Chapter 33

A CULTURE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA: EXPLORING YOUNG WOMEN'S STORIES

Sarah Frances Gordon
University of Cape Town, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Violence against women is extremely prevalent in South Africa and it has been labeled the rape capital of the world. It has been two decades since the end of apartheid and South Africa is still grappling with the relentless issue of violence. However this is not surprising as South Africa's past is embedded in political violence and oppression, creating a culture of violence, which is both normalized and tolerated. This study focuses on how women's lives and identities are transformed by living in this culture of violence. A biographical-interpretive methodological approach was adopted and free association, narrative interviews were conducted with 27 female, University of Cape Town (UCT) students. Interpretive analysis, drawing on social discourses, narrative accounts and psychoanalysis was used to analyse the data. Findings have revealed the complex interaction between identity and trauma, more specifically the prevailing discourse of silencing women's stories.

Keywords: gender, identity, trauma, violence against women.

1. INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is extremely prevalent in South Africa and it can be seen as the social epidemic facing the nation. The legacy of apartheid's militant and violent ideology can be seen in post-apartheid South Africa's culture of violence against women. This chapter expands on doctoral research, which explores the psychological impact of living in a culture of violence against women, such as South Africa. This chapter also explores the paradox between the high levels of violence against women and the extensive legal discourse set in place to protect women.

2. BACKGROUND

Apartheid was a system of racial segregation and oppression enforced by the white ruling party in South Africa between 1948 and 1994, in which the majority of the population were denied various political and human rights. The legacy of apartheid can be seen in daily South African life as apartheid's oppressive racial categorization has had long-lasting effects on the economic, social and political opportunities of its citizens (Henri & Gruenbaum, 2005). South Africa's transition from an oppressive apartheid government to a democratic one in 1994 ushered in an era of policy reform and change. The South African Constitution of 1996 is one of the most progressive constitutions in the world and there is currently extensive legislation that readdresses the subordination of women in South Africa (Human Rights Watch, 2010; Walker, 2005). This includes the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, which broadened the definition of domestic abuse to include emotional, economic, verbal, physical and sexual abuse, widening the definition of what constitutes "domestic" (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998). The New Sexual Offences Act of 2007, which broadened the definition of rape to include forced anal, oral and vaginal sex, irrespective of the gender of either the victim or perpetrator and the method of penetration (Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007). Furthermore, South Africa has some of the highest number of women in parliament in the world (Graybill, 2001). Despite the significant advances for women in the political arena and the extensive legislation, which readdresses the subordination of women,

violence against women and the fear associated with such violence is still prevalent (Britton, 2006; Gqola, 2007). The Human Rights Watch (2010) reported that South Africa has the highest rate of reported rapes in the world, labelling it as the rape capital of the world. In 2012, 55201 rapes were reported to the police and recent statistics reveal that one in three women will be raped in her lifetime (Institute for Security Studies, 2012; Statistics South Africa, 2012). However, these statistics also need to be viewed within the trend of underreporting in South Africa (Vetten, 2000). Intimate partner violence is also rife in South Africa and it is estimated that one in four women are in an abusive relationship (Abrahams, Jewkes, Laubscher, & Hoffman, 2006; Mathews et al., 2004; van Rensburg, 2007; Wood & Jewkes, 1997; Wood, Lambert, & Jewkes, 2008). Abrahams et al. (2009) reported that the overall rate of female homicide (24.7 for 100,000) in South Africa is six times higher than the global rate. In this respect, the gap between policy and practice is evident and measures need to be taken to address this.

