

The Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre Newsletter

February 2008

ORCC Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre

Winter 2008 Edition



...yes, we can.

Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre

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A Note from the Crisis Line/Volunteer Coordinator

Happy New Year! I hope that you all had a restful holiday.

2007 was a very busy and fruitful as we saw the team expanding to include new members. Unfortunately, we also lost some of our team members.

Crisis Line Calls Quarterly Statistics July 2007 to December 2007

	JULY 2007	AUG 2007	SEPT 2007	OCT 2007	NOV 2007	DEC 2007
Childhood Sexual Abuse	11	36	30	30	26	18
Adult/Recent Sexual Assault	42	34	19	34	39	29
Sexual Harassment	0	1	0	1	0	0
Combination	44	50	54	21	5	1
Other	29	28	28	35	37	19
Information Request	6	5	12	14	8	8
Total Calls	132	154	143	135	115	75

Crisis Line Volunteering Quarterly Statistics July 2007 to December 2007

	JULY 2007	AUG 2007	SEPT 2007	OCT 2007	NOV 2007	DEC 2007
Active Volunteers	22	23	20	24	22	17
Volunteers on Leave	4	9	11	7	8	10
New Volunteers	8	1	0	0	0	0
Volunteers Who Left	2	1	2	0	1	3
Total Volunteers	36	35	33	31	31	30
Total Vol. Hours	350	360	348	383	334	292

A fond farewell to: Rose Fuchs, Leta Borque, Georgie Slogar, Jenny Reynen, Teresa Dubois, Rachel Laratte, Jo-Ann Brault and Setorme Tsikata. The Ottawa Rape Crisis Center thanks you for your support on the crisis line and commitment towards ending violence against women.

As well, please join me in welcoming the following women: Greta Hall, Debra Soh, Adena Eliasoph, Jen Carter and Daksha Bhasker. Welcome to all of you and I hope you have an enjoyable and educational experience working at the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre. You have joined a dynamic and interesting working group. Please feel free to come to the centre and enjoy the warm and friendly environment.

I am currently co-facilitating with Vanessa Blair the winter crisis line training, which began on Jan 8th and ends on March 11th 2008. We currently have 14 women in the training and continue to use the crisis line binder and our community partners as resources for the training. I very much would like to hear from the women who have been part of the training with suggestions on how best to improve the trainings.

Spring training commences on April 1st and ends June 3rd 2008. Please be advised that if you want to do a placement at the center in the fall it is important that you attend the spring training and a placement for December will require that you complete the fall training.

Josephine Basudde
Crisis Line Coordinator



Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB) Review

On March 2, 2007, Attorney General Michael Bryant announced that the Honourable R. Roy McMurtry, Chief Justice of Ontario, would be appointed to review Ontario's system for compensating victims of crime. This review follows Ontario Ombudsman André Marin's scathing report into the treatment of victims by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, entitled "Adding Insult to Injury."

As part of the review, interested parties were invited to send written submissions pertaining to the CICB. The staff of the ORCC decided that this was an appropriate venue to present our concerns and the concerns of our clients. Below is the relevant excerpt from the letter we sent to Mr. McMurtry, containing our list of concerns:

- *Clients are receiving inadequate and inconsistent information from the CICB 1-800 number leading to an array of differing information about the process.*
- *Clients are concerned about the length of time, upon the submission of documentation to the CICB, it takes for the Board to complete the entire investigation process. For some clients the process lasts up to five years.*
- *The CICB adjudicators rely heavily on reports; letters and other documentation received from psychologists and psychiatrists, rather than feminist grassroots organizations like the ORCC. The ORCC has been providing high quality sexual violence counselling and support services to sexual assault victims for over thirty years and we have the educational, professional and practical experience.*
- *Continuing to provide financial compensation is vitally important for victims/survivors as it provides victims to cover their costs of counselling and medical bills. This compensation to victims is also important, as many victims comment that the financial compensation they receive is highly symbolic, for many it reinforces that the crime took place and the victims feel validated as a result of the process. It is extremely important that the CICB continue to serve victims of sexual violence through direct monetary awards, particularly in light of the fact that less than 5% of all sexual violence victims' cases proceed through the criminal justice system.*
- *In the City of Ottawa, we are fortunate to have a strong community partnership with the University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic. The clinic's Women's Division has a great deal of expertise assisting sexual violence victims through the CICB applications process. Our partnership with the U of O community Legal Clinic is effective for a number of reasons: 1) it provides an effective forum for cross agency training, referral and information sharing between our two organizations; 2) it allows law students to receive practical hands on experience with sexual assault victims as they access the CICB process; and 3) it facilitates a seamless level of community based service delivery to the victim/survivor. We therefore recommend that the review process should explore the Ottawa model as well as investigate the potential of duplicating this model in other cities in Ontario.*

For more information, take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.mcmurtryvictimcompensationreview.ca/>

<http://www.ombudsman.on.ca/UploadFiles/File/PDF/CICB%20English%20Web2.pdf>



Public Education Update

Greetings Everyone!

