



West Cork Whisper

WEST CORK WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE PROJECT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 65

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2016

Since 1991, the 16 Days of Global Action against Gender-Based Violence has been recognised internationally by governments, thousands of NGOs and advocacy organisations. It is used to raise awareness of and spur action against the worldwide pandemic of violence against women and girls.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence happens in every country, it knows no boundaries, shows no respect for female agency or human rights. It is used both as a weapon of war and a means of domestic terrorism. From young girls in Afghanistan & Pakistan who brave attacks and death to have an education; to the infanticides of girl babies in rural China because of the preference for boys; the mass rapes of women and girls by warlords and their armies from Bosnia to Isis; little girls as young as six years old genitally mutilated on 'cutting' tables in compliance with some misogynistic 'tradition' that serves

only to keep them in excruciating agony to ensure they will never know the pleasure of their own bodies; women and girls sexually trafficked from Eastern Europe and further afield, some of whom end up in Ireland's brothels to be sexually misused; acid attacks on young women who refuse so-called suitors or honour killings of those who 'offend' the sensibilities of their male relatives. The forms of violence are myriad.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
25th November to
10th December 2016



For women aged 15-44 worldwide, acts of violence cause more death and disability than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents, and war combined.

WHO (1997) *Violence Against Women: A Priority Health Issue*

Gloria Steinem

at 2016 West Cork Literary Festival

For those unable to attend the feminist icon and activist Gloria Steinem's inspiring talk at this summer's West Cork Literary Festival, there will be another chance to catch it.

West Cork Music and West Cork Women Against Violence Project are proud to announce a special viewing of the event in the Bantry Bay Hotel on Thursday December 1st at 8pm. Admission is free but donations to West Cork Women Against Violence Project are welcome.

Gloria Steinem's appearance in July was a highlight of the 2017 West Cork Literary Festival. News of this memorable afternoon in Bantry spread far and wide on social media and in the press. More recently, it was mentioned on BBC Radio 4. It was her first visit to Ireland and a 400-strong audience who had travelled to Bantry from throughout Ireland and the UK eagerly awaited her arrival. When she entered the room, *"the room crackled with the energy of women who were not just delighted to see her but seemed to somehow need her"* according to Catherine Conroy of the Irish Times. Gloria Steinem said afterwards, *"It's because I'm a signal. I'm a recognisable part of something that matters to them - and it matters to me just as much."*

Marjorie Brennan of the Irish Examiner reviewed the talk and wrote, *"there was a mix of laughter, tears, anger and hope in the room over the nearly two hours the event lasted. Steinem had asked that Irish women make their voices heard and she wasn't disappointed. In conclusion, she expressed the wish that the world "could be a lot more like this room".*



Gloria Steinem is a writer, lecturer and feminist activist. She co-founded Ms magazine and was one of its editors for fifteen years. She has spent most of her life on the road, as a journalist, organiser, activist and speaker.

Her books included the bestsellers *Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*; *Outrageous Acts and Everyday*

Rebellions; and *Moving Beyond Words*. In 2013 she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Obama.

west | cork | music

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM Against Gender-based Violence

25TH NOVEMBER TO 10TH DECEMBER 2016

16
DAYS

In Ireland we are not immune to the virus that devalues and demeans women. This State has a long and disgraceful history of maltreatment of women and young girls: from the Magdalene Laundries, to the Hepatitis C and Symphysiotomy Scandals, slaps on the wrists in our courts for rapists and domestic abusers that provide no deterrent whatsoever, where domestic violence is not a criminal offence but must be prosecuted under inappropriate Offences against the Person legislation; to women forced to give birth despite the risks to their lives or against their wishes. Ireland has little to be proud of and this State's legacy of misogyny and sexism is one which still pervades present day attitudes and laws.

So here in Ireland we need the 16 Days of Action to raise awareness. We need to raise awareness of the 212 women who have been murdered in the last 20 years, 55% of whom were murdered by a partner or ex-partner and 99% of murders were by men both known and unknown to the victims. We need the public to take seriously the fact that one in five women in Ireland have experienced domestic abuse and that our refuges are full to overflowing with women and children fleeing violence in their homes. We need to get our own house in order and that starts with each of us saying very firmly that Violence Against Women and Girls will not be tolerated and those who perpetrate that violence will have no hiding place. We need to pressure those who make and enforce our laws to increase protections for women and children.