South Africa's history of violence can be seen in the brutality of the apartheid regime and the armed resistance of the liberation party (Britton, 2006; Hamber, 2000; Wardrop, 2009). In the 1990's South Africa became known for its culture of political violence, however since the end of apartheid in 1994, there has been a shift to a narrative of violent and sexual crime (Britton, 2006; Hamber, 2000). Vetten (2000, p. 49) argues that the "militarisation and conflict of the Apartheid era" are embedded in the country's psyche and set the context for how men relate to women. Violence against women is enmeshed in these patterns of patriarchy, oppression and hegemonic masculinity, which were synonymous with colonialism and apartheid (Britton, 2006; Gqola, 2007; Morrell, Jewkes, & Lindegger, 2012). Violence against women in South Africa also appears to be entrenched in justificatory narratives in apartheid discourse (Britton, 2006; Moffett, 2006, 2009; Vetten, 2000). During the apartheid era legislation, racist discourse and violence was used to shame and remind the "non-white" population of their subordinate position in society. Similarly men use gender-based violence and the fear of such violence to shame women and keep them within specific boundaries and categories (Mofett, 2006, 2009). Despite extensive legislation aimed at readdressing the issue of violence of against women, the country's history of racial violence and human rights violations creates the context for a culture of violence and fear, where human life is expendable. Wardrop (2009) argues that living within a context of violent crime and fear, such as South Africa, transforms an individual and changes the topography of their identity. Women who live in communities characterised by high levels of violence are affected regardless of whether or not they are directly victimised because the continuous fear and anticipation of violence serve as traumatic stressors, exposing all women to "insidious trauma" (Brown, 1995; Root, 1992). In South Africa preparing for the dangers of violence has become interwoven into our daily activities and social practices, as women are expected to employ precautionary strategies to avoid violence (Gordon & Collins, 2013). The fear of violence, specifically sexual violence, is constructed as central to the identity of women and women are expected to constantly police their behaviour (Day, 1994; Campbell, 2002; Gavey, 2005; Gordon & Riger, 1991; Stanko, 1996, 2001). The intersection between trauma and identity is evident in this context, as the fear of violence becomes a taken-for-granted aspect of women's identity. This research explores this intersection between trauma and identity and how women navigate their lives in this volatile context.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This doctoral research is a qualitative, biographical-interpretive study, which explores 27 young women's stories in the post-apartheid context. It focuses on how women's lives and identities are transformed by living in this culture of violence. The theory of the psychosocial subject was used to frame the study (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). The psychosocial subject consists of the unique inner world and shared social world of an individual (Frosh, 2003; Gadd & Jefferson, 2007; Hollway, 2004). Free-association, narrative interviews were conducted with these women and interpretive analysis, drawing on discourse analysis, narrative theory and unconscious motivations, was used to analyse the data (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000).

3.1. Participants

Twenty-seven young female students, between the ages of 18 and 32 were interviewed. The racial composition of these young women was a mixture of black African, White, Indian and Coloured[i]. Participants were accessed through the Student Research Participant Programme (SRPP) in the psychology department at UCT. Students in the undergraduate psychology programme must accumulate academic credit by participating in their choice of research studies. This form of purposive sampling helped identify young female participants, whilst keeping the sample relatively random and unbiased. Women did not necessarily need to have direct experiences of violence to participate in this study.

3.2. Free association and narrative interviews

A biographical-interpretive method, focusing on a free-association narrative interview style, following Hollway and Jefferson (2000) was adopted. Informed consent was obtained before the interviews were conducted and participation was emphasised as voluntary. Two interviews were conducted with each participant. The first interview consisted of an opening statement, discussing the prevalence of violence against women and the researcher's interest in the participant's life story. Participants were asked "Can you start off by talking about yourself and your life in Cape Town?". Probes reflecting key theoretical themes, such as gender-based violence/victimization; precautionary strategies/rules; fear/anxiety; identity/womanhood, were explored. The second interview consisted of a series of tailor-made follow-up questions based on the first interview. Interviews were approximately an hour and a half to two hours in length and were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher. Each participant was debriefed at the close of the interviews.

