

# WOMEN

## making waves

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## Globalization and Trafficking in Women



The United Nations estimates that up to one million people are trafficked throughout the world each year, women being the primary victims. Canada is a destination and transit country for women trafficked for the purposes of labour and sexual exploitation. The RCMP estimated that 800 persons are trafficked into Canada annually and that an additional 1,500-2,200 persons are trafficked through Canada into the United States. Given the clandestine nature of trafficking some estimate that this number is higher.

Trafficking in persons is a criminal offence under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and the *Criminal Code*. Sections A118, A120 and A121 of the *IRPA* establish a specific trafficking in persons offence and provide for stiff penalties for trafficking persons into Canada.

On November 5, 2005, Bill, C-49, *An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Trafficking in Persons)* S.C. 2005, c.43, which created three new trafficking in persons specific *Criminal Code* offences, came into force. These offences prohibit 1)

trafficking in persons, 2) receiving a financial or other material benefit from the trafficking of persons, and 3) withholding or destroying identity, immigration or travel documents to facilitate the trafficking of persons.

### For many women, migration has become a strategy for survival.

On May 11, 2006, Citizenship and Immigration Canada released interim guidelines that provide criteria that is used by immigration officers to decide when a person is entitled to receive a Temporary Resident Permit (TRP) on the basis that they are trafficked. These guidelines provide victims of human trafficking with TRPs for up to 120 days, renewable based on the severe circumstances facing the victim

By Darla Tomeldan

or their willingness to assist law enforcement in prosecuting their traffickers, right to repatriation, health-care benefits under the Federal Health program, access to counselling, and exemption from the TRP process fee.

Anti-trafficking policy has been directed towards prosecuting traffickers and protecting victims. While these are important and necessary, it is not enough. To properly address the trafficking in women we must address its causes

Globalization of the economy and structural adjustment programs have increased poverty in the Third World, created environmental degradation, and weakened democratic structures. For many women, migration has become a strategy for survival. Women end up in the global sex trade or slave-like working conditions in other countries just so they can feed their families.

Canada has international responsibilities, as we have ratified the following three human rights treaties that address trafficking:

- The 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others;
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; and
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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#### Women Making Waves

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BATTERED WOMEN'S  
SUPPORT SERVICES

## Strategy for Multicultural Outreach, Knowledge and Education

By **Pari Ruengvisesh**

Community Organizer and Outreach Project Coordinator

SWAN (Sex Workers Action Network)\* is very excited to be in partnership with BWSS in a new project: Strategy for Multicultural Outreach, Knowledge and Education

The project grew out of the need to better understand the many forms of sexual exploitation of young women and girls in the Greater Vancouver Area. It is a known fact that 80% of women in the sex work are working in off-street sites (as opposed to street-based), and there are many different forms of off-street sexual exploitation in our diverse ethnic communities. While these women may share some issues/vulnerabilities that street-based sex worker faced, there are also different challenges they are facing because of their cultural and immigration background.

\*SWAN- Sex Workers Action Network was established in 2003 we are a group of women from diverse backgrounds and cultures whose aim is to provide culturally appropriate and language-specific support, education, advocacy, research, and outreach for trafficked, prostituted, migrant and immigrant sex trade workers.



By understanding the diverse forms of off-street sexual exploitation in our communities- how they impact young women and youth, and how they impact our community as a whole- we will be better equipped to come up with ways to effectively address the issue, especially in the area of prevention of entry into sex work, protection of those involved in sex work and assistance in exiting from sex work.

We aim to do this through working in collaboration with immigration serving organizations, youth and women's organizations, as well as other community stakeholders. Over the next year, we will be organizing community meetings. Our long term goal is to use this knowledge and network to develop a strategic plan for intervention.

## In Memory of December 6<sup>th</sup> | By Onna Tatum



December 6<sup>th</sup> marks the anniversary of the deaths of 14

women shot and stabbed to death at L'Ecole Polytechnique de Montreal by a single man, 25 year old Marc Lepine. It was a horrific moment in Canadian history that reminded us all of the staggering problem of violence against women, and at least one man's inability to accept women's growing equality with men.

It is important to remember that not all violence against women happens on such a public scale. For the most part women are targeted by their husbands or partners behind closed doors. December 6<sup>th</sup> is a moment for all of us to commit to end violence against all women, and take action to see that all women are safe in their schools, their homes and on their streets.