I am glad to be back to the ORCC – the work is going well and we have two exciting projects this year- the **Sexual Violence Information Website for Youth** and the **Girls Chat**.

The purpose of the Youth Website Project is to develop a website that raises awareness amongst youth aged 12-24, about sexual violence. The website will include e-mail and instant messaging components so that the users can anonymously ask questions related to sexual violence. We have hired Maria Alexopoulous (a long-time crisis line and public education volunteer) to coordinate this project. Welcome Maria!

The goal of the **Girls Chat** project is to assist young women (high school age) from immigrant and refugee background in discussing issues such as sexual violence, inter-generational conflict, self-esteem and body image in a safe and confidential environment. Weekly discussion groups for girls are organized in five Ottawa High Schools. Faize Hassan and Halimah Shaw will be continuing on as the project facilitators.

We are also delivering presentations on a monthly basis to Ottawa High Schools and community groups.

The next public education volunteer training will be in **January 2008** and the dates will be announced by mid-December.

I wish you a safe and a happy holiday season and looking forward to a year filled with renewed commitment to building safer communities.

Ikram Jama
Public Education Program Coordinator

This poem was written for a client. Reprinted with the permission of the client and the author.

Bloodshed of the Butterfly

In your eyes I have seen the fight for your sanity.
In your smile, a veneer for your blackened soul.
A barrier of teeth painted into a gentle grin,
Stifling a cry for the slaughtered butterfly.

A creature of beauty, delicate and pure,
In innocent transition.
You witnessed the murder of this beloved being.
Now a legacy of ruined innocence,
A stain on the fingers of homicidal hands.

The deadened soul lay out of the safety of its translucent shell,
In your eyes lies the vision of her writhing body.
Her black eyes called to yours an inaudible cry,
Her vulnerable life summoned you alone,
Torn from her cocoon, she first saw your face.

Face down on bare wood,
Virgin wings forced open.
This memory floats in you still,
Calloused hands built for carnage dissecting a friend.

Abused and maimed her soul slowly died in the sun.
You stood still by her side till her writhing had ceased,
You cupped her shattered pieces,
You stroked her lifeless frame.

Scouring the earth, you searched for her remains.
Reclaiming her unconditional heart, you extracted it from the moss,
And there by the rock you secured her tomb.
The cocoon of her premature birth,
And resigned her battered body inside.

She knows you did not kill her,
Forgive yourself for not crying out, No!
You could not stop the hands that raped her,
You were helpless.

Deeply you weep for her as she cries for you.
A small shadow was she to his brutality,
Powerless to his cruelty.
Still she is tortured below your memory,
Where lies all that she suffered.

As you buried her beneath the moss,
She handed you her legacy.
A difficult lifelong task,
That you cry for yourself,
Justly cry for yourself.....
Sweet butterfly.



Announcements

Ikram Jama, our Public Education Coordinator, returned from her maternity leave at the beginning of November. She's jumped right back into things here at the ORCC, as you can see from her Public Education Update! Our Finance and Administration Coordinator, Bogi Tessier, has also returned from her maternity leave, and we're delighted to have them both back!

Our interim Public Education and Finance and Administrative Coordinators, Chris Nuyens and Almaz Kifleyesus, have both moved on to new jobs. We wish them the best and thank them for all the hard work they did over the past year.

Because I Am A Girl

Plan Canada (formerly the Foster Parents Plan), one of the world's largest international, child-centered development organizations, has started an ambitious project to follow the lives of 135 girls from nine countries for the first nine years of their lives. Some statistics, just to show the inequality faced by girls and women in some parts of the world:

62 million girls under age 15 do not go to school.
96 million young women 15-24 are illiterate.
14 million females aged 15 to 19 give birth each year.

Pregnancy leading to birth or unsafe abortion is the leading cause of death for females aged 15 to 19 worldwide.

More than 700,000 teenage girls are married each day with the majority of girls in many countries married before 18.

450 million adult women are stunted from childhood protein malnutrition.

9.6 million girls are in hazardous labour including slavery, prostitution and armed conflict.

