. would do better. He pointed to the Langley pilot project as an example of progress, and said he would like to see it expand province-wide.

Today, Solicitor General Kash Heed echoes Mr. Oppal's sentiment, saying work is now under way to integrate the government's criminal justice, family law, and child protection services. Yet his office sent out a letter this summer to the support groups that provide front-line services for domestic violence victims, announcing funding cuts of \$440,000. This week, Mr. Heed backed down, restoring funding to previous levels.

The online training program, which starts next week, is brief, taking just three to four hours to complete. It teaches the essentials of how to investigate these crimes effectively and how to keep victims of domestic violence safe. The course will do nothing to change the fact that every detachment in the province continues to have its own set of policies. And it doesn't provide additional resources, and it won't fast track court proceedings. It does, however, take some of the best ideas from other Canadian jurisdictions in trying to prevent domestic disputes from escalating into potentially lethal situations.

Aside from the e-learning training program, concrete change is hard to find. The only Crown prosecutor specializing in domestic violence, Jocelyn Coupal, has been reassigned to other duties.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/lack-of-comprehensive-approach-to-domestic-violence-is-the-rule-in-bc/article1310776/>

### **Left to Die in Snow**

Roxanne Fernando's killers savagely beat her and buried her in a snowbank while she was still alive. That horrifying detail was made public for the first time yesterday at a sentencing hearing for Nathaniel Plourde and Jose Toruno. Plourde, 21, pleaded guilty Thursday to first-degree murder and was sentenced yesterday to mandatory life in prison with no chance of parole for 25 years. Toruno, 21, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to life in prison with no chance of parole for 15 years.

Fernando, a 24-year-old Filipina immigrant, was marked for death after she refused Plourde's demand she stop pursuing him romantically. She was pregnant and had told Plourde the child was his. Plourde and Fernando met while working together at a McDonald's restaurant and had been involved in a brief sexual relationship in late 2006. In February 2007, Plourde and a 17-year-old co-accused hatched a plan to kill Fernando if she didn't stop pursuing him.

Plourde arranged to meet Fernando under the guise of exchanging Valentine's Day gifts. Plourde picked her up at her Maples home and drove to Little Mountain Park. Fernando didn't know the boy was hiding in the backseat under a blanket, armed with rubber gloves and tape. After arriving at the park, Fernando and Plourde argued. The two exited the car and Plourde set upon Fernando with a wrench, hitting her up to 20 times in the head. The boy got out of the car, taped

her feet together and wrapped her in a blanket before dumping her body in the trunk. As they drove away they could still hear Fernando moaning in the trunk.

Plourde and the boy panicked and called Toruno for help. Toruno punched Fernando in the head and beat her with a broken hockey stick. They then drove north of The Maples where Plourde and Toruno buried Fernando – who was still alive – in a snowdrift. Toruno was given \$100 – money the youth accused looted from Fernando’s pockets – as well as a box of chocolates and a teddy bear Fernando had bought for Plourde. Toruno later gave the gifts to his girlfriend.

<http://www.winnipeg.sun.com/news/manitoba/2009/10/10/11365351-sun.html>

### **Desperate Mothers**

On a windswept street in a bustling industrial area on the outskirts of town, a stocky man in a white shirt and dark jeans pulls out three Ziploc bags containing red, brown, and silver pills. Take two red and brown pills each day for a week, he tells the woman who says she is nine weeks pregnant, and your baby has an 85 per cent chance of being a boy. Then he demands \$750 in cash. But this scene on an industrial strip was not played out in Punjab, but just west of Toronto, in an area a large number of Punjabis now call home – and where the latest Canadian census figures reveal significantly fewer girls than boys in the South Asian community.

Young mothers from India, particularly from Punjab, often face intense pressure here to have baby boys, said Baldey Mutta, executive director of Punjabi Community Health Services in Peel Region. Mutta said he has no doubt female feticide - aborting a female fetus - also is prevalent among Punjabis in Canada. One woman was forced by her family to have two abortions because they were girls, he said. When she became pregnant again and found out it was a girl, she approached Mutta for help.