We need to make Ireland a safe place for women and girls.

Approximately 800,000 people are trafficked across national borders. Approximately 80% of these people are women and girls and up to 50% are minors. The majority of these women and girls are trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation.

Trafficking in Persons Report, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, US Department of State, June 2007

In 2015, there were 3,281 incidents of physical assaults disclosed to Women's Aid. Reported physical abuse included being gagged, kicked and beaten; being choked, strangled and stabbed; being slammed against the wall; being spat on, having hair pulled and being scalded; and being beaten and raped while pregnant.

Women's Aid Impact Report 2015

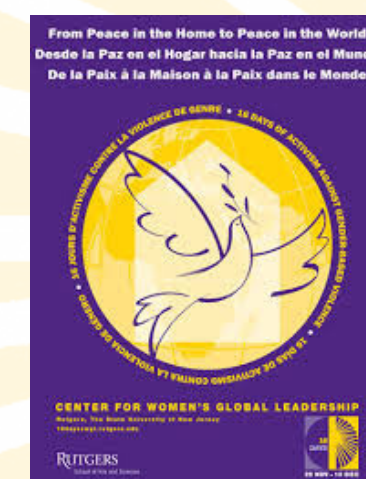
21% of adult women survivors of sexual violence disclosed that their partner or ex-partner was the perpetrator of the violence.

National Rape Crisis Statistics, Rape Crisis Network of Ireland, 2011

47% of men who beat their wives do so at least 3 times a year.

AMA Diagnostic & Treatment Guidelines on Domestic Violence, SEC: 94-677:3M;9/94 (1994)

Women's Aid has announced details of their 16 Days of Action campaign for 2016. This year the theme will be *Change the Conversation* and encourages local and national action to challenge the victim blaming culture that surrounds domestic abuse in Irish society. This campaign will also bring survivors' voices to the fore of our awareness raising activities <https://www.womensaid.ie/16daysblog>



Every year the **Center for Women's Global Leadership** sends out a *Take Action Kit*, detailing how participants can get involved and campaign in order to make a change.

This year's theme is **From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Make Education Safe for All!**

Get yours at:
<http://16days.cwgl.rutgers.edu>

time to trump the boogie man

by Julia

There's an online magazine I like a lot. It's called *Standard Issue* and describes itself as 'a smart and witty e-magazine by women'. It's very entertaining and often hits just the right note about the stuff that concerns us everyday.

Just recently I read a piece by Jo Caulfield called *Don't Censor Pussy*. In it she described her outrage at the media reports of Donald Trump's comment, albeit with the P-word having been censored. Imagine the lofty heights that outrage soared to when she discovered what he had actually said.

There's been a lot of coverage about his comments, his actions in the past and his general attitude, but I for one am thankful for the global conversation that the whole debacle has started. Suddenly it has become really clear that to speak of or to a woman in a way that suggests she is 'fair game' is always wrong. It is never ok to grab anybody's body. No matter how much of a star you are.

And 'locker room' talk might seem to be acceptable between some men, but when that talk becomes public, and millions of people are commenting on it – isn't it clear then how very unacceptable it is? What you say to your mates in a bar, would it be ok if you overheard the same being said of your daughter? Your sister?

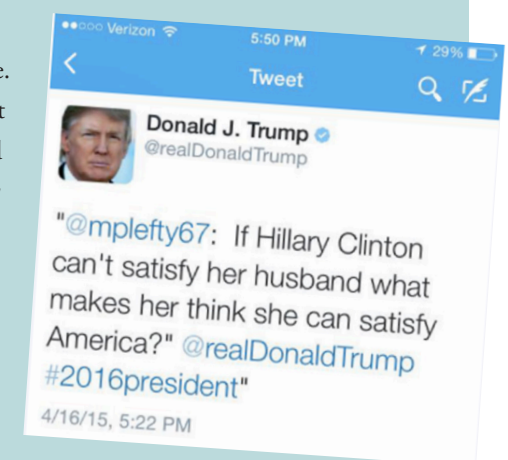
This is not acceptable. This is real life. The guy is competing in the biggest race in the world, against a woman, and tweets: "If Hillary Clinton can't satisfy her husband what makes her think she can satisfy America?"