3.3. Interpretive analysis: Discourses, narrative accounts and unconscious motivations

Interpretive qualitative data analysis derived from the biographical-interpretive approach, designed by Hollway and Jefferson (2000) was used to analyse the interview transcripts. This interpretive analysis is embedded in the theoretical underpinnings of "the psycho-social subject" and explores both the inner psychic world and the shared social world of the individual, providing us with a holistic understanding of each participant (Frosh, 2003; Gadd & Jefferson, 2007; Hollway, 2004). It utilises discourse analysis, narrative theory and psychoanalysis to explore the stories of these 27 women. Hollway (1984) argues that individuals are not just "accidently" positioned in particular discourses but receive "some satisfaction or pay-off" from investing in specific discourses (p. 238). The researcher explored the discourses participants' position themselves in and the unconscious attractions of these discourses in relation to their biographical narrative accounts. Emphasis is placed on the overall plot of the narrative, specifically the interconnectedness between the past, present and future and how the practices of retrospection and reflection inform identity.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings have highlighted the following: the discourse of fear; the discourse of women's responsibility and the narrative of intergenerational trauma. This chapter focuses on a short overview of these findings.

4.1. Discourses of fear and women's responsibility

The women in the study positioned their fear of violence against women as "natural" because women are socialised from a young age to fear men. This fear of male perpetrators becomes assimilated into the identity of women and their life stories. Women are also constructed as responsible for negotiating this fear and avoiding gender-based violence. Monica's story will be explored to highlight the discourses of fear and women's responsibility. Monica is a black African female student who is previously from a township in Johannesburg and currently lives in university residence. She (aged 19) tells the story of her first conscious memory of fear at seven years old. She speaks about seeing a neighbour raped.

> "This lady she was one of the house helpers on my street and she was running and there was this guy chasing her. He grabbed her on the lawn in front of my street and basically he wanted to rape her. He was taking off his pants and stuff. That was like...looking back on it I didn't really understand what was happening at the time." (Monica, Interview 1)
>
> "(...) that was the first time that I think I was scared of a man because I just didn't understand why you would do that to somebody so that was like I think like my first conscious memory of fear." (Monica, Interview 1)
>
> "(...) but I always heard my granny saying that you need to be careful you'll get yourself raped and stuff like that." (Monica, Interview 1)

In the first excerpt Monica uses active verbs to begin describing the story of her neighbour's rape, such as "she was *running*" and "there was this guy *chasing* her". Beginning the story with the present tense places us, the listener inside the story and infuses the story with life. Monica's use of the present tense emphasises the continuing significance of this story in her life (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). She speaks about how she never understood why her mother tried to make her scared of men until she was seven years old and witnessed her neighbour's rape. Her first memory of fear is directly connected to male perpetrators and rape and it can be postulated that the fear of men and rape is constructed as integral to Monica's identity and narrative. This poignant story highlights how the fear of rape has become a taken-for-granted aspect of womanhood, an unconscious force that motivates how we live our lives, that we often forget that there was once a time that we didn't know what the "fear of rape" was or why we had to be scared of men. Monica also speaks about how her grandmother told her that she needs to be careful or "*you'll* get *yourself* raped". The use of the words, *"you'll"* and *"yourself"* emphasise how women are seen as responsible for the violence perpetrated against them and are expected to construct precautionary strategies to avoid such violence. Investing in a discourse of women's responsibility, in which women cast themselves as responsible for avoiding violence may represent an attempt to limit the anxiety and fear surrounding violence against women (Stanko, 1996, 2001). Investing in this discourse may allow Monica to feel safe in an otherwise volatile environment. However, this discourse shifts responsibility away from perpetrators towards victims, which reinforces victim blaming, contributing to the silence surrounding violence against women (Day, 1994; Campbell, 2002; Gavey, 2005; Gordon & Collins, 2013; Stanko, 1996, 2001). Constructing women as responsible for avoiding violence is a false representation because as Campbell (2002) argues "victims don't cause rape; rapists cause rape" (p. 49). Furthermore, the dissemination of this discourse of women's responsibility serves to reproduce patriarchal power relations and uphold the status quo. As a result society is not adequately challenged to address the issue of violence against women.

Monica begins to describe what happened to the man that raped her neighbour.