Amandeep Kaur, a counselor at Punjabi Community Health Services, said she has seen dozens of victims of domestic abuse. But nothing prepared her for a young Malton mother who sought help. The woman in her mid-20s, had two young daughters. Her in-laws had subsequently forced her to have two abortions after ultrasounds indicated she was carrying girls. Now she was pregnant again with a female fetus. The woman’s in-laws told her she could keep the baby and return to India, or have the abortion.

The bias against girls is entrenched in traditional Indian culture, where a girl is considered a burden on the family. Parents worry about finding her a good husband and providing a dowry. For most parents, girls will get married and go live with their new families. A son, they believe, will look after them in old age and also carry on the family name.

Canadian law says a patient is entitled to all their own medical information. In its national guidelines, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada says sex determination of the fetus is part of the complete obstetric ultrasound. Acknowledging “information may lead women to abort pregnancies when the fetus is not the wanted sex,” the society stipulates ultrasound clinics should not do scans only to determine gender. If doctors know the gender, they will ask the patient if they want to know, says Jennifer Blake, chief of obstetrics and gynecology

at Sunnybrook Health Science Centre. But Blake acknowledges an ethical quandary in revealing that information “if a doctor suspects an infant’s life would be terminated based on gender.”

<http://www.parentcentral.ca/parent/newsfeatures/article/704904#>

### **Man wanted ex-girlfriend killed: police**

Lewis Ronald Branton appeared in provincial court in Clarendville Monday afternoon where he was charged with a single count of "counselling to commit murder" after he allegedly offered "thousands of dollars," to Frederick Cyril Johnson in exchange for killing his unnamed ex-girlfriend. RCMP spokesman Sgt. Wayne Newell said police are still investigating the plot, which was interrupted before any physical harm came to the woman. Meanwhile, no charges have been laid against anyone else in the case, Newell said, adding there may be room to lay charges later in the investigation.

The crime of counselling to commit murder is only laid in cases when no harm has come to an intended victim. According to the Criminal Code of Canada, "everyone who counsels another person to commit an indictable offence is, if the offence is not committed, guilty of an indictable offence and liable to the same punishment to which a person who attempts to commit that offence is liable."

<http://www.thetelegram.com/index.cfm?sid=292497&sc=79#>

### **Ont. man sentenced to life for wife's murder**

A man who shot his estranged wife to death in Brockville, Ont., almost three years ago has been found guilty of first-degree murder. Andrew Stevenson of Mallorytown, Ont., was convicted and sentenced Wednesday to life in prison with no eligibility of parole for at least 25 years for killing 33-year-old Stefanie Stevenson. She was found fatally wounded on Dec. 23, 2006, on the driveway outside the home she shared with her boyfriend. She had been shot in the head, but there were no witnesses, and the shotgun that police said was the murder weapon was never found. Over the course of the six-week trial, the court heard that at the time of the murder, the Stevensons, who had joint custody of their two daughters, then age six and nine, were in the midst of an ugly divorce, and Andrew Stevenson was upset about his wife's boyfriends.

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/ottawa/story/2009/10/07/brockville-andrew-stevenson-stefanie-murder.html>

### **Family violence not an equal opportunity crime, says Durham Region experts**

Taken out of context, the numbers may make it appear so, but intimate relationship violence is not gender-neutral, say Molly Dragiewicz and Walter DeKeserdy. “No one’s denying there are abused men,” he said. “The question we’re trying to address is, is there equality, and the answer is no.” According to one study, eight per cent of women and seven per cent of men reported experiencing some sort of violence perpetrated by a partner in the last five years. “Looks pretty equal, doesn’t it?” Dr. Dragiewicz. But women are more likely to report repeated victimization,

to be injured, or experience more serious forms of abuse, they said. When the numbers are broken down, it shows 44 per cent of the women who reported partner violence were physically injured and 13 per cent required medical attention, compared with 19 per cent and two percent of men. Furthermore, 95 per cent of domestic homicides in Canada between 2002 and 2005 were perpetrated by men. "How often do we hear of women stalking her ex-partner, then killing him and their children?" Dr. DeKeserdy said. "Why are we expecting women's shelters to provide services to men? Where are the men?" said Dr. Dragiewicz, noting Dr. DeKeserdy is a "rare unicorn" in being a male who does research on gender violence. "I see all these anti-feminist groups attacking - - show some demand for your services and the funding will come to you like it does for women."