He wants to represent a nation, but that nation and many, many others have had to recognise that there is no place for this attitude, in work, business, politics or schools, not in this life, not in this century.

Finally we have an iconic misogynist, a real life, breathing, be-wigged spectacle of "You know, it doesn't really matter what [the media] write as long as you've got a young and beautiful piece of ass."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/politics/donald-trump-sexism-tracker-every-offensive-comment-in-one-place/>

It's like finding an actual boogie man, the scary thing that you know exists out there, but lurks in the shadows. But he is real and you can pin him up to the light for inspection. And it's not nice, and it can be scary, but we **can** name it and we **can** challenge it.



"Not only is coercive control the most common context in which [women] are abused, it is also the most dangerous"

Coercive Control

Evan Stark* suggests that *"coercive control is an ongoing pattern of domination by which male abusive partners entwine repeated physical and sexual violence with intimidation, sexual degradation, isolation and control"*.

Victims of coercive control can have every aspect of life controlled by their partner, often being subjected to daily intimidation and humiliation. The primary outcome of coercive control is a feeling of entrapment that can be hostage-like in the harms it inflicts on dignity, liberty, autonomy and personhood as well as to physical and psychological integrity. In many cases, dominance over the victim develops and escalates over the years until the perpetrator has complete control. Putting a foot wrong can result in violent outbursts, with victims living in fear for their lives.

*Evan Stark (2007) *Coercive Control. How Men Entrap Women in Personal Life*. New York: Oxford University Press.

TANTAMOUNT TO TORTURE

Coercive control can be tantamount to torture and it encompasses a wide range of behaviours intended to undermine a woman to the point where she ceases to exist as a person in her own right. The woman can lose her sense of self; she will believe that she is to blame for everything that he says is wrong in the relationship because she will be constantly told this. She may question her parenting abilities and believe him if he says he will report her to the Social Workers. She may have difficulty making decisions because he makes all decisions, and be unsure of how to manage the family finances because he does that also. She may experience isolation from family and friends. She is likely to be reluctant to disclose the abuse to anyone because she fears she will not be believed. The abuse may begin with the abuser becoming jealous of attention that the woman gives to friends, family or children. It can then increase to where he starts to control the woman financially, socially, sexually. The woman begins to pacify her partner by ensuring that meals are to his liking, children are kept quiet, family members are excluded and she stops attending social occasions. He begins to tell her what to wear, say to people, when she can work or attend meetings.

Men using coercive control leave anonymous threats on answering machines, sabotage electronic communication, remove pieces of clothing or other memorabilia from the house, cut telephone wires, steal their partners' money or their mail or remove vital parts from their cars. Abusers also exploit secret fears which only they know or they play 'gaslight' games to make their partners feel 'crazy' (such as moving their car in the night or removing car keys/ diaries from their handbags). Stalking is the most prevalent form of surveillance used in coercive control. Stalking falls on a continuum with a range of surveillance tactics that include timing the partners activities (calls, toileting, shopping trips, etc.); monitoring their communications; searching drawers, hand-bags, wallets or bank records; cyberstalking with cameras or global positioning devices or having partners followed.

On over 3,494 occasions in 2013, services were unable to accommodate women and their children because the refuge was full or there was no refuge in their area.

Safe Ireland Domestic Violence Services National Statistics 2013

In 2015, there were 5,499 safety orders applied for in our courts.

LAW IN UK UPDATED

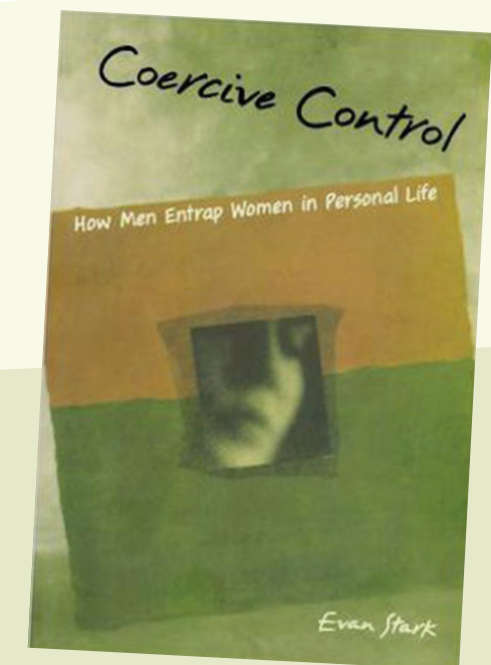
In December 2014, England updated The Serious Crime Act 2015 by creating a new offence of controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships. The new offence closed a gap in the law around patterns of controlling or coercive behaviour in an ongoing relationship between intimate partners or family members.

