

**HEARING THE VOICES OF FILIPINO WOMEN:
VIOLENCE, MEDIA REPRESENTATION AND
CONTESTED REALITIES**

By

**Cleonicki Saroca
BSocSci (Hons)
University of Newcastle**

**Thesis submitted for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy**

**School of Social Sciences
Discipline of Sociology
University of Newcastle**

December 2002

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

(Signed) _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge all the Filipino women and children who have been killed or 'gone missing' in Australia. I also acknowledge those remarkable Filipino women whose courageous example and dedication to improve the status of their *kababayan* (fellow country women) in Australia has provided inspiration for this study.

I acknowledge Dr Peter Khoury's supervision of this thesis and for the time he spent on its editing. I also acknowledge Dr Deirdre Wicks for her supervision in the earlier stages of this study. I thank Dr Raymond Donovan. His deep commitment to sociology has been an inspiration. It has helped nurture my own passion for sociological research.

I gratefully acknowledge the significant contribution and commitment of Dee Hunt from the Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Brisbane Branch. Her commentary, encouragement, willingness to discuss and provide feedback on ideas and editing of this thesis have been invaluable. I am also grateful to fellow CPCA members Melba Marginson and Joan Dicka for their ongoing support. I doubt if this project could have proceeded in the way it was originally designed without the input of Dee, Melba and Joan. These wonderful women organised most of the interviews I conducted.

To the families and friends of Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Generosa Bongcodin, Rosalina Canonizado, Marylou Orton, Elma Young and Annabel Strzelecki, who I interviewed for this study, my deepest appreciation for sharing the lives of their loved ones. Thank you for the opportunity to hear their stories and better understand their lives. I have come to know these women. I share your sadness and anger over the violence they met in the country that had promised them a better life. Thanks also to the other Filipino women and few Filipino men I interviewed who willingly gave their time.

Many other people have contributed in some way to this study. I would like to express my gratitude to Deborah Wall, Della Ipong and Lilia McKinnon, the New South Wales Filipino Women's Working Party; Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, Isis International-Manila; Julie Stubbs, Institute of Criminology, University of Sydney; Rina Jimenez-David, Philippine Daily Inquirer; Kathleen Maltzahn, Solidarity Philippines Australia Network; Tess Selga, Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development, and Dr Rogelia Pe-Pua, University of New South Wales.

Thank you to all my friends for their support, especially Sandy Darab, Minae Inahara, Flora McCann and Maree Porter. Your friendships have sustained me, as have all those new friendships made during the course of this thesis.

And last, but never least, my deepest gratitude to my family. To my partner Leo, a Filipino who introduced me to the Philippines, my second home, my daughters, Marissa and Natasha, son, Michael, and mother, Ilma, a big thank you for your love, understanding and practical support. I am also appreciative of the care and assistance I received from our family in the Philippines during my research in their country.

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Statement of Authorship | i |
| Acknowledgements | ii |
| Table of Contents | iii |
| Abstract | vii |
| Abbreviations | viii |
| List of Illustrations | ix |

PART ONE: CONTEXTUALISING THE ISSUES

Chapter 1. Introduction **1**

| |
|--|
| The Research Focus |
| The Problem of the ‘Filipino Mail Order Bride’ |
| The Absent and Silenced Voice |
| Rationale for Selection of Research Topic |
| Research Methods: Discourse Analysis and In-depth Interviews |
| Methodological and Ethical Issues |
| Previous Research |
| Overview of the Study |

Chapter 2. Violence and Representation: Theoretical and Conceptual Issues **23**

| |
|---|
| Introduction |
| Epistemological Issues |
| Structural and Representational Intersectionality |
| Discourse and Power |
| Construction of Boundaries |
| Orientalism |
| Conclusion |

Chapter 3. Historical and Social Context **41**

| |
|--|
| Introduction |
| Historical and Social Context: the Philippines |
| Colonial and Neo-colonial Relations |
| International Relations of Migration |
| International Political Economy of Sex |
| Historical and Social Context: Australia |
| Colonisation, White Australia and the ‘Yellow Peril’ |
| The Migration of Women |
| Media Archetypes of Filipino Women |
| Institutionalised Violence Against Women |
| Filipino Women’s Activism |
| Conclusion |

PART TWO: HEARING THE VOICES OF FILIPINO WOMEN

| | |
|---|------------|
| Chapter 4. An Introduction to the Case Studies | 71 |
| Introduction | |
| Profile of the Women | |
| Submerged and Subjugated Voices of Filipino Women in the Media | |
| Abuses of Male Power and Control | |
| Resistance to Domination | |
| Effects of Violence on the Children of the Deceased and Missing Filipino Women | |
| Problematic Definitions and Conceptualisations of Violence | |
| Conclusion | |
| Chapter 5. Representing Teresita Andalis | 81 |
| Introduction | |
| Media Representations | |
| Teresita Andalis' Story: Interviews with Friends | |
| Conclusion | |
| Chapter 6. Representing Nenita Westhof | 91 |
| Introduction | |
| Media Representations | |
| Nenita Westhof's Story: Interviews with Friends | |
| Conclusion | |
| Chapter 7. Representing Generosa Bongcodin | 102 |
| Introduction | |
| Media Representations | |
| Generosa Bongcodin's Story: Interviews with Friends | |
| Conclusion | |
| Chapter 8. Representing Rosalina Canonizado | 115 |
| Introduction | |
| Media Representations | |
| Rosalina Canonizado's Story: Interviews with Family | |
| Conclusion | |
| Chapter 9. Representing Marylou Orton | 125 |
| Introduction | |
| Media Representations | |
| Marylou Orton's Story: Interviews with Friends | |
| Conclusion | |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Chapter 10. Representing Elma Young | 135 |
| Introduction | |
| Media Representations | |
| Elma Young’s Story: Interviews with Family | |
| Conclusion | |
| | |
| Chapter 11. Representing Annabel Strzelecki | 145 |
| Introduction | |
| Media Representations | |
| Annabel Strzelecki’s Story: Interviews with Friends | |
| Conclusion | |
| | |
| PART THREE: COMMON THREADS | |
| | |
| Chapter 12. Different Voices/Common Threads | 155 |
| Introduction | |
| Accuracy and Adequacy | |
| Journalism as a Patriarchal and Racist Gaze | |
| Cultural Insensitivity in Reporting | |
| Failure to Address Structural Factors | |
| Obscuring the Complexity of the Issues | |
| Media Fallacy of the ‘Poor Filipina’ | |
| Dialectics of Discourse | |
| Media Effects | |
| Stigmatisation | |
| Construction of Boundaries | |
| Raising Consciousness | |
| Agency | |
| Conclusion | |
| | |
| Chapter 13. Crystallising Australian and Philippine Media Representations of Violence | 175 |
| Introduction | |
| Mail Order Bride Discourse | |
| ‘Mail Order Brides’ and Violence | |
| Sexualising Violence, Poverty and Victimhood | |
| Non-Filipino Partners | |
| Philippine Articles | |
| Construction of Boundaries | |
| Desire and Fear | |
| Woman in Danger/Dangerous Woman | |
| Australian Articles | |
| Philippine Articles | |
| Victim-Blaming Discourse | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Discourse of a Better Life | |
| Individualising Women's Poverty | |
| Discourse of Personal Sacrifice and Suffering | |
| Explaining the Differences Between Australian and Philippine | |
| Media Representations of Violence | |
| Conclusion | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Chapter 14. Conclusion | 197 |
|-------------------------------|------------|

| | |
|---|--|
| Hearing the Voices Of Filipino Women | |
| Acknowledging Violence | |
| Recognising Diversity | |
| 'Mail Order Bride' Discourse and Violence | |
| Media Sources and Interviews | |
| Further Research | |
| Strategies For Change | |
| Building on the Initiatives of Filipino Women | |
| Conclusion | |

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| APPENDICES | 204 |
|-------------------|------------|

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| REFERENCES | 220 |
|-------------------|------------|

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a feminist exploration of how violence against Filipino women in Australia is represented in the Australian and Philippine media and the relationship between the women's lives and media images of their abuse. It is fundamentally concerned with the problem of the absent and silenced voices of Filipino women in media portrayals of violence. It aims at creating a space in which the women's stories can be told. Based on interview data and discourse analysis of Australian and Philippine newspaper articles, the study investigates how the homicides and disappearance of seven Filipino women are represented. Case studies drawn from interviews with family members and friends of these women comprise the core of the study. An exploration of additional articles and interviews further reinforces the issues and themes that emerge in the case studies.

The case studies contextualise the women's experiences. Analysing media images in light of the interviews reinstates the absent and silenced voice in media accounts of violence. By charting the lives of these seven women, their hopes and aspirations as well as the pain and fear they suffered at the hands of abusive male partners, the case studies illuminate the way media accounts have largely misrepresented their experiences. Many of the Australian articles, in particular, bore little resemblance to the women's lived realities. Juxtaposing Australian with Philippine portrayals further illuminates the racism and sexism of a large section of the Australian print media. A major theme to emerge out of this study is that the relationship between media image and actual violence also involves struggle and conflict over constructions of identity. It is a site of contested realities.

Most of the articles analysed in this study failed to tell the story from the deceased woman's perspective. It is argued that to hear these women's voices, journalists need to move beyond using sexist, racist and class-based stereotypes, such as mail order bride, to describe Filipino women or explain their abuse. It also means accounting for the history of domestic violence that was a large part of their lives.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------|--|
| CATW | Coalition Against Trafficking in Women |
| CATW-AP | Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific |
| CFED | Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development |
| CPCA | Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia |
| FWWP | New South Wales Filipino Women's Working Party |
| HREOC | Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| KAKAMMPI | Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-anak ng Migranteng Manggagawang Pilipino, Inc |
| KALAKASAN | Kababaihan Laban sa Karahasan |
| KALAYAAN | Katipunan ng Kababaihan Para sa Kalayaan |
| MRC | Migrant Resource Centre |
| NGO | Non-government organisation |
| NSW | New South Wales |
| OCW | Overseas Contract Worker |
| OFW | Overseas Filipino Worker |
| OWWA | Overseas Workers Welfare Administration |
| PCIJ | Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism |
| PO | People's organisations |
| POEA | Philippines Overseas Employment Administration |
| Qld | Queensland |
| R & R | Rest and Recreation |
| SAMPA | Samahan ng Pilipino sa Australia |
| SAPS | Structural Adjustment Programs |
| SPAN | Solidarity Philippines Australia Network |
| US | United States |
| USA | United States of America |
| VFA | Visiting Forces Agreement |
| WEDPRO | Women's Education, Development, Productivity and Research Organization |
| WB | World Bank |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----|
| Figure 1 | Government of the Republic of the Philippines (1974) <i>The Philippines: A Nation Reborn</i> , Manila, National Media Production Center, p. 65. | 50 |
| Figure 2 | Teresita Andalis | 81 |
| Figure 3 | Nenita Westhof | 91 |
| Figure 4 | Generosa Bongcodin | 102 |
| Figure 5 | Orozco, W. (1991) ‘Trouble Down Under: Battered, Abused Filipinas Fight Back’, <i>Manila Times</i> , 13 April, p. 5. | 109 |
| Figure 6 | Seneviratne, K. (1991) ‘Australia: Lax Immigration Laws Seal Fate of Filipino Mail Order Brides’, <i>Manila Times</i> , 27 July, p. 5. | 110 |
| Figure 7 | Rosalina Canonizado | 115 |
| Figure 8 | Marylou Orton | 125 |
| Figure 9 | Elma Young | 135 |
| Figure 10 | Dibben, K. (1995) ‘Murder By Mail-Order’, <i>The Sunday Mail</i> , 26 February, pp. 66, 95. | 139 |
| Figure 11 | Dibben, K. (1995) ‘Murder By Mail-Order’, <i>The Sunday Mail</i> , 26 February, pp. 66, 95. | 139 |
| Figure 12 | Annabel Strzelecki | 145 |
| Figure 13 | Whiting, F. (1999) ‘Click Here for Your Dream Girl’, <i>The Sunday Mail</i> , 24 January, p. 20. | 184 |
| Figure 14 | Whiting, F. (1999) ‘Click Here for Your Dream Girl’, <i>The Sunday Mail</i> , 24 January, p. 21. | 184 |
| Table 1.1 | Filipino Women Featured in the Case Studies | 78 |
| Table 1.2 | Filipino Women Featured in the Case Studies | 79 |
| Table 1.3 | Filipino Women Featured in the Case Studies | 80 |

PART ONE

CONTEXTUALISING THE ISSUES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Commenting on how the Australian media have responded to the murder of one of the Filipino women in this study, a Catholic priest observes:

And that sort of portrayal does nothing to promote community or community relations. Stereotyping in terms of these young women, that they're very available and all Filipinas are the same. And so it makes me feel very angry that kind of stuff is put around in places and many copies are produced, going to people's homes and front page, all sensationalised. I don't think that's justice whatever. Doesn't respect people. Doesn't respect the person (Father Wally, a friend of Nenita Westhof, July 1999).

The Research Focus

Filipino women and others in both Australia and the Philippines have contested media portrayals of Filipino women, particularly in relation to violence. In Australia, media representation of violence against Filipino women continues to be a major concern for Filipino organisations. These include the Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia (CPCA), located in Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, the New South Wales Filipino Women's Working Party (FWWP), the Melbourne based Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development (CFED), and the Adelaide based Buklod Kababaihang Filipino. According to the FWWP, the sensationalist media portrayal of Filipino women as 'mail order brides', sex objects and prostitutes has created a negative perception of all Filipino women and their settlement in Australia (Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW 1992a:12). Such notions of Filipino women have not only become commonsense knowledge, although considerable resistance has always come into play, but are regularly used in media reports of Filipino women and violence.

Isis International-Manila, a Philippine based feminist NGO, identified the media representation of violence against women in the 'Asia' and Pacific regions as a critical area of concern. The Philippine media typically portray Filipino women as victims,

subservient housewives and mothers, or sex objects and prostitutes; they are either virgins/crime victims or vamps (Isis International-Manila 1999:107; Tiongson 1999:7-8; de Quiros 1992:14; Azarcon-dela Cruz 1988:4, 128; see also Roces 1994:52). According to Isis International-Manila (1998), certain portrayals of violence against women actually constitute abuse and are, thus, violations of women's human rights. Media images of violence which construct women as natural victims are seen to strengthen rather than challenge men's oppression of women (Isis International-Manila 1999:109; Tiongson 1999:8). It is further contended that the Philippine media's portrayal of women as both powerless and dependent on men or as sexpots dedicated to pleasuring men contributes to women's vulnerability to violence (Raquiza 1992:62).

The criminological research of Cunneen and Stubbs (1996, 1997) came to a similar conclusion. Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:31) establish that Filipino women in Australia are almost six times more likely to be victims of homicide than other Australian women. They argue that many of the killings are extreme examples of domination which have been mediated by racialised and sexualised representations of Filipino women as submissive yet sexual beings, the embodiments of masculine desire (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:113-114). Cunneen and Stubbs identify the media as a key institution in this process wherein fantasised images of Filipino women render the women vulnerable to male abuse in Australia.

These introductory remarks do not mean to suggest that all relationships between Filipino women and non-Filipino men in Australia are violent, or that Filipino women are passive victims in such relationships. Nor am I suggesting the media are a homogeneous institution producing identical texts. As this study will demonstrate, there are often marked differences in newspaper reports both within Australia and the Philippines as well as between the two countries. The disjuncture between the

Australian and Philippine reportage is partly a legacy of the pervasive sexism, racism and colonialist and anti-Asian biases in Australia. It is also not my intention to imply the media never make a positive contribution to the reporting of violence against Filipino women.¹

The objective of this thesis is to provide a feminist sociological analysis of the relationship between the lives of Filipino women and Australian and Philippine print media representations of their experiences of abuse in Australia. While violence against women takes many forms, this study is mainly concerned with domestic violence. Such violence takes place in the context of a current or former intimate relationship. It can be defined as the abuse, coercion and control of one or more persons over others and includes physical, psychological and verbal abuse, sexual assault, financial deprivation, social isolation and control of movement (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:1-2). Based on discourse analysis of articles and interviews conducted with their family members and friends, case studies of seven Filipino women who were victims of homicide or have disappeared in Australia comprise the core of the study. An exploration of additional articles and interviews with Filipino women not associated with these seven women will further reinforce the issues, processes and themes that emerge in the case studies.

The thesis explores the interplay between the lives of Filipino women and media images of violence using four guiding themes as research tools. First, it examines how Australian and Philippine newspapers represent the killings of Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Generosa (Gene) Bongcodin, Rosalina Canonizado, Marylou Orton and Elma Young, and the disappearance of Annabel Strzelecki, as well as the abuse of Filipino women more generally. Representation here refers to the way meaning is produced and

¹ Some media reports sensitively address the issue of Filipino women and violence. For example, Nikki Barrowclough's (1995:46-67) excellent article, 'The shameful story of Australia's serial husbands', insightfully explores the issue through the stories of Filipino women.

circulated through forms of language, such as words, narratives, images and discourse (Hall 1997a:1, 5; Lidchi 1997:153). Second, an interrogation of the accuracy and adequacy of these media images, their accordance with the women's lived reality, is another central focus. Third, I consider media effects, the social consequences of such portrayals. Fourth, the study illuminates the agency Filipino women exercise within the constraints of their particular situations. In so doing, it challenges media portrayals of Filipino women as passive victims, objects acted upon by external forces such as male power. Overall, I am concerned with the problem of the absent and silenced voices of Filipino women in media portrayals of violence, and creating a space in which these women's voices can be heard. Essentially this thesis investigates the questions:

How is violence against Filipino women in Australia represented in the Australian and Philippine media? What is the relationship between the women's lives and media images of their abuse?

In addressing these questions, the study highlights representation as a site of contest and struggle over constructions of reality.

Two interrelated arguments run through the thesis. Firstly, it became increasingly clear as the research progressed that even journalists endeavouring to present sympathetic accounts of Filipino women and violence frequently employed 'mail order bride' discourse as both framework and explanation for understanding the women's abuse.² It seemed as though once journalists established the victim was a Filipina the violence became reconstructed as a 'mail order bride' event and the reporting was then framed in those terms. As will be demonstrated, journalists evoke this discourse even when the grounds for doing so are especially tenuous. In the hundreds of articles on violence against Filipino women in Australia surveyed for this

² I suggest that recognising the hegemony and heterogeneity of the 'mail order bride' discourse is crucial to understanding this phenomenon. This point is developed in the theoretical chapter.

thesis the dominant discourse was mail order bride. Secondly, the study contends that the abuse of Filipino women and media portrayal of their abuse must be understood in a wider historical, social and structural process. Such violence is intricately connected to economic and political arrangements in previous historical periods and other regions of the social in both Australia and the Philippines. These include the gendered racism of Australian police, courts and judicial system, the labour export policies of successive Philippine governments, and 'first world'/'third world' class and gender relations.

The Problem of the 'Filipino Mail Order Bride'

Given the centrality of mail order bride discourse to the media's reporting of violence against Filipino women, it is important here to provide an overview of what the expression represents. According to Cahill (1990:133), the term was initially a media invention. The problem of the Filipino 'mail order bride' is not located within Filipino women but is rather a problem of how their identities, culture and social relationships are constructed. This is not to deny that a marriage trade in Filipino women exists, an issue I explore in Chapter Three. 'Mail order bride' is a pejorative term that has come to symbolise Filipino women who marry non-Filipino men.³ It thus lies at the intersection of sexism, racism and class. When the media use the expression 'mail order bride' they are operationalising assumptions about the 'contractual' basis of a Filipino woman's relationship with her non-Filipino partner: the marriage therefore cannot be based on romantic love. As Robinson (1996:54,56) argues, 'mail order bride' defines Filipino women as commodities and they are then seen to undermine the notion of romantic love as the 'norm' of Australian marriage. The term thus constitutes and reflects the 'illegitimacy' of the women and their motives for marriage (Robinson 1996).

³ Although, as David (1991) indicates, there have been several developments in Australian media representations of Filipino women since the early and mid 1980s, continuity in the discourse that all Filipino women are mail order brides remains a significant feature of the reportage.

The use of the term ‘mail order bride’ to represent Filipino women and characterise a whole spectrum of ways in which couples meet and marry simultaneously creates a negative image of the women and their marriages to non-Filipino men and obscures the actuality of their everyday lives. It negatively characterises the desire of Filipino women for an improvement in their personal and economic situations as a deviant motivation for marriage (Saroca 1997:91). However, a desire for a better life is a universal aspect that is presumably present in most marriages and not peculiar to a specific ethnic group. The notion of ‘bride’ is no less negative as it denies Filipino women autonomy and an existence not defined in terms of their male partners. What the mail order bride discourse renders invisible are the many Filipino women who migrated to Australia as professionals or as part of the family reunion system. It also obscures those who visited Australia as tourists or came to train as nurses in various hospitals during the 1970s and early 1980s and then subsequently married non-Filipino men.

The Absent and Silenced Voice

This section delineates two crucial and interrelated concepts used in the thesis—what I call the absent and silenced voice. The centrality of the concepts to both method and theory means they need to be addressed early in the thesis.

Numerous studies have highlighted that the absence of the victim’s voice is a major problem when analysing domestic homicide. Dead women cannot speak on their own behalf. Thus, their account of the relationship they shared with the accused and the events that transpired is not available (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:102; Women’s Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:138). In media coverage, the absence of women’s voices means they are outside the account of their killing. As the living voice of the relationship, it is usually the perspective of the accused that is presented. Further,

journalists tend to report the police and court version of events, which means the experience of the victim is often portrayed in a selective and biased way and her story is not told (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:105-108).⁴

The absence of the deceased woman's perspective can clearly be seen when a previous history of domestic violence is not reported and in the way women are constructed in the media. For Filipino women, in particular, the significance of their absent and silenced voices in media accounts of homicide arises in the way they are represented in a context of fear, as insatiable, grasping, manipulative women, and desire, as perfect partners for sex and marriage (see Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:102, chapter 6).

While it is obvious that deceased women can have no voice in the present, there are ways we can hear their voices through their family members and friends. This thesis explores the issue of the absent and silenced voice in media portrayals of violence against Filipino women through interviews conducted with the families and friends of seven women: Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Generosa Bongcodin, Rosalina Canonizado, Marylou Orton and Elma Young, who were killed, and Annabel Strzelecki who has been missing since June 1998 and is feared dead.⁵ I use the notion of absent voice to refer to that which is not present, what the text cannot say, while the silenced voice refers to a failure to mention or what the text refuses to say. As Macherey (1978:87) argues:

What is important in a work is what it does not say. This is not the same as ... 'what it refuses to say', although that would in itself be interesting: a method might be built on it, with the task of *measuring silences*, whether acknowledged or not. But ... what the work *cannot* say is important, because there the elaboration of the utterance is carried out, in a sort of journey into silence.