<http://www.newsdurhamregion.com/news/clarington/article/136957>

### **'I don't regret nothing,' arsonist says**

A drug-addicted prostitute's tearful remorse turned to anger Friday when she lashed out at the victims of a fire she set following a failed three-way tryst in a downtown hotel. "I don't regret nothing," Melissa White shouted from the prisoner's box. Ontario Court Justice Lise Maisonneuve sentenced White to prison for the New Year's Day fire, which caused more than \$1.5 million in damage and severely injured 25-year-old Shannon Oliver and her boyfriend, Daniel Leewen. "I'm getting five years for those f---ing stupid assholes," White yelled across the courtroom to where Oliver and her family were seated. "Try the window next time."

Oliver, who suffered severe burns to her face, mouth and upper body as a result of the fire and now relies on a machine to help her breathe, was reduced to tears. Oliver has a tube protruding from her throat and can barely speak after the fire fused her vocal cords and damaged her larynx. Oliver has undergone numerous surgeries and spent 27 days in intensive care at The Ottawa Hospital's Civic campus. Leewen's arm and back were burned and he was in hospital for seven days. Another guest in a room on the same floor suffered breathing problems and an eye infection and was hospitalized for five days.

At White's last court appearance, she was the one in tears, sobbing when she came face-to-face with her badly injured victim. "It's the biggest punishment you guys could give me to see that today," White sobbed during the earlier hearing. "I'm so ... sorry. Maybe she doesn't think I am, but I am. I hit the bottom. I didn't mean to hurt nobody. I didn't know what I was thinking. I was praying to change." White admitted to using gasoline to set the door to Oliver and Leewen's Radisson hotel room ablaze.

The intoxicated couple had paid White for a planned sexual encounter, but she left when nothing happened; Leewen ended up in a physical confrontation with White when she refused to give them their money back. White then left the hotel, returning by taxi a short time later with a can of gasoline and setting the fire. White called Gatineau police the next day, bragging about how she set the hotel on fire.

Before White's outburst, Maisonneuve said remorse was one of the mitigating factors she considered before arriving at a seven-year prison term; with the sentence already passed, White's

eruption made no difference. With two-for-one credit for 10 months in custody, White has five years and four months left of her sentence. In her sentencing, Maisonneuve said she believed meeting Oliver in court “clearly brought home the consequences of her actions” for White, who pleaded guilty to arson causing bodily harm in May. The judge said White was at a “very dark place” when she set the fire, working for an escort service as a prostitute with no clear plan for her life. Maisonneuve added that White is “quite damaged” and comes across as someone with a low maturity level who will need extensive psychological counselling to understand the consequences of her actions as well as deal with impulse-control and anger problems. However, White’s actions showed a complete disregard for human life, involved some planning and deliberation and were carried out in revenge. Maisonneuve noted that the impact to the victims, as well as the damage to the hotel, were significant and required a lengthy amount of time in prison. As well as the prison sentence, White was ordered to make restitution of about \$18,000 to the three injured victims.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/regret+nothing+arsonist+says/2139204/story.html>

### **Children likely saved mother's life after stabbing, Gatineau police say**

A Gatineau mother who was stabbed by her husband likely owes her life to her two children, who quickly administered first aid and called emergency officials, police say. The woman was stabbed numerous times by her husband, who then took his own life with the same knife. Gatineau police said the 47-year-old woman was stabbed during an argument overheard by her two children, aged 16 and 20, both of whom were in the house at the time. Police would not reveal whether the children witnessed the violence, or responded after hearing their mother’s screams. The couple had been having marital difficulty for several months, which culminated in Sunday’s violence. The woman remains in hospital, recovering from her wounds. She is expected to survive.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/Children+likely+saved+mother+life+after+stabbing+Gatineau+police/2119805/story.html#>

# America – News

## **Sniper's ex-wife gives domestic violence talk at Fort Belvoir**

Mildred Muhammad, ex-wife of D.C. sniper mastermind John Muhammad, remembers her estranged husband coming into her house after their divorce, standing over her as she slept. "Because I knew he was trained as a combat engineer, he specialized in reconnaissance, demolitions and was an expert shot, I knew if I exposed the white of my eyes, then he would know I was watching him and he would kill me," Muhammad said at Fort Belvoir on Tuesday.

