



George & Sheila

A story of violence... and hope

*The Overseas Development Administration (UK)
presents a co-production between
Wan Smolbag Theatre and
Ace of Hearts (NZ) Ltd.*

George & Sheila

Before your group or class sees the video it is important for them to express their own feelings about and experiences of domestic violence.

If they do not do this they won't relate the story to their own lives and the impact of the video will be lessened.



DISCUSSION:

I. GENERAL QUESTIONS:

- Is domestic violence different from other kinds of violence?
- Is it a crime ?
- Do you hear about or see domestic violence happening a lot?



2. Next you could read this poem or ask the group to read it quietly to themselves.

Nineteen eighty-six
 statistics
 at Vila Central
 show
 that Women
 are treated
 worse
 than cats,
 dogs and pigs.
 When a pig
 a domestic
 animal
 is brutalised
 there is
 a hue and cry
 and plenty toktok.
 When a Man
 husband
 lover
 boyfriend
 betrothed
 intended groom
 de facto husband
 bashes
 batters
 brutalises
 kills
 a woman
 it is accepted
 taken for granted
 as the Man's right
 therefore
 hemi
 bisnes
 blong

tufala nomo
 therefore
 it becomes
 confirmed
 legitimised
 entrenched
 accepted practice
 therefore
 Vanuatu Women
 remain
 colonised people.
 From 10.01.'86
 to 3.6.'86 Seventy-three cases.
 a sample reads:
 struck
 on the head
 lost consciousness.
 Six months pregnant
 kicked
 in the abdomen
 punched
 on the head
 perforated eardrum
 scalp lacerations
 require suturing
 kicked in the chest.
 Semi conscious
 scalp lacerations
 severe haemorrhage
 operation performed.
 Struck with wood
 both sides of head
 punched
 on the mouth and nose

haematoma
 deep penetrating wound,
 fingers chopped off
 epistaxis
 orbital
 haematoma
 whipped with stirrup
 on back and buttocks
 punched over truck
 ruptured spleen
 and (R) Kidney
 2 major operations.
 Pushed to ground
 striking head
 against table
 haematoma
 (L) eye,
 ear and cheek
 punched
 on face and mouth
 suturing
 facial laceration.
 bruising on hands
 legs, buttocks,
 laceration
 back of head.
 punched in face
 struck
 on (R) forearm
 kicked abdomen
 (R) shoulder
 and (R) hip
 struck by stone
 abrasions
 and haematoma
 on forehead.
 scratches

limbs and back
 kicked in axilla
 punched
 (L) shoulder and arm
 bruising on back
 fractured ribs
 At least
 ten women a month
 in Port Vila
 alone
 mostly
 bashed
 on the head
 and kicked
 in the abdomen
 and thorax
 while pregnant
 are admitted
 because
 their battered bodies
 require suturing
 re-structuring
 re-construction
 for the next
 onslaught
 and slaughter
 because
 Man is BOSS
 Man i Kat Raet
 therefore
 in Vanuatu
 IT IS RIGHT
 according to
 the THINKING
 and PRACTICE
 of Vanuatu.

3. Now is a good time to divide into smaller groups. This is so that people can have a chance to talk more personally and so they won't be frightened by the larger grouping.

BEFORE WATCHING THE FILM:

Ask the group to consider these questions:

- What makes a man beat his wife?
- Do women ever beat their husbands? Why?
- Do you think you would ever beat your wife/husband?
- Would you expect to be beaten?
- What should a woman do if she is beaten?
- Is it wrong to hit your husband/wife at all, or can it be alright sometimes?
- Are men more violent than women and what makes them violent?
- Is violence the only way to control your family or can you use other ways?
- What happens to children who see their parents hitting one another or their father beating their mother?
- Why do men laugh at women being beaten? Is it funny?

You may want individuals to write their answers so you can choose interesting answers to discuss with the group in the next session. You should not make people feel they have given a right or wrong answer as this may make them hide their true feelings.

WHILE WATCHING THE FILM:

Ask the group to consider these questions:

- What causes anger in the film?
- What causes violence?
- Does anyone act wrongly? Give an example from the film.
- What stops George from beating his wife?

AFTER WATCHING THE FILM:

You could give your group some time to think about their answers, then discuss the answers as a group. Again there is no real right and wrong although people should be encouraged to prove their answer by using evidence from the film.