⁴ The media reporting of homicide is structured in part by who and what can be reported so stories often derive from lawyer's cross examinations, judicial summaries and witness statements in court that are immune from legal redress (Walton 1993:8-10).

⁵ Not all the killings fit into the police and media category of domestic, an issue I explore in the women's case studies. There was no suspect in Marylou's death and Rosalina's partner was acquitted of murder.

Spivak (1988:286) suggests Macherey's ideas are relevant to the social texts of imperialism where she identifies a collective ideological *refusal*. She states the work here is a task of measuring silences. The notion of what the work *cannot* say is important especially in relation to the subaltern woman (Spivak 1988:286). In the context of this study, the subaltern woman is a Filipina.

Furthermore, the thesis links the absent voice with normalised absence and the silenced voice with pathologised presence. Pettman (1991; 1992) and other feminist authors (Carby 1982:212; Grosz 1988:55; Riley 1985:63) use the terms 'normalised absence/pathologised presence' or similar concepts to capture how many academic (and popular) discourses, including feminist versions, represent minority women. As Pettman (1992:vii) argues, minority women are often absent within western discourses and when they are made visible '... it is often as problems or victims, in ways that deny them agency and purport to explain their experiences within culturalist frames'. Similarly, Gilroy (1987:12) suggests that Black people are forever fixed within an '...alternating current of racism between problem and victim status ...'

Rationale for Selection of Research Topic

My rationale for choosing this topic reflects a feminist concern with the way the media represent Filipino women's experiences of violence and the exclusion of the women's voices from the account. The basis of this concern lies in the fact that the media are a powerful ideological arena and institution of social control (Grossberg et al. 1998:182; Davies et al. 1987:2-6). The media shape social life, structuring and limiting that vast realm of perceptions, beliefs, identities and social relations, including difference (Grossberg et al. 1998:206, 292; Jakubowicz et al. 1994:3; Davies et al. 1987:2-6). Moreover, a number of authors have already drawn attention to links between media

representation and the abuse of Filipino women (Cunneen & Stubbs 1996, 1997; Wall 1994; Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia 1994; Mowatt & Wall 1992).

The issue of the absent and silenced voice in media representation is particularly problematic when we consider the power of the media, especially in light of the claim that they merely reflect reality. Due to its widespread accessibility, the media is the major source of information about Filipino women in Australia. It is also our main source for information about domestic violence, including killings (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:122). As already indicated, the media portrayal of Filipino women has, overall, been negative and it is this view that has gained currency in popular Australian imaginings of the 'Asian Other'. Because of the media's ability to construct 'truths', homogenise identities, and shape perceptions of social reality through stereotypical representations, it is an institution which requires rigorous investigation and critique. Particularly in the realm of such extreme human rights violation as homicide, it is important to explore how the media construct Filipino women's experiences in order to understand the way image mediates reality. It is equally important to examine media effects and the dangers these may pose for Filipino women.

Research Methods: Discourse Analysis and In-depth Interviews

Given this is a feminist analysis of the relationship between Filipino women's lives and media representation of their abuse, my research methods seek to bring the dimensions of this interplay into sharp focus. The two research methods employed—discourse analysis of Australian and Philippine newspaper images of violence against Filipino women in Australia, 1980-2000, and in-depth interviews with two subject groups—are designed to provide a critique that illuminates problems of media representation and addresses the challenge of how the voices of Filipino women can be heard.

Although discourse analysis has its basis in Foucault's (1972) methods of empirical enquiry, I draw on Hennessy's (1993) and Smith's (1988a; 1988b; 1990) elaborations and critiques of Foucault to provide a method more in keeping with the political aims of feminist research.⁶ A discourse analysis of Australian and Philippine newspapers was conducted to explore how violence against Filipino women in Australia is represented in the media. The analysis also includes a comparison of the Australian and Philippine articles which seeks to further illuminate the sexism, racism and class-bias of the Australian media. In Foucauldian terms, discourse analysis is concerned with analysing discourses '... according to their material, historical conditions of possibility and their governing systems of order, appropriation and exclusion' (Gordon 1980:233). Discourses are regulated groups of statements that are part of a discursive formation (Foucault 1972:107). They are formations of power and knowledge which constrain and enable what can be meaningfully spoken, thought and written about objects and practices in specific historical periods (Foucault 1972:129; 1978b:14-15). Discourse analysis examines the conditions that make it possible to utter certain statements and exclude others (Foucault 1972:109; 1978b:14). As Foucault (1972:28) suggests:

... we must grasp the statement in the exact specificity of its occurrence; determine its conditions of existence, fix at least its limits, establish its correlations with other statements that may be connected with it, and show what other forms of statements it excludes.

The analytical efficacy of discourse analysis lies in its ability to bring to light how media discourses of gender, 'race' and class construct Filipino women and exclude other ways of understanding the violence they experience. Foucault's concept of discourse, together with Hennessy's and Smith's critiques and development of Foucauldian concepts, will be elaborated in the theoretical chapter.

⁶ Although Foucault has provided feminists with a politically useful framework for analysing aspects of women's oppression, there are problematic facets of his theory and methods which undermine feminist critiques of patriarchy, racism and class. A critique of Foucault is developed in the theoretical chapter.

In-depth interviewing allows direct access to subjective reality and to patterns of practices and the networks of social relations underpinning those practices (Plummer 1983:67-70, 105; Bertaux 1981:31). It has the capacity to reveal the interplay between the meanings of personal experience, social structure and historical change (Connell 1991:143; 1995:89; Plummer 1983:70; Thompson 1981:299). Although not without shortcomings,⁷ interviewing is a method well suited to examining the experiences of a small number of individuals in some depth.

Moreover, interviewing based on Dorothy Smith's (1988a; 1988b; 1990) method of inquiry is ideal for a feminist study which seeks to create a space in which the voices of Filipino women can be heard and, hence, the stories of their lives (and deaths) told. In Smith's terms, access to those voices enables us to grasp Filipino women's reality, their understandings of self and the social relationships in which they participate, from their own perspectives. Smith's method preserves the active presence of subjects. She argues there '... is an active subject prior to the subject constituted in the text ...' and inquiry should begin there and not at the point of the written text (Smith 1990:5). In effect, Smith's method is a critique of Foucault's discourse analysis, which reads people's lives from the text by working '... within the textual and from the textual, but by implication only, to the actualities of people's lives ...' (1990:4). The starting point for my analysis, then, is an exploration of how interviewees read reports of violence. Crucial here is Smith's (1988b:38-39) concept of textually mediated discourse, which highlights the notion of agency within the context of social structure. As she argues:

... we must be concerned with the reading or viewing of texts, with how people organize their activities in relation to texts, and therefore with skills and practices and with how relations mediated by texts and textually-determined practices work. Hence our focus investigates a lived world of ongoing social action organised textually (Smith 1988b:38-39).

⁷ These include: interviewer bias, problems of inaccurate recollection, the idealisation of past events, the reshaping and re-evaluation of life according to present life circumstances, and time consuming data collection and analysis (Thorogood & Coulter 1992:56; Connell 1991:143; 1995:89; Karpati 1981:136).

The main dimensions of the connection between the two interview groups should be noted here. Although the case studies constitute the core of the thesis, additional interviews with twelve Filipino women who have experienced domestic violence and/or work around domestic violence issues are included as they further reinforce the themes and processes. This thesis recognises the specificities and variety of the deceased and missing women's lives while highlighting the commonalities of the abuse Filipino women experience. Moreover, the inclusion of interviews with women not associated with the case studies is important as they identify the wide reach of media effects. As previously stated, the notion that all Filipino women are mail order brides has come to shape media and other commonsense discourse. This suggests the reporting of Filipino women and violence affects all Filipino women in some way.

Analysing media reports in light of interview data *reinstates the absent and silenced voices of Filipino women into accounts of violence*. Together, the case studies and additional interviews illuminate the way media reports of violence in many cases misrepresent the deceased and missing women as well as Filipino women more generally. This method provides a powerful critique of the media.

Methodological and Ethical Issues

This section addresses key methodological and ethical considerations of the study. The politics of the research are a major factor in this thesis. Like all research, this study is not value-neutral but grounded in a feminist and anti-racist commitment to challenge media truth claims that sustain the unequal status of Filipino women in Australia. Fundamentally, feminist research directs attention to women's diverse positionings within oppressive, inequitable social systems and has an emancipatory agenda to generate knowledge which will contribute to women's liberation and the improvement

of their daily lives (Guerrero 1999b:8; 1999c:15). My identity as a feminist, former women's refuge worker with a Filipino partner and children, and Filipino relatives and friends is central to the politics of this research. Discussing the tendency of traditional social science to idealise 'value-free' research, Paredes-Canilao (1999:31) states:

Our more positive response to the impossibility of value-neutrality in research is the feminist move to consciously identify, acknowledge, and work around researchers' values in a productive way. Rather than looking at values as disruptions, we should instead regard them as vital contributions to the enrichment of our research perspective.

Even as I recognise the ways my values have shaped and guided all aspects of the research process, I have been sufficiently reflexive and transparent about my project to adhere to established protocols of research and scholarship.

A variety of methods were employed to collect newspaper articles about the seven women in the case studies and more general reports on the abuse of Filipino women in Australia. These include: commercial archival searches, newspaper online internet sites, microfilm searches in both Australia and the Philippines using key dates, for example the periods following the killings or disappearance and court appearances, my personal collection, and visits to newspaper offices in the Philippines. In addition, I received many articles from Dee Hunt, co-ordinator CPCA-Brisbane Branch and *KASAMA* editor, and Joan Dicka, Dawn House, North Eastern Region Domestic Violence Services, Adelaide. However, I encountered problems finding relevant articles in the Philippines. It appeared to me that the Philippine press tend to focus on the plight of Filipino women in the US, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Hong Kong and Singapore, countries where the women are more likely to be deployed as 'domestic helpers' and/or entertainers. Violence against Filipino women in Australia did not appear to be a major focus. The articles I analysed were selected as they are representative of the way the Australian and Philippine media portray such violence. The period of 1980-2000 was chosen as the timeframe for analysis as most of the homicides and disappearances listed

on the CPCA (2002) 'Violent Deaths and Disappearances Amongst Filipino Women and Children in Australia' data sheet (see Appendix 3) took place between those dates.

Two methods of recruiting interviewees were used. Firstly, several organisations in Australia and the Philippines were approached, and are included in Appendix 1. Key informants from these organisations made the initial approach on my behalf to possible respondents with whom they had established relationships. Secondly, I advertised through a variety of media, for example Filipino community newsletters, such as *MABUHAY* (newsletter of the Filipino Australian Society of the Hunter Valley), and NGO newsletters, for example *KASAMA* (newsletter of SPAN), and invited interested persons to participate. These methods of recruitment were designed to reduce invasions of privacy. In both methods, the role of key contacts was pivotal. I doubt if the project could have proceeded in the way it was originally designed without their support.

Between June 1999 and January 2000, I interviewed fifty people for the study.

- The first subject group consisted of sixteen family members and friends of Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Generosa Bongcodin, Rosalina Canonizado, Marylou Orton, Elma Young and Annabel Strzelecki.
- The second subject group of thirty-four interviewees was composed mainly of Filipino women and included a few Filipino men and non-Filipinos. Time constraints and the amount of data generated meant that the study could only present the interview data of twelve Filipino women from this second group. These women had either experienced domestic violence in a relationship with a former non-Filipino partner and/or worked on domestic violence issues. In addition, some work in the media or on media issues.

Although the study is based on the narratives of twenty-eight interviewees, all the interviews conducted helped shape my understanding of the topic.

The research adopted a purposive strategy for gathering interviews.⁸ Family members and friends were chosen based on their relationship to one of the deceased or missing women, and their willingness to discuss her life and the media portrayal of her death or disappearance. These factors also determined the selection of these particular case studies. The interviewees in the second group were selected on the basis that they were accessible and willing to discuss violence against Filipino women and media representation. I conducted interviews in four Australian states and in the Philippines.

Instead of using a structured interview schedule, I prepared a list of interview themes (see Appendix 2) which allowed the interviewees more freedom to discuss aspects they felt were relevant to the situations of Teresita, Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel, or their own particular circumstances. Additionally, this approach provided the flexibility for the pursuit of issues that only became apparent during the interviews. Rather than give interviewees specific articles to read, I asked interviewees in both subject groups about particular articles they remember reading at the time. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews. The interviews were conducted in a manner consistent with the principles of feminist qualitative research, for example that of Oakley (1981), Roberts (1992) and Olesen (1994), as a participatory relationship between researcher and interviewee. Such a dialogical approach, as Guerrero (1999a:xi; 1999c:19) argues, provides a more egalitarian and connected relationship between researcher and interviewees.⁹

⁸ According to Guerrero (1999d:170), the great value of purposeful sampling is that ‘... you can choose cases that are information-rich. From these cases, you can learn a great deal about issues that are central to your research purpose’.

⁹ Using a ‘dialogical’ approach to interviews helps address the problem of unequal power relations between researcher and subjects of research. Frankenberg (1993:30) explains the strategy:

Rather than maintaining the traditionally distant, apparently objective, and so-called blank-faced research persona, I positioned myself as explicitly involved in the questions, at times sharing with interviewees either information about my own life or elements of my own analysis of racism as it developed through the research process.

Data analysis involved the systematic coding of the fully transcribed interviews. The findings are presented in the form of themes and concepts, which are illustrated by extracts drawn from the interviews. Case studies were written to provide insight into the lives of the deceased and missing Filipino women and *to reinstate their voices into accounts of violence*. The analysis of interview data raised several issues related to voice, for example the more general problems associated with translation and representing experiences, selection of narrative, and the necessity to make my own position as researcher clear in relation to the women's voices (see Olesen 1994:167; Robinson 1994:203-204). The analysis does not seek to generalise about all Filipino women in Australia. Indeed, this is one of my major critiques of the media treatment of these women. However, the analysis does allow insight into the experiences of a small group of women and how media portrayals mediate their realities.

A number of ethical considerations arose in the course of the study. Protecting the confidentiality of interviewees was vital. Pseudonyms were used and other identifying features removed when the tapes were transcribed so interviewees could not be identified within the study, unless they requested otherwise. A major ethical concern in revisiting sites of grief was the risk of opening up interviewees' feelings of pain and anger, particularly so for the families and friends who shared the lives of their loved ones. I minimised risks by maintaining integrity towards interviewees, respecting their rights, and by providing empathetic, culturally sensitive and non-judgemental interviewing. Further, I consulted with key informants to establish the most appropriate services available for participants in case they experienced distress and requested support. While my ethics of personal involvement and participation helped reduce the risk of emotional distress for interviewees, the emotional impact of the interviewing and transcribing on me (hearing stories of pain, sadness and death) was enormous.

Previous Research

This thesis is interdisciplinary and multidimensional in its scope. It draws on insights and material from a range of disciplines, including sociology, gender studies, criminology, media or cultural studies, and the fields of migration and racism studies. Here, I present a brief review of the literature that made the most significant contribution to my understanding and analysis of the issues under discussion.

In their excellent criminological study of violence against Filipino women in Australia, Cunneen and Stubbs (1997) analyse the deaths and disappearances of twenty-seven Filipino women and children. They establish that Filipino women are nearly six times more likely to be victims of spousal homicide than other women in Australia (1997:31). In all the examined cases, the partner or former partner was a non-Filipino and, in the main, the perpetrator and victim were in some form of intimate or family relationship. Examining the Internet and other media, Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:chapter 6) argue that the racialised and sexualised construction of Filipino women as compliant and sexually accommodating, as ‘perfect marriage partners’, renders them particularly vulnerable to abuse in Australia. Such representation occupies a central position in male fantasies of power and desire (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:107, 121-122). The male fantasy incorporates exotic sex, the promise of a relationship with a traditional woman whose goal is to serve her husband, sexual compliance and love that transcends age differences (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:110-113). Violence is contextualised in terms of men’s attempts to live out such fantasised relationships and the women’s refusal to comply (1997:113). For Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:119), while the violence can be understood as male violence against women, the relationship between Australian men and *what they understand* to be Filipino women is a fundamental factor in the abuse. My study draws heavily on their insights.

In Blood on Whose Hands? The Killing of Women and Children in Domestic Homicides, the Women's Coalition Against Family Violence (1994) draws on interviews with family members and friends to recount the stories of women and children victims of homicide which were ignored or misrepresented in police investigations, court and the media. Included is Generosa Bongcodin, who is also featured in this thesis. According to the Women's Coalition Against Family Violence (1994:127), the media, police and courts present a distorted view of domestic homicide as they silence the deceased woman's voice and omit facts regarding the relationship between the perpetrator and victim. The media rarely portray the violence from the woman's perspective or include any history of domestic violence (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:138). By not reporting previous violence, the context of the homicide and the power relationship between killer and victim are obscured (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:2-3). As in the legal process, this omission of previous abuse allows the accused to portray his actions '... as spontaneous, atypical and provoked ...' rather than the outcome of a continuum of violence (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:109). Further, the media often attempt to find fault with the victim's behaviour, thereby justifying the killing (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:123). The perpetrator's crime thus becomes secondary to concerns about the woman's behaviour, and responsibility for violence is shifted onto the victim while the killer becomes the victim (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:3, 36, 139). Such media accounts, together with flawed police and legal outcomes, further victimise the victims. There are significant parallels between the Coalition's insightful analysis and the one presented in this study.

As part of their work on the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health, Woelz-Stirling, Kelaher and Manderson (1998) conducted in-depth interviews and

questionnaires with Filipino women married to non-Filipino men. While the women rarely disclosed abuse during their interviews, five per cent stated in their surveys they had been physically hurt in the preceding twelve months (Woelz-Stirling et al. 1998:292-293). This suggested to the authors a possible under reporting of domestic violence in such relationships. Three explanations for the under reporting are offered. First, issues of power and the politics of abuse were seen as central to both the under reporting and the women's difficulties in seeking protection (Woelz-Stirling et al. 1998:295-296). Inequalities of power structure such relationships before marriage, during the immigration process and everyday living in Australia (Woelz-Stirling et al. 1998:296). Second, fear of gossip among family, friends and the Filipino community, and the shame associated with separation and divorce, influenced women to avoid disclosure of violence and remain in abusive relationships (Woelz-Stirling et al. 1998:289, 297). Third, public discourse of violence is limited due to the stigmatisation of Filipino women and their marriages to Australian men (Woelz-Stirling et al. 1998:289). According to the authors (1998:289, 293), stereotypical representations and social disapproval of these marriages, and the women's associated shame, contribute to their reluctance to discuss domestic violence. The research of Woelz-Stirling, Kelaher and Manderson is relevant to this study as it provides insight into Filipino women's experiences of violence and the relationship between their abuse and representation.

As will become clear in this thesis, the themes of desire and fear are central to understanding both Filipino women's lived experiences of violence and media portrayals of such violence. While Hamilton (1990) focuses more generally on so called 'Asian' women, Robinson (1996), and Cunneen and Stubbs (1997) have explored desire and fear specifically in relation to Filipino women. Hamilton (1990) uses the terms to examine the cultural construction and circulation of media images of Aborigines and

'Asians' in contemporary Australia. She argues that ambivalent feelings of fear and desire towards Aborigines and 'Asians' stem from their positions respectively at the 'heart' and 'boundaries' of the Australian consciousness (Hamilton 1990:18). Although there is a fear of an entity in the heart and outside the boundaries, there is also a fascination that can be neutralised by the appropriation of commodified images of Aborigines and 'Asians' (Hamilton 1990:18). However, the imagery of the past, which is grounded in colonialist racist discourse, undermines the emerging images in a way that counters the appropriation and reinforces the fear and danger in contact (Hamilton 1990:18). Fear is expressed in the dangers of the 'primitive', sexual contact with this 'other', and the '... production of the 'half-caste' (Hamilton 1990:18).

Robinson (1996) draws on Hamilton's research to explore contradictory images of fear and desire in media representations of Filipino women. For Robinson (1996:54), desire is signified in images of submissive beauties who are sex slaves to Australian men and evoke traditional family values. Taking up Hamilton's point, Robinson (1996:54) highlights the expression of fear in terms of miscegenation. However, she also directs attention to the fear evident in media prophecies of failed marriages between Filipino women and Australian men (Robinson 1996:54).

Although Cunneen and Stubbs (1997) employ Robinson's understanding of representations of Filipino women as containing contradictory elements of fear and desire, they have a slightly different interpretation. For Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:119-120), male defined images of fear are explicit in stereotypes of Filipino women as insatiable, manipulative, and exploitative of (first world) men's emotions, while desire is evident in images of erotic Filipino women who are also 'perfect marriage partners'. Their concept of fear is particularly relevant to my analysis of media reports of violence against Filipino women.

Overview of the Study

This introductory chapter has set out the thesis topic, research questions and main arguments. It has delineated two key issues of the study, namely the 'Filipino mail order bride' and the absent and silenced voice. An outline of the research methods and key methodological and ethical issues were then presented. A brief summary of the most relevant literature is included.

Chapter Two outlines key theoretical and conceptual issues which are central to understanding the relationship between Filipino women's lives and media images of their abuse. A discussion of the way Filipino women are located at the intersection of gender, 'race' and class in terms of social relations, including relations of violence, as well as media representation sets out the intersectional approach of the thesis.

Chapter Three locates Filipino women's experiences of violence in terms of broader historical, social and structural processes in the Philippines and Australia. The factors that encourage the migration of Filipino women and constitute their particular vulnerability to violence in Australia are discussed. The centrality of these processes for understanding how a genre of reporting violence against Filipino women has emerged and the particular forms it takes is highlighted. The activism of Filipino women in Australia will also be examined.

Chapter Four is an introduction to the case studies. It provides a brief profile and overview of the seven women at the center of this thesis and notes five recurring themes that emerged from the case studies. Both the uniqueness of each woman's story and the common threads they share with other Filipino women are highlighted.

Chapters Five to Eleven provide detailed case studies of Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Generosa Bongcodin, Rosalina Canonizado, Marylou Orton, Elma Young and Annabel Strzelecki. Each case study features a discourse analysis of media

articles about the woman's homicide or, in the case of Annabel, disappearance, and interviews conducted with their families and friends. *The case studies are presented in separate chapters to preserve the integrity of the women and the particularities of their situations.* Indeed, one of the major critiques made in this thesis is that the media conflate all Filipino women into one highly recognisable and manageable identity. The case studies are designed to emphasise in considerable depth the main issues addressed in the study. In particular, *they allow the reinstatement of the women's voices into accounts of violence and illuminate the contested nature of identities.* They bring the relationship between Filipino women's lived realities and media images of their abuse into sharp focus.

Chapter Twelve draws on interviews conducted with twelve other Filipino women not associated with the main case studies. These interviews reinforce the issues, processes and themes which were drawn out in the case studies.