"Domestic violence is not just physical. It is emotional, verbal, psychological, economic, stalking and sexual assault. Unfortunately, physical violence is the one that gets most people's attention and only 20 percent of domestic violence is physical, where as 80 percent is not," Muhammad told a crowd as she kicked off the base's Domestic Violence Prevention Month.

Muhammad closed her speech with an excerpt from her book, "Scared Silent," which is due out Tuesday. In the excerpt, she begins remembering all the disturbing things John had said during the course of their marriage.

"John once said, 'When a man hits a woman, it means he has lost all respect for her, it would be easy for him to kill her,' " Muhammad said. "I never thought John would kill innocent people that had nothing to do with our troubled marriage. When the person you love becomes the one you fear, you are scared to the core of your being. Everything you thought was real has become an illusion, it is disconcerting," Muhammad said. "You feel as though you have fallen into a deep hole and there is nothing to hold onto, because then everything you thought was there is gone, and you slip deeper and deeper."

[http://www2.insidenova.com/isn/news/local/article/snipers\\_ex-wife\\_gives\\_domestic\\_violence\\_talk\\_at\\_fort\\_belvoir/44762/](http://www2.insidenova.com/isn/news/local/article/snipers_ex-wife_gives_domestic_violence_talk_at_fort_belvoir/44762/)

## **State departments must address workplace violence, Ritter declares**

A quarter of all the incidents of workplace violence begin as domestic disputes, Ritter said. Nationally, the Department of Justice estimates that domestic violence strikes the workplace 18,700 times a year. Under Ritter's order, all state departments will have until March 1, 2010, to adopt a single policy on workplace violence and until Aug. 1, 2010, to put it in place. An executive order on workplace violence was issued 10 years ago, but Ritter said only three state departments had been following it faithfully. The policy has not yet been written, but it probably will include education on identifying signs of domestic violence; employee-assistance programs; and ways to thwart a violent incident at work, Ritter said.

Supervisors and co-workers need to learn how to recognize signs of stress in their fellow employees, said Rich Gonzales, executive director of the Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration.

[http://durangoherald.com/sections/News/2009/10/08/State\\_departments\\_must\\_address\\_workplace\\_violence\\_Ritter\\_declares/](http://durangoherald.com/sections/News/2009/10/08/State_departments_must_address_workplace_violence_Ritter_declares/)

### **Bill eyes online registry of domestic violence offenders**

DuWayne Gregory hopes to provide a way to find out – as easily as one finds a date online – if a prospective mate has a violent history. Gregory is pushing legislation to create an online registry of the county’s domestic violence offenders. Under Gregory’s proposal, which was approved Thursday by the legislature’s Public Safety Committee, the registry would include an offender’s name, address, and photograph. Judges and probation officers would be responsible for submitting those convicted of domestic violence abuses to the registry. Gregory likened the registry to those maintained for sex offenders. The full legislature will not act on the bill before November, because Gregory in changing the bill to eliminate a provision to set a minimum amount of time an offender would be on the registry. He wants to leave the matter to a judge’s discretion. But Jo Anne Sanders, the executive director of the Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, said she is apprehensive about listing domestic violence offenders online. She said some victims may become more afraid to call police if they believed their abusers would be publicly shamed. Several states, including New York, maintain domestic violence databases for law enforcement agencies that are not available to the public. Some others, like Wisconsin, have searchable online databases that contain records of all court activity.