> Monica: "Like they all came out with walking sticks and mops and stuff. Literally mob justice at its worst to beat this guy and the next day we found out that he died."
> Interviewer: "They beat him to death?"
> Monica: "Ja basically. They beat him up so bad that we took him the next day he died and by that time I didn't understand what that meant or the implications of it…" (Monica, Interview 1)

The man who raped her neighbour was beaten to death by other community members in an action Monica describes as "mob justice at its worst". Monica reflects again on her innocence and confusion as a seven-year-old child, who did not understand the significance of these events. This is specifically highlighted when she states "(…) by that time I didn't understand what that meant or the implications of it..." Monica's story illustrates the culture of violence in her community and also highlights the prevalence of vigilantism and mob justice in townships in post-apartheid South Africa (Buur & Jensen, 2004; Minnaar, 2001; Nina, 2000). This fear and culture of violence in South Africa was a theme that was present across all of the women's stories. Gqola (2007) argues that an "ideology of militarism" has been carried over from

apartheid and violence has been constructed as the "constant companion" in our lives as South Africans (p. 114).

This study also revealed that womanhood in South Africa appears intimately connected with fear, vulnerability and constant caution. Nandipha, (aged 20) a black African female student, speaks about this connection in the excerpt below.

"Living as a woman in South Africa is a difficult thing because we don't see the hardships every day like there's just this caution constantly. You have to be alert all the time." (Nandipha, Interview 1)

Alicia (aged 18), a white, female student, also speaks about her experience of being a woman in South Africa in the excerpt below, highlighting the connection between fear, vulnerability and womanhood.

"It can be very scary. It affects you every day of your life. You've always got to be aware of your surroundings and who you're around." (Alicia, Interview 1)

These associations between fear, vulnerability and womanhood are very dangerous because they serve to restrict and shame women, relegating them to a subordinate position to men (Moffet, 2006, 2009). Furthermore, the fear generated by the prevalence of violence against women and its capacity to restrict and limit the choices and movements women make in society, constitute violence in itself (Campbell, 2002; Kelly & Radford, 1996).

4.2. Narratives of intergenerational trauma

This construction of womanhood and its intimate connection with fear translated into narratives of intergenerational trauma. When asked to speak about their lives five of the women in this study chose to structure their personal narratives around stories of intergenerational trauma. Throughout the interviews these five participants spoke about how their mothers, grandmothers, aunts and sisters told them stories about the violence perpetrated against themselves and other female family members. This oral tradition serves to construct cautionary tales for other women in the family. Camilla's story illustrates this narrative of intergenerational trauma. Camilla (aged 26), a white female student who currently resides in a middle class area in Cape Town, speaks about how she found out that her mother was abused as a child, in the excerpt below.

"I mean I heard the stories from my aunt about what my grandfather did to her and I can understand her not wanting to tell us. It was quite horrific hearing someone bashed your mother's head against the wall because they were angry at her." (Interview 1, p. 12)

These stories were considered "private family issues" and were not consciously labelled as violence. In Camilla's except above she describes how her mother didn't disclose the abuse herself, but her aunt did. Danieli (1998, p. 4) argues that it is this "conspiracy of silence" that defines intergenerational trauma in families. Camilla's second-hand knowledge of the abuse and her mother's silence surrounding this issue opens itself up to multiple interpretations. Her mother's silence could be demonstrative of the shame and stigma surrounding violence against women. The silence could also represent the traumatic nature of her mother's abuse and her resistance to engage with this experience (Frosh, 2001). However silence can also be constructed as an agentic choice, rather than an unconscious denial (Frankish & Bradbury, 2012). This oral tradition of intergenerational trauma and the "conspiracy of silence" that surrounds it, helped structure these women's narratives and ultimately their identities. The emergence of these narratives of intergenerational trauma also indicate how embedded the social issue of violence against women is in the lives of these women.