Chapter Thirteen summarises the key themes and processes which emerged from the thesis. It not only draws on the articles referred to in the case studies but additional ones as well. This material further highlights the concepts and themes in the case studies. The juxtaposition and comparison of Australian and Philippine articles brings into clearer focus the gendered class-based racism of much of the Australian reportage.

Chapter Fourteen is the conclusion to the thesis. I bring together the various threads of the argument and present the concluding remarks. Reference is also made to strategies for change in media reporting of Filipino women and violence. These suggestions have their origin in the pain, suffering, anger, frustration and optimism of Filipino women and their families and friends. The discussion stresses the importance of providing media space *where the voices of Filipino women can be heard.*

CHAPTER TWO
VIOLENCE AND REPRESENTATION:
THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

This chapter outlines theoretical and conceptual issues that are central to understanding the relationship between Filipino women's lives and media images of their abuse. It addresses the epistemological foundations of the study, which is a feminist perspective drawing on social constructionist insights. From this position, violence is both constructed and material; it has a reality as manifested in women's bodily pain, suffering, fear and death. Structural and representational intersectionality is discussed. The concept of gendered class-based racism highlights the ways Filipino women are located at the intersection of gender, 'race' and class in terms of social relations, including relations of violence, and media images. Discourse and power are also outlined. Here, I draw on the insights of Foucault, Hennessy and Smith. Foucault's concepts of discourse and power are subjected to a feminist critique and reformulation. In addition, the chapter explores the concepts of boundary construction and Orientalism.

Epistemological Issues

It is a fundamental principle of the study that violence has a materiality and is also constructed and made meaningful in discourse. Relations of violence, including the (male) control exercised over Filipino women's bodies, are more than social. They are tangible and dangerously real, as evidenced by the emotional and physical pain of abused women. However, the material or real world can only be accessed by means of discourses, the structures through which ideology operates, which constitute the object of knowledge (Hennessy 1993:75). It is at the intersection of 'the real' and discourse

that explanations for male abuse of women as well as conflict and the potential for change can be found (Frankenberg 1993:240; Ramazanoğlu & Holland 1993:248).

From a constructionist position on representation, meaning is not transparent or a mirror reflection of reality. It is socially constructed, involves negotiation, is often contested and shifts with historical and cultural contexts (Hall 1997a:5, 9-10). As Gledhill (1997:348) indicates, media representations are major sites of ongoing struggle and negotiation over definitions of the 'real'. People construct meaning and communicate about the world to others using systems of representation: concepts, signs and discourse (Hall 1997b:25). According to Foucault (1978a), it is in discourse that subjects constitute themselves or are constituted as particular kinds of people, such as mail order brides, for example (see also Turner 1987:11; Hacking 1986:36). Hall (1997b:25) and Lidchi (1997:162-163) argue a distinction should be maintained between reality—people and things—and the symbolic practices of representation through which meaning is produced about those objects.

Structural and Representational Intersectionality

An intersectional focus illuminates the complex ways structural and representational factors both shape Filipino women's lives and responses to their abuse. The concept of gendered class-based racism highlights Filipino women's position at the intersections of gender, 'race' and class in terms of structural processes, including relations of violence, as well as media images.¹ I am indebted to the work of Cunneen and Stubbs (1997) who use an intersectional approach to examine how structural factors, such as racialised and gendered international relations, together with racialised and gendered stereotypes constitute Filipino women's vulnerability to violence in Australia.

¹ Although the term gendered racism is often used to express the interrelationship between gender, race and class (see Pettman 1992:59), my concept gives equal status to the class dimension rather than leave it implied.

The concept of gendered class-based racism is based on the premise that gender, 'race' and class are not natural categories but social constructions. Gender refers to culturally ascribed notions of masculinity and femininity and is a relationship deeply inscribed in unequal divisions of labour. Although 'race' is associated with physical characteristics like skin colour and facial features, there is no scientific validity to the notion of biologically discrete groups (American Anthropological Association 1999: 712-713; Pettman 1992:2-12). 'Race', however, does have social meanings. Racism occurs when physical and cultural characteristics are seen to determine behaviour and to justify discrimination and oppression (Jakubowicz et al. 1994:29). Cultural racism employs deterministic ideas of culture, such as religion, rather than biology as markers of difference (Pettman 1992:10, 56). Class as used in this thesis extends beyond notions of common economic positions and life-chances to encompass iniquitous international relations, including economic disparities between men in Australia and Filipino women from the so-called 'third world'. My usage of class follows Aguilar (2000:7) who argues the situations of many oppressed women in the 'third world' '... calls not only for a class analysis but also for the comprehension of the glaring inequalities that characterise international relations'. Gender, 'race' and class are significant dimensions of social identity whose membership and meanings constantly shift over time and involve contest and struggle (Frankenberg 1993:11; Pettman 1992:2-3, 60). They are relations of domination, subordination and resistance, powerful ways of constructing boundaries which simultaneously define who belongs and who is excluded (Pettman 1992:3). As systems of structural inequality based on negatively ascribed gender and 'racial' differences, sexism and racism reinforce or deny rights and social resources, construct differences in value, and naturalise those inequalities (Frankenberg 1993:70; Pettman 1992:55-56, 60). They are both ideological formations and material relations.

Intersectionality as employed in this study highlights both the different locations of women within 'race' and class categories (hooks 1984:4; 1989), and the ways these categories of difference intersect with gender to shape the structural and representational dimensions of violence against Filipino women (see Crenshaw 1991). Difference here is understood as relations of power and not simply multiple forms of subjectivities (see Aguilar 1998d:37-38; 1998e:63-64). Crenshaw uses structural intersectionality to identify how the location of some women at the intersection of gender, 'race' and class shapes their actual experiences of domestic violence as well as the responses of others, for example, police, courts, and media (1991:1245; see also Radford, et al. 1996:1, 5; Radford & Stanko 1996:65; Family Violence Professional Education Taskforce 1994:2; Mama 1989:31). Representational intersectionality refers to the cultural construction of women of colour through intersecting narratives of 'race', gender and class (Crenshaw 1991:1245, 1283). This is the terrain of stereotypes such as the 'mail order bride'. Stereotyping, an ambivalent mode of representing difference, tends to occur where there are inequalities of power (Hall 1997c:257-258; Bhabha 1994:70). According to Hall (1997c:258), stereotypes seize a few recognisable '...characteristics about a person, *reduce* everything about the person to those traits, *exaggerate* and *simplify* them, and *fix* them ...' Hence, the 'mail order bride' with its subtext of exotic, naturally submissive, sexually accommodating and poverty stricken women who will do anything and put up with anything to escape the Philippines.

Discourse and Power

This section draws on Michel Foucault's (1972; 1978a; 1978b; 1979; 1980a; 1982) concepts of discourse and power, Rosemary Hennessy's (1993) work on discourse as ideology and Dorothy Smith's (1988b; 1990) concept of textually mediated discourse to

construct an account of representation that can explicate the relationship between Filipino women's lives and media images of their abuse. Foucault's concepts of discourse and power are reformulated into a conceptual framework more in tune with the feminist principles and aims of this study. Both Hennessy and Smith have used and critiqued his concepts in developing their own.

For Foucault (1972:109), discourse has a particular meaning which moves it away from being simply a linguistic accomplishment. Discourses are practices that constrain and enable what can be meaningfully said, thought and written about people, objects and events in any historical period (Foucault 1972). Foucault (1972:49) argues discourses constitute social reality by systematically forming '... the objects of which they speak'. They are amalgams of power, or material practices, and knowledge (Foucault 1978a:100). It is within the power/knowledge nexus of discourse that the material or real and the discursive are linked together. This can clearly be seen in the way knowledge is used to govern both one's own conduct and that of others (Foucault 1972; 1978a; 1979; 1982). For Foucault (1978a:102), discourses are neither uniform nor stable but can exist as different and contradictory statements within the same strategy or even '... circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another opposing strategy'. He argues discourses are neither true or false (Foucault 1980a:118).

Foucault's concept of discourse illuminates the historical production of knowledges about Filipino women, and the way such knowledge shapes their practices and the actions of others. Filipino women could only be portrayed as mail order brides within media and other discourses at a specific historical moment, namely in the context of the unequal gendered, racialised and class terrain of international relations which provides the impetus for migration for marriage, particularly since the 1970s. The discourse of the mail order bride tends to close off the possibility in media and other

commonsense discourses of alternative ways of knowing and speaking about Filipino women. It can thus be understood as a form of social control over Filipino women.

Foucault's concept of reverse discourse highlights how Filipino women can actually keep the framework of the mail order bride discourse in place. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1978a:101) argues that nineteenth century medical discourses on homosexuality made possible the formation of a 'reverse' discourse in which homosexuality began to '... demand that its legitimacy or 'naturalness' be acknowledged, [but] *often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified*' [emphasis added]. Reverse discourse reveals the way marginalised groups seeking to contest their demonisation invoke, even as they challenge, the oppressor's legitimating discourse (Soper 1993:33). As this study will show, at times Filipino women and sympathetic journalists create reverse discourses by evoking some of the language and assumptions inherent in the 'mail order bride' notion, for example constructing the women as victims in ways that deny them agency. Reverse discourses are not necessarily resistant discourses but may work to reinforce the status quo.

Foucault's (1979:194; 1980a:119) concept of power as productive and positive is a critique of repressive, juridical notions of power. He argues:

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production (Foucault 1979:194).

Foucault's (1978a:136) power works concretely to generate, reinforce and control rather than impede or destroy. The productive character of power helps explain why many people accept and obey it (Foucault 1980a:119). Power is not seen as a binary system of domination and subjugation, to be possessed by one adversary and levelled against another (1978a:92, 94; 1979:26). Foucault (1978a:95) argues one type of stable

subjugation has never existed because, where there is power, there is always resistance to power.² Power does not have a unique source of sovereignty, such as the state (Foucault 1978a:93). Rather, it is exercised on the body from countless points in the interplay of local and mobile power relations (Foucault 1978a:94). Foucault (1982:220-221) argues this constant exercise of power is not primarily about violence or struggle, but focuses on governing the conduct of self and others. The exercise of power produces knowledge in the form of discourse. For Foucault (1979:27), the interrelationship of power and knowledge is fundamental; power relations cannot exist without knowledge, and knowledge always puts power into circulation. Foucault's notion of power as productive reveals how media discourses construct Filipino women and their experiences of abuse. It helps correct analyses that simply demonise the media as repressive, and thus fail to recognise the positive part some media play in the struggles of Filipina activists and others to improve the lives of Filipino women in Australia.

While Foucault's concepts of discourse and power as productive enhance understanding of the media construction of Filipino women, they also have several problematic features that need to be addressed. First, they do not engage with ideology and interests (Purvis & Hunt 1993:476; Spivak 1988:273). Ideology draws attention to the way particular interests come to appear as universal, natural and inevitable (Purvis & Hunt 1993:478). As the play of interests is a feature of social relationships, it is imperative to address its links with discourse. Male perpetrators of violence against Filipino women, for example, exhibit considerable self-interest in getting their version of events heard in court and the media. Indeed, concern over the portrayal of Filipino women in these contexts surfaced many times in the interviews I conducted. By not accounting for the nexus between knowledge and the interests of social groups,

² Resistance to power is an argument Foucault espouses but frequently neglects in his historical studies.

Foucault's concept of discourse detaches knowledge from its social context (Turner 1992:181,192). Discourse thus appears disembodied, operating almost independently of the social groups that are its primary carriers (Turner 1984:175; 1992:181).

Second, although Foucault defines power as productive, his conception of the body acted upon by power results in a repressive notion of power and obscures people's agency and potential for resistance (McNay 1992:3,12). It deprives the body of oppositional force. The reduction of individuals to 'docile bodies' cannot adequately explain how women often act in autonomous and creative ways despite considerable social constraints, and it leads to an oversimplified notion of gender as imposed rather than a dynamic process (McNay 1992:12, 40-43). Further, it does not account for women's experiences which fall outside the terrain of the 'passive' body (McNay 1992:43). Foucault's notion of the body rendered docile by power is problematic for feminist research concerned with recovering and revaluing the experiences of women (Ramazanoğlu 1993:7-8; Cain 1993:83-84; Ransom 1993:125; McNay 1992:9).

Third, Foucault's concept of power obscures the sexual specificity of the construction of subjects. He regards the body in terms of a male norm, as though the bodily experiences of men and women are the same (Bartky 1988:63; Grosz 1990:107; Sawicki 1991:49). Foucault failed to address the gender configurations of power on the body.³ He neglects the fact that power is often patriarchal, it inscribes male and female bodies in quite specific ways with different consequences, and the subjugation of women's bodies has been a primary target (Diamond & Quinby 1988:xiv; Grosz 1990:107). As Bartky (1988:64) argues:

Women, like men, are subject to many of the same disciplinary practices Foucault describes. But he is blind to those disciplines that produce a modality of embodiment

³ While the body is inscribed by gender, it is also worked upon by other formations, such as 'race', class and ethnicity, all of which are neglected in Foucault's historical analyses. These formations are gendered but they cut across gender distinctions, thus, breaking down any absolute polarity between male and female bodies (McNay 1992:37).

that is peculiarly feminine. To overlook the forms of subjection that engender the feminine body is to perpetuate the silence and powerlessness of those upon whom these disciplines have been imposed.

To understand the gendered character of power, we have only to look at the roles Filipino and other women are expected to perform in their familial and domestic relations with men, or the effects of domestic violence on their bodies.

Fourth, Foucault's concepts of discourse and power do not address racism, class and imperialism (Ramazanoğlu 1993:10; Spivak 1988). As Spivak (1988:287-289) contends, Foucault ignores both the violence of imperialism and the contemporary international division of labour with its ready supply of ill-protected, cheap and shifting labour located in 'developing countries'. By focusing solely on Western European discourses, Foucault produces a restricted, self-contained version of the west which ignores the role of the (racist) imperialist project in its production (Spivak 1988:290-291, 298). Foucault's regionalism renders invisible the way new mechanisms of power in the west during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were secured through the demands of territorial imperialism and colonial expansion 'elsewhere' (Spivak 1988:290). He also remains oblivious to contemporary American imperialism (Spivak 1988:291) in countries such as the Philippines.

Fifth, for Foucault, discourse and power are contingent and anti-hierarchical. As Hennessy (1993:43) points out, the ubiquity of power makes it impossible to explain the political force of particular discourses over others and so precludes an understanding of the hierarchical relations among discourses. Weedon (1987:35, 110) argues that not all discourses possess the social power that comes from a secure institutional site, and discourses within fields such as the law or the family do not manifest equal power. The relevancy of this point will be seen in the way Filipino women's stories are often marginalised or dismissed in court and the media as well as in their own homes. Further,

Foucault's regional focus on institutions in a particular local social formation cannot explain the systemic operations of power, such as patriarchy, racism and capitalism, or elucidate the relations between such global arrangements and the local practices that sustain them (Hennessy 1993:19-21). By reading the discourses circulating within a particular social formation in isolation, Foucault obscures how discourses in one location depend on discourses and economic and political practices in other sites within and across cultures (Hall 1997b:51, 124; Hennessy 1993:64).

Hennessy's (1993) materialist feminist critique of Foucault rearticulates the regional and contingent focus of discourse and power in an alternative structural framework. Hennessy (1993:16-32) argues for the notion of discourse as ideology. She contends that a theory of ideology with its systemic framework allows an understanding of the relationship between discourse and subjectivity and their connection to other dimensions of life (Hennessy 1993:37-38). Ideology, those sense-making practices that constitute what counts as the 'real' or the 'truth' in any historical period, operates through discourses (Hennessy 1993:14, 75). As Hennessy (1993:78) explains:

Women's lives are shaped by ideology in the sense that their lived experience is never served up raw but is always made sense of from a host of vantage points, including those of the woman experiencing the events and those of the feminist critic, scholar, or theorist who appeals to women's lives as the basis for her knowledge. Women's lives are only intelligible at all as a function of the ways of making sense of the world available in any historical moment.

Ideologies produce the social 'real' through hegemony, a situation in which a ruling group dominates by instituting the cultural commonsense and winning the consent of the dominated (Hennessy 1993:76). An understanding of ideology as negotiated and contested discourses is implicit in the concept of hegemony (Hennessy 1993:76). Thus, discourses do not dominate without contradiction and struggle (Hennessy 1993:76).

Ideology shapes and is in turn shaped by economic and political practices, such as divisions of labour and exercises of power (Hennessy 1993:14, 75). A theory of

discourse as ideology, therefore, provides an analysis that reveals workplace and home, colony and metropolis as specific but interconnected sites of exploitation (Hennessy 1993:31). It serves as a corrective to Foucault's regional focus. The concept allows a consideration of the construction of (Filipino) 'woman' across multiple dimensions of difference while acknowledging hierarchical and systemic operations of power (Hennessy 1993:xv-xvi). Power is expressed as exploitation and captures how '... patriarchal and racist oppression are deeply involved in the unequal control and distribution of social assets' (Hennessy 1993:32).

Hennessy's concept of discourse as ideology allows an understanding of the interplay between Filipino women's lives and media images of their abuse which addresses the hierarchical operations of discourse and power underpinning that relationship. It elucidates the ways hegemonic discourses of Filipino women, such as mail order bride, are connected to other discourses as well as economic and political processes. While this study retains the Foucauldian notion of power as productive, it also incorporates Hennessy's notion of power as structural and exploitative.

As with Hennessy's notion of discourse as ideology, Smith's materialist concept of textually mediated discourse provides a corrective to the problematic aspects of Foucault's concept. Textually mediated discourse reveals the ideological work that produces texts, fixed forms of printed writing and images, without detaching them from the practices and social relations in which they are embedded and organise (Smith 1988b; 1990). According to Smith (1988b:39), it illuminates '... how people organize their activities in relation to texts, and ... how relations mediated by texts and textually-determined practices work'. Textually mediated discourse includes the talk women do in relation to texts and their work to emulate textual images (Smith 1988b:40-41, 55). For Filipino women, it also involves distancing oneself from 'mail order bride' images.

As a textually mediated discourse, 'mail order bride' brings together media reports of Filipino women and violence, public discussion of these texts, and the activities and social relations that the texts and their discussion generate and mediate. The distinctive feature of textually mediated discourse is its potential to shape and organise practices and social relationships in various settings of the everyday world (Smith 1988b:53). Smith (1988b:42) contends that such discourse demonstrates immense capacity to transcend the transient character of social processes and remain constant across geographically and temporally separate locations. 'Mail order bride' is a prime example.

Textually mediated discourse emphasises the exercise of agency within the context of social structure. As Smith (1988b:39) argues, women are not passive victims of patriarchal oppression or the media (often the same thing). They make choices and take an active part in the social construction of their own subjectivity within the constraints of structural arrangements (Smith 1988b:39). Textually mediated discourse captures this dialectic between agency in the form of the active female subject and the organisation of her activity in and by texts coordinating it with the market (Smith 1988b:39). Relations between discourse and practices are not ones of determination but mediation (Smith 1988b:54). Resistance undermines the apparent uniformity of texts, and discourse is continually undergoing contradiction and reworking among women actively participating in it (Smith 1988b:54-55). Textually mediated discourse allows theorising of Filipino women as social agents while acknowledging the limitations to their ability to act posed by structural inequalities of gender, 'race' and class.

Construction of Boundaries

The concept of boundaries has its foundations in Durkheimian sociology. Durkheim (1984:59) argues that when a cherished belief is strongly offended against '... the entire

group attacked closes ranks in the face of danger and clings closer together'. Thus, the boundaries of the collective are strengthened (see Durkheim on crime and punishment, 1984).⁴ Drawing on Durkheim, Erikson (1962:310) contends the visible deviant gives form to the unseen dangers which threaten a group's existence, and comes to symbolise those forces excluded by the group's boundaries. The point is that all human communities have dangerous groups like the so-called 'Filipino mail order brides' at their boundaries and such negative depictions serve to unite 'us' against 'them', the outsiders. I suggest it is cherished sentiments such as a 'racially White Australia' and romantic love that 'Filipino mail order brides' are seen to threaten and this offence constitutes their deviance. Although boundaries simultaneously include while excluding particular people, they are not fixed (Pettman 1992:3). Boundaries can be embraced, but they are also frequently subverted, resisted and shifted through struggle (Pettman 1992:3). Boundaries are political constructs constituted through relations of domination, subordination and resistance (Pettman 2-3). Yet, they are not only part of discourse. As Pettman (1992:3) argues, there '... are real and sometime dangerous consequences for those who are named as belonging to, or outside, particular boundaries'. Outside particular boundaries violence becomes thinkable and doable (Pettman 1996:47).

Stereotypes are at the core of boundary construction and maintenance (Hall 1997c:258). Stereotyping symbolically fixes boundaries and, in this way, excludes everything which does not belong (Hall 1997c:258). By facilitating bonding between the 'normal' and sending the 'others' who are different into symbolic exile, Hall (1997c:258) suggests stereotyping helps maintain the social order. As this thesis will show, media stereotyping of Filipino women as 'mail order brides' is a marking of sexualised, 'racialised' and class 'differences' which maintains a boundary between

⁴ Durkheim never questioned the status quo nor addressed the issue of conflict, struggle and resistance in society.

different 'sorts' of women. Here the boundaries are in flux as sometimes Filipino women are seen as 'acceptable' and non-Filipino women are seen as 'unacceptable'.

Mary Douglas' (1966) concept of 'matter out of place' as a key aspect in the transgression of boundaries helps explicate both the vulnerability of Filipino women to violence in Australia and media images of their abuse, as well as the relationship between the two. Douglas (1966:36-37) defines matter out of place as a violation of ordered relations; it constitutes the elements rejected by a classification of matter. Matter out of place contradicts and threatens cherished categories (Douglas 1966:36-37). When people are out of place they become polluted (Douglas 1966). Douglas (1966:114, 139-140) describes a polluting person as someone who has crossed a boundary that should not have been traversed and their displacement endangers themselves and others. Filipino 'mail order brides' who marry Australian men are seen as 'out of place' as they have transgressed boundaries of 'race' and space. They are both *dangerous women* and *women in danger*. As Pettman (1996:185) argues, women '... are especially vulnerable when they are seen to be 'out of place'.

Orientalism

Mail order bride is a particular type of discourse. It is an example of orientalism, a discourse through which those designated 'Asian' or 'Oriental' are given meaning. This section discusses orientalist discourse while drawing out its relevance to the study.

In *Orientalism*, Said (1978) traces the development and consolidation of what he calls orientalist discourse. He draws on Foucault's concept of discourse to reveal how orientalism constrains thought and action about the 'Orient' and its inhabitants. It systematically produces and manages the 'Orient' as a unified 'racial', cultural, and geographical entity (Said 1978). For Said (1978:3), orientalist discourse is a way of:

... dealing with [the Orient] by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.