<http://www.newsday.com/long-island/suffolk/bill-eyes-online-registry-of-domestic-violence-offenders-1.1511929>

### **Child abuse: when family courts get it wrong**

When a parent harms his or her own child, family courts are supposed to step in and safeguard the victim. Can you imagine what a tragedy it would be if courts awarded custody to the wrong parent – the abuser? Actually, according to one conservative estimate, more than 58,000 children per year are ordered by family courts into unsupervised contact with physically or sexually abusive parents following divorce in the United States

As we see in many cases across the country, even when physical or sexual abuse of children is alleged during a divorce, American family courts routinely award custody to the parent with an established record of domestic violence restraining orders, child abuse, neglect, alcoholism, addiction, dangerous mental illness, or a combination. Meanwhile, the child’s other parent, commonly referred to as the “protective parent,” is typically demonized by court professionals as an “alienator” for bringing evidence of child abuse to the court’s attention.

This happens because the reigning paradigm in family courts across the country is an unscientific, discredited theory known as “Parental Alienation Syndrome.” PAS and its many derivatives suggest that the parent who asks the court to protect his or her child by limiting the alleged abuser’s access to that child is “alienating” the child from the other parent. The theory suggests that a parent “coaches” a son or daughter to fabricate false abuse allegations, and the court’s attention immediately shifts away from investigating an alleged crime and instead focuses on the “uncooperative parent” who refuses to share custody of the child with the alleged

abuse or molester. PAS is tricky for the courts because parents in heated custody battles often badmouth each other and sometimes exaggerate claims of neglect, and children overhear their parents' complaints about each other. Though rare, false allegations of abuse do occur. Research on child sexual abuse indicates that close to 98 percent of children who claim sexual abuse in the context of a high conflict divorce are telling the truth, yet family courts routinely proceed as if the opposite were true.

Four factors conspire against protective parents: Family law judges are granted broad discretion in their decision making; Juries are nonexistent in most family law courtrooms; Costly appeals are out of reach for most litigants; and Children are not afforded a voice in these important proceedings that determine their future.

In California, home to some of the most egregious cases, the Center for Judicial Excellence and its partner organizations in the Safe Child Coalition recently worked with State Sen. Mark Leno of San Francisco to unanimously pass an audit request through the California legislature to address this growing problem. The request asks the state auditor to investigate the procedures used by family courts to appoint, train, evaluate, and discipline the plethora of professionals they use in cases in Marin and Sacramento counties.

The legislature should also pass two bills in 2010. Assemblyman Jim Beall of San Jose has proposed a bill that would outlaw PAS in state family courts, and a bill by Assemblywoman Fiona Ma of San Francisco would allow children to have a voice in family court proceedings.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/1014/p09s02-coop.html>

# International – News

## **Man accused of throwing daughter off bridge pleads not guilty (AUS)**

A man accused of throwing his four-year-old daughter off of a Melbourne bridge has pleaded not guilty to her murder. Arthur Phillip Freeman was ordered to stand trial Thursday in the death of his daughter Darcey, in January. Prosecutors told the Melbourne Magistrates' Court that 36-year-old Freeman was driving his three children across the West Gate Bridge when he stopped, lifted Darcey out and allegedly tossed her from the bridge. Darcey Freeman fell 190 feet (58 metres) into the Yarra River and later died in hospital. Prosecutor Gavin Silbert said the incident happened moments after Freeman phoned his ex-wife and told her she would never see their children again.

<http://www.edmontonsun.com/news/world/2009/10/08/11343111.html>

## **“Battered person” defence to be introduced into Queensland law**

A legal defence for people who commit murder as a result of domestic and family violence will be introduced into the Criminal Code, in a serious significant reform announced today by the Queensland Government. Premier Anna Bligh and Attorney-General Cameron Dick said the amendment to the Criminal Code would see the introduction of a new partial defence reducing murder to manslaughter, for victims of seriously abusive relationships who kill their abusers.

“The Government is not condoning acts of violence or saying it’s acceptable to kill someone if you are in an abusive relationship. The driving force behind developing a defence to cover this issue is to ensure the law is capable of reflecting the awful abuse people in our community can suffer in a violent relationship,” said the Attorney General.