4.3. Summary

In South Africa an interesting paradox exists in which women are legislatively empowered but feel unsafe in their daily lives (Gqola, 2007). This was reflected in the way the women in this study told their life stories. Questions of identity became stories of fear, responsibility and intergenerational trauma. The fear of violence against women appears to be socialised into women at a young age. Monica constructs the story of witnessing her neighbour's rape at the age of seven as her "first conscious memory of fear", encapsulating the seamless connection between fear and womanhood. The brutal murder of her neighbour's rapist

by community members represents the culture of violence in South Africa and our ties to an "ideology of militarism" (Buur & Jensen, 2004; Britton, 2006; Hamber, 2000; Minnaar, 2001; Nina, 2000; Wardrop, 2009). Women are also constructed as being responsible for avoiding violence and are expected to change their behaviour. This discourse of women's responsibility absolves the perpetrators of any guilt or shame, further silencing women in South Africa (Campbell, 2002; Gavey, 2005; Gordon & Collins, 2013; Stanko, 1996, 2001). The discourses of fear and women's responsibility reflect how women in South Africa are told to "surrender many choices, make yourselves as small, quiet and invisible as possible" (Gqola, 2007, p. 121). Stories of intergenerational trauma represent how ingrained violence against women is in our family histories and the residual impact it has. These findings reflect how women in South Africa, regardless of whether or not they are direct victims of violence, are affected by the presence of violence and fear in their communities. This culture of fear and violence against women is intertwined into how these women construct their personal narratives and how they understand and experience the world.

5. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

There are needs to be more research on the psychological impact of living in communities characterised by high levels of violence, as there is sparse research in this area. The link between the militancy of apartheid and the prevalence of violence against women in post-apartheid South Africa also needs to be addressed in future research.

6. CONCLUSION

This study is highly significant as there is sparse literature in South Africa that explores the psychological impact of a culture of violence against women. The paradox between the prevalence of violence against women and the extensive legislation aimed to protect women in South Africa is a multi-faceted issue. Apartheid's legacy of militancy, which constructs violence as an acceptable social resource is one of the factors that play a role. The dominant discourse of hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy in South Africa also serve to create a culture in which violence against women is normalised and tolerated. As a result women's stories are silenced and seen as unimportant in the public arena. This research goes beyond previous literature as it highlights how all women are affected by the presence of violence in their community, emphasising the bondage that violence against women has over the lives of all women.

REFERENCES

Abrahams, N., Jewkes, R., Laubscher, R., & Hoffman, M. (2006). Intimate partner violence: Prevalence and risk factors for men in Cape Town, South Africa. *Violence and Victims*, *21*(2), 247-264.

Abrahams, N., Jewkes, R., Martin, L. J., Mathews, S., Vetten, L., & Lombard, C. (2009). Mortality of women from intimate partner violence in South Africa: A national epidemiological study. *Violence and victims*, *24*(4), 546-556.

Britton, H. (2006). Organising against gender-based violence in South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies, 32*(1), 145-163.

Brown, L. S. (1995). Not outside the range: One feminist perspective on psychic trauma. In C. Caroth (Ed.), *Trauma: Explorations in memory* (pp. 100-112). London, UK: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Buur, L., & Jensen, S. (2004). Introduction: Vigilantism and the policing of everyday life in South Africa. *African Studies*, *63*(2), 139-152.

Campbell, R. (2002). *Emotionally involved: The impact of researching rape*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 (South Africa). Pretoria, South Africa: Government Printers. Retrieved from http://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/acts/2007-032.pdf

Danieli, Y. (1998). *International handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Day, K. (1994). Conceptualizing women's fear of sexual assault on campus: A review of causes and recommendations for change. *Environment and Behavior*, *26*(6), 742-765.

Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 (South Africa). Pretoria, South Africa: Government Printers. Retrieved from http://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/ acts/1998-116.pdf

Erasmus, Z., & Pieterse, E. (1999). Conceptualising Coloured identities in the Western Cape province of South Africa. In M. Palmberg (Ed.), *National identity and democracy in Africa* (pp. 167-187). Cape Town, South Africa: Capture Press.

Frankish, T., & Bradbury, J. (2012). Telling stories for the next generation: Trauma and nostalgia. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, *18*(3), 294-306.