In dominant orientalist discourse, 'Asians' are exotic and inferior creatures subject to Western superiority and domination (Broinowski 1992:2; Said 1978). This construction allows the West to define itself positively as a contrasting image and experience while providing justification for European colonialism (Said 1978:1-9). Orientalism is both discourse and practice. Said (1978:5-6) emphasises the considerable material investment of orientalist discourse, for example, its supporting socio-economic and political institutions and close ties with European colonisation and imperialism.

However, Said's early formulation of orientalism fails to adequately address the impact of gender discourses. Although Said (1978:207) briefly notes that orientalist discourse exhibits a male conception of the world, is sex blind, and constructs women as sensual, stupid and sexually licentious, he does not sufficiently identify, or critique, the close connection between orientalist discourse and the sexual conquest of 'Asian' women. Yet, gender relations are central to orientalist discourse. Fantasies of sexual innocence and experience, sexual domination and submissiveness together constitute a powerful sexual myth that was and remains a dominant feature in Western discourses about the non-West (Hall 1992:302), including 'Asia'. Said's analysis is itself phallogocentric as both the object and subject of discourse are male. The 'Oriental' is a 'he' who '... lived in a different but thoroughly organised world of his own' (Said 1978:40). Further, as Lewis (1996:17, 20) indicates, by presenting orientalism as a homogeneous discourse enunciated by a colonial male subject, Said also ignores women as readers of Orientalist representations and participants in imperial relations of power.

In contrast, Kabbani's (1994) analysis of orientalist discourse develops a coherent gender critique of the erotic, racial and sexual myths the West constructed

about 'Oriental' women to justify colonisation. She argues these myths fostered stereotypes of 'promiscuous' Eastern women which became vital to the colonial world-view (Kabbani 1994:51, 139). Kabbani (1994:59) states that to '... perceive the East as a sexual domain, and to perceive the East as a domain to be colonised, were complementary aspirations'. Embedded within 19th century travel narratives and paintings, such myths constructed the East as an 'Illicit Space' where women offered endless sexual gratification (Kabbani 1994:7). Representation of these women as sexual commodities implies an inherent licentiousness and they could then be exploited with no qualms (Kabbani 1994:51). Kabbani (1994:113) suggests such images persist today and are continually being reinvested with new life. The media discourse of the Filipino 'mail order bride' demonstrates such tenacity. She argues the colonisers exhibited ambivalence toward 'Oriental' women, fluctuating between desire, pity, contempt and outrage, thus their construction as scheming witches or erotic victims (Kabbani 1994:26). As witches, 'Oriental' women embody all the negative stereotypes traditionally associated with females. They are fickle, faithless, lewd and malign, and plot to achieve their base desires in the most merciless manner (Kabbani 1994:48-49). As erotic victims, 'Oriental' women are usually virgins (good women) who suffer a cruel fate before being corrupted (Kabbani 1994:51). As will be demonstrated, media reports about Filipino women and violence draw on both orientalist stereotypes.

Apart from its gender blindness, Said's Orientalism appears as a unified, stable and homogeneous discourse, one that offers little sense of resistance or internal splits (Lewis 1996:18, 41). As a critique, Lewis (1996:4, 19) emphasises the diversity of positions within orientalist discourse and the points of resistance in its imaginary unity. Arguing that Orientalism is a flexible and heterogeneous discourse in which meanings are always contested and shifting, Lewis (1996:237) states that the:

... hegemonic knowledge about the East that Said sees as fundamental to imperialism is still there—but the emphasis now is on the fluidity essential to the maintenance of that hegemony. Orientalism is never static, but perpetually fending off or responding to challenges from within and without: challenges that are ... themselves productive of dominant and alternative definitions of not only class or Orientalism, but also gender, class and nation.

As Bhabha (1994:69-70) suggests, an identity is enacted in a space disrupted by the heterogeneity of other positions so it cannot be secure. The hegemony and heterogeneity of orientalist discourse illuminates the presence of counter-hegemonic or subaltern voices that may contest and possibly transform hegemonic discourse (Lewis 1996:4).

While ‘mail order bride’ is a heterogeneous discourse with diverse and ambivalent positionings and spaces for resistance, it is also very much a hegemonic ideology preconstructed in the interdiscourse. Pecheux’s (1975:113-121) concept of the interdiscourse explains the textuality of hegemony and how cultural commonsense is maintained. The preconstructed conveys the sense of an ‘always-already there’ and ‘what everyone knows’ (Pecheux 1975:115, 121). It gives rise to the notion that all Filipino women are mail order brides and as such are likely to be victims of violence. The hegemony and heterogeneity of the orientalist mail order bride discourse illuminates how desire and fear can both appear in images of Filipino women. Further, they explain the seeming contradiction of a situation in which sympathetic reporters and Filipina activists can invoke mail order bride discourse. As I discovered during my interviews, even Filipina activists who challenge the stereotype could also talk about ‘mail order bride’ in an ontological sense as being a person, phenomenon or an industry.

Conclusion

This chapter has critically discussed the key theoretical and conceptual issues which inform my analysis of the relationship between Filipino women’s lives and media representation of their abuse. It starts from the premise that violence is both dangerously

real and constructed in discourse. An intersectional focus based on the notion of gendered class-based racism provides insight into the themes that emerge in the thesis. In developing my conceptual framework, I have explored Foucault's concepts of discourse and power and Said's concept of orientalist discourse in reference to feminist critique and reformulation. Retaining the notion of discourse and power as productive and key aspects of orientalism allows an understanding of how the media construct Filipino women. The notion of boundary construction and transgression also helps explicate the interplay between Filipino women and media images of their abuse.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

This chapter locates Filipino women's experiences of violence in Australia in terms of broader historical, social and structural processes. A critical examination of the Philippines and Australian contexts illuminates how such violence is intricately connected to ideological, economic and political arrangements in other historical periods and regions. As this thesis argues, both Filipino women's experiences of violence and media images of their abuse are related to practices which extend beyond local sites of abuse. This discussion is not intended to be a linear history or comprehensive account. Rather, it aims to contextualise those factors that encourage the migration of Filipino women and constitute their particular vulnerability to violence in Australia. In so doing, it follows the research of Cunneen and Stubbs (1996:132-135; 1997:2-9; 2000:9-12) which locates the women's vulnerability in terms of interconnecting inequalities of power. These include the relations between so-called 'first world' and 'third world' countries, and gender relations. Central here are the forces that shape Filipino women's experiences as migrants, and masculine power and desire which intersect with, as they construct, racialised and sexualised stereotypes of Filipino women (Cunneen & Stubbs 1996; 1997; 2000). The first half of the chapter traces colonial and neo-colonial relations in the Philippines as well as international relations of migration and sex. The second half turns its attention to Australia. It highlights sexism, racism and class inequality as pervasive features of the Australian landscape since colonisation. The migration of women to Australia and three historical media archetypes of Filipino women are then explored. The abuse of Filipino women is set within a terrain of institutionalised violence against women. The chapter concludes with a discussion of Filipino women's activism in Australia.

Historical and Social Context: the Philippines

International relations of colonisation, migration and sex are intricately related practices of gender, 'race' and class. They are deeply implicated in the constitution of, desire for, and fear of Filipino women. The structural character of such relations means the migration of Filipino women to Australia cannot be seen purely in terms of individual choice.

Colonial and Neo-colonial Relations

Although the [Filipino] women interviewed represent different sections of the population of almost 50 million ... to the last woman, the conviction strongly held and acted upon is that freedom from oppression as women can become possible only when the nation is liberated from US domination and when the majority of the people can be released from poverty, illness, malnutrition, and other forms of deprivation rampant in a neocolony (Aguilar 1998a:45).

The mass exodus of women from the Philippines is closely related to the country's long history of colonialism and its present neo-colonial status. Spanish colonisation of the Philippines in 1521 imposed a landlord system wherein colonial officials and friars sought to subjugate and domesticate the dispossessed population through violence, misogynist Catholicism and education (Mananzan 1992:x; Aguilar 1988:2). At the same time, substantial numbers of male colonists produced the conditions for prostitution (Eviota 1992:37). The repressive colonial regime of forced labour, land tenure and excessive taxation led to frequent armed uprisings against the Spanish, which eventuated in the revolution of 1896 (Aguilar 1988:2).

After defeating Spain in the Spanish-American war, the United States forces defeated the Filipino revolutionaries and became the new colonial power of the Philippines in 1898 (Eviota 1992:62). Many Filipinos died in the ensuing Philippine-American War. In 1901, the leaders of the Philippine revolution were forced to surrender to the Americans (Eviota 1992:62). US colonial rule lasted for fifty years until 1946 when the Philippines won its political independence. Enduring relations of dependency and

exploitation and continued cultural alienation mean the Philippines remains a neocolony (Mananzan 1992:xi). However, Filipino women, together with Filipino men and children, have long been active in the fight against colonial domination. They built strong mass movements to resist and challenge the colonialists' militarism and violence against Filipino women, in particular trafficking and prostitution (de Dios 2002:10-15; Peredo 1992:24-25), and US owned mining corporations and sugar plantations (Aguilar 1998a:46). Filipino women closely link their struggle for gender equality with the struggle for national liberation (Aguilar 1988:1; 1993:91-94; 1998a).

US neo-colonialism transformed the Philippines into a supplier of raw materials and cheap, subjugated labour, a dumping ground for western products and a site for capital investment (Aguilar 1998b:135; Largoza-Maza 1994:xi; Eviota 1992:167; Sancho 1992:26-28). These inequitable relations resulted in unequal ownership of assets, particularly of land, mass unemployment, declining wages and the underdevelopment of industry and agriculture (Sancho 1992:27-28). They ensured continual poverty for many Filipinos. Poverty was further exacerbated by the increasing dependence of the Philippines on foreign debt and the harsh regime of development strategies and structural adjustment programs consequently instituted by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (Largoza-Maza 1994:xi). As Eviota (1992:167) argues, colonialism '... laid the basis for the structural subordination of the Philippines in the global economy'.

The sexual conquest of Filipino women was and continues to be a major feature of colonialist and neo-colonialist social relations in the Philippines. Such sexual exploitation exemplifies the inequalities between so-called 'first world' and 'third world' countries, which are based on relations of gender, 'race' and class. Although the rape of indigenous 'Indias' was rampant during the Spanish colonial period, the sexual colonisation of Filipino women became more blatant and pervasive with the arrival of US armed forces

and the subsequent establishment of American military bases throughout the Philippines (Peredo 1992:21-23). From the mid 1940s until the rejection of the treaty for their continued stay in 1991, the US bases created a demand for prostitution and the sex industry in the surrounding areas expanded and flourished (Torres-Calud 1992:53). American servicemen in the Philippines derogatively call Filipino women LBFMs—‘little brown fucking machines’ (Peredo 1992:22). This language of neo-colonial sexual colonisation is used to further humiliate and dehumanise Filipino women.

The exploitation of both human and material resources in the Philippines during the Spanish and American colonial eras and the continuing underdevelopment of the country caused partly by its neo-colonial ties with America has given rise to a pervasive colonial mentality (Cahill 1990:51). Colonial mentality is defined as subservience and deference to all things western, particularly American, including lifestyles, products and notions of beauty. Aguilar (1989:529) states that colonial mentality is a ‘... predilection for seeing only superior ways in the conqueror races (and, conversely, inferiority in the conquered) ...’ It legitimates and perpetuates neo-colonial relations of domination and subordination. In the Philippines, dominant ideals of beauty are distinctly ‘western’. Brown skin colour in general is disparaged while the fair skin (*maputi* or white) of the so-called ‘*mestiza*’ is highly valued (Illo 1999:49-50; Peredo 1992:23). Colonial mentality constitutes the ‘white’ man as saviour, as a Prince Charming who rescues the Filipina from poverty by marrying her (Peredo 1992:23-24). For many Filipino women, marriage to a ‘white’ foreigner is seen as the pinnacle of success, the path to social mobility and happiness (Angeles 1993:43; Peredo 1992:24; Boer 1988:14-15). Colonial mentality encourages the migration of Filipino women, and makes them available to foreign men from more affluent countries. It is thus a central factor in constituting the vulnerability of Filipino women to male violence in Australia.

International Relations of Migration

The migration of Filipino women is tied to the political economy of the Philippines, a structure incorporated within an international nexus of inequitable gendered, racialised class relations. These relations have made the Philippines one of the largest debtor nations in the world (San Juan Jr. 1998:137). In particular, the SAPS designed and administered by the IMF and WB, and their offshoot, the labour export policies of Philippine governments, provide the impetus for the international migration of Filipinos across state borders. Since 1970, SAPS compelled successive Philippine governments to implement harsh economic measures to alleviate growing trade and budget deficits and ballooning foreign debt (Miranda 1994:16). These measures include massive cuts in government budget allocation to health, education and basic services in favour of debt servicing and military spending (Miranda 1994:16). SAPS have directly led to prolonged stagnation, increased taxation, unemployment, wage freezes, depressing living conditions, homelessness, threatened food security, declining health and export oriented production (Aguilar 1998c:160; San Juan Jr. 1998:137; Largoza-Maza 1994:xi). They have resulted in the greater impoverishment of Filipinos. Such programs place an extra heavy burden on Filipino women (Aguilar 1998c:159). As Largoza-Maza (1994:xi) points out, when food, health services and jobs are scarce, women are the last to eat and seek medical attention, and they are more likely to be employed in subcontracting or casual work where wages are low and conditions substandard. SAPS are also closely associated with population control programs that target the bodies of poor women (Largoza-Maza 1994:xiii).

As a measure to ease severe unemployment and boost foreign currency reserves, the Marcos government (1965-1986) declared overseas employment a major part of its national development strategy and established Filipino labour migration as state policy (Israel 2001:4; Kanlungan Centre Foundation 1997:8; Abrera-Mangahas 1997:1). This

coincided with Marcos' imposition of martial law in 1972. The Philippine Labor Code of 1974 institutionalised overseas labour migration and made the 'warm-body export' a common feature in Filipino life (Aguilar 1998b:137; 1998c:160).¹ Subsequent governments left the policy intact and the overseas employment program quickly expanded. Originally introduced as a temporary measure, the export of labour has become a permanent fixture of each government's development strategy (Kanlungan Center Foundation 1999; Alunan 1992:109). The Philippines is now the largest exporter of human labour in the 'Asian' region (Go 1997:1). The bodies of Filipinos have become commodities traded for foreign exchange earnings (San Juan Jr. 1998:138; Ramirez & Deza 1997:4). Successive Philippine governments aggressively promote labour export despite the fact that governments and citizens of host countries often treat Filipino workers inhumanely (Kanlungan Center Foundation 1999). In the twenty-five years of the labour export program more than ten million Filipinos have migrated overseas to work, officially remitting at least \$US 37 billion to the Philippine economy (Kanlungan Center Foundation 1999:18). Generating \$US7 billion in 1997, remittances have established labour export as the single largest source of foreign exchange (Aguilar 1998b:136; Aguilar 1998c:157-158; San Juan Jr. 1998:138). In 2001, it was estimated Filipino overseas workers remitted \$8 billion annually (Israel 2001:4). Women contribute seventy-one per cent more in foreign exchange to the Philippines than men (Aguilar 1998b:36).

Since the 1980s, the increase in international demand for service workers, particularly nurses, domestic workers and entertainers, has resulted in the feminisation of Philippine international labour (Go 1997:6; Angeles 1993:26-27). According to the

¹ Several government agencies, such as POEA and OWWA, have been created to process Filipino overseas workers. These agencies, together with the changing acronyms conferred on Filipino migrant labour, for example OCW and OFW, point to the institutionalisation of international migration and the active role of successive Philippine governments as recruitment agencies since the Marcos regime. POEA, whose mission is to seek overseas labour markets, endorses and directly recruits Filipino women as entertainers even though many of the women have ended up in brothels, especially in Japan (Alunan 1992:108).

Ateneo de Manila University Research Team (1999:91), the phenomenon of ‘mail order brides’ to Australia and Europe has also strengthened the feminisation of labour migration. It is estimated that more than half of all OFW are women, mostly domestic workers (Kanlungan Centre Foundation 1997:9; Nuqui 1998:68; Abrera-Mangahas 1997:2). Addressing Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong in 1988, President Aquino proclaimed the women ‘the Nation’s new heroes’ (Israel 2001:6; Aguilar 1998b:137; Nuqui 1998:67). However, Aquino’s words are hollow as successive Philippine governments have failed in their duty of care for these workers. Domestic helpers and entertainers, in particular, are vulnerable to abuse because of their gender and ‘race’ and the considerable isolation of their work (IBON Foundation 1999:6). Alunan (1992:109) invokes the term *pambayad utang* to capture how Filipino women have become payment for debt. A *pambayad utang* is a girl from a poor peasant family who becomes a chattel mortgage, payment for debt owed to the landlord (Alunan 1992:107). Alunan (1992:109) states ‘... the ‘*pambayad-utang*’ syndrome, no longer means simply bailing out the family from debt to the landlord; it has taken an international dimension, that of bailing out the country from foreign debt’.

Filipino women’s quest for a ‘better life’ through international migration, including migration for marriage, cannot simply be reduced to an escape from poverty. Nor can migration be understood solely in terms of individual choice, as the decision of Filipino women to go abroad is related to the needs of their families and women’s familial roles (Abrera-Mangahas 1997:2-3). While the primary reason for migration is economic, Filipino cultural values need also to be taken into account. This is not to dismiss other factors like adventure as a motivation for migration. As previously mentioned, their long history of colonisation and a widespread desire for western lifestyles has created a culture in which many Filipinos consider overseas employment or marriage to foreign men as a

means of social mobility (Ateneo de Manila University Research Team 1999:3; Kanlungan Centre Foundation 1997:15). Further, socialisation plays a major part in the decision of Filipino women not only to migrate but also to risk exploitation (Ateneo de Manila University Research Team 1999:3). According to the Ateneo de Manila University Research Team (1999:3), Filipino women are socialised to sacrifice themselves to support their families and this increases their susceptibility to exploitation abroad, such as accepting dehumanising work like prostitution or marrying in order to earn money for their family in the Philippines. The family is an important factor in the sex trafficking and prostitution of Filipino women and children via the justification of their victimisation for ‘the sake of the family’ (de Dios 2002:8). A CATW-AP study demonstrated that impoverished women are frequently recruited into prostitution because of familial pressure; female members are often expected or believe that it is their filial duty to assist their families in times of economic crisis (de Dios 2002:8).

International Political Economy of Sex

The sexualisation and presumed availability of Filipino women’s bodies for men’s sex and service through sex trafficking and tourism, military prostitution and as commodities in global marriage markets points to an international political economy of sex (Pettman 1996:185). There are currently two major debates on prostitution. The first defines prostitution as sex work and rests on the concepts of consent and personal choice. The second perspective advocated by the CATW sees prostitution as institutionalised violence against women (see Hughes & Roche 1999; Hofmann 1998; Law 1997; Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific 1996).² While it is beyond the scope of this study to engage any further in the prostitution debate, I adopt the latter position in which

² The CATW has a very informative web site that addresses all facets of sex trafficking and prostitution. It can be located at <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/catw>

prostitution is a violation of human rights. Prostitution is thus defined as the commodification and dehumanisation of mainly women and children for commercial sex (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific 1996:5-6). It is the structural and economic base of sex trafficking. Sex trafficking is the transport, sale and purchase usually of women and children for purposes of prostitution and sexual exploitation and is closely connected to other practices of sexual violence such as military prostitution, sex tours and commercial marriage matching (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific 1996:5). Prostitution and sex trafficking are the public face of the sexual contract, which Pateman (1988:17) describes as the ‘... mechanisms through which men claim right of sexual access to women’s bodies and ... of command over the use of women’s bodies’.

The commodification and sexual colonisation of Filipino women occurs in an inequitable division between ‘first world’ countries, which control resources and capital, and a heavily indebted Philippines economy (de Dios 1992:73). The fact that many prostituted women and those who migrate for marriage come from the Philippines, and their clients or husbands are mainly from affluent countries in Europe, America and Australia, clearly demonstrates unequal international relations (Angeles 1993:41). Globalisation has increased the destitution of Filipino women and many resort to extreme measures to survive, such as selling themselves for sex in local and international markets and marrying foreigners (de Dios 2002:4-5). While Filipino women caught up in such global relations often have little prospects for resistance, the effects of such inequities of power are never absolute. As Angeles (1993:44) argues, there are always spaces ‘... where women can and do resist their oppression as women ... [so it] is defeating to view women as total victims in all cases ... even those under conditions of trafficking’.

Sex tourism was institutionalised in the Philippines with the establishment of the Department of Tourism in 1973 to promote a new tourism industry (Aguilar 1988:5). In

the foreword of *The Philippines: A Nation Reborn*, an official Philippine government publication produced in 1974, the Secretary of Tourism, Jose Aspiras, stressed the importance of international tourism to Marcos' 'New Society' of the Philippines (Government of the Republic of the Philippines, 1974). The book explicitly extols the beauty and sexual delights of Filipino women for international male travellers (Figure 1).

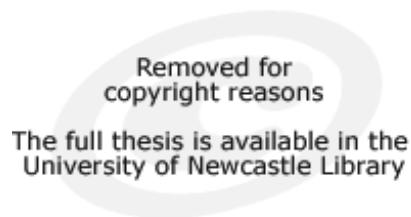


Figure 1: Government of the Republic of the Philippines (1974) *The Philippines: A Nation Reborn*, Manila, National Media Production Center, p. 65.

In the late 1980s, Hilsdon (1995:5) found that prostituted Filipino women provided substantial tourist revenue for the Philippine government. Sex tourism is closely related to the feminisation of poverty in that demand from males of affluent countries feeds on the impoverishment of women (Lauber 1996:31). During the Marcos regime, the Philippines was promoted internationally as a tropical paradise of 'sun, sea and sex' (Angeles 1993:28). More recently, the Estrada government (1998-2001) explicitly marketed women and nightlife as a tourist attraction (IBON Foundation 1999:7). According to Eviota (1992:137), the increasing numbers of prostituted women in tourist areas such as Manila is directly related to the growth of the tourist industry. Interconnections between the state and business in the promotion of sex tours can be seen in the way the Department of Tourism uses Filipino women as enticements in its advertising (Eviota 1992:138). While this has been subtler in recent years, '... the 'beauty of the Philippines shining through' is still its women' (Eviota 1992:138). Manderson (1997:143) and Hamilton (1997:145, 148) found a similar situation in Thailand where images of beautiful young Thai women are used to attract tourists and facilitate sex tourism. Representations of Filipino women as submissive and exotic are deeply implicated in the constitution of male desire for these women. The images are used to sell both women's sexuality and tourism internationally, thus rendering Filipino women available to foreign male tourists (see Pettman 1996:195).

Sex tourism has become a major source of foreign exchange (Chant & McIlwaine 1995:63-66; de Dios 1992:75; Torres-Calud 1992:52). A large majority of sex tourists are Australian males and every year thousands explore the Philippine sex tourism scene (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific 1996:38-39; Maltzahn & de Guzman-Marginson 1996:5-7; Garcia 1993:154). However, the role of Australians is not limited to buying women for sex but extends to supplying women for sex (Distor 1996:76). There is a significant Australian involvement in the Philippine sex industry.