NO SPECIFIC LAW IN IRELAND

In Ireland we don't have any specific law around coercive control and legislation is applied through seven differing acts and laws: the Domestic Violence Act 1996, the Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act 2002, the Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabitants Act 2010, the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011, the Courts and Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2013 and the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015. A new Domestic Violence Bill was proposed in 2015 to pull aspects of all of these legislations into one bill for better access to interim barring orders, ban electronic communications and to enhance court experiences. Frances Fitzgerald, Minister for Justice states that it is a *"major step"* towards Ireland's ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, known as the Istanbul Convention. Domestic violence and gender inequality has long been recognized as a human rights issue by Irish Domestic Violence services with *"power and control"* as the underpinning pattern of behaviors in domestic violence. However the Istanbul Convention was signed in May 2011 and we are still awaiting legislation that will enable women who experience stalking, harassment and coercive control, access to legal safety.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women who have left abusive relationships usually say that the *"violence isn't the worst part"* of the abuse they experience and they say that coping with the emotional abuse and control was the most difficult. They find it so hard to move on from the episode of violence and adjust back into a *"normal"* life. The flashbacks that result from the abuse can continue to affect how women feel in other relationships for years afterwards. The horrendous impact of this method on the woman is very much understated and unrecognised and sadly women experience a lack of understanding about this method of control when one hears statements as to why she doesn't leave the situation. Even where one seeks support from agencies, we are then hampered by the reality that coercive control is not recognised by law in Ireland and this needs to change.



Someone to turn to, somewhere to go



In 2015 almost 1,200 calls were made to West Cork Women Against Violence helpline by women in the area seeking help. Following the recent murders of Clodagh Hawe and her sons in Cavan, there has been a further spike in the numbers of women contacting West Cork Women Against Violence Project and other domestic violence services throughout the country.

Earlier this year the Project commissioned an evaluation of the impact and importance of our domestic violence services in West Cork.

Someone to Turn To, Somewhere to Go was launched with a presentation of its findings on **Thurs 22nd September** at the Uillinn Arts Centre in Skibbereen. Dr Caroline Crowley, a Rural Development and Social Inclusion Researcher who conducted the evaluation, along with West Cork Women Against Violence Board members and staff, was present to talk about the service and answer queries.

The evaluation report surveyed 40 clients of the service who speak in their own words about what the service means to them. It also contains the views of professional frontline staff in agencies ranging from An Garda Síochána, Child Protection Social workers, health service providers, solicitors, counsellors and community organisations as to the importance of the service and the role it plays in supporting women and children living with domestic violence.

Someone to Turn To, Somewhere to Go gives a rare insight into the trauma and danger many women and children live with in West Cork. It describes the unique expertise and vital support offered by West Cork Women Against Violence and highlights the effectiveness of multi-agency co-operation and intervention.

Project Co-ordinator Marie Mulholland says:

"The geographic make up of West Cork is intensely rural, which can exacerbate the isolation, fear and helplessness that some women, and their children, live in. The scourge of domestic violence will only ever be effectively addressed when we face up to its prevalence and its consequences together as a society. In the meantime, organisations like ours are the only lifeline women have."

The launch and the report's findings received extensive coverage in local press and on radio.

We were delighted to see a really wide blend of organisations and clients that we have worked with in the audience. The presentation was followed by a lively and engaged discussion, largely centred around the positive results achieved when organisations can share training and information to work together to benefit clients. The discussion also highlighted the need for more support in and around West Cork in the absence of any refuge nearer than Cork City, and that being heavily oversubscribed.

West Cork Women Against Violence would like to thank the following for their support and generosity: The Uillinn Arts Centre and staff, Kalbos Café and all those who attended on the day of the launch.

