



Newsletter Volume 1 Issue 2

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

By resolution [54/134](#) of December 17, 1999, United Nations General Assembly designated the 25th of November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and invited governments, international organizations and non-governmental agencies (NGOs) to organize activities designed to raise public awareness of this problem. The historical origins are linked to the brutal assassination in 1960, of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, assassinated on orders from Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961). November 25 was designated by women activists as violence awareness day and on December 20, 1993, the General Assembly, by resolution [48/104](#), adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and named November 25th as the day.

The Peel Institute on Violence Prevention (PIVP) is joining other organizations around the world in the growing recognition that violence against women and girls is a human rights violation, public health pandemic and serious obstacle to sustainable development.

Why This International Day?

Violence against women is a human rights violation and is a consequence of discriminatory practices against women and of persisting inequalities between men and women. It impacts on, and impedes, progress in many areas including poverty eradication, combating HIV/AIDS, peace and security and continues to be a global pandemic. Prevention is possible and essential.

One of the major challenges to preventing and ending violence against women and girls worldwide is the substantial funding shortfall. Resources for initiatives are severely lacking. Frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, which includes a specific target on ending violence against women and girls, offer huge promise, but must be adequately funded in order to bring real and significant changes in the lives of women and girls. There remains much work to be done to turn this awareness into meaningful prevention and response.



From November 25 through December 10, [Human Rights Day](#), the [16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence](#) aim to raise public awareness and mobilize people everywhere to bring about change. This year, the UN Secretary-General's [UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign](#) invites you to "**Orange the world**," using the colour designated by the UNiTE campaign to symbolize a brighter future without violence. The PIVP is supporting the November 25 activities by highlighting in this issue the main presentation done at the First Peel Global Symposium on Violence Prevention.

THE SITUATION OF WOMEN IN CANADA: NOT AS ADVANCED AS WE WOULD LIKE TO THINK

Since its birth 25 years ago, the Canadian Women's Foundation has always focused its attention to provide funding for programs that address Violence against women and has maintained its commitment to support violence prevention programs. This article attempts to highlight the most important aspects of the presentation by the Canadian Women's Foundation's President and CEO, Sheherazade Hirji at the first Global Symposium on Violence Prevention in Peel.

Ms. Sheherazade Hirji's said that the situation of women around the world is very similar when it comes to violence and gender inequality. She mentioned that at a recent meeting hosted by the Canadian Women's Foundation with UN in attendance that the conversations confirmed that women and girls in every country experience the same challenges: less opportunities for education, work, and inequitable financial compensation compared to men, as well as violence in disproportionate numbers. She talked about how Canada can be seen as a very privileged country, and yet, when you look at the statistics, women and girls are still falling behind. When it comes to women in Canada, we are a very impoverished country. There is still major financial gender disparity, as well as a disproportionate number of women and girls who experience violence.

Sheherazade that more than any other country Canada is at a very strategic place to make a difference in terms of improving the lives of Canadian women and girls. She talked about how we currently are at a moment where "many stars are aligning" so we may look at significant gains for women and girls in Canada. She shared that the Canadian Women's Foundation is shifting its vision in planning for the next 25 years, that talking about Violence Against Women is a thing of the past, that moving forward, the new concentration is to focus on Gender Equity and that because we are at this moment in history, we can to grow collectively to invest in the first generation that will grow up with full Gender Equity. To see the full presentation, please go to: <http://hosting2.epresence.tv/FRAMELINE/34/Page/Published/94.aspx?=&page=1>

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A FAIRLY RECENTLY RECOGNIZED GLOBAL ISSUE

This article summarizes Paola Melchori's introduction, as moderator, at the Global Panel on Violence Prevention on the topic of Education, Gender, Human Rights and Violence.

Paola Melchori referred to the significance of this meeting as the first Global Panel, a benchmark from which all future Global Panels on Violence Prevention would be measured, in the context of the Global Symposium on Violence Prevention. She provided a bit of history by referencing how Violence Against Women (VAW) was one of only 12 topics at the Beijing Global Platform of Action. She mentioned that it was not until the International Women's Conference in 1995, that VAW became the most prominent issue for women internationally, and the most important issue to tackle.

She referred to the opening of these discussions as the catalyst for the redefinition of Human Rights, to include the point of view of women's bodies. This redefinition promoted a complete shift of its paradigmatic theory, which "made it right in a different way". It allowed for the International definition of Human Rights to become more inclusive of women's experience. Her brief introduction to the panel referenced the idea that this first panel would become the gauge to measure future Global Panels. It also provided contextual information about how recent it is that VAW issues have been included in the global agenda of the United Nations.

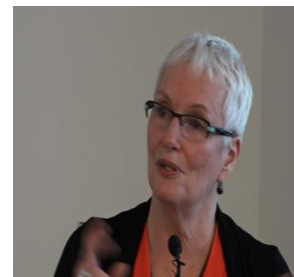


STILL A MOVEMENT AFTER ALL THESE YEARS?

Deborah started her presentation by sharing a list of facts about the current conditions of women around the world; from social and political to economics and issues of safety. She then dove into details about the current reality of violence against women in Canada, the picture continues to be the same: women continue to be the majority of victims of violence in private and public life. Women, and often times their children as well, continue to experience violence in disproportionate numbers around the world and Canada is no exception. Today, in Canada, women being murdered by their intimate partners outnumber police officers and military men and women who die in the line of duty.

For a little under one hour, Deborah took us to the Violence Against Women's (VAW) movement for the past forty years in Canada, with many specifics of Ontario and her own journey as an activist and front line worker. She talked about the different stages of the movement in our Canadian and Ontario context using Beth Richie's work on the 8 stages of VAW movement as a guide. Along the way, she reminded us to look at the movement as a 40-year-old movement in a context of 100 years as a way to instill hope and to look at the current state of the VAW movement in perspective. In the conversation, there were references to critical reflection and the acknowledgement that deconstruction of our own identity are crucial parts of committed social activism and front line work.

Towards the end, Deborah talked about the very interesting shift in public discourse happening at the present moment. She mentioned recent events that triggered public responses such as: the Am I Next? campaign, the #WhyIStayed campaign, the Idle no More campaign and the Black Lives' Matter campaign. She talked about the Generation Z Rises, stating that it is inspiring to learn that for this generation, young women and men 15 – 18 years old, the top three issues that were critical to them were: aboriginal rights, women's rights and the environment. To close, she gave the audience a reference to the 5 Determinants of Effective Early Intervention that is evidence based practice and she acknowledges they are things that activists and front line workers have been doing for many years.



This article has attempted to capture the essence of Deborah's presentation, but it definitively falls short of the wealth of information she shared with the audience at the symposium. Please take the time to go to the following link and see her full presentation as well as all the other presentations that are available. <http://hosting2.epresence.tv/FRAMELINE/34/Watch/677.aspx>

The Peel Institute on Violence Prevention

In early 2013, a Café Scientifique was organized where a variety of voices came together to express their views on how better to support survivors of violence. The participants stressed the need for increased services, better access, and improved coordination of services for survivors of sexual assault. There was an urgent desire to transform the culture of how services and programs for survivors of violence are viewed, offered and evaluated in Peel. Following the event, a proposal led by Family Services of Peel (FSP) to establish the Peel Institute on Violence Prevention (PIVP) was drafted. The Institute was approved for funding by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and went into operation in June 2013. While located in and managed by FSP, PIVP is a community collaboration with over 16 community partner agencies 4 universities. See published work on www.fspeel.org

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