Many Australian men own bars, clubs and lounges which often function as brothels, and they also organise packaged sex tours in the Philippines for Australian resident men (Lauber 1996:24; Garcia 1993:155; Torres-Calud 1992:52). As Maltzahn and de Guzman-Marginson (1996:7) argue, the sex tourism industry in the Philippines is massive and it thrives on the impoverishment of the Philippines and on racism and sexism in Australia.

The presence of US military bases since the mid 1940s together with the American 'rest and recreation' industry that emerged during the Vietnam War established an enormous infrastructure of prostitution in the Philippines (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific 1996:6). The military installations institutionalised the availability of women to sexually service US forces (Glodava & Onizuka 1994:38-39). Philippine and US authorities jointly organised and regulated military prostitution (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific 1996:46). Aside from expanding the sex industry, the US military presence dislocated local Filipino families and was directly responsible for the 'Amerasian' babies born and usually abandoned by their servicemen fathers (Lubi 1992:90-91). For more than thirty years until the termination of the Philippine-US Bases Agreement in 1991, the areas around the US military base at Subic Bay and the R & R sites at Olongapo and Angeles City were the largest centres of prostitution in Asia (de Dios 1993:4). However, R & R continues today as US military vessels make port calls in the Philippines and thousands of servicemen head for towns where military prostitution still exists (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific 1996:38-39). The new VFA between the Philippines and US forged in 1998 allows US military personnel to visit or temporarily stay in the Philippines. It raises real concerns about a renewed US military sexual commodification and colonisation of Filipino women and children.

The trafficking of Filipino women as commodities across state borders in global marriage markets is a major dimension of the international political economy of sex

(Pettman 1996:185-195).³ According to Cunneen and Stubbs (1997; 2000), the Internet is a significant international market for the commodification and selling of Filipino women. They argue that Internet sites typically represent Filipino women as ‘perfect partners’ for sex and marriage (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:107-113; 2000:14-19). These sites construct racialised gender stereotypes of Filipino women as ‘brides’, women who are sexually willing, exotic, docile and devoted to family life (Pettman 1992:72-73; 1996:192; Garcia 1993:156-157). Such portrayals may heighten danger for women so defined. As I stated in Chapter Two, Pettman (1996:185, 194) argues the marriage trade is dangerous for some Filipino women as they are vulnerable to abuse when they are seen as out of place.

Historical and Social Context: Australia

The rest of this chapter traces the main historical, social and ideological forces in Australia which inform the experiences of Filipino women. The practices and social relations examined here are intricately connected to the international relations of colonisation, migration and sex delineated in the preceding section.

Colonisation, White Australia and the ‘Yellow Peril’

Since British colonisation, the dominant forces in Australia have been Anglo/Celtic-supremacist, racist and patriarchal, and based on class oppression. Although Australia was colonised on a racially imperialistic base, patriarchal dominance was a major part of the cultural baggage the British invaders transported to the new colony (Huggins 1991:6, 8). The brutality of colonisation in the form of mass murders, theft of Aboriginal children, dispossession of land and destruction of Aboriginal culture affected all Aborigines and

³ While many Filipino women migrate to Australia for marriage, not all have been marketed through the marriage trade. Some women met their partners in the Philippines or while holidaying in Australia. Filipino women have also come as independent migrants, nurses and teachers, for example. As this thesis demonstrates, they are not a homogeneous category but come from diverse backgrounds and migrate in many ways (for a critique of texts which produce a singular ‘third world woman’ see Mohanty 1988).

motivated their struggles against colonial relations of domination and subordination. 'Race' and gender positioned Aboriginal women in particular ways. Their frontier experience was overwhelmingly one of abduction, rape as part of the conquest of war, and exploitation of their labour and sexuality, as well as resistance (Behrendt 1993:29).

Throughout most of the period up until the mid twentieth century, the British colonisers imagined Australia as a homogeneous and monolithic 'white' nation with its foundations embedded in English, Welsh, Irish and Scottish emigration movements (Cahill 1990:19). This imagining conveniently obscured the existence of the indigenous population and the presence of other small ethnic minority groups, like the substantial numbers of Chinese who migrated during the gold rushes of the 1850s. With Federation in 1901, non-white settlers were specifically excluded as a matter of government policy under the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, colloquially known as the *White Australia Policy* (Penny & Siew-Ean 1996:15). Concern about the future of the Anglo-Saxon 'race' was used to justify the racism of the 'White Australia' policy, which was seen as fundamental to Australia's existence (White 1981:81) as an outpost of British colonialism. The new racially exclusionary immigration policy was expected to ensure the protection of the nation from foreign aggression and assault on its 'racial purity'.

The so-called 'Yellow Peril', an orientalist discourse which encapsulates a twin fear of the 'Asianisation of Australia' and destruction of the 'Australian way of the life', was perceived, and continues to be seen by many, as a major threat to the integrity and 'civilisation' of the new nation. The exclusion of Chinese and others designated 'Asian' was a major target of the 'White Australia' Policy. Images of invading 'Asian' hordes, plagues and pests flooding into a vulnerable Australia were pervasive in parliamentary debates, media and other public discourses (Broinowski 1992:6-9). Miscegenation was also vigorously opposed and Anglo-Asian births were condemned (de Lepervanche

1989:166). Acceptable white women were instructed to populate the land with sons or perish in a national project to prevent 'Asian' invasion and the overpopulation of Aborigines (Broinowski 1992:34; de Lepervanche 1989:169).⁴ In 1973, new policy objectives of the Whitlam Labor government (1972-1975), namely the introduction of 'Multi-cultural Policy' to replace assimilation policy, officially ended the White Australia Policy. This also coincided with the influx of Timorese and Vietnamese refugees and since then immigration from 'Asia' has steadily increased (Batrouney & Stone 1998:14; Penny & Siew-Ean 1996:15). However, 'White Australia' is kept alive in contemporary debates over anti-Asian immigration, especially in the discourse of historian Geoffrey Blainey. The comments of Pauline Hanson, the former One Nation party leader, and the current Howard government's position on asylum seekers and its repressive border protection policies continue to fuel the racist discourses of the Blainey debate. The construction of the Filipino 'mail order bride' and 'illegal immigrants' illuminates this national obsession with 'racial purity'. They are modern versions of the invasion theme. Both are dominated by an imagery of flood, Asian hordes and penetration of white Australia's national borders. Indeed, anti-Asian racism has a long history in Australia, and violence against Filipino women must be seen in the context of this history.

The Migration of Women

Historically, women have travelled from distant lands to marry Australian residents and their migration has often been sanctioned by the Australian state. More recently, in contrast, the sponsors of Filipino women's migration for marriage are usually individual men. The Australian state was heavily involved in the selection and transportation of single women, usually English and Irish, as brides for male settlers (de Lepervanche

⁴ Not all women were encouraged to be 'breeders for the nation' (de Lepervanche 1989:165). Aboriginal women in particular were often prevented from reproducing (de Lepervanche 1991:132, 148) and their children were usually forcibly removed.

1991:141-142). After World War Two, the state introduced female partners for non-English speaking migrants (de Lepervanche 1991:139). While some women migrated independently, most came to Australia as dependents of men and have been expected to marry and breed (de Lepervanche 1989:164; Pettman 1992:40).

In an attempt to redress the marked disproportion of the sexes in England and Australia, and political unrest in both countries, Australian colonial governments and British politicians actively pursued female migration as a solution (Brown 1996:127; Hammerton 1979:53, 105).⁵ It was widely felt female emigration would civilise Australia, and the women sought were domestic and farm servants who were expected to marry and become mothers (Hammerton 1979:53). In 1831, colonial governments organised a system of assisted emigration and mass shipments mostly of young unmarried working class women were transported to Australia as servants and prospective wives (Summers 1994:322; Hammerton 1979:54). The emigration of young Irish orphan girls, mainly from workhouses in Ireland, commenced in 1848 (Reid & Mongan 1996:2). Although brought to Australia primarily to work as domestic servants, it was anticipated that they would eventually marry and populate the country (Reid & Mongan 1996).

More than any other person, Caroline Chisholm popularised the notion of emigrant women as 'God's Police' and, in so doing, she helped institutionalise the patriarchal subordination of women in Australia (Summers 1994). Chisholm wanted to populate the colony with '... good and virtuous women' who would exercise a civilising influence over errant male behaviour (Summers 1994:337). Concern about the plight of newly arrived female migrants motivated Chisholm's involvement in rescue work and she opened a Female Immigrants Home in Sydney in 1841 (Summers 1994:346; Hammerton 1979:99-100). Chisholm personally accompanied the women on job seeking expeditions to her

⁵ By 1836, the New South Wales population had more than double the number of males for every female and, conversely, there was a huge surplus of women in England (Hammerton 1979:53, 105).

country depots in Goulburn and Yass (Maher 1984:55). However, she wanted their employment to be temporary as her ultimate aim was for them to become wives and mothers (Summers 1994:347). In 1849, to facilitate the emigration of families and single women, Chisholm established the Family Colonization Loan Society in England where she personally ascertained the ‘respectability’ of the prospective immigrants (Summers 1994:348-349). It can be argued that Chisholm’s English screening house performed a similar function to contemporary marriage introduction agencies matching women from the Philippines with non-Filipino males, that is, they were/are both in the business of supplying wives/sexual partners for men. However, they have been constructed as two distinct institutions processing two different kinds of women. While Chisholm’s screening house in England was seen to produce ‘respectable’ young ladies—‘God’s Police’—contemporary introduction agencies produce ‘mail order brides’.⁶

The official dismantling of the ‘White Australia Policy’ and Marcos’ imposition of martial law in the Philippines (1972) led to a rapid increase in the population of Philippine born in Australia over the following decades (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2000). This increase is attributable largely to intercultural marriages (Soriano 1995:97). Migration from the Philippines to Australia has been gender biased in favour of females (Soriano 1995:97). In the 1996 Census, there were 32,315 males and 60,620 females originating from the Philippines in Australia, a sex ratio of 53.3 males per 100 females (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2000). More than 70 per cent of Filipino women who migrate are sponsored as fiancées or spouses of

⁶ It is important to note that many colonists saw female immigrants as whores or prostitutes rather than ‘God’s Police’ (Summers 1994:322). Many contemporary newspapers displayed deep hostility and racist aversion to female migrants like the Irish orphan girls (Reid & Mongan 1996:4). For example, the *Melbourne Argus* described them as ‘... the most stupid, the most ignorant, the most useless and the most unmanageable set of beings that ever cursed a country by their presence’ (quoted in Reid & Mongan 1996:3). Similarly, the *Goulburn Herald* in 1850 states that ‘... the orphan girls from the Irish parishes where they are not absolutely depraved they are so stupid that they are fit for nothing’ (*Goulburn Herald* quoted in Reid & Mongan 1996:132). These accounts suggest that the contemporary media discourse of Filipino ‘mail order brides’ is part of a long tradition of gendered class-based racism in Australia.

Australian male residents, and 15,369 women entered Australia in this capacity in 1995-1996 (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 1999). After the USA, Canada and Japan, Australia is the fourth most popular destination for Filipino women who migrate for marriage (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 1999).

Given the popular perception that the migration of Filipino women is tied to their relationship with an Australian resident male and every Filipina is a mail order bride, it is worth reiterating that not all Filipino women migrate to Australia as spouses or fiancées. Many migrate independently as professionals, nurses for example, or as part of the family reunion system and have subsequently married non-Filipino men. There has been a discursive continuity in the construction of Filipino-Australian marriages as 'mail order' in the sense that they are often situated in the context of the introduction agencies and pen-pal columns of the 1970s and 1980s which advertised Filipino women for marriage.⁷ The discourse continues to circulate without radically changing its basic form, obscuring the fact that most Filipino-Australian couples today do not meet through introduction agencies (Navarro-Tolentino 1992:25-26).⁸ Informal networks established by Filipino women who had previously migrated to Australia now provide the major means by which Australian men meet female partners from the Philippines (Iredale et al. 1992:23-24; Kaminskas & Smith 1990:13). These networks allow the personal introduction of Australian men to female family members and friends in the Philippines.

The migration of Filipino women for marriage is tied to their hopes for a better life. While for many women marriage-based migration provides a way out of economic hardship in the Philippines, it cannot be seen solely as an escape from poverty. In her

⁷ In April 1990, the Philippine government introduced legislation to ban introduction agencies in the Philippines from matching Filipino women for marriage to foreign nationals. This does not mean such agencies cease to function. Their operations, however, have become covert.

⁸ This information comes from data collected by the Commission of Filipinos Overseas, a Philippine government department. As matching Filipino women for marriage is illegal in the Philippines, it is reasonable to assume Filipino women are less likely to admit to government agencies that they met their partners through an introduction agency.

research, Roces (1996:150; 1998:2) found that Filipino women who marry Australian residents are mainly motivated by a desire to fulfil the traditional Filipino role of wife and mother. The women were solteras or single women who were generally past marriageable age and they were marginalised in the Philippines where a woman's status is tied to her identity as wife and mother (Roces 1998:2-3). Migration for marriage allowed them to fulfil the goal of traditional Filipino womanhood as well as perform their role as dutiful family members by sending money back to the Philippines (Roces 1996:150; 1998:2-3).

Media Archetypes of Filipino Women

The following discussion of three media archetypes of Filipino women helps historically contextualise the ideologies and values informing contemporary portrayals of Filipino women and violence. Junie Morosi as the beautiful 'femme fatale' who 'bewitched' and then destroyed Jim Cairns, the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia (1972-1975), thus bringing down the Whitlam government, Rose Hancock the 'gold-digger prostitute', and Cynthia the 'mail order bride' from the movie, *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*, epitomise how the media have portrayed Filipino women in Australia. While Junie Morosi and Rose Hancock are real women, they are also media constructions. These archetypes are part of a long tradition of Australian racism based on male desire for and fear of the 'exotic' other.

As far as can be ascertained, Junie Morosi was one of the earliest 'Asian' women to be represented in the Australian media as desirable/dangerous 'Filipina other'. Although the newspapers linked her with the Philippines (see Hills 1974:1), Morosi was not a Filipina. She was born in Shanghai to an Italian father and Portuguese mother, both of whom had a Chinese background (Morosi 1975:41-49; Wilmoth 1996:1). It is significant that the media represented her *as though she was a Filipina* in a sexist and racist process whereby national boundaries and ethnicities are blurred and any 'Asian'

woman can substitute for another. This is what Broinowski (1992:133) calls the Far East Fallacy, the interchangeability of 'Asians' or 'Asian' countries. Morosi's family later moved to the Philippines when she was three and she migrated to Australia as an adult in 1962 (Morosi 1975). On 2 December 1974, Morosi was appointed as Private Secretary to Jim Cairns, the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and Minister of Overseas Trade. His decision to hire her drew an immediate and vehement media criticism (see Morosi 1975).

The Australian media demonised Morosi by creating what came to be known as the 'Morosi Affair' to describe the 'events' surrounding her appointment. The term invoked an image of licentious female sexuality. It suggested a sexual relationship between Morosi and two senior ministers of the Whitlam government, Jim Cairns and Senator Lionel Murphy, the Attorney General of Australia. The term 'Morosi Affair' illuminates masculine fear and desire of the 'Filipina other'. Holt (1993:124-128) argues that newspaper photographs of Morosi simultaneously affirmed her sexual availability and attraction while highlighting the danger for white men contained within this excitement. Although desire is evident in *The Age* reporter's portrayal of Morosi as '... the gorgeous Eurasian grandmother ...', fear and danger take precedence as we read that she '... has sent the Federal government into a political panic' (Hills 1974:1). More explicitly, another article, 'The Morosi Affair: One Man's Poison is Another's Meat' (*The Australian Financial Review* 1974:1), suggests Morosi's sexuality has the potential to destroy men and governments. This is not simply a fear of miscegenation. It is a fear of the illegitimate methods and techniques beautiful Asian women use to threaten white power. Morosi was seen as using her racially desirable sexuality to bewitch powerful men in the government and ingratiate herself into the corridors of power. In a sense, just like contemporary 'mail order brides', Morosi was represented as using Murphy and Cairns as passports to a better life. Evocative of the invasion theme of the 'Yellow Peril', other articles such as 'Morosi

Storm Rocks Government' (Hills 1974:1) and 'Cyclone Junie Strikes Again' (*The Age* 1974:1) conjure up an image of Asian females flooding and penetrating the national borders of White Australia. Here we can clearly see the prototype of Filipino women infiltrating while threatening the family relationships at the heart of Australia. As Morosi herself stated, '... in an article entitled 'Women we love to hate', it was said I was a threat to every Australian home' (quoted in Wilmoth 1996:1). For Morosi, the furor around her appointment, including the media campaign, was about sexism and racism. As a visibly different woman of colour, her very presence in the ministerial office threatened Anglo-Saxon male racial superiority (Cullen 2002:192; Morosi 1975:53-55).

Even more than Junie Morosi, Rose Hancock remains the paradigmatic Filipino woman in the Australian media, the definitive 'mail order bride'. According to a 1992 article, every Filipino woman wants to be a Rose Hancock:

The central theme of Rose Hancock's story is not uncommon among the millions of young Filipinas struggling to escape the abject conditions of Manila. The Philippines capital is full of young girls who dream of meeting a rich man to whisk them away to freedom. Rose Hancock was such a woman. The difference is she succeeded like few others (Wainwright 1992a:4).

The media obsession with Hancock, now known as Rose Porteous after her marriage to Willie Porteous, has lasted for over one and a half decades. In 1983, Rose Lacson was hired as a housekeeper for mining magnate Lang Hancock and two years later they married. From the start of the relationship, there was conflict between Rose Hancock and Gina Rinehart, Lang Hancock's daughter. After a long and serious illness, Lang Hancock died in 1992 when he was eighty-two. The coroner found he had died of natural causes related to heart, kidney and lung disease. However, Rinehart pushed for an inquiry into her father's death claiming Rose had deliberately killed him through 'Rose-induced' stress. Rinehart and Hancock were embroiled in an acrimonious court battle over Hancock's estate and company assets, which was played out in the national media.

Reporters stated that the Hancock saga had all the ingredients of primetime television drama without acknowledging the pivotal role of the media in that very production.⁹

Desire in the form of Rose Hancock's sexual attractiveness and availability was always a central feature of the reportage. Yet, within this discourse of desirability was a warning about the dangers Filipino women pose for Australian men. Journalists looked no further than Rinehart's comments that her father had claimed Rose was 'the most evil person' he had ever met, 'was a very dangerous woman' and he 'feared her' (quoted in Tucak 2001:5) to support their portrayal of Hancock as dangerous. One male journalist ominously asked '... [w]as he sent to the grave by a shrieking, demanding, money-hungry wife who threatened to kill him or did he die of natural causes?' (Russell 2001:18). Interviews with relatives add credibility to the media accounts. Reinhart describes Rose Hancock as a 'Filipina prostitute' and a mercenary, money-hungry gold-digger who never loved her husband (Russell 1999:25; 2001:18; Laurie 1999:65). Talking about her mother, Johanna Lacson agreed Rose '... had acted in such a way as to deserve being called a mail-order bride, a Filipina floozy and a gold-digger' (quoted in Russell 2000:35). To emphasise Rose Hancock's mail order bride status, Wainwright (1992a; 1992b) made links between Rose, Manila bars, a fast-paced lifestyle, prostitution and her search for a rich man to marry. As a relative who visited bars with Rose stated '... I am sure she cared about [Lang] but money meant a lot to Rose ... Rose use to say, 'Expensive things like me cost money' (Wainwright 1992b:15). Rose Hancock's danger is those sexualised and racialised characteristics that constitute her as a mail order bride in media discourse. Rose Hancock, the media image, provides insight into the historical origin of the discourses the Australian media draw on when reporting violence against Filipino women.

⁹ For example, Russell (1999:25), in his *Courier-Mail* article, constructs the Gina Rinehart-Rose Hancock feud in the classic fairytale genre of Cinderella and her wicked stepmother. BABAE (1992:1) a feminist organisation of Filipino women, pointed out that the Australian media's monitoring of the conflicts between Rose Hancock, her daughter, Johanna Lacson and Rinehart had the quality of a soap opera.

A major current of 'humour' in the popular Australian film, *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (1994), involves Cynthia, a 'mail order bride' from the Philippines. She is an archetype of the stereotypical Filipino woman in Australia. Cynthia is an opportunistic and mercenary gold-digger, a former bargirl and prostitute, morally lax and seductive, the embodiment of a rampant sexuality.¹⁰ Writing in *American Vogue*, Powers (quoted in Perdon 1994:8) describes Cynthia as a '... mirthlessly cruel caricature of an Asian prostitute who speaks in half-witted pidgin and leers delightedly as she does a live show'. Her character calls on an already existing catalogue of patriarchal Anglo-Australian male desires and fears about the 'exotic' other. As Holt (1996:73) argues, Cynthia reiterates the role of Filipino women as desirable sex objects of white Australian men. Yet, she is also an object of fear. Cynthia's Filipina presence indicates a successful penetration of the racial, sexual and national boundaries of 'white' Australia (Holt 1996:72). Cynthia is juxtaposed with Bob, the honest, hard-working Aussie male she conned into marriage. The considerable time the film devotes to Cynthia's act of popping ping-pong balls from her vagina suggests that sexual immorality is intrinsic to Filipino women. Cynthia's remark to Bob when she leaves him, 'I no like you anyway. You got little ding-a-ling,' constitutes the 'Asian' whore whose obsession with male genitalia and sexuality places her outside the moral boundaries of 'respectable' womanhood. Ironically, those words permanently fix Cynthia the media image, like real Filipino women, as a victim of her own sexuality.

After viewing *Priscilla*, many Filipino women claimed the film depicted '... an extremely dehumanised human being' and that it perpetuated '... prejudicial attitudes against Filipino women in Australia' (Wall 1994:1). Most of the women I interviewed as part of this study were also incensed about the characterisation of Cynthia. According to

¹⁰ Although certainly no less racist and sexist, the Welsh feature film, *Filipina Dreamgirls* (1991), exemplifies the heterogeneity of mail order bride discourse. Filipino 'mail order brides' are portrayed as both sexually voracious and the embodiment of traditional values.

Wall (1994:3), the gay Anglo-Australian characters were portrayed as ‘more human’ than Cynthia’s Filipina character. As Bobis (Gilbert, Lo & Bobis 1994-1995) points out, the freakishness of the drag queens dissolves as their stories unfold, but Cynthia is never given the chance to develop beyond a woman who uses her sex organ in a freakish game of ping-pong. According to SBS radio announcer Richie Buenaventura, what the Cynthia character does not address is that while some Filipino women take advantage of their Australian husbands as Cynthia did in the film, far more Filipino women suffer brutality as victims of domestic violence (Perdon 1994:8).