In memory of the 14 women killed on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1989, Anne-Marie Lemay, Anne St-Arneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Annie Turcotte, Barbara Daigneault, Barbara KlucznikWidajewicz, Genvieve Bergeron, Helen Colgan, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganiere, Maryse Leclair, Michele Richard, Natalie Croteau, Sonia Pelletier, and all women who have suffered male violence please take a moment out of your day to imagine a world free of male violence and how you can make a difference in your own community.

*Continued from page 1*

Canada needs to take responsibility for its part in creating the conditions that cause widespread migration. We cannot support trade liberalization and other structural adjustment programs that displace millions of people and then incarcerate women when they leave their homelands and end up trafficked into Canada.

We also need to assess the requirements of immigration in terms of the potential discriminatory impact. Canada's immigration requirements limit women's legal entry into Canada by 1) awarding

points for education, professional experience, and language ability, which women from other countries have less opportunity to develop, 2) by focusing on economic criteria and disregarding unpaid work in the family and volunteer work in the community, and 3) by charging high immigration fees, which women are less likely to afford. The only way women are most likely to migrate to Canada is through the Live-in Caregiver Program, as a mail-order bride, as a sponsored spouse, or as an exotic dancer. The point system also increases the likelihood that women consequently may be subjected to trafficking.

Most women who are trafficked into Canada and within Canada usually contact frontline workers for support and advocacy. Sufficient financial resources are needed for community-based services such as shelters, housing, settlement, language classes, counselling, income security, and capacity building. Funds that would have been used for detention and deportation can be allocated towards these services. It is also important for police and immigration officials to continue consulting the NGO community regarding development and implementation of policies.

## Working with Women from Around the World

On November 2<sup>nd</sup> we had the privilege of meeting with a group of women from Japan who are involved with a group seeking to create a "gender equal society." Noriko Seo is one of the members of the group, Collaboration Planning NIMS, which aims to educate women and the community about the importance of gender equality. One of the major obstacles this group of women see as an issue for Japanese women is the lack of safe housing and the limited emergency services for women. The women of NIMS were particularly impressed with BWSS and the many programs we offer, and we are looking forward to continued partnership with NIMS in the future.

## Conferences Attended

On November 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2006, BWSS attended the **Ending Relationship Abuse Society of BC (ERA) Conference**. ERA is committed to the provision of high quality treatment services in British Columbia for men who use abuse in relationships. These services are provided through conferences and training for the public and professionals. In addition to the development of guiding principles for professionals, they are providing treatment for relationship abuse offenders, collecting and disseminating information on prevention and intervention responses to relationship abuse, and maintaining an educational website, with the ultimate goal of ending abuse in intimate relationships.

BWSS assisted this conference with the purpose of learning about the work that other professionals are doing to stop violence against women in intimate relationships through province-wide provision of effective, accessible, ethical services for men who have used abuse in relationships. Although ERA wish to respond to all abuse in intimate relationships, their primary focus is on abuse against women within the social context of men's relatively greater power in relationships with women.

## United Way Workplace Campaign

We just finished our **United Way Workplace Campaign**. Workplaces across the country participated in raising funds for the United Way, and here at BWSS we raised just under \$1500.00 between all of the staff! It was a huge success and we thank all of you in the community who also participated in this event though your workplaces.

## New Projects

We are in the process of starting a new venture at BWSS called **the OZ Project**. Our aim is to help women leaving transition homes and second stage housing to create beautiful living spaces in their new homes with the help of the Vancouver Community College Interior Design program. If you are interested in this project and would like to know more or would like to volunteer and/or make a donation to this project please phone **604-687-1868 ext 315** for more information.

We have been invited to act as community partners with the VPD Professional Standards Section in an attempt to break down barriers and make the police complaint process less intimidating for women and in particular women who may face cultural or language barriers. As community partners we will assist women who may have a complaint against the police in Vancouver.

## Events

On December 2<sup>nd</sup> we will be holding our **Winter Gala**. It is a 70's themed shopping event where you can hear your favourite music, shop till you drop and enjoy wonderful food and company. It is one of our most anticipated events and one you will not want to miss. For more information about this and any upcoming events please call us **604-687-1868**.