Frosh, S. (2001). Things that can't be said: Psychoanalysis and the limits of language. *International Journal of Critical Psychology*, *1*(1), 29-46.

Frosh, S. (2003). Psychosocial studies and psychology: Is a critical approach emerging? *Human Relations, 56*(12), 1545–67.

Gadd, D., & Jefferson, T. (2007). *Psychosocial criminology.* London, UK: Sage Publications.

Gavey, N. (2005). *Just sex? The cultural scaffolding of rape*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Graybill, L. (2001). The contribution of the truth and reconciliation commission toward the promotion of women's rights in South Africa. *Women's Studies International Forum, 24*(1), 1-10.

Gordon, S. F., & Collins, A. (2013). "We face rape. We face all things": Understandings of gender-based violence amongst female students at a South African university. *African Safety Promotion*, *11*(2), 93-106.

Gordon, M. T., & Riger, S. (1991). *The female fear: The social cost of rape.* Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Gqola, P. D. (2007). How the "cult of femininity" and violent masculinities support endemic gender based violence in contemporary South Africa. *African Identities*, *5*(1), 111-124.

Hamber, B. (2000). "Have no doubt it is fear in the land": An exploration of the continuing cycles of violence in South Africa. *Southern African Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, *12*(1), 5-18.

Henri, Y., & Grunebaum, H. (2005). *Re-historicising trauma: Reflections on violence and memory in current-day Cape Town*. Direct Action Centre for Peace and Memory.

Hollway, W. (1984). Gender difference and the production of subjectivity. In J. Henriques, W. Hollway, C. Urwin, C. Venn, & V. Walkerdine (Eds.), *Changing the subject: Psychology, social regulation and subjectivity* (pp. 227-263). London, UK: Methuen.

Hollway, W. (2004). Editorial. In W. Hollway (Ed.), *The international journal of critical psychology: Psycho-social research* (pp. 5-12). London, UK: Lawrence & Wishart.

Hollway, W. & Jefferson, T. (2000). *Doing qualitative research differently: Free association, narrative and the interview method.* London, UK: Sage Publications.

Human Rights Watch. (2010). *Human Rights Watch world report: South Africa.* New York, NY: Seven Stories Press.

Institute for Security Studies. (2012). *Fact Sheet: Explaining the Official Crime Statistics for 2012/3.* Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies.

Kelly, L., & Radford, J. (1996). "Nothing really happened": The invalidation of women's experiences of sexual violence. In J. Radford, L. Kelly & M. Hester (Eds.), *Women, violence and male power* (pp. 19-33). Bristol, UK: Open University Press.

Mathews, S., Abrahams, N., Martin, L. J., Vetten, L., van der Merwe, L., & Jewkes, R. (2004). *"Every six hours a woman is killed by her intimate partner": A national study of female homicide in South Africa* (MRC Policy brief no. 5). Retrieved from South African Medican Research Council (MRC) website: http://www.mrc.ac.za/policybriefs/woman.pdf

Minnaar, A. (2001). *The new vigilantism in post-April 1994 South Africa: Crime prevention or an expression of lawlessness*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Institute for Human Rights & Criminal Justice Studies. Retrieved from http://www.unisa.ac.za/contents/docs/vigilantism.pdf

Moffett, H. (2006). "These women they force us to rape them": Rape as narrative of social control in post-apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies, 32*(1), 129-144.

Moffett, H. (2009). Sexual violence, civil society and the new constitution. In H. Britton, J. Fish, & S. Meintjes (Eds.), *Women's Activism in South Africa: Working across Divides* (pp. 155-184). Scottsville, South Africa: University Of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Morrell, R., Jewkes, R., & Lindegger, G. (2012). Hegemonic masculinity/masculinities in South Africa: Culture, power, and gender politics. *Men and Masculinities*, *15*(1), 11-30.

Nina, D. (2000). "Dirty Harry" is back: Vigilantism in South Africa – The (re)emergence of the "good" and "bad" community. *African Security Review, 9*(1), 18-28.