The proposed new defence will apply only in cases where the accused has unlawfully killed another in the following circumstances:

- The accused has suffered domestic violence in an abusive domestic relationship.
- The person has committed acts of serious domestic violence against the accused in the course of that relationship
- At the time of the killing the accused believes the acts are necessary for the person’s preservation from death or grievous bodily harm, and
- There are reasonable grounds for this belief, having regard to the abusive relationship and all the circumstances of the case.

<http://www.cabinet.qld.gov.au/MMS/StatementDisplaySingle.aspx?id=66104>

# Research

**A Further Look at the Intergenerational Transmission of Violence: Witnessing Interparental Violence in Emerging Adulthood** by David S. Black, Steve Sussman, and Jennifer B. Unger in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.

## **Abstract**

The intergenerational transmission (IGT) of violence has been a main theoretical consideration to explain the link between interparental aggression in the family of origin and intimate partner violence (IPV) in subsequent intimate relationships. Studies have examined this theoretical link based on self-reports of interparental violence witnessed during childhood and adolescence. However, no study has examined whether emerging adults who currently witness interparental violence are more likely to exhibit violence in their own intimate relationships. Data were analyzed from undergraduate students ( $N = 223$ ) attending an ethnically diverse Southern California university. Multivariate linear regression analyses were used to examine the impact of witnessing interparental violence on the physical and psychological IPV experienced in emerging adult relationships. The joint effects of witnessing both forms of interparental violence were also tested. Support for the intergenerational transmission of violence was identified for specific types of violence. Future directions of study and implications for prevention and treatment are offered.

## **Findings**

58.3% of students witnessed interparental psychological violence.

69.5% of students experienced psychological violence in their own intimate relationships.

17.5% witnessed violence between parents.

27% experience violence within their own intimate relationships.

**When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2007 Homicide Data** by the Violence Policy Centre. <http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2009.pdf>

Gun use does not need to result in a fatality to involve domestic violence. A study by Harvard School of Public Health researchers analyzed gun use at home and concluded that “hostile gun displays against family members may be more common than gun use in self-defense, and that hostile gun displays are often acts of domestic violence directed against women.” The U.S. Department of Justice has found that women are far more likely to be the victims of violent crimes committed by intimate partners than men, especially when a weapon is involved. Moreover, women are much more likely to be victimized at home than in any other place. A 2003 study about the risks of firearms in the home found that females living with a gun in the home were nearly three times more likely to be murdered than females with no gun in the home.

*When Men Murder Women* is an annual report prepared by the Violence Policy Center detailing the reality of homicides committed against women. The study analyzes the most recent Supplementary Homicide Report (SHR) data submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The information used for this report is for the year 2007. Once again, this is the most recent data available. This study examines only those instances involving one female homicide victim and one male offender.

In 2007, there were 1,865 females murdered by males in single victim/single offender incidents that were submitted to the FBI for its Supplementary Homicide Report.

- For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 91 percent of female victims (1,587 out of 1,743) were murdered by someone they knew.
- More than 10 times as many females were murdered by a male they knew (1,587 victims) than were killed by male strangers (156 victims).
- For victims who knew their offenders, 62 percent (990) of female homicide victims were wives or intimate acquaintances of their killers.
- There were 315 women shot and killed by either their husband or intimate acquaintance during the course of an argument.
- Nationwide, more female homicides were committed with firearms (51 percent) than with any other weapon. Knives and other cutting instruments accounted for 21 percent of all female murders, bodily force 14 percent, and murder by blunt object seven percent. Of the homicides committed with firearms, 76 percent were committed with handguns.
- In 88 percent of all incidents where the circumstances could be determined, homicides were *not* related to the commission of any other felony, such as rape or robbery.

**Is Animal Cruelty a “Red Flag” for Family Violence? : Investigating Co-Occurring Violence Toward Children, Partners, and pets** by Sarah DeGue and David DiLillo in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence

#### **Initiatives**

In 2007, nine U.S. States had laws mandating cross-reporting systems for child protection and animal welfare agencies. Another five states had bills pending. In addition, nine states currently have laws permitting pets to be included in protection orders for domestic violence, with similar legislation pending in three jurisdictions.