ACTIVITIES:

(Mainly for use in school)



CREATIVE WRITING:

- a) Write a review for 'George and Sheila':
The review should start with a brief description of the story of the film and the use of black and white and what that is for. Then it should look at whether the film carries a strong or useful message and whether you would recommend other people to see it.
- b) Write a story or poem about violence in the family:
Imagine you are the woman who is beaten, or the child seeing the beating, or the husband who realises too late what he has done.

Try and imagine the whole situation

- If you are the woman, do you expect your husband to beat you? What causes the fight, how does it end?
- If you are the child, what do you see? What do you feel? Do you try to stop what is happening?
- If you are the husband, are you drunk or jealous or angry about something that has happened? Do you hurt your wife badly? How do you feel about what you have done?

c) POSTERS:

This involves making a good, strong image with a sentence or two in words giving a message about domestic violence. The people making the poster need to decide who they are making it for: is it for men, telling them it is wrong to beat their wives? For women telling them what to do if they are beaten? Or for neighbours and family asking them if they should just let it happen, or do something? The poster makers may have more ideas, but they must be clear and aim their message at a certain group.



d) DEBATES:

Many debating topics can come out of this work. A debate should be thoroughly prepared. One way of doing this is to divide the class into two, for and against the motion and make them spend at least an hour organising their arguments and choosing speakers and seconders. The teacher can go to each group in turn trying to make the groups think more deeply. Only when the groups are prepared does the debate take place and the two opposing sides get to hear each others arguments.

You could ask the class to vote to choose out of topics like:

- Is it wrong to use any violence in marriage?
- Divorce is always wrong even if the marriage is violent.
- Women must obey their husbands.
- Men's jealousy causes violence in marriage.
- Women must not dress in a provocative way.
- Drunk makes men violent and should be banned.

Voting will tell us which debate the class would be most interested in.



WOMEN'S RIGHTS:

Here are some notes provided by Merin Mason, a lawyer who works on domestic violence cases :

1. What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is an assault or threat by someone you live with. This may be your husband, boyfriend, father or other family member. The violence usually occurs in your home but it can also happen outside the home. An assault includes slapping, pushing, hitting and kicking. All these actions are criminal offences. A threat may also be a criminal offence.

2. What can I do about it?

You may have already tried to get help from your chiefs or from a church or family member. You must decide what is best for you in your situation. There is a Women's Centre in Port Vila and in Luganville if you would like to talk to a counsellor about your options. If you wish to take some legal action, the options are listed below.

3. Reporting to the police:

Any criminal offence should normally be reported to the police. You should be sure that you give the police a written statement which you have signed, if you want them to prosecute (take him to court) the attacker. If you only talk to the police they may not go ahead with a prosecution. Instead the police may talk to the attacker and give him a warning.

If you have any injuries, you should get a medical report as soon as possible. The police have a form which you should take with you to the hospital or doctor.

If you are afraid that the attacker will assault you again after you have reported him to the police, or that he will try to force you to withdraw your complaint, you should tell the police this and ask them to place bail conditions on him.

The bail conditions can prohibit him from contacting you or threatening you. Bail means that he is not kept in prison until the case is heard but is allowed to live his normal life. However some restrictions (called conditions) are usually placed on him and if he breaks these restrictions he can be held in prison until his case is heard by the court.

Sometimes the police ask you to have a meeting with the attacker at the police station. You do not have to go to this meeting. If you don't want to, you should explain this to the police, telling them your reasons.

When the case comes to court, you may have to tell your story to the court (give evidence) about the assault, if the attacker says he didn't do it.

4. Getting a Restraining Order:

A restraining order is a court order which prohibits the attacker from doing certain things. You decide what protection you need and ask the court to make the order in these terms. These orders often say that the man must not:

- assault, threaten or harass you
- contact or approach you, or communicate with you
- go to your home or work place
- damage property belonging to you

Some of these things are criminal offences even without a restraining order. The most useful part of the order is that it prohibits the man from coming near you. Without this you may have to wait until he hits you or does some damage before you could get the police to help.

In the Magistrate Court in Vila, you will need a lawyer to help you to get a restraining order. There is a lawyer at the Vanuatu Women's Centre, or you can go to the Public Solicitor's Office or a private lawyer.

In places where there is no lawyer you may be able to ask the court clerk to assist you, or you may be allowed to bring the matter before a Magistrate without the usual paperwork.