## New Faces at BWSS:


**Heidi Baghaian**, *Manager of Finance and Administration*

"As a woman, the very first time that I walked into BWSS office, I immediately found myself in a safe, equal, diverse, professional, warm, and dynamic organization. BWSS's services towards equalization and anti-oppression are particularly appealing to me, and I eagerly joined BWSS management team as a manager of finance and administration."

- **Joanna Medjuch**, *Legal Advocate*
- **Maura Gowan**, *First Nations Women's STV Counsellor*
- **Daniela Escobar Bach**, *Spanish Speaking Women's Counsellor*.



**What's New at BWSS...**



Offering a variety of new and used clothing and household goods. All proceeds go to support BWSS Programs, so women can continue to access our services for free. Please phone us at **604-254-7471** if you would like to learn more about this program or to make a donation.

**1029 Commercial Drive • 10AM - 5PM MONDAY to SATURDAY • 11AM - 5PM SUNDAY**



FALL  
WINTER

## Support Groups at BWSS

- Drop-in Support Groups
- Empowering Mothers Parenting Program
- 10-week Women's Support Group
- Latin American Women's Support Group
- Healing from Trauma Through Art
- Healing from Trauma Through Empowerment
- Lesbian/Bi-sexual Women's Support Group

### Women's Only Pro-Bono Clinics:

Date and time to be announced

Please phone our intake and crisis line at **604-687-1867** for more information or to register for the support groups or women's only pro-bono clinics



## yes! I would like to support BWSS in your work to end violence against women.

I would like to donate \$   
immediately to BWSS.

### Monthly Sustaining Member

I wish to join the *Circle of Strength* monthly giving club and make my gift of \$  every month.

I authorize BWSS to bill my credit card on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. *I understand that I may cancel my contribution at any time with written notice.*

### Payment Information

- Enclosed cheque payable to BWSS  
 VISA  MasterCard  American Express

Card Number   
Name on card   
Expiry Date  /   
Signature

### Contact Information

Name   
Address   
Phone   
Email

We respect your privacy and will not trade or sell your name to other organizations

- I wish to receive the BWSS newsletter, *Making Waves*  
 I have remembered BWSS in my will  
 Please contact me to discuss how I can include BWSS in my financial and estate planning

Please send your completed form & donation to:

**BWSS**  
P.O. Box 21503  
1424 Commercial Dr.  
Vancouver, BC V5L 5G2

**OR**  
**By Phone** 604.687.1868 ext. 315  
**By Fax** 604.687.1864  
**Online** www.bwss.org

Your gift is tax deductible. We will send you a tax receipt.

## Thank You

We would like to thank all of you who have made a donation to BWSS in the past few months. Your generous gifts have made a huge contribution towards our vital programs and services for women.

*Our sincere appreciation to the Government agencies and Foundations who continue to fund BWSS services:*

- Al Roadburg Foundation
- City of Vancouver
- United Way of the Lower Mainland
- Vancouver Foundation

*Thank you also to the following:*

- A-Part Auto Wrecking Ltd and the Charity Car program
- Delta Ladies Golf Club
- Gladys E. Bloomfield
- London Life Employees Charity Trust
- Rachel Mara
- RCMP Ladies Auxiliary
- Ronald Dunbar
- McCleery Ladies Golf Club

## Thank You to Our Volunteers:

It is with your hard work and dedication that we are able to open our doors to the thousands of women who use our services every year. To all of our volunteers, thank you for your commitment to ending violence against women.

**A Special Thank You to Suzanna and Elena:** Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication over this past year as an office volunteer. We are sorry to see you go and will miss your energy and your smile. Good Luck in your new adventures.

## Breaking the Silence:

### BWSS Drop-in Support Group for Women

For the past 27 years, from its beginning, BWSS has been offering a safe and supportive space for women to come together to share their experiences of abuse, receive support, and explore ways to reclaim personal power. For most of the women whom attend the drop-in support group, it is their first time being among and sharing their experiences of violence with other women. Many women leave each group session feeling validated, less isolated, and more aware of their sense of self and the possible options they may have.

The Drop-in Support Group is held every Tuesday from 12:00pm until 2:00pm at BWSS (East Vancouver). It is open to all women who are/have experienced violence in an intimate relationship. It is free and confidential. Childcare is offered on-site and transportation tickets, if needed, are available for women.

It is the ideal group for women who have never been part of a women's support group to try out and for women who are not able to make a commitment to an ongoing support group. It is a very safe, supportive, and empowering space for women to begin to break the silence around abuse.