#### **Findings**

Although about 60% of individuals who witnessed or perpetrated animal abuse also experienced family violence, only about 30% of family violence victims had experienced animal cruelty. Individuals who witnessed animal cruelty were eight times more likely to be perpetrators.

**Shifting Public Policy Direction: Gender-Focused Versus Bi-Directional Intimate Partner Violence** by Walter S. DeKeseredy and Molly Dragiewicz.

[http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/owd/english/resources/publications/dvac/shifting\\_pp\\_direction.pdf](http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/owd/english/resources/publications/dvac/shifting_pp_direction.pdf)

#### **Highlights**

- Debates about terminology surrounding woman abuse are ongoing and have significant implications for policy and practice.
- Recent efforts to promote the use of gender-neutral language selectively cite research to incorrectly characterize violence as bi-directional, mutual, or sex symmetrical.
- It is impossible to make valid claims about symmetry, reciprocity, or mutuality based on the decontextualized counts of acts used in recent Canadian studies.
- The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) and similar quantitative measures used to support symmetry claims are controversial and fail to assess meaning, motive and contexts of violence.
- The imposition of gender-neutral language does not make discourses on violence and abuse more inclusive.
- Canadian government research finds marked sex differences in women and men’s experiences of violence.

- To make claims about sex-symmetry, it is necessary to ignore research findings on context, injury, homicide, sexual assault.

#### **GSS Findings on Sex Differences**

- Women were more likely than men to report “more severe” forms of violence.
- Women were more likely than men to report repeated victimization.
- Women were more likely than men to be injured by a partner.
- Women were more likely than men to report negative emotional consequences as a result of the violence.
- Women were more likely to experience forms of violence that came to the attention of the police.
- Women were much more likely to report fear that their lives were in danger

#### **Domestic Violence Assaults in the Workplace Study** by Peace at Work.

[http://peaceatwork.org/Peace@Work\\_DV-Workplace-Assaults\\_09.pdf](http://peaceatwork.org/Peace@Work_DV-Workplace-Assaults_09.pdf)

##### **Highlights of Findings**

- Over 40% of the perpetrators did not try to escape capture after the assault. 32% attempted or committed suicide and 9% either turned themselves over to the authorities or waited for arriving officers without resisting arrest.
- When the time and place of the assault was known, 20% occurred in the parking lot as the abuse victim was arriving for work; the most common situation. Again, when the time was known, 42% of the assaults occurred at the beginning of the shift.
- The vast majority of the abusers were male (92%). However, 29% of the female perpetrators either hired a hit-man or conspired with their boyfriends who committed the actual act (compared to only 4% of male perpetrators).
- In 67% of the cases where the abuse victim had obtained a TRO (Trespass Restriction Order) against the perpetrator, a firearm was used to commit the assault, despite a federal regulation banning gun ownership by the assailant.
- When it was known if the perpetrator had criminal record or not, 36% had prior domestic violence charges or convictions.
- It was indicated in 12% of the cases that there was either a recent, previous incident at the workplace or a direct warning from the abuse victim about the potential threat.
- In only 10% of the cases was it identified that the employer took any precautions prior to the assault.
- In general the perpetrators were not “seasoned criminals” but well educated with advanced careers.

#### **Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile** by Statistics Canada.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2009000-eng.pdf>

##### **Preface**

This is the twelfth annual *Family Violence in Canada* report produced by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics under the Federal Family Violence Initiative. This annual report provides the most current data on the nature and extent of family violence in Canada, as well as trends over time, as part of the ongoing initiative to inform policy makers and the public about family violence issues. This year, the focus of the report is a profile of shelters that provide residential services to women and children fleeing abusive situations.