Institutionalised Violence Against Women

Media portrayals of the abuse of Filipino women need to be situated within the context of institutionalised violence against women in Australia. I refer here specifically to what is commonly known as domestic or family violence. The main perpetrators of domestic violence are men while women and children constitute the majority of their victims (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:33; Women’s Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:2, 37). This is not to suggest all men are violent and women are not, or that every victim is a woman (see hooks 1984:118). As hooks (1984:118) argues, such a sexist stereotype obscures the extent to which women also exert coercive authority over others or act violently. While not diminishing the pervasive problem of male abuse of women, it must be acknowledged that both men and women have supported the use of violence, and together have created cultures of violence (hooks 1984:130). Women are more likely to be assaulted and/or killed by their male partners or ex-partners than by anyone else. Such violence is an exercise of power and control and must be understood in terms of the inequitable distribution of social, economic and political resources between men and women (Women’s Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:23, 37). Indeed, women’s

lack of economic and social power is an important reason why they remain in situations of abuse (O'Donnell & Saville 1982:52). Domestic violence is the most under reported crime in Australia and domestic homicides account for the largest single category of homicides (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:1, 2). Significantly, a history of domestic violence often precedes a domestic homicide (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:29; Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:3).

As I stated in Chapter Two, not all women's experiences of domestic violence are the same. Their abuse is shaped in quite different ways by other dimensions of their social identities, such as 'race', ethnicity, class and age (Radford, et al. 1996:1-6; Family Violence Professional Education Taskforce 1994:2; Crenshaw 1991:1245). While accounting for the differences among women, it is also important to recognise commonalities between situations of abuse. Social markers of difference structure the responses of others, like family members, friends, police, courts and media. Although domestic violence cuts across all social groups, its cultural meanings will often vary (Family Violence Professional Education Taskforce 1994:120). As Easta (1996:10) found in her research, it is likely to be invisible among immigrant women who need to send financial support to families in their country of origin or feel pressured to remain in abusive relationships to discourage racism. Sponsored women in particular are likely to be vulnerable to abuse as they are often dependent on their partners for their immigrant status (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:33). The non-recognition of overseas qualifications exacerbates the isolation and financial dependence of some migrant women (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:39; Easta 1996:9). These factors need to be considered when examining the over-representation of Filipino women as victims of domestic homicide in Australia.

Particular attitudes, cultural practices and structural inequalities support men's violence towards women. In Australia, dominant constructions of masculinity and

femininity constitute women as dependents and property of men, as bought through men's breadwinning (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:35; Pettman 1992:69). In dominant family ideology, women are nurturing, caring and 'naturally' responsible for their family's happiness and wellbeing (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:35). This ideology is particularly powerful when combined with victim blaming, the idea that a woman is responsible for violence against her—that she deserved or provoked it (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:52). It means many women may experience shame and embarrassment about being victims of violence and will often keep silent about their partner's abuse as they may feel a personal failure if they tell others (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:35, 38-39, 52). Family ideology combined with inequalities such as 'race' and class is a powerful factor in keeping women in violent relationships. Fear of male retribution has a power of its own.

Filipino Women's Activism

Filipino women have actively engaged in struggles against oppression in the Philippines and in the many countries around the world which have become their second homes, including Australia. Their activism draws on the long history of struggle for national liberation in the Philippines. Filipino women here have taken up the struggle around a broad range of issues, including serial sponsorship, immigration legislation, sex trafficking, racism, domestic violence and media representation. The richness and innovativeness of their attempts to challenge injustices undermine stereotypes of Filipino women as submissive, uneducated, and hapless victims. Hunt (2002) provides a discussion of some of these campaigns. In addition, the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW (1992a; 1992b; 1994) has a number of publications which focus on the serial sponsorship campaigns. Serial sponsorship is defined as:

... the situation whereby a person sponsors a spouse or fiancé from overseas on more than one occasion in situations where at least one of the relationships has resulted in some form of abuse or exploitation of the sponsored party (Iredale et al. 1992:iv).

Filipino women have identified a relationship between serial sponsorship and domestic violence and they played a considerable role in the Australian government's decision to amend migration legislation to control such sponsorship (see Hunt 2002:9). The amendments were introduced in November 1996. Eligible Australians may now sponsor a maximum of two partners in their lifetime with at least five years between each sponsorship (cited in Hunt 2002:9). Filipino women's activism in Australia has a strong focus on networking with other groups here and in the Philippines. Political mobilisation for many includes membership in organisations such as the CPCA, FWWP, and Buklod Kababaihang Filipino. The following provides a brief overview of these organisations and their major campaigns. It seeks to show some of the ways Filipino women have struggled to improve the status of their *kababayan* (fellow country women) in Australia.

The CPCA has bases in Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney and Adelaide. A major project of the CPCA is ongoing research into the deaths and disappearances of Filipino women and their children in Australia (see Hunt 2002:5; Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia 2002). In 1989 after Gene Bongcodin's murder, the CPCA began documenting these cases. On behalf of the CPCA, Melba Marginson approached the Race Discrimination Commissioner, HREOC, with this data and argued for an investigation of the issue (Ramilo 1998:9). Julie Stubbs and Chris Cunneen undertook the final research, which culminated in the publication of *Gender, 'Race' and International Relations: Violence Against Filipino Women in Australia* (1997). Dee Hunt, the co-ordinator of the CPCA Brisbane Branch, continually updates the centre's statistical data and information on the cases. According to the CPCA (2002) data sheet, 'Violent Deaths and Disappearances Amongst Filipino Women and Children in Australia since 1980', six

children and twenty-one Filipino women have been killed, while four women and two children have disappeared (see Appendix 3).

Another significant CPCA project was the Campaign Against Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Filipino Women Exposure/Study Tour to the Philippines in 1995 (see Hunt 2002:6). The Study Tour exposed the extensive Australian involvement in the Philippine sex tourism industry and trafficking for marriage trade. Another tour is planned for February 2003. In August 1995, I attended a forum at the Newcastle Migrant Resource Centre conducted by study tour participants, Jane Queripel from CPCA-NSW Branch, and Meredith Burgmann, Member, Legislative Council NSW Parliament. A major issue to arise from the forum was that the stereotyping of Filipino women as docile sex slaves and mail order brides had contributed to their exploitation and fed into the sex tour business. The CPCA has actively challenged this negative image by moving the focus of scrutiny from Filipino women to the activities of the sex trade operators, mainly male, who promote the exploitation of women for monetary gain. These issues are discussed on the Solidarity Philippines Australia Network (SPAN) web site at <http://www.cpcabrisbane.org>

Formed in 1990 to advocate on behalf of Filipina migrants, the Filipino Women's Working Party has politicised areas of major concern to Filipino women, such as serial sponsorship, immigration, media representation and domestic violence. From its inception, the FWWP focused on media issues and set about addressing the '... negative effect on the Filipino community as a whole of the media representation of Filipino women as mindless, or just 'marriage industry' objects (Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW 1992a:35). The FWWP identified the need to develop a media training manual for media and community spokespersons so they could produce a more balanced portrayal of Filipino women in the media (see Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW 1992a). Funded by the Ethnic Affairs Commission, *Dealing With the Media* (Mowatt & Wall 1992) was a

direct challenge to the dominant discourse of mail order bride. It brought to media attention the need for informed reporting of Filipino women and aimed to provide Filipina spokespersons with skills to analyse and counter negative media stereotypes. The FWWP also developed and broadcast a radio program (see Guanio-Bartels & Pe-Pua 1994) which was especially designed to reach Filipino women in rural areas and increase their level of awareness about issues such as racism. Episode eleven explored many facets of racism and offered practical advice on how to deal with it. By providing such information, the FWWP aims to empower Filipino women to challenge racist discourses and practices.

Buklod Kababaihang Filipino consists of Filipino women who have been meeting in Adelaide since 1993. Most of the twelve women involved in Buklod Kababaihang Filipino have survived abusive relationships with non-Filipino men. In 1993, with the support of Joan Dicka, a Filipina activist and women's refuge worker, the women developed a performance entitled 'For Better or Worse ... Till Death Us Do Part'. Based on their own experiences, it movingly tells their stories of abuse through narration and song. According to the Buklod Kababaihang Filipino (1997:1) performance program, a '... significant aim of the performance is to provide an acceptable and accessible medium with which to dialogue on violence against women that is culturally sensitive and inclusive'. This use of theatre performance is a powerful medium as it allows Filipino women, both performers and spectators, to reclaim their lives. Additionally, it furthers community understanding about their experiences whilst challenging racist and sexist stereotypes of Filipino women as submissive, uneducated and passive victims.

Conclusion

This chapter has contextualised Filipino women's experiences of abuse in Australia in terms of those broader historical and social processes in the Philippines and Australia that

encourage the women's migration and constitute their particular vulnerability to violence. In the Philippines, international relations of colonisation, migration and sex were identified as key factors in the movement of women out of the Philippines and into relations with foreign men, including Australians. In Australia, the sexism, racism and class oppression that have existed since colonisation all contribute to Filipino women's susceptibility to abuse. This chapter has demonstrated the centrality of these processes to understanding how a genre of reporting violence against Filipino women has emerged and the particular forms it takes. Rather than existing in a vacuum, media representations have a history. I have illuminated the way this history is set in a nexus of inequitable international relations which extend beyond local sites and are deeply implicated in the constitution of desire for and fear of Filipino women. The chapter concluded with an exploration of Filipino women's activism in Australia. A major challenge has been those very factors that constitute Filipino women's vulnerability to violence in Australia: sex trafficking, serial sponsorship, media representation and domestic violence.

PART TWO

HEARING THE VOICES OF FILIPINO WOMEN

CHAPTER FOUR

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDIES

Part Two of this thesis comprises seven case studies of Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Generosa (Gene) Bongcodin, Rosalina Canonizado, Marylou Orton and Elma Young, who were killed, and Annabel Strzelecki who has been missing since June 1998 and is presumed dead. This chapter presents a brief profile and overview of the women and notes five of the recurrent themes that emerged from the case studies.

These case studies attempt to reinstate the voices of Filipino women who were victims of homicide or have disappeared and explore media portrayals of their lives and deaths. They capture the specificities and variety of each woman's story while highlighting the commonalities of their experiences. Although every story is unique they have common threads, a point I take up again in Chapter Twelve. The case studies are organised into separate chapters to maintain the integrity of the women and the particularities of their situations. Each case study consists of two parts. Together they explore the relationship between media image and the reality of a particular Filipino woman's life, including the violence she suffered. Firstly, a discourse analysis of Australian and Philippine newspaper representations of the woman and her death or disappearance is provided. Comparative analyses between the Australian and Philippine portrayals further accentuate the racism, sexism and class-bias of a large section of the Australian print media. Secondly, interviews conducted with family members and friends bring out the voices of these women and, in this way, allow their stories to be told. We are given access to the contexts of the women's lives and deaths or disappearance: the abuse they experienced, their pain, suffering and fears but also loves, hopes and aspirations in Australia, the country that had promised a better life. Using the

women's stories to critically re-examine the media discourse, what I call reinstating the absent and silenced voice into accounts of violence, reveals how journalists have often misrepresented their lives. Here we can see clearly the contested nature of realities. The women's stories illuminate the agency Filipino women exercise even within oppressive situations. In so doing, they challenge media portrayals of Filipino women as hapless and passive victims. While we must never forget these women were victims of abuse, this is only part of the story. They were *not just victims*, but also beloved mothers, daughters, sisters and friends, as well as workers, community volunteers and activists, a fact often rendered invisible in one-dimensional media portrayals which provide no sense of who each woman was as a person to those who loved and cared about her.

In addition, the families and friends of Teresita, Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel, most of whom are Filipino women, speak about the social effects of the media representations on their own lives. They also discuss how they organise their activities in relation to the portrayals of their loved one.

Profile of the Women

Contrary to the myths and simplistic over-generalisations of many media accounts, the lives and experiences of the women at the center of the case studies exhibit diversity. They come from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances. Most of the women do not fit into the stereotypical categorisation of 'mail order bride'. While some were from impoverished socio-economic circumstances in the Philippines, others enjoyed relative comfort in their country of origin. Many of the women were skilled workers and either contributed financially to the relationship or had the potential to contribute. Some were more educated or qualified than their male partners. And every woman provided support in some form to her family of origin back in the Philippines. Apart from Annabel

Strzelecki who was residing in a rural district when she went missing, the women were living in urban areas at the time of their deaths. Five of the women had children.

Four major commonalities concerning violence become apparent in the women's lives. First, in every case, a history of domestic violence preceded the homicides and disappearance. The women had been subjected to many different types of abuse, including racist violence. In Marylou's killing, however, her former partners were not suspects. In Rosalina's case, her husband was acquitted of murder, and Annabel's husband was never charged with any offence related to his wife's disappearance. Most of the women were still in the abusive relationship. Second, the abusive partners or former partners of the women were all non-Filipino men. Third, despite threats and pressures not to discuss their abuse or seek help, all of the women had disclosed the abuse they experienced to other people, usually family members or friends. To quote Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (1998:xi), such a finding '... directly challenges the notion that women experiencing domestic violence perpetuate the situation by remaining silent about the abuse'. Fourth, regardless of the considerable abuse and oppression they suffered, each woman had established strong networks of friends who they could turn to for support.

Submerged and Subjugated Voices of Filipino Women in the Media

The most recurring theme in the thesis is the way the voices of the deceased and missing Filipino women have been submerged in media portrayals of their abuse. The voices of Teresita, Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel are largely absent and silenced in media accounts which privilege the story of the accused and construct Filipino women in racist, sexist and class-based ways. In this context, the women's stories are what Foucault (1980b:82) terms subjugated knowledges:

... a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition ...

A major task of the thesis is to make these voices heard.

Abuses of Male Power and Control

While the partners or former partners of the women were all non-Filipino men, they came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Most were themselves immigrants to Australia. The men had in common a strong belief that they did not have to be accountable for their behaviour or treatment of their partners or ex-partners. They believed and acted in ways which suggested these women were their 'property', that they 'owned' the women, that the women did not have any rights. These relationships were characterised by abuses of male power and control. They were regimes of terror. Central here were the psychological abuse, mind games and emotional put-downs, which were intended to destroy the women's self-esteem, self-confidence and identities. It became clear in my case studies that men also exercised control over women through their children and by isolating them from networks of family and friends. Moreover, it was apparent the violence intensified as men attempted to maintain control in their relationships. As the Women's Coalition Against Family Violence (1994:23) notes:

Men's violence towards women and children is a considered exercise of power aimed at maintaining control over them. When a man who is violent towards his partner and children has his control over them challenged, he will often inflict more violence to 'teach them a lesson', to remind them 'who is boss' and to intimidate and force them to comply with his wishes. The ultimate expression of this desire to control is the act of murder.

Similarly, Polk (1994:28, 56) points out that often men use murder as a form of control to ensure possession of 'their' woman. Like the research of Cunneen and Stubbs (1997), I found some of the men involved with these women attempted to live out relationships mediated by racialised and sexualised images of Filipino women as 'perfect partners'.

Resistance to Domination

While the lives of these women were marked by relations of domination and subordination, they also exhibit resistance to male tyranny. In different ways, the seven women were trying to escape intolerable situations, struggling to do something about the oppression they experienced at the hands of their abusers. In nearly every case as the women attempted to break loose, become more assertive or refused to remain submissive, when men failed or were unable to exercise control over them, the violence escalated in intensity. Indeed, it was the women's attempts to resist and assert their rights that lead to their deaths or disappearance. According to the Women's Coalition Against Family Violence (1994:54), violent men frequently kill their partners or former partners when they perceive challenges to their power and control, for example when the women try to leave the relationship or '... attempt to assert their rights over what men regard as their money, house, assets and children'.

Effects of Violence on the Children of the Deceased and Missing Filipino Women

The outcomes of these tragedies do not end with the violence inflicted on the women. There are other victims. The abuse the women experienced also affected their families and friends, especially their children. Even before their mother's death, many of the children were subjected to what Irwin and Wilkinson (1997:17) refer to as a '... reign of terror ...' living in a domestic violence environment (for a discussion on domestic violence and children see Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 1999:13-16; 2001:23-26; Domestic Violence Resource Centre, nd:1-4). Part of the women's hesitation to escape violence was their love and protection of their children. They did not want to leave without their children. Their struggle for freedom was not only for themselves but also for their children. It was to protect and reclaim their children. With

the deaths of Nenita Westhof, Gene Bongcodin, Marylou Orton and Elma Young and Annabel Strzelecki's disappearance, their children's lives were changed forever. They will grow up without their mothers. In reclaiming the voices of the victims, it is important to acknowledge that the tyranny of these men has extended to the women's children. They have experienced immense pain, torment, suffering and injustice. Nenita's daughter is now an orphan. Annabel's son and daughter may never know what happened to their mother. The daughters of Gene and Elma have seen the release of their fathers after serving inadequate prison terms for killing their mothers. Marylou's sons were separated after her death and we do not know if their fathers made sure the brothers remained in contact. Another issue is whether the children have maintained contact with the relatives of their mothers in the Philippines. What happened to their children is a significant part of the women's stories but beyond the scope and parameters of this thesis to explore. The point that I am making here is to acknowledge the legacy of these deaths and disappearance on the lives and futures of their children and other family members.

Problematic Definitions and Conceptualisations of Violence

Journalists as well as some family members and friends I interviewed have often failed to acknowledge non-physical forms of violence, such as emotional and verbal abuse and social isolation. Submerged or narrow definitions of violence were a recurrent theme throughout the articles I have surveyed. Among family members and friends, in many instances, psychological abuse and emotional bullying were not articulated as domestic violence. Violence was wrongly confined to physical abuse. Failure to name domestic violence is not to suggest acceptance of the women's abuse. This inability to name is consistent with research conducted by Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (2000;

2001). Although in the general community there is a reasonably high understanding of domestic violence issues, violence is nonetheless seen mainly as only physical violence (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 2000:17-18; 35-36; 2001:37). While all of the women in my case studies had disclosed the abuse they experienced to other people, some may not have defined their situation as being one of domestic violence. According to Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (1998:69), although many more women now define physical abuse as domestic violence, they do not always recognise that such violence can take other forms. Women in abusive relationships may even see the problem as something else, for example their partner's drinking or their own 'inadequacies' (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 1998:50).

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the case studies. It has provided a brief profile of the seven women at the center of this thesis and highlighted five recurring themes which emerged in the interviews I conducted with their family members and friends. In this chapter, I have set up a fundamental premise of the study: while each woman's story is unique and their lives exhibit diversity, they have common threads. In particular, commonalities concerning violence become apparent as the women's stories unfold. The next seven chapters consisting of the case studies form the core of my study. They illuminate the relationship between media image and Filipino women's reality.

Table 1.1
Filipino Women Featured in the Case Studies

| NAME OF VICTIM | DATE OF INCIDENT | AGE | PLACE OF RESIDENCE | CAUSE | MIGRATION DETAILS | LENGTH OF STAY IN AUSTRALIA | CHILDREN | SUSPECT/ ACCUSED | PREVIOUS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE | LEGAL OUTCOMES: |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-----|---|--|--|-----------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| TERESITA BEATRIZ ANDALIS | 10 August 1980. | 21 | Brisbane, Queensland. | Drowned off South Stradbroke Island, Queensland. The motivation for her murder was economic. David Grant Mathiesen had insured her life for \$400,000. | Teresita met Mathiesen through an employment agency in Manila. He hired her as a domestic aide. She arrived in Australia in February 1980. | 5 ½ months. | No children. | David Grant Mathiesen, 26, Teresita's employer and 'fiance'. Teresita's friends claim she genuinely loved him and thought he would marry her. | Yes, in her relationship with David Mathiesen. | David Mathiesen pleaded not guilty. On 16 April 1981, Judge Connely of Queensland Supreme Court found Mathiesen guilty of Teresita Andalis' murder. He received a life sentence with hard labour. |
| NENITA WESTHOF | 18 February 1987. | 33 | West End, a suburb of Brisbane, Queensland. | Nenita's throat was cut in her flat. Her killer then shot Willem Westhof at another location. | Nenita met and married Willem Westhof in the Philippines in the early 1980s. She subsequently migrated to Australia. | Approximately 4 years. | Amanda aged 2. She was placed in her aunt's custody and raised in the Philippines. Nenita also helped care for Sammy, 8, the son of Willem Westhof's former wife. | Antonio Juan Curado, 39, Nenita's partner. | Yes, in relationships with her estranged husband and Antonio Curado. | In March 1988, Antonio Curado was convicted of both murders by a Queensland Supreme Court jury and sentenced to life imprisonment. |

Table 1.2
Filipino Women Featured in the Case Studies

| NAME OF VICTIM | DATE OF INCIDENT | AGE | PLACE OF RESIDENCE | CAUSE | MIGRATION DETAILS | LENGTH OF STAY IN AUSTRALIA | CHILDREN | SUSPECT/ ACCUSED | PREVIOUS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE | LEGAL OUTCOMES: |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-----|---------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| GENEROSA BONGCODIN | 9 July 1989 | 34 | Oak Park, Victoria. | Gene was strangled to death when she visited her ex-husband's residence in Newport, Victoria, for an access visit with her daughter, Glenys. | In 1981, Gene Bongcodin met Charles Schembri during his visit to the Philippines. They married in the Philippines and Gene subsequently migrated to Australia. | 8 years. | Glenys aged 6. At the time of her mother's death, Glenys was living with her father. He had used violence against Gene to gain custody. While Schembri was in prison, his mother cared for Glenys. | Charles Schembri, 41, Gene's ex-husband. | Yes, in her relationship with Charles Schembri. | Schembri pleaded guilty to Gene's manslaughter. On 9 July 1990 in Melbourne Supreme Court, he was sentenced to 8 years jail to serve a minimum of 5 ½ years. He was released on 11 July 1993. |
| ROSALINA CECILIA CANONIZADO | 13 April 1991. | 24 | Tregear, New South Wales. | Rosalina was strangled with a lamp cord and then set on fire in her home in Tregear in western Sydney. | Rosalina met Thomas Keir in February 1988 while holidaying with relatives in Australia. They married in November 1989 in the Philippines and she then migrated to Australia. | 17 months. | No children. | Thomas Andrew Keir, 34, Rosalina's husband. | Yes, in her relationship with Thomas Keir. | On 6 April 1993 in the NSW Supreme Court, Keir was acquitted of Rosalina's murder. His later conviction for the murder of his first wife, Jean, was quashed. On 17 October 2002, a retrial found Keir guilty of Jean's murder. |

Table 1.3
Filipino Women Featured in the Case Studies

| NAME OF VICTIM | DATE OF INCIDENT | AGE | PLACE OF RESIDENCE | CAUSE | MIGRATION DETAILS | LENGTH OF STAY IN AUSTRALIA | CHILDREN | SUSPECT/ ACCUSED | PREVIOUS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE | LEGAL OUTCOMES: |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----|-------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| MARYLOU ORTON | 13 March 1992. | 33 | Fawker, Victoria | Marylou and her employer's brother were stabbed to death in the Fitzroy massage parlour where she worked. | Marylou met John Orton in 1979 in the Philippines where they married in March 1980. They moved to Melbourne in 1981. | 11 years. | Jomar aged 14, and James aged 20 months. Marylou's sons were separated and raised by their respective fathers. | No suspect | Yes, in relationships with her ex-husband and former defacto partner. | No person has been charged with Marylou's homicide. |
| ELMA REBECCA ALBARRACIN YOUNG | 20 February 1994. | 42 | Munruben, Queensland | Elma was beaten and then strangled to death in her home. | Elma left the Philippines in 1977 to work as a nurse in Saudi Arabia. She met Paul Young while visiting her sister in Australia. They married in July 1982. | 12 years. | Amanda aged 10. Elma was also 5 months pregnant. Amanda went to live with her mother's sister and her husband. | Paul Young, 42, Elma's husband. | Yes, in her relationship with Paul Young. | Young was convicted of manslaughter on 18 February 1995 in Brisbane Supreme Court. He received a 10-year sentence but only served 4 years and 7 months. |
| ANNABEL SABELLANO STRZELECKI | 6 June 1998. | 28 | Clare, South Australia. | Jim Strzelecki, 71, claimed Annabel disappeared from their home during the night with friends. | Annabel married Wlodzimierz 'Jim' Strzelecki in 1989 in the Philippines and migrated to Australia. | 9 years. | Richard aged 7, and Rachel aged 5. They were placed in the care of their half-sister. | Jim Strzelecki, committed suicide in June 2000. He was 73. | Yes, in her relationship with Jim Strzelecki. He was a serial sponsor. | The police investigations into Annabel's case are ongoing. |

CHAPTER FIVE

REPRESENTING TERESITA ANDALIS

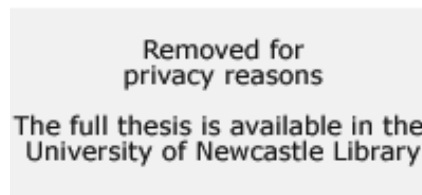


Figure 2: Teresita Andalis 1959-1980
Source: Dikken, K. (1995) 'Murder By Mail Order', The Sunday Mail, 26 February, p. 95.