The court charges a fee of about 5,000-10,000 vatu. If the court gives you an order you can ask them to also order the other person to pay this money back to you.

You will have to appear in court to give evidence and you may have to appear twice. The man will also be given a chance to appear in court to tell his story.

5. Breaches (breaking) of a Bail Condition or a Restraining Order:

If the man breaches a bail condition, you must report this immediately to the police. In Vila, you can also report it to the Public Prosecutor's Office. If you have a Restraining Order and the man breaches it, you should report this to your lawyer or, if you don't have one, to the police and the court. A breach of a restraining order is called a "contempt of court". This means that the man has not respected the court's order and so the court will punish him for this disrespect.

If the breach is also a criminal offence, such as another assault, you should report this to the police and make a further complaint against him. It is very important that you report breaches of bail conditions and restraining orders as soon as possible. Even if the breach seems to be small, the man may be testing the order to see if you will act. If he thinks that you are not going to report him, he may soon breach the order in a serious way.

YOU CAN GET HELP FROM THE FOLLOWING PLACES:

- Vanuatu Women's Centre, Vila Phone: 25764
- SANMA Counselling Centre, Luganville Phone: 36157
- Public Solicitor's Office, Vila Phone: 23450
- Your nearest Police Station:
 - Police Headquarters, Vila - Phone 22 222
 - Santo - Phone 36 222
 - Malekula - Phone 48 408
 - Tanna - Phone 68 658
 - Ambae (no Phone)

These notes apply to Vanuatu. If you live outside of Vanuatu, find out what the law can do for women who suffer domestic violence.

Ask your group to read the notes carefully. Do they understand what women can do about domestic violence? Can they make a role play showing exactly what a woman can do, from going to the police and onwards? Does your group think the law does a good job to protect women? Are there different ways of dealing with the problem through custom courts? Which does your group think is best? Why?



ROLE PLAYS AND CHORUSES:

Role Plays: Dealing with violent situations:

(4 - 6 people can take part in each situation)

This role play involves two 'actors' and two or three 'advisors'. The actors play the husband and wife who sit or stand in the middle while the advisors stay a little to the side and help them with ideas and suggestions, to try and reach a solution to the argument. If the advisors feel they can handle the situation better or if they feel the actors are becoming angry or will not reach a compromise, they can take over from the actors. The advisors are like trainers in the boxing ring and the 'husband' and 'wife' are the boxers but they can only exchange words not blows. The aim of the role play is to try to find a compromise in a potentially violent family situation.

The situation each group is given should be typical of ones that could spark violence. We have not included drunkenness in our selection of situations because it would almost always cause violence but you may think of many situations we have not included. Please make up your own!

Groups should be given situation cards to look at, then they should split into husband/wife sides and think carefully about the situation. In (a) they need to decide where the wife has been if they are on the wife's side; if they are on the husband's, has this happened before? They must also decide how the argument will go ahead.

Possible Situations:

- a) Husband arrives home to find that supper is not cooked. The wife has been out and has just come in. The husband is hungry and also cross that the house is dirty. The husband wants to know where his wife has been...
- b) The wife tells her husband that her relatives are coming to stay in the house for a month or two. He's very unhappy... How many are coming? Who is paying for food? There's no room anyway. She says his family is always coming but never hers. Her says it's his house...
- c) The wife is waiting for her husband. He's very late home. She wants to know where he's been and who he has been with. She believes he's been seeing another woman (you can decide if this is true or not). He says he hasn't and he can go out if he wants to...
- d) Wife wants to start work in a store. Her husband doesn't want her to work. The wife gives her reasons like, having her own money, getting out the house.... her husband says she should be at home with the children and cleaning the house. She says she'll pay someone to do that, he says why work if you've got to pay someone to look after the kids?

- e) Wife asks for more housekeeping. Husband says she has had her house-keeping. He's only got this cigarette money. She says she needs to buy food. Husband says he's going out. Wife stops him...
- f) Husband sees wife has new dress. Where did she get it? How much did it cost? Why is she wasting money like that? She says she needed a new dress. The old one was full of holes. He says he never buys new clothes...
- g) Mother and father are waiting for daughter to come home. It's nine o'clock. She went to play netball. Where is she? Father blames mother, says she spoils her. He says he's really going to beat her when she gets back. She says he never beats their son...