Check out the website:

<http://plancanada.ca/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=420&srcid=420>

Ani DiFranco: The F Word

By Rebekah Meek



For 18 years, the F word has been chasing Ani DiFranco everywhere. That is, feminist. Often portrayed as just another angry lesbian with unshaven armpits and, you know, a multimillion dollar business she started when she was 18, DiFranco has redefined that F word with her own series of paradigm-unsettling Fs. DiFranco is a friendly, frank feminist singing folk songs, reconciling family and feelings with candor and intimacy. For those cynics looking for reductive criticism, DiFranco isn't an easy target.

While she isn't often linked to the word fashion, DiFranco manages to find innovation and creativity in the most unexpected places. She once sported signature electric-green and magenta braids, but now, she wears her hair in its natural, henna-hued way. She's traded in her steel-toed platforms for softer shoes. And her right hand is always equipped with a full set of extra strength Nailene press-on nails reinforced by electrical tape. Those nails, she says, are the perfect tool for her fiercely syncopated approach to the acoustic guitar. Like most things in her career, the lil' folksinger does fashion her own way, and that surprises a lot of people.

a recent interview, Rob Ehmke asked DiFranco if her decision to compile her favorites onto a two-disc retrospective called *Canon* meant that her nonstop touring and recording may be coming to an end. She replied, "I'm not done! You don't get off that easy ... I feel I've only just begun." Good thing, too, as DiFranco's live sets continue to evolve. For several tracks on *Canon*, DiFranco chose several versions over original studio recordings. Not just some smoke-machines-and-strobe-lights version of a record you already know, DiFranco's sets are hearing things already familiar forming anew. Her petite stature does not hold her back from captivating an entire audience, hushing all but those who parrot each and every line she sings. Fantastic.

Editorial from The Fulcrum
November 8, 2007

Editorial: Girls just wanna have equal opportunities at well-paying jobs that carry with them significant responsibilities

"THIS WEEK I'VE been out four evenings. It's not something a young woman wants to do ... It's not something a young man wants to do either, I guess. But is that appealing for women to be working 24 hours, seven days a week as the president does? These jobs are time-consuming. Women have family issues, and many personal responsibilities," said VP Academic of the University of Ottawa, Robert Major to the Fulcrum in a recent interview.

The Fulcrum spoke with Major about the fact that, despite the majority of U of O students being female, faculty positions—and in particular, the highest-paying jobs at the university—are predominantly filled by men, with women comprising only 32 per cent of faculty positions.

It seems that the response of the second-most powerful person at the U of O might sum up the battle: a

blanket statement deeming an entire gender disinterested and dismissing any concerns regarding equal opportunities. These jobs are hard, why on earth would a woman want to take them on anyway?

Major's comment is insulting to every female student on this campus, not to mention those working with and for him. Here we are, working our asses off in the hopes of a prosperous future and a good life that includes families, well-paying jobs, and whatever else we might set our minds to, and the vice-president academic all but states that some jobs probably just don't suit us because of "family issues". Which begs the question: does Robert Major have a family? What about his personal responsibilities? Clearly he must live and breathe exclusively University of Ottawa air if he's able to do his job.

It is discouraging to continually hear arguments reflecting the double standard that exists for professional women. To argue that women have "other responsibilities" that hinder us from achieving success passes the buck and diverts attention from the real reasons we are forever banging our heads against a glass ceiling. It has always been an uphill battle to convince society that we have something to offer besides ovaries. Why is it so hard to imagine a woman with a job and a family? And perhaps an even better question: Why is this an argument at all in a world with stay-at-home or single fathers, and women who aren't interested in raising a family at all?

If the U of O is in fact working to be "a leader in the promotion of women in all aspects of university life," as its mission statement indicates, decision-makers such as Major should let us decide our own limitations and do their part to ensure equal opportunity by leaving preconceived notions at the door. We'll do the rest by bringing the talent.



The Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre
Presents:

FREE INFORMATION SESSIONS ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS

Thursdays, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
March 20th, 2008 – April 17th, 2008
at
The Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre

PLANNED TOPICS:

March 20th: The Healing Process

March 27th: Flashbacks and What to do with Feelings

April 3rd: Dealing with Anger

April 10th: Building a Support System

April 17th: Open topic with community guest speaker

*Women are welcome to attend any number of sessions.
Assistance for childcare and bus tickets are available upon request.*

For more information, or to register for some or all sessions,
please call Melissa or Elise at (613) 562-2334 ext 25

Welcoming women from all communities in the Ottawa area.