Dr Caroline Crowley (centre) with staff & board members of WCWAV



Evening Echo 28/09/2016

Copies of *Someone to Turn To, Somewhere to Go* can be requested from the office at Harbourview, Bantry, by calling 027 53847 or emailing admin@westcorkwomensproject.ie

A Union of Students in Ireland (USI) 2016 survey found that 1 in 12 female students are victims of rape or attempted rape.

2,361 sexual offences were recorded by An Garda Síochána in 2015.
Garda Recorded Crime Statistics, Central Statistics Office, 2015

"Choose people who lift you up"

MICHELLE OBAMA

HELPLINE **FREEPHONE:****1800 203 136****Tuesday:** from 10am to 4pm**Other weekdays:** Helpline is covered 10am to 4pm whenever possible**Office:** 027 53847 -**Mon to Fri:** 9 am to 5.30 pm

CONFIDENTIALITY West Cork Women's Project assures all women contacting us that four core values underpin our service:

- Confidentiality
- To be listened to
- To be believed
- Respect for her choice

Speaking to someone, perhaps for the first time, about experiencing violence or abuse in the home is never easy. Placing your trust in a stranger on the end of a phone or meeting someone for the first time face to face takes courage. These first stages of seeking support can be a time of stress and fear for women. It is important that women understand that they have the right to remain anonymous when contacting the service. If a woman is comfortable with giving identifying details, these details are not passed on to any other agency except at her request.

There are two exceptions to confidentiality:

- If a disclosure raises concerns with regard to Child Protection issues
- If a woman discloses that she intends to harm another person.

West Cork Women Against Violence Project is registered with the Charity Regulator and is in full compliance with all of their requirements. Charity No. 20056292 Company No. 635556J. West Cork Women Against Violence publish an Annual Report on all our activities and the services we provide, including an annual audited financial report each year. Copies of our Annual Report and financial accounts can be obtained by request to admin@westcorkwomensproject.ie

TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

We are here to
support you

1800 203 136

support services for women

Cork

West Cork Women Against Violence	Freephone 1800 203 136
Cuanlee Refuge, Cork.....	021 427 7698
Free Legal Aid Clinic.....	Locall 1890 350 259
Information and referral	
IRD Duhallow Domestic Violence Support	Helpline 087 7733 337 <i>from Monday to Saturday 10am - 10 pm or office at 029 60633</i>
Legal Aid Board, Cork	021 455 1686 / 021 427 5998
Mná Feasa (Domestic Violence Project)	021 421 1757
OSS, Cork	Freephone 1800 497 497 (Domestic Violence Resource Centre for men and women)
S.A.T.U.....	021 492 6100
Sexual Violence Centre	Freephone 1800 496 496
Domestic Violence Social Work.....	021 492 1728
Y.A.N.A. North Cork	022 53915

Kerry

Kerry's Women's refuge and Support Services (Adapt)	066 712 9100
Kerry Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre.....	Freephone 1800 633 333
Legal Aid Board	066 712 6900
Tralee Women's Resource Centre	066 712 0622

National

Women's Aid	Freephone 1800 341 900
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West Cork Citizens' Information Service

West Cork Citizens' Information Service can provide you with information, advocacy and advice on all your rights and entitlements. The service is free, confidential and independent. Open daily, please call for times.

Bantry The Square, 076 107 8390 *Daily from 10am - 5pm*
10am-1.00pm 2.00pm-5.00pm
(Fridays until 4pm, closed 1pm-2pm Mon, Tues & Thurs)

Macroom South Square Macroom, 0761 078 430
Mon, Tues, Weds, Thursday (Closed Friday)

Bandon, c/o St Michael Centre, South Main Street, Bandon
Every Thursday from 10am - 1pm & 2pm- 4pm

Dunmanway, Ross House, The Square, Dunmanway *Wednesday 10am-1pm (Fortnightly)*

Clonakilty, c/o Employability Service, 16 Rossa Street, Clonakilty
Every Wednesday from 10am - 1pm & 2pm- 4pm

Free Legal Aid Clinic *Monthly on 1st Tuesday 6pm - 7pm*

For an appointment please contact West Cork Citizens' Information Service by either dropping in or phoning 076 107 8390.

published by West Cork Women Against Violence Project

at Harbour View, Bantry, Co. Cork

www.westcorkwomensproject.ie email: admin@westcorkwomensproject.ie

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