[My] Thai friend had met [Teresita] at the People's Palace Hotel and said she was very lonely and she knew that I was married to a Filipino. So she brought her over to the house on a number of occasions. And I invited some other Filipinos to meet her so that she got to know people. And, she was a lovely, lovely young girl ... very naïve ... We were devastated because ... we knew her so well and she was just so very young. And very innocent (Sarah, activist and a friend of Teresita, August 1999).

Teresita Beatriz Andalis was born in 1959 in San Vicente Norte, Iriga City, the Philippines (Smith 1986:92). Her mother died when she was ten years old and her father worked as a rice farmer to support his nine children. Teresita spent two years studying at a university near Manila. Like many Filipinos, Teresita enlisted at a local employment agency specialising in sending labour to overseas destinations. Her friends, Sarah and Joseph, told me she hoped to earn enough money to help support and educate her younger siblings. According to Detective Senior Sergeant Keith Smith (1986:92), one of the police officers investigating her death, Teresita was regarded as ‘... a saviour to her family, who looked upon her as a means to reduce the financial hardship which had been constant company for most of their lives’. Teresita Andalis met her killer, David Grant Mathiesen, through the employment agency where he ostensibly hired her as a domestic aide for his (non-existent) sister in Australia. Mathiesen, whose father was a retired Australian diplomat, took out several insurance policies on Teresita’s life totalling \$400,000 and planned her murder. Teresita Andalis arrived in Australia on 28 February 1980 and Mathiesen booked her into the People’s Palace, a cheap hotel in Brisbane, where she stayed for the next six months until her death. On 10 August 1980, David Mathiesen drowned Teresita Andalis while they were staying on a houseboat off South Stradbroke Island in Queensland. She was twenty-one. Mathiesen claimed he was Teresita’s fiance and had planned to marry her. As her ‘next of kin’, he then set about claiming on the life insurance policies. On 16 April 1981 after eight months of investigation, David Mathiesen was found guilty of Teresita Andalis’ murder and sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour (CPCA 2002:1; Smith 1986:92).

Teresita Andalis’ case study explores images of her life and death in a number of Australian and Philippine newspapers and reinstates her voice through interviews with friends, Joseph, a Filipino, and Sarah, his Australian partner. At the time, Joseph was

president of the Filipino-Australian Society of Queensland. Sarah and Joseph worked hard to uplift the status of Filipinos and improve their access to welfare services. This included supporting Filipino women in abusive relationships. As far as I can ascertain, the Australian reportage of Teresita Andalis was one of the earliest about the homicide of a Filipina in Australia. Her death and Mathiesen's trial took place before the media frenzy and moral panic over so called 'Filipino mail order brides' had taken a firm hold.

Media Representations

The Australian newspaper coverage of Teresita Andalis' murder privileged the prosecution's version of events. Teresita was portrayed as a duped overseas worker, a victim of crime motivated by greed. David Mathiesen emerged as a cold-blooded killer who fabricated the story that Teresita Andalis was his fiancée as part of his plan to defraud the insurance companies. The crown case was cited to refute Mathiesen's account that he loved and wanted to marry Teresita. For example, in his *Sunday Mail* article, 'Dead Filipino Girl Shy and Lonely—Court Told', Allen (1981a:8) wrote:

AMP representative, Bernard Francis Atkins, said that he met Mathiesen in early April and Mathiesen inquired about term insurance for his fiancée. The Chief Crown Prosecutor, Mr Angelo Vasta, QC, had earlier alleged that Mathiesen flew to Manila and recruited Teresita from an employment agency as a domestic aide ... Mathiesen said ... his fiancée was the daughter of a Filipino rice plantation owner ... The Crown has alleged that Teresita was from a very poor family and came to Australia to work as a domestic aide to send money home to her father ...

At times, the prosecution argument and the killer's story were blurred. A *Courier-Mail* (1981:2) article titled 'Man Jailed for Murder of Filipino Fiancée' portrays Mathiesen's fiancée story as part of his fraud while describing Teresita as his fiancée.¹ Contrary to the prosecution case and the overall tenor of the reporting, there is a suggestion in the

¹ This slippage between prosecution position and killer's account was again apparent in a 1987 *Sunday Mail* article where Dwyer (1987:3) wrote that David Mathiesen was imprisoned for murdering his Filipino fiancée.

linking of crown evidence with ‘his fiancée’s life’ that the prosecution actually acknowledged the veracity of Mathiesen’s engagement story:

The Crown produced evidence that Mathiesen took out a \$400,000 insurance policy on *his fiancée’s life* and also \$18,000 travel insurance on her life (*Courier-Mail* 1981:2) [emphasis added].

A similar slippage between prosecution and killer’s accounts can be seen in Allen’s (1981a; 1981b; 1981c) one page series of reports in the *Sunday Mail* under the general heading of ‘Filipino ‘Fiancee’ Killed for \$400,000 Policy: Murder to Force a Change in Insurance’. The front-page lead into the reports states that Mathiesen was found ‘... guilty of the murder of his Filipino fiancée ...’ while the reports emphasise Teresita’s status as an overseas worker:

Mathiesen took out the temporary term cover on a Filipino domestic aide, Teresita Andalis, whom he recruited in Manila and brought to Brisbane (Allen 1981b:5).

In ‘‘Pity me,’ Lonely Girl Said in Letter’, Allen (1981c:5) unambiguously articulates the prosecution’s position when he states, ‘...despite Mathiesen’s public charade that Teresita was his fiancée and they were to be wed, there was no love’.

Reporting on the trial, Allen (1981a:8) sympathetically captures Teresita’s loneliness and despair while emphasising David Mathiesen’s brutality towards her:

The Criminal Court in Brisbane last week heard from People’s Palace employees about the lonely existence of a young Filipino student in the months before her drowning ... Mathiesen would usually ring once a week and leave a message ... for Teresita to meet him outside the GPO. If he did call to the People’s Palace and didn’t find Teresita in her room he was very angry.

After the verdict, Allen (1981c:5) drew on letters Teresita had sent to her family in the Philippines while living at the People’s Palace to further highlight her suffering:

Room 68 in the Palace Guest House in Brisbane’s inner city is 3.4m by 1.8m with a bed and a wardrobe-dresser. For six months it became a cell for the frightened young Filipino girl, Teresita Andalis. Haunted by the need to send home money to her poor family and frightened by the treatment of the bullying Mathiesen, life became a nightmare ... ‘He’s treating me like a dog and I’m getting very thin’, she wrote to her shocked family.

Despite his sympathetic approach, Allen needlessly subjects Teresita's sexual status to scrutiny. For example, in the middle of a discussion about a letter Mathiesen had sent to the insurance companies about Teresita's death the bold heading **Virgin** appears. The article later states '... Dr Michael Wilson, a Southport pathologist, testified that in his opinion the dead girl was a virgin until a few hours before her death' (Allen 1981a:8).

Writing in the Philippine newspaper, *Bulletin Today*, Enciso (1981:7) similarly stresses the economic dimension of the relationship between Teresita and Mathiesen:

The trial and conviction in record time of an Australian, David Grant Mathiesen, 26, for the murder by drowning of a job-seeking Filipino co-ed Teresita Andalis, in Brisbane, Queensland, to collect a multi million peso ... insurance, is probably one for the books. In a way, what happened to Teresita should make Filipino girls wary of 'sweet promises' of good-paying jobs abroad.

As in the Australian articles, Enciso portrays Teresita Andalis as a duped overseas worker. However, he does not mention Mathiesen's fabricated fiancée story.

Similarly, Sipin's (1994:4) *Manila Times* article, 'Did You Come Here to Die?', portrays Teresita Andalis as an overseas worker and omits Mathiesen's story. Teresita and the other Filipino women killed in Australia are constructed as 'new heroes':

We have a handful of *kababayans* [fellow country women and men] who met misfortune instead of the fortune that they sought in going to Australia. In tribute to these fallen *bagong bayanis* [new heroes], I present their cases ... [T]here is a standing joke among Pinoys in Australia. It's about an immigration officer confronting a newly arrived Filipino migrant. 'Did you come here to die'? (Australians pronounce *today* as *to die*). Answers the Filipino migrant, 'No I did not come here to die, I came to earn dollars' (Sipin 1994:4).

While Sipin's use of the term 'new heroes' to describe Teresita obscures the often appalling conditions Filipinos endure in the Philippines and in other countries, it does highlight that the labour and remittances of overseas workers help support the Philippine economy. Sipin later refers to David Mathiesen as Teresita's Australian husband. Although factually incorrect, the statement draws attention to an intimate relationship between victim and killer.

Bagares (1995:1, 5) elaborates on this idea in his *Philippine Star* article titled ‘18 Pinay Brides, Fiancees Meet Death in Australia’. His headline implies Teresita and the other Filipina homicide victims were mail order brides and in the text he describes David Mathiesen as Teresita’s fiance. The way Bagares (1995:1, 5) cites and positions the CPCA sources in constructing his account suggests that the deaths of Teresita and the other women were directly related to organised sex trafficking for marriage:

At a press conference held in Quezon City ... the Center for Philippine Concerns-Australia (CPCA) said the [homicides] are ‘a result of trade in Filipino women’ involving a syndicated network run by Australians to exploit Filipino women and children ... The CPCA said the first case it has documented was the 1980 murder of Teresita Beatriz Andolis [sic] ... Police investigation revealed later that her fiance, David Mathiesen [sic] had insured Teresita’s life for thousands of dollars ... ‘We came here to discuss extensive issues of Filipina mail-order brides and the abuses they face in Australia’, Melba Marginson, CPCA head, said.

It is hard to know if the CPCA spokesperson, Melba Marginson, was misquoted but her comments support Bagares’ construction of Teresita Andalis as a ‘mail order bride’. The term, however, does not adequately reflect how Teresita came to be in Australia as she was originally contracted to work as a domestic aid.

Teresita Andalis’ Story: Interviews with Friends

Teresita Andalis’ voice is absent in the Australian media play-off between the prosecution’s case and David Mathiesen’s fraudulent proclamations of love and marriage. What the articles do not speak about is Teresita’s *own understanding* of her relationship with David Mathiesen—that *she loved him, thought she was his fiancée and believed he was going to marry her*. Teresita did not see their relationship purely as an employment arrangement. According to Smith (1986:93), as part of his plan, Mathiesen had bought Teresita an engagement ring. He thus created the illusion he had a romantic interest in her and they would eventually marry. While the articles correctly portray Mathiesen as a ruthless murderer and Teresita Andalis as a victim of his greed, they fail

to address this central aspect of their relationship as a man and a woman. Teresita was a duped overseas worker but she was also a duped 'Filipino fiancée'. When speaking with her friends, Teresita referred to David Mathiesen as both her fiancé and employer:

I think Teresita was hoping for a good marriage ... I think she genuinely loved this man. She spoke very highly of him ... [H]e told her that she was going to the Gold Coast to live, to work for his sister ... (Sarah August 1999).

Given Teresita's living arrangements and feelings for her 'fiancé', Sarah was concerned about the young woman's sexual and emotional vulnerability. They discussed this on a number of occasions. Teresita's anticipation of marriage was always clear:

[S]he seemed to be a deeply religious girl who said that she was waiting for marriage. Because I was worried being in a hotel room with him ... visiting her ... And she would say 'I'm going to be married before I sleep with him' (Sarah August 1999).

Other people who met Teresita Andalis during her stay in Australia confirm my view of Teresita's perception of her relationship with David Mathiesen. Writing about the history of the Philippine-Australian Society of Queensland, Whiten (1999:24) mentions that two members recalled how Teresita was embarrassed she had not met the parents of her 'fiancé'. While interviewing Teresita's family in the Philippines, Detective Smith read the letters she sent from Australia. She wrote about her loneliness and '... hopes of eventually finding happiness with her 'fiancé'' (Smith 1986:101).²

Although David Mathiesen's violence was central to concealing his plan to murder Teresita Andalis and defraud the insurance companies, her experience of abuse was domestic violence. The court and media failed to recognise the history of domestic violence that preceded Teresita's murder. Mathiesen's abuse could not even be articulated in these terms, perhaps since violence against women was not a major focus of the media, police or courts in the early 1980s, but also because of the way the prosecution and media constructed their relationship. Teresita's abuse had a racist

² Smith's article is a very full account of Teresita Andalis' case.

dimension. Mathiesen deliberately selected a Filipino woman as his target; one he thought he could get away with killing. Teresita often spoke about the restrictions Mathiesen imposed on her movements with Sarah and Joseph:

And she said that she was staying at the People's Palace. [W]hen her fiance was in Brisbane she wasn't allowed to mix, but when he wasn't here she wasn't supposed to leave the hotel ... [S]he used to sneak out with the Thai friend of mine and come over to our house. And then she'd always get her back before he was due to arrive back at the hotel (Sarah August 1999).

Although she loved him, Teresita was clearly afraid of Mathiesen's threats and control over her life. Sarah and Joseph discuss the extent of the abuse Teresita endured:

Sarah: ... she was too scared to leave the hotel. And when she said that, I was a little bit suspicious, that something wasn't quite right ... She really didn't have much of a life here ...

Joseph: She was almost like a prisoner if you ask me.

Sarah: She was there at his beck and call ...

Joseph: More like a slave.

Sarah: Just waiting for him, waiting to get married (August 1999).

Mathiesen's exploitation of Teresita's trust was a significant feature of his abuse:

Sarah: Whatever he said she believed and she accepted it ...

Joseph: She saw things in a rosy way. She didn't think there was any problem ... [except] why wasn't she allowed to associate with Filipinos or anyone, that she has to stay in the hotel. But to her that was the way that things are done. In a way, maybe naïve may not be a very good word to use, maybe more innocent (August 1999).

Although Teresita was afraid of David Mathiesen's violence and threats, she disobeyed his orders and made friends in Australia. She actively sought respite from an abusive situation and her network of new friends helped ease her social isolation. Teresita Andalis was not simply a hapless victim of violence as portrayed in the media. This is only part of her story. She was also an enjoyable companion and a good friend who shared her fears and hopes for love and happiness. Teresita never forgot her father and siblings in the Philippines. They were always included in her plans for a better life.

Sarah and Joseph were concerned that the media focus on the economic aspects of Teresita's relationship with Mathiesen clouded the gender issues. Joseph said:

... it was just one of those crimes motivated by greed ... the reporting was not to highlight violence against women. It's just like they portrayed this person to be greedy, Teresita was the unwitting victim, and that was it (August 1999).

As Joseph explained, 'I've always been an outspoken person in so far as women's rights are concerned. So, that's why I was very disappointed'. By failing to address the violence Teresita experienced as a woman, Sarah and Joseph felt the media could not provide any real sense of her life. Joseph made it clear that journalists were able to represent Teresita in this limited way as they did not interview those people who became part of her social network:

It was actually inadequate, the reporting ... Maybe they did not even bother interviewing ... any of the local Filipinos ... No, there was no research or no background information about her (August 1999).

The media portrayals of Teresita increased Sarah and Joseph's awareness about the abuse some Filipino women experience in relationships with non-Filipino partners. Clearly, the inadequacies of the Australian coverage fueled their criticism of media images of Filipino women and violence. Yet, as Sarah points out, articles on Teresita's death in the Philippine media had some positive effects as they provided a warning to Filipino women about the dangers they may face if they marry men from Australia:

The only good thing that came out of Teresita's death, if there could be anything that was good, was that for once in the Philippines they started warning the women. In the Philippine media (August 1999).

Sarah's comments suggest the media can be a positive technology of information and education. Raising consciousness about abuse could help save Filipino women's lives.

In discussing ways to improve the reporting of Teresita's murder, Joseph offered a well-developed feminist analysis that addressed violence against women in general:

Well they could have highlighted the dangers that's inherent in such a relationship. They could have contacted members of the community to canvas their feelings about Teresita's death ... I didn't mean to suggest a media beat-up but they could have handled it in a more compassionate way in a sense that highlight the disadvantage that a woman has. Not just for a foreigner coming to Australia but also those who are already

in Australia, whether they are Australian born, or migrants ... But then at that time ... domestic violence or violence against women wasn't really that big an issue ... Had there been ... militancy against violence of women maybe the media could have handled it more differently (August 1999).

Joseph's insights are a starting point in the struggle to bring about change in media reporting of Filipino women and violence.

Conclusion

The reinstatement of Teresita Andalis' voice in media accounts of her murder demonstrates that the relationship between Filipino women's lives and media images of their abuse is often one of misrepresentation, as well as contest over meaning. It highlights that journalists cannot produce accurate or adequate accounts of violence against Filipino women unless they allow the women's voices to be heard. To tell these women's stories means to acknowledge the abuse they experienced, and eschew the use of racist and sexist stereotypes such as 'mail order bride' in constructing the account, a trap even sympathetic journalists fall into. In addition, speaking with friends and family members who knew the deceased woman well and can tell her story in a fair and balanced way is vital to understanding the circumstances of her life and death. Central in Teresita Andalis' case is the misrepresentation of women's lives that occurs when journalists simply regurgitate flawed court reports of the relationship between victim and killer rather than carry out an investigation of the case.

CHAPTER SIX

REPRESENTING NENITA WESTHOF

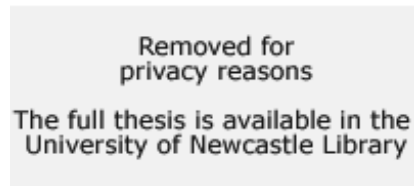


Figure 3: Nenita Westhof 1954-1987
Source: Dikken, K. (1995) 'Murder By Mail-Order', The Sunday Mail, 26 February, p. 95.

She's always laughing and joking ... She is always full of life ... that's why they called her full of life. Bundle of joy that's what she was (May, a friend of Nenita, August 1999).

Well she was famous for parties ... She was a very vibrant, happy girl ... She was the most loveliest, loveliest person you'd ever meet, and that's the way I wanted to remember her (Peter, a friend of Nenita, August 1999).

And she was a leader in the Filipino community ... she was a person of energy ... who would get things done within the Filipino community (Father Wally, activist and a friend of Nenita, July 1999).

She was trying to establish a family of her own among her friends ... [S]he gathered around her women who themselves are lonely ... And she was always out there to help them somehow ... they were all having fun together ... And that's why maybe people had an image of her being fun loving. Well she is fun loving. She really enjoyed life but she wanted security (Lola, activist and a friend of Nenita, July 1999).

Nenita Westhof was born in the Philippines in 1954. She met Willem Westhof, also known as Jimmy, in the Philippines in the early 1980s. They married there and Nenita migrated to Australia. Jimmy Westhof originally migrated to Australia from Holland. After suffering emotional and financial abuse, Nenita separated from her husband when she was pregnant with their child, Amanda. She boarded in a house with several people, including Peter and May, who is a Filipina. The three shared accommodation from 1984 until 1987 when Nenita moved to her own flat. In 1986, a friend introduced Nenita to Antonio Curado, a Spanish born Australian. They entered into an intimate relationship, although they did not live together. Antonio Curado murdered Nenita Westhof on 18 February 1987 in her flat in West End, a suburb of Brisbane, Queensland. He cut her throat in a jealous rage. Nenita was thirty-three years old. Curado then shot and killed Jimmy Westhof at another location. Amanda Westhof was two years old when her parents were killed and she was left an orphan. Amanda was placed in her aunt's custody and raised in the Philippines. In March 1988, Antonio Curado was convicted of both murders and sentenced to life imprisonment (CPCA 2002:2).

Nenita Westhof's case study explores images of her life and murder in several Australian and Philippine newspaper articles and reinstates her voice through interviews with friends, May, Peter, Father Wally Dethlefs and Lola. May and Peter lived with Nenita during her pregnancy and after the birth of Amanda. They became Nenita's family. Father Wally was Nenita Westhof's priest and a good friend. Lola, a Filipina activist, was a grant-in-aid worker for migrant women at the Migrant Resource Centre. She supported Nenita through her domestic violence situation. The Australian media portrayal of Nenita Westhof was very different to the coverage of Teresita Andalis' murder. By the mid 1980s, media frenzy over so called 'Filipino mail order brides' was reaching its peak and the reporting tended to be sensationalist (see David 1991:26-41).

Media Representations

Major features of the Australian media coverage of Nenita Westhof's murder were the inclusion of irrelevant material, pathologising of her behaviour, and the racist and sexist stereotyping of her marital relationship. Three of the articles (Watt 1987:1-2; Rowett & Edmondson 1987:1; Reynolds 1988:10), examined here highlight Nenita's ethnicity but do not refer to the ethnicity of Jimmy Westhof or Antonio Curado.

