



MMFC e-News

Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research
Centre Muriel McQueen Fergusson pour la recherche sur la violence familiale

MMFC RESEARCH CONFERENCE ENDING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE: HARNESSING RESEARCH AND ACTION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

For over 25 years, the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research (MMFC) has been fostering collaborative, action-oriented research that contributes to social change concerning family violence. The MMFC's researchers have contributed to better understanding of the complexity of the many forms of family violence including the impact of exposure to domestic violence on children, teen dating violence, sexual violence, intimate partner violence, the abuse of pets and animals, and the abuse and neglect of older adults. The MMFC has been a leader in the creation of knowledge about the unique realities of family violence in rural contexts, the impact of family violence in the workplace, cyberviolence, the intersection of family violence and religion, and the justice system response to intimate partner violence. Research associated with the MMFC has not only contributed to knowledge creation, but has informed better public service delivery and the creation of policy.

The MMFC's conference, Ending Gender Based Violence: Harnessing Research and Action for Social Change will highlight important established and emerging work. It will take place at the Wu Centre at UNB in Fredericton, October 9-10, 2019.

The Conference will showcase important established and emerging evidence related to violence from a range of disciplines and sectors which, through enhanced coordination and collaboration, can contribute to improvements in understanding, preventing and responding to violence. This includes evidence from academic researchers, including graduate students, and professionals such as service providers and policy makers.

The Call for Papers has been extended to May 15 and is available in French and English here:

<https://www.unb.ca/fredericton/arts/centres/mmfc/index.html>

CANADIAN DOMESTIC HOMICIDE PREVENTION INITIATIVE WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Dr. Myrna Dawson is a Professor and Canada Research Chair in Public Policy in Criminal Justice and Director of the Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence (CSSLRV), College of Social and Applied Human Sciences, University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada. She is Director of the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice & Accountability and Co-Director of the Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative with Vulnerable Populations (CDHPIVP).

For more than two decades, Dawson's research has focused on trends and patterns in, and social/legal responses to, violence with particular emphasis on violence against women and femicide. She established the CSSLRV in 2005 with funding from the Canadian Foundation of Innovation to support the establishment of a research center focusing activities on understanding and preventing violence. In 2008, Dawson received funding to expand the CSSLRV to create/mobilize knowledge about

continued next page

CANADIAN DOMESTIC HOMICIDE PREVENTION INITIATIVE WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS (Continued)

effective violence prevention through rigorous research, exchange of knowledge to inform policy, and to train future researchers. She is a long-term member of the Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee, the first of its kind in Canada, which was implemented as a result of an inquest at which she served as an expert witness and co-authored the foundation paper upon which the committee was based. Dr. Dawson will give a keynote address during the MMFC Research Conference.

Cathy Holtmann, Director of the MMFC, is a co-investigator on the CDHPVP under the direction of Myrna Dawson and Peter Jaffe, the Academic Director of the Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children at Western University. Members of the CDHPVP conduct research on domestic homicides in Canada, identify protocols and strategies that will reduce risk and shares this knowledge with the wider community. The initiative focuses on four vulnerable groups: Indigenous populations; rural, remote and northern populations; immigrant and refugee populations; and children exposed to domestic violence.

As a contributor on this research project, The Office of the Chief Coroner for New Brunswick provides anonymized death investigation data associated with domestic and intimate partner homicides in New Brunswick. Through the analysis of this data and linkages with other associated databases, patterns and trends may be identified that can contribute to the development of appropriate and focused government and social policy regarding the prevention of intimate partner violence. UNB graduate student Mary Aspinall is currently working to review and code the data, as well as assisting the team with the UNB ethics application for phase three of the project. This phase will include interviewing individuals who have experienced high-risk domestic violence and proxy information from those close to the victims of domestic homicide. The Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre (FSAC) is a partner on the CDHPVP. Lorraine Whalley, Executive Director of FSAC, shares the agency's expertise in sexual violence and gender-based violence, and connects the work of the CDHPVP with FSAC's extensive network of community and government partnerships. Dr. Deborah Doherty, executive director of Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (PLEIS-NB), is also a partnership member on the CDHPVP. She has conducted research on intimate partner violence in a rural context and domestic homicide in New Brunswick resulting in the development of a safety-planning tool intended to support women to strategically mitigate their risk of violence even if they have decided to stay in the relationship.



Dr. Myrna Dawson

COLLECTIVE MEMO OF CONCERN TO WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Dr. Linda C Neilson, PhD, Professor Emerita at UNB and Research Fellow of the MMFC, recently submitted a memo to the World Health Organization (WHO), along with the support of many others from Canada, Australia, France, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States, to remove all references to "parental alienation" and related concepts from the WHO's International Classification of Diseases 11th Revision (ICD-11). Dr. Neilson and the 175 concerned family law academics, family violence experts, family violence research institutes, child development, child abuse and child rights experts who signed the memo are concerned that the WHO is proposing to endorse a reference to "parental alienation" (PA) as a "caregiver-child relationship problem" in ICD-11. As cited in the memo, "We are surprised by the lack of prior consultation on gender equality issues and are deeply concerned about this from a women's safety and child development, health and safety point of view, as well as from research and science perspectives... Our research demonstrates that parental alienation lacks research credibility and is frequently employed to divert attention from domestic violence and abuse and other evidence relevant to the best interests of children." The Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre endorses this memo to the World Health Organization.



For more information, visit:
www.unb.ca/mmfc



Like us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/mmfcvrc



NEW Follow us on Twitter:
[@CentreMuriel](https://twitter.com/CentreMuriel)

**Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for
Family Violence Research**

678 Windsor Street, Fredericton, NB E3B 5A3
506-453-3595 / fvrc@unb.ca