

Preface

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It all began early in 2004, when I had just started my PhD program at The Australian National University, Canberra. Suddenly, stories of the Three-Mile Guesthouse Raid burst into cyberspace. The emails started flying, the hidden tales were posted online, email discussion lists picked up the issue, lawyers dissected the police case, distressed anthropologists and social workers tried to understand. On ASAONET, the discussion list of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO), someone asked: why the violence? Others contributed their thoughts, observations and theories to the discussion. Someone suggested that it would make a good session topic for ASAO's annual meeting.

For two weeks, I was glued to my keyboard, frantically networking, fielding questions to which I had only partial answers. This was my place, my territory, my work. I had lived, studied and worked in PNG for more than half my adult life. I had been involved in the later stages of the Law Reform Commission's initiative on domestic violence of the 1980s and 1990s. I had drafted PNG's HIV management law, just a couple of years previously, constructing it as far as possible so as to render HIV stigma and discrimination unlawful, and ensuring that sexual minorities were included in the protection afforded by the law.

Now, I was appalled at and perplexed by the total abjection of the helpless women caught up in the raid. How could anyone be treated so shamefully and brutally in public, in the nation's capital? Who was protesting? Hardly anyone, it seemed at the time.

When the ASAO session was suggested, I waited anxiously. Nobody volunteered to facilitate. Then Dorothy Counts chimed in with a query about the original news item. At the time, Dorothy was only a famous name to me: editor and driving force behind two books and a special journal edition devoted to domestic violence in cross-cultural perspective. Was she going to take charge again? Perfect, I thought, and contacted her. No, she replied, she would not take on the task, but she offered me every assistance if I would.

Do it, said my long-time friend and former UPNG law teacher Jean Zorn, now far away in the USA. Do it, said Margaret Jolly, head of what was then the ANU Gender Relations Centre. And so this volume was born, initially christened 'Gender Violence in Oceania' and developed into its present form through sessions at ASAO annual meetings in Hawai'i, California, Virginia and

Canberra. My first thanks must therefore go to ASAO and its cheery band of itinerant anthropologists, who welcomed me into their ranks and supported me throughout.

Many potential contributors arrived to join the session. Some left, and their founding work does not appear here. I want to thank Lawrence Hammar, Vicky Lockwood, Abby McLeod, Marta Rohatynskyj, Paige West and ‘the two Christines’, Christine Salomon and Christine Hamelin, for their enthusiastic participation and fascinating contributions in the early stages of our work together. I also make special acknowledgement of Phineas Hartson, prevented from attending his first (or any) meeting by USA immigration requirements, simply because he had once been arrested for participating in a gay rights protest in Australia—gender abuse of a slightly different kind?

An even bigger thankyou goes to those who stayed the course, crafted their papers, willingly joined in the round robins of commenting on each others’ work—even, in several cases, completely re-writing and shifting ground as we progressed. The results of their labours make up this volume.

A special huge thanks goes to my supervisor, professor and mentor Margaret Jolly who on several occasions and in various ways rescued me, my PhD and the entire Engendering Violence project from total oblivion. All we asked her to do, really, was to become our lead discussant, but ultimately she did far more. It was Margaret too who enlisted the assistance of Carolyn Brewer, *rédactrice par excellence*, who skilfully crafted our simple texts into professional online book form. Thanks also to The Australian National University, to its newly established Gender Institute, and especially to the Australian Research Council, which in funding the Discovery Project *Oceanic Encounters* and the Laureate Project *Engendering Persons, Transforming Things* has made the resources available to bring this important project to fruition.

Most of all, I thank Dorothy Counts. She retired from active participation after the Engendering Violence project was safely under way, but she was always there for us, if not in person then in spirit.

Tenkyu tru, bosmeri, yu bin halivim long givim nek long husat oli bin pilim pen bilong dispela pasin nogut long daunim ol meri.