Root, M. P. (1992). Reconstructing the impact of trauma on personality. L. S. Brown, & M. Ballou (Eds.), *Personality and psychopathology: Feminist reappraisals* (pp. 229-265). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Stanko, E. A. (1996). Reading danger: Sexual harassment, anticipation and self-protection. In M. Hester, L. Kelly, & J. Radford (Eds.), *Women, violence and male power: Feminist activism, research, and practice* (pp. 50-63). Bristol, PA: Open University Press.

Stanko, E. A. (2001). Women danger and criminology. In C. Renzetti, & L. Goodstein (Eds.), *Women, crime and criminal justice* (pp. 13-26). California, CA: Roxbury Publishing Company.

Statistics South Africa. (2012). *Victims of Crime Survey 2012*. Pretoria, South Africa: Statistics South Africa. Retrieved from: http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0341/P03412012.pdf

United Nations General Assembly. (1993). *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*. UN doc. A/RES/48/104. Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Publication.

van Rensburg, M. J. (2007). A comprehensive program addressing HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence. *Journal of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance, 4*(3), 695-706.

Vetten, L. (2000). Gender, race and power dynamics in the face of social change: Deconstructing violence against women in South Africa. In J. Y. Park, J. Fedler, & Z. Dangor (Eds.), *Reclaiming women's spaces: New perspectives on violence against women and sheltering in South Africa* (pp. 47-80). Johannesburg, South Africa: Nisaa - Institute for Women's Development.

Walker, L. (2005). Men behaving differently: South African men since 1994. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 7*(3), 225-238.

Wardrop, J. (2009). Notes from a tense field: Threatened masculinities in South Africa. *Social Identities, 15*(1), 113-130.

Wood, K., & Jewkes, R. (1997). Violence, rape and sexual coercion: Everyday love in a South African Township. *Gender and Development, 5*(2), 41-46.

Wood, K., Lambert, H., & Jewkes, R. (2008). "Injuries are beyond love": Physical violence in young South Africans' sexual relationships. *Medical Anthropology, 27*(1), 43-69.

ADDITIONAL READING

Dosekun, S. (2007). "We live in fear, we feel very unsafe": Imagining and fearing rape in South Africa. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, *21*(74), 89-99.

Dosekun, S. (2013). "Rape is a huge issue in this country": Discursive constructions of the rape crisis in South Africa. *Feminism & Psychology*, *23*(4), 517-535.

Herman, J. L. (1992). *Trauma and recovery: Domestic abuse to political terror.* London, UK: Pandora.

Jewkes, R., & Abrahams, N. (2002). The epidemiology of rape and sexual coercion in South Africa: An overview. *Social Science & Medicine*, *55*(7), 1231-1244.

Shefer, T., Boonzaier, F., & Kiguwa, P. (Eds.). (2006). *The gender of psychology*. Cape Town, South Africa: UCT Press.

KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Gender-based violence: an umbrella term for any harm that is perpetrated against a person's will and that results from power inequities that are based on gender roles (UNGA, 1993).

Violence against women: any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (United Nations General Assembly, 1993).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AUTHOR(S) INFORMATION

Full name: Sarah Frances Gordon
Institutional affiliation: Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town
Institutional address: University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch, 7701, Western Cape, South Africa
Biographical sketch: Sarah Gordon is from Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. She received her Bachelors, Honours and Masters degrees in Psychology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) before enrolling at the University of Cape Town (UCT) to pursue her PhD. Sarah's doctoral research centers on violence against women and how women's identities are transformed by living in a culture of violence. Her thesis is entitled: *Imagining fear: Exploring the psychological impact of a culture of violence on women.* She is also actively involved in community work in the area of gender-based violence.

---

[i] The term "Coloured" is used instead of "mixed-race" as it describes "those South Africans loosely bound together for historical reasons such as slavery and a combination of oppressive and preferential treatment during apartheid, rather than by common ethnic identity." (Erasmus & Pieterse, 1999, p. 169).