You might give one situation to a group and when they finish, they hand it on to another group and try a different one. You should try to make a group extend the discussion as much as possible, by giving ideas and making sure everyone is talking. You might ask a group who is lively to perform for the class in a brief version of their discussion.

This may take a long time or a short time. They may find it hard but you should encourage them to keep talking and to look at every possible angle. They must try to find some kind of solution that is not violent.



CHORUS WORK

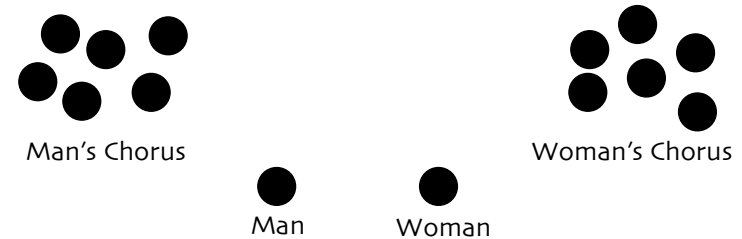
(In big groups)

These choruses allow everyone to speak a line or two, but do not put one person on the spot. Lines should be varied; some shouted, some whispered, some cross, some sad, some lines said by one person, others by a group.

CHORUS 1:

A boy and girl play the man and woman. They are in front; the chorus is behind and to the side. They are divided into two groups, one advising the man to beat the woman, the other trying to stop him.

Position of the group:



(The man walks up, the woman is waiting).

Woman: Where have you been?
Man: Out.
Woman: Wasting good money on beer.
Man: Shut up!

(The man makes the action of hitting the woman and then stays completely still while the chorus talks).

Man's Chorus: That's it!
 Shut her up!
 Put her in her place.
 Show her who is boss!
 A woman can't speak to a man like that
 Telling you what to do.
 Show her!

Man: Don't tell me what to do!

(Grabs her and stays completely still. The woman does too).

Woman's Chorus: (Softly) Yes.
You can hit her now
Break her arm
Smash her face
Is that what a man should do?
Will your son be proud of you?
Proud of you?

(The man could let the woman go at the end).

CHORUS 2:

(Woman is lying on the floor)

Man's Chorus:

(Pointing at woman and talking to each other. They are on the man's side.)

It's her fault
She made him do it
Nagging, nagging
Why can't she shut up?

Woman: You think it's my fault?

Woman's Chorus: He came home drunk
He hit her

(Man walks across and pretends to hit woman. The man's chorus laughs.)

Woman's Chorus: You think it's funny, do you?
You think it's funny,
How do you feel (turning to audience)
When it happens
To you!

CHORUS 3:

Boys and girls divide. (Or men and women). The girls group can start by pretending to clean up and say things like 'it's so dirty!' 'His clothes are everywhere'. The boys are listening.....

Boys:	Women! Always worrying!
Girls:	Men never think of the family.
Boys:	Women don't like to have fun.
Girls:	Men drink, smoke, don't care.
Boys:	Women can't stop talking!
Girls:	Men can't stop drinking.
Boys:	Women don't understand how hard we work!
Girls:	Men don't know what its like..... Looking after the kids..... Cooking meals.....
Boys:	Women, always complaining.
Girls:	Men, never listening.
All:	Why do we have to live together?

CHORUS 4:

(This is divided between boys and girls too, but starts very happily and finishes crossly.)

HAPPY:	Share a life together Build a home for two Together we'll have children A boy for him A girl for you
WORRIED:	But the rent is very high The room is very small We can't buy much on your pay There's not enough to eat today
WORRIED	You can't go out to drink! (all girls to boys) You can't go buy a dress! (all boys to girls) You're always spending money (girls to boys) You're always wasting money (boys to girls)
All:	We can't live like this !

A SONG TO FINISH:

You can write one or take a poem and put it to a tune, or you can put a tune to this one, which we use at the end of our piece on domestic violence:

Tell me who wins? *Don't do it darling*
 Don't use your fists on me

 Don't turn my love
 To ashes.

 A man and woman
 It's not an easy thing
 A man wants his way
 Thinks he has the right
 But I need my life too
 Need freedom to grow
 If we keep fighting
 Tell me who wins?

(This is a shortened version of the original song, which you can hear on the WSB music cassette, SONGS '89 to '93).

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FURTHER READINGS:

- CEDAW (Woman I Gat Raet Long Human Raet o No?)
by GRACE MOLISA
- A book on "WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT"
by GRACE MOLISA

Activity notes by Jo Dorras.

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