### **Profile of Canada's shelters for abused women**

- In 2008, there were 569 shelters across Canada providing residential services to women and children escaping abusive situations.
- Transition homes (47%), providing short- to moderate-term housing, and emergency-type facilities (26%) made up the majority of shelters in Canada.
- Prince Edward Island had the greatest number of shelters per capita at 14 per 100,000 married, common-law and separated women, followed by New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador and Manitoba.
- While 57% of shelters serve a suburban or urban population exclusively, 4% are exclusively village or rural-area facilities (this includes rural shelters serving reserves).
- In addition to housing, the services most commonly offered to residents were transportation, short-term counselling, advocacy, safety or protection planning and housing referral, each provided by about 9 in 10 shelters.
- About three-quarters of facilities offered services for children accompanying their mother to shelters.
- About two-thirds of facilities provided former and non-residents with services such as crisis telephone lines, safety or protection planning, individual short-term counselling and advocacy.
- Transition houses are least common in Alberta (8%), however, Alberta had the highest proportion of women's emergency centres, which constituted nearly two-thirds of the shelters for abused women in that province.

### **Police-reported spousal violence in Canada**

- In 2007, nearly 40,200 incidents of spousal violence (i.e., violence against legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners) were reported to police. This represents about 12% of all police-reported violent crime in Canada.
- Police-reported spousal violence has steadily declined over the past 10 years, decreasing 15% between 1998 and 2007.
- The majority of victims of spousal violence continue to be females, accounting for 83% of victims.
- Spousal violence is twice as common between current partners (legally married or common-law) as ex-partners.
- Accounting for nearly two-thirds of offences, common assault was the most frequent type of spousal violence according to police-reported data, followed by major assault, uttering threats and criminal harassment or stalking.
- Police laid charges in more than three-quarters of spousal violence incidents reported in 2007. Incidents involving female victims were more likely to result in charges being laid than those involving male victims.
- Rates of spousal violence were highest in Saskatchewan (329 per 100,000), Alberta (249), Quebec (241) and Manitoba (215).

### **Police-reported family violence against children and youth**

- Police-reported data for 2007 indicate that children and youth under the age of 18 were most likely to be physically or sexually assaulted by someone they know (85% of incidents).

- Nearly 53,400 children and youth were the victims of a police-reported assault in 2007, with about 3 in 10 incidents of assaults against children and youth perpetrated by a family member.
- When children and youth were victims of family violence, a parent was identified as the abuser in nearly 6 in 10 incidents.
- Girls under the age of 18 reported higher rates of both physical and sexual assault by a family member than boys.
- In 2007, the rate of family-perpetrated sexual assault was more than 4 times higher for girls than for boys.
- Male family members were identified as the accused in a sizable majority of family-related sexual (96%) and physical assaults (71%) against children and youth.

### **Spousal homicides**

- Rates of spousal homicide, which involve persons in legal marriages, those who are separated or divorced from such unions, and those in common-law relationships, declined over the 3 decades from 1978 to 2007. In 2007, the spousal homicide rate of 4 per million spouses was the lowest in over 30 years.
- Women continue to be more likely than men to be victims of spousal homicide. In 2007, almost 4 times as many women were killed by a current or former spouse as men.
- During the most recent decade, between 1998 and 2007, about 41% of spousal homicides involved common-law partners and more than one-third involved legally married persons.
- Spousal homicide rates were highest for persons in the 15 to 24 year-old age group.

### **Family homicides against children and youth**

- Homicides of children and youth (under the age of 18) represented about 9% of all homicides in 2007. Most child and youth homicide victims were killed by someone they knew. In 2007, 41% of child and youth homicides were committed by a family member, 27% by someone known to the victim but other than a family member, 20% by strangers and the remaining 13% of child and youth homicides were unsolved.
- Parents were the perpetrators in the majority of child and youth homicides committed by family members. Fathers (54%) were more likely than mothers (34%) to be the perpetrators.
- Infants under the age of one experienced higher rates of family homicide compared to older children.
- From 1998 to 2007, baby boys (35 per million population) had somewhat higher rates than baby girls (27 per million population).
- In family homicides of infants, half of victims (51%) were killed by their mother and 47% by their father, whereas in family homicides of older children fathers were the most likely perpetrators.