On 27 February 1987, after the bodies of Nenita Westhof and Jimmy Westhof had been found, Watt's (1987:1-2) article 'Bizarre Double Murder' appeared as front-page news in the *Telegraph*. He stated:

Mrs Westhoff [sic], about 30, was originally from the Philippines and lived with her daughter. Neighbors from the three-storey white brick unit block today described her as a 'happy-go-lucky' woman who 'loved life' and 'adored' her little daughter. They said she was a church-goer and 'someone you couldn't help but like'. A close friend and neighbor, Maria Elsa Kettunen, said Mrs Westhoff [sic] had only been living in the flat for five months on a supporting mother's pension. Mrs Kettunen, also a Filipino, said Mrs Westhoff [sic] had been separated from her husband, whom she met as a penfriend, for more than two years. 'She had a strange relationship with her husband ... she had been thinking about getting a divorce, but I don't know any more than that', said Mrs Kettunen. 'Sometimes she didn't want Amanda to be with her husband, sometimes she didn't mind. She often stayed with friends for up to three days because she felt lonely, so I thought she was away', Mrs Kettunen said (Watt 1987:2).

The overall tenor of Watt's article undermines the positive image of Nenita he presents in the opening sentences. His statement that Nenita met Jimmy as a penfriend has no relevancy to her death. It was already clear Jimmy did not kill Nenita so there was no need for a dissection of their marital relationship. There is a suggestion here that being a penfriend somehow explains her demise. The term constructs Nenita as a mail order bride. It implies her marriage was not based on romantic love, that she used Jimmy to get to Australia. Nenita's 'difference' from other 'Australian' women is thus highlighted. This notion is further stressed by other comments attributed to Elsa Kettunen: Nenita was on a supporting mother's pension and left her husband when she

was pregnant; Nenita had a strange relationship with her husband and was contemplating a divorce. Although the article states Nenita adored her daughter, other comments, such as her wavering about leaving Amanda in the care of Jimmy and her habit of staying away from home, suggest she was not a good mother.

A similar scrutiny of Nenita and Jimmy and their marital relationship was played out the next day in Rowett and Edmondson's (1987:1) *Courier Mail* article, 'Slain Couple's Baby Found Safe as Police Quiz Man: Tip-off Leads to Family Caring for Tragic Orphan'. After establishing that Amanda's 'mother was a Filipino ...', the two female journalists state:

A friend of the dead couple, Mrs Elsa Kettunen, yesterday described them as complete opposites. She said Mrs Westhoff [sic], 33, was an extrovert who liked having friends around her. Mrs Westhoff [sic] had been depressed for the past month after starting divorce proceedings. 'She wasn't sure if she was doing the right thing and still cared a lot for Jimmy', Mrs Kettunen said. 'She left him when she was pregnant with Amanda—they were just not compatible. But Jimmy was a good father, a quiet man, who worried a lot about Nenita. He had been upset a lot lately because whenever he came looking for her she was not around. Nenita was like a butterfly, popping from one place to another. But she was a good mother and her daughter was her life.' Mr Westhoff [sic] ... survived on a pension and tinkered, fixing lawn mowers for pocket money. He hardly ever had visitors except for Nenita's monthly visits. Neighbours said the last few visits had ended in heated arguments (Rowett & Edmondson 1987:1).

The article's most troubling aspect is the quote attributed to Elsa Kettunen, 'Nenita was like a butterfly, popping from one place to another'. Rowett and Edmondson exhibit cultural insensitivity in their use of the word butterfly to describe a Filipino woman. In Filipino colloquial language, the expression refers to a loose woman, slut, or prostitute. The reporters have not considered the meanings the term has for many Filipinos or the social consequences of its use. Nenita Westhof's construction as a 'butterfly' who is never home when her husband comes to visit positions her as 'out of place'.

Nenita Westhof's behaviour is again the focus in Reynolds' (1988:10) report on Antonio Curado's double murder conviction, 'Letters Led to a Killer's Conviction'. The article featured in the *Sun* on 11 March 1988. Nenita's relationship with two men is the

central concern rather than her killer's actions. Although Reynolds (1988:10) states Nenita was separated from her husband for two years before she became involved with Curado, he portrays the murders as the outcome of a 'vicious love triangle':

For decades Queenslanders have been shocked to hear growing stories of tragic murder-suicides through vicious love triangles ... From the evidence, Mr and Mrs Westhof separated and several years later she formed a relationship with Curado. All went well for seven months until she fell pregnant and went to several doctors for treatment. He was convinced Mrs Westhof had had an abortion and that he was the father of the unborn child. It was the *distraught belief that she had terminated his child which led to an horrific end for two people* ... Curado automatically blamed Mr Westhof for her getting the abortion and, subsequently, her death [emphasis added].

Antonio Curado's story that their relationship was good until Nenita fell pregnant is presented. It is assumed she shared the same experience. Reynolds sympathetically addresses Curado's distress over Nenita's abortion while highlighting her 'loose morals'. Nenita Westhof's behaviour makes Antonio Curado's actions understandable. It was her abortion that '... led to an horrific end for two people'. Reynolds' portrayal deflects attention away from Curado's violence. It legitimates the patriarchal premise that women are the property of men and men have the right to control women's bodies. Nenita Westhof is transformed from a victim of Antonio Curado's violence into a woman who abused men and provoked her own murder. He is reinvented as her victim.

Dibben's (1995:66, 95) article 'Murder By Mail-Order' presents the stories of four Filipino women killed in Queensland, Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Milagros Wills, and Elma Young. It appeared in the *Sunday Mail* on 26 February 1995. The sensationalist headline suggests these women were killed because they came to Australia as mail order brides. Describing Nenita's demise as 'murder by mail order' is factually incorrect. As Dibben makes clear, Nenita's husband did not kill her. It is also racist and sexist. According to *KASAMA* (1995:5), Dibben did not like the offensive headline; her editor imposed it. However, it reinforces the very stereotypes about

Filipino women and violence it was trying to refute. The article reflects the earlier reportage about Nenita's marital relationship and complicity in her own murder:

From one of the letters the jury in Curado's trial learned that Nenita had been his girlfriend for seven months, and at one stage had been pregnant with his child. It was Curado's belief that Mrs Westhof had had an abortion that led to the murders. Mrs Westhof and her husband, whom she met as a penfriend, had been separated for several years (Dibben 1995:95).

Sipin's (1994:4) *Manila Times* article, 'Did You Come Here to Die?', constructs Nenita Westhof, like Teresita Andalis, as a 'new hero'. Although less sensationalist than the Australian coverage of Nenita's murder, his article is more overtly factually incorrect. He describes the murders thus:

Nenita Westhof [sic], 33, Brisbane. Died in 1987, together with her husband. Husband and wife were attacked inside their car. They were shot to death, with the killer making doubly sure he completed the gruesome job by slashing the couple's necks. A suspect, Spanish national Antonio Juan Curado, was arrested but subsequently released for lack of evidence. Case unsolved (Sipin 1994:4).

It seems Sipin has not checked his sources. Another problem is that he does not clearly identify Nenita Westhof's relationship with Antonio Curado. As the Women's Coalition Against Family Violence (1994:125) argues '... failure to name the relationship between the killer and the dead woman denies the reality of domestic murder'.

While in the Philippines researching for this study, I interviewed Rina Jimenez-David, a feminist journalist from the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Rina then interviewed me about my research. She wrote the article 'The Killings Go On' (Jimenez-David 2000a:7) which sensitively portrays Nenita Westhof and Rosalina Canonizado. Rina eloquently tells Nenita's story and its misrepresentation in the Australian media:

The portrait [reporters] portrayed of Nenita—of a fun-loving, party-throwing woman who had separated from her husband and was already living in with another man—only reinforced the prejudices many Australians held against Filipinas. But when Nikki [sic] talked to ... friends of Nenita, she found an entirely different reality. The 'parties' ... were actually 'solidarity' affairs for other newly arrived migrants ... the regular gatherings [Nenita] held in her apartment was her way of easing their entry into Australian life ... (Jimenez-David 2000a:7).

Jimenez-David's article is an excellent example of how journalists can bring forth women's voices. It also highlights the way activists and media can work together to expose racist and sexist images of Filipino women and violence.

Nenita Westhof's Story: Interviews with Friends

The Australian media portrayal of Nenita Westhof as a loose woman, 'a butterfly', worked to discredit her and render invisible many aspects of her life. Father Wally reveals a different reality. Nenita was an active member of his parish and played a vital role as a leader in the Filipino community and in the wider migrant community:

She could be an incredibly generous sort of person and a person who was community-minded ... [S]he played an important role in the West End community ... and the West End church was then only a very small church community ... But she played a significant enough role in that place as well. And then in the Filipino community, she seemed to play a significant role there (Father Wally July 1999).

Nenita Westhof's community spirit included holding regular gatherings in her apartment. Her parties were multicultural solidarity affairs which helped ease newly arrived Filipinos and other migrants into life in Australia. Father Wally and another parish priest were usually in attendance. Nenita truly was a unifying force in the West End community. She brought together people from many different ethnic backgrounds and actively promoted multiculturalism, as Father Wally made clear:

[Nenita] and May ... use to put on these incredible parties ... The last one I remember going to there were probably a hundred people there of all nationalities and people would donate the food for Nenita and May to cook and Nenita was a really good cook ... I remember one of those parties, probably the last one before she died ... And I was just amazed about the people who turned up. And Noel and I went down and we were actually trying to identify all the different nationalities that were there ... (July 1999).

Discussing their parties, May spoke of Nenita's great passion for life. Nenita's life revolved around her daughter, Amanda, and her extensive network of friends:

[W]e lived together for so long, and every occasion we always have a party which Father Wally is always there ... In West End ... [a] lot of ethnic groups there. So she

got a lot of Vietnamese friends, Filipino friends and ... Thailand friends ... She goes to any functions. Like barrio fiestas ... Greek Festival. Any festival she goes ... And I think that's it ... She just want to be talking to a lot of good people ... She's happy with her little girl, she's happy with her life. Cause she got so much friends and people around her (May August 1999).

Furthermore, Nenita Westhof did voluntary work at the local Migrant Resource Centre. She used her own experience of domestic violence to support other migrant women in crisis. Lola indicates the pivotal role Nenita played:

Everytime I had a function, and I had a migrant women's support group within the MRC, she always came ... She just relished the role of somebody who gives support to women perhaps in similar situation as she was. Not necessarily domestic violence—being isolated, newly arrived ... Nenita just lapped it all up, whether as participant, whether as one of my main pillars. I'd say 'Nenita I need some women to come to this function' and she would get them all. It became sort of a reverse role for us ... She somehow gathered together isolated, lonely women of different ages, different backgrounds ... And, gee, when she passed away everyone just missed her (July 1999).

Nenita established a family amongst the women she helped while looking out for their wellbeing.

Another major issue to arise from the interviews was the way the *Telegraph* and *Courier Mail* journalists had sensationalised and misrepresented Elsa Kettunen's comments about Nenita Westhof. Her statements were (re)presented to construct Nenita in accordance with dominant stereotypes of Filipino women. Elsa was Nenita's good friend and neighbour. She was understandably in deep shock at the time of the interviews and it was felt the press had taken advantage of her vulnerable emotional state. After her interview, Elsa was marginalised within the local Filipino community, as Peter and May explain:

Peter: ... [S]omebody rang May and just screamed that she was going to ... kill Elsa ... May said '... in the paper, it says [Nenita] was like a butterfly'. And what Elsa was referring to was she'd be at the Migrant Resource Centre, then she'd be back at the church doing something, back home, then shooting somewhere else. But in Filipino translation that meant she was a prostitute. So it was taken out of context ... And then [Elsa] copped a lot of abuse for that.

NS: And when was she actually interviewed by the media?

Peter: I think it was ... the next day ... [She was so distressed because it happened right underneath her ... She heard no screams, she heard nothing (August 1999).

May: Oh, a lot of people [were] ringing [Elsa]. A lot of people abusing her, 'why did you say she's a butterfly? She's not a butterfly'. But Elsa was saying, 'I didn't tell she's like that. What I was trying to tell them she is a happy go lucky girl' (August 1999).

The media portrayal of Nenita Westhof divided the Brisbane Filipino community. Father Wally invested an enormous amount of energy in repairing damaged social relations within the community and beyond. He discussed his efforts to heal and reconcile community members and, in particular, to mend Elsa's isolation:

I did a little bit of fence mending there and a bit of mediation work ... to allow people to grieve and at the same time not to blow the ... community apart in their suffering. And that was a strong possibility because of the media stuff. That was very, very much an issue for some in the community. And then Elsa ... was really upset about the fact that people had taken the connotation of the butterfly ... that had been put in the [paper]. And she was really upset about the repercussions that were taking place on herself. So I just saw my job then as letting her talk about this stuff, and hearing her side of the story (Father Wally July 1999).

As part of his mediation work, Father Wally and others undertook a creative project to remember Nenita Westhof as the significant person she was. While the project was a poignant way to challenge the media image of Nenita within their group, as Father Wally points out, its effectiveness was limited:

Father Wally: So one of the first meetings that we'd had of a smaller group that Margaret did and suggested and was taken up was that people actually write down their memories of Nenita and get photos together and they be kept and or given to Amanda. And there's a whole kind of healing thing with all of that project that Margaret took up. And it was very, very vital ...

NS: And that project to bring Nenita's voice into the picture would undermine the negative stereotype.

Father Wally: [Yes] within the community but it doesn't get front page in the papers. So that stereotype on a societal level is not redressed (July 1999).

Despite Father Wally's hard work to mitigate the consequences of the media portrayals, he was very aware that their long-term effects remained:

But I suppose you are left with the residual thing that, well, here's a young woman who has been publicly vilified and basically she has no recourse to natural justice at all ... And then like the wider Australia community, the male community, also has the stereotype reinforced once again which doesn't help [Filipino women], and it doesn't help the many, many Filipino women who are still coming out here (July 1999).

There was a strong perception amongst Nenita Westhof's friends that Nenita's story could not be told because, aside from Elsa Kettunen who was misquoted, reporters did not interview those who knew her really well. Both Peter and Father Wally made it clear that this was a major flaw in the media reports of Nenita's murder:

Probably the detectives told them what they needed to know but nobody came and talked to us ... They never even talked to Father Wally. But the people who knew her, nobody bothered talking to us. So where they got their story from, I don't know. So they couldn't have portrayed Nenita as Nenita was ... Well, commonsense is that you talk to the people who were with her ... Then they'd be able to understand Nenita a bit better and then write accordingly. Going half-cocked you only get half a story (Peter August 1999).

They could have gone to the Filipino Welfare Association. Or they could have gone to Filipino community leaders, like Lola and whoever else was around at that time. But they didn't ... so that whole side doesn't get mentioned at all. Nenita's life doesn't get mentioned at all ... Nobody's being asked, or if Elsa was asked, they don't print up everything she said ... Elsa probably said lots and lots and lots of things and giving her a better coverage of that rather than the butterfly stuff (Father Wally July 1999).

A significant part of Nenita Westhof's story was the violence she experienced at the hands of both Jimmy Westhof and Antonio Curado. Lola described the emotional and financial abuse Nenita suffered in her marital relationship:

I remember her story ... that he was very stingy even when they were shopping. Cause I always gave this as an example of financial abuse and emotional abuse. They were shopping and she would put something she liked in the trolley and he would put it back. He was always scolding her, 'you don't need that'. If I remember right, he didn't want her to buy food of her choice. It was always his choice (July 1999).

The Australian articles stressed Nenita's separation from Jimmy. Yet, no mention was made of the abuse she experienced in her marriage, which was certainly a factor in her decision to leave. Regarding Nenita's relationship with Antonio Curado, Father Wally said Curado was possessive, tried to control Nenita, and was jealous of her male friends:

See he turned up at the presbytery one day telling me ... what I had to do with regards to Nenita and what to do with Jimmy which didn't go over very well at all ... And it seemed to me that he was ... fixated or something on Nenita. And that he wanted to possess her. I mean she was a very beautiful looking young woman ... And that he was very jealous of us probably. But I met him a couple of times and each occasion, he was

'you will do this and you will do that' ... And he pushed and he pushed. Yes, so I met him a couple of times. I wasn't impressed with him.

NS: Do you know if there was any violence in their relationship?

Only that kind of violence. I am sure that if he was doing that with me, he was doing that with her, yes (July 1999).

Reynolds' (1988:10) coverage of Antonio Curado's sentencing for murder failed to establish the history of domestic violence that preceded Nenita Westhof's death. Curado's killing could thus be portrayed as an isolated act of jealous rage, rather than a continuum of abuse. It was not Nenita's abortion, however, that led to murder but Antonio Curado's jealous possessiveness and violence.

Conclusion

Australian media portrayals of Nenita Westhof's murder bore little resemblance to her 'lived reality'. Sexist and racist stereotyping and the failure of journalists to interview Nenita's friends and account for her abuse meant her story could not be told. Nenita's case study highlights that not all media are the same. Rina Jimenez-David demonstrates how some journalists do produce insightful accounts of Filipino women and violence. The way activists and journalists can work together to contest sexist and racist images of Filipino women is illuminated. Here lies the possibility for change.

CHAPTER SEVEN

REPRESENTING GENEROSA BONGCODIN

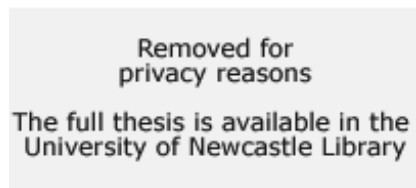


Figure 4: Generosa Bongcodin 1955-1989
Source: Philippine Issues (1989) 'A Tribute To Gene', July-September, p. 11.

Gene ... had her own means before coming here ... even before coming here she had her own business ... in fact she was a good hairdresser. Actually it was her dreams crumble ... when she came over ... dreams or expectations maybe (Sixta, activist and a friend of Gene, August 1999).

Well, what I've heard and what I think is that she's a very friendly person. She really has a lot of friends ... she's a lively person ... During the service ... there's buses full of her work-mates ... (Baby, activist and a friend of Gene, August 1999).

Generosa Bongcodin, also known as Gene, was born in 1955 in the Philippines. She came from a large, poor family. They lived in Bicol, south of Manila. Gene worked as a hairdresser in her own beauty parlour in Manila to help support her family. In 1981, Gene's friend, Sixta, introduced her to Charles Schembri in the Philippines. Schembri was born in Malta but migrated to Australia as a child. Gene Bongcodin married Charles Schembri and migrated to Australia. In 1983, she gave birth to their child, Glenys. Gene left the marital relationship several times because of Schembri's physical and emotional abuse. The final separation occurred when Glenys was twenty-one months old. Charles Schembri was granted custody of their child and the couple divorced in 1984. On 9 July 1989, Schembri strangled Gene Bongcodin to death when she visited his residence in Newport, Victoria, for an access visit with Glenys. Gene was thirty-four. Glenys was six years old when her mother was killed. Schembri's mother cared for Glenys while her father was in prison. Schembri's lawyers argued provocation and he pleaded guilty to the lesser charge of manslaughter. In Melbourne's Supreme Court on 9 July 1990, Justice Vincent sentenced Charles Schembri to eight years imprisonment to serve a minimum of five and half years (CPCA 2002:4). He was released on 11 July 1993.

Gene Bongcodin's case study analyses media representations of her life and death in several Australian and Philippine newspaper articles and reinstates her voice through interviews with two Filipino women, Sixta and Baby. Sixta and Gene were friends in the Philippines and Australia. At Charles Schembri's trial, Sixta stood as a character witness to refute his portrayal of Gene. Baby became familiar with Gene's situation through the mutual friends they shared. She was involved in the Justice For Gene campaign. I also draw on the excellent analyses of Gene Bongcodin's homicide in Women's Coalition Against Family Violence (1994) and Cunneen and Stubbs (1997).

Media Representations

Before analysing the articles about Gene Bongcodin's death, it is important to show how Gene and Charles Schembri were constructed during the trial. In reporting the case, journalists drew largely on Schembri's account and Justice Vincent's comments, which reflected the killer's story. Stereotypes of Filipino women were used to bolster Charles Schembri's assertion that Gene Bongcodin had exploited him, and the court uncritically accepted this racist and sexist explanation for his killing (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:112). The defence's stereotyping of Gene generated considerable sympathy for Schembri, as Justice Vincent's sentencing comments illustrate:

Your wife, you claim, had been more interested in securing money for her apparently impoverished family and a passport to this country than she was in the development and maintenance of a marital relationship with you. This may well be the case. In expressing myself as I have done on this aspect, I do not wish to convey any impression of disapproval or moral judgment concerning her conduct ... The desire to escape from a life of uncertainty to one of relative security and affluence would be understandable in the circumstances ... I have no reason to doubt that you tried your best to make this unlikely alliance work, but ... the barriers between you appear to have been insurmountable. You wanted to establish for yourself what might be regarded as a stereotypical relationship with your wife and family. She, it would appear, grasped at the opportunity of securing freedom in a new country (*R v Schembri* 1990:50-51).

The pathologising of Gene's behaviour shifted responsibility for her death away from Schembri. As Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:118) explain about Gene's portrayal in court:

In these cases the image of women is overladen with racialised and sexualised fantasies about Filipino women as perfect partners. The women who are murdered are recast as being complicit in their own demise when they fail to fulfil the requirements of male fantasy. A new racialised and sexualised image then emerges: Filipino women are seen as permissive and grasping 'gold diggers'. The men themselves become reconstructed as doubly victimised because they are naïve or unstable enough to believe in the possibility of fulfilling their desires through these marriages, and because they are the victims of women who are able to manipulate their desire.

As in the court reports, a central feature of the Australian media coverage of Gene Bongcodin's homicide was the racist and sexist stereotyping of her personal characteristics, behaviour and cultural practices to excuse Charles Schembri's actions. Although journalists intensely scrutinised all aspects of Gene's life, there was little

indication of his role as the aggressor in her suffering and death. In all of the articles I examined, Schembri was sympathetically portrayed as the hapless victim while Gene was recast as his victimiser. It was always his story that was given the status of truth.

The two articles leading up to Schembri's sentencing (Ross, 1990:7; Norbury, 1990:9) were relentless in their character assassination of Gene Bongcodin. Like other Filipina migrants to Australia, Gene was portrayed as an exotic, predatory and promiscuous woman who used her beauty and sexuality to get what she wanted from an 'unsuspecting' Australian man. Ross' (1990:7) article, 'Man Strangled 'Dream Bride'', appeared in the *Sun* on 4 July 1990. It included a photograph of Gene with the caption, 'Filipino bride Generosa Bongcodin ... killed after her whirlwind Australian marriage went wrong' (Ross 1990:7). He simply regurgitated the court story:

A NEWPORT man's television-inspired dream of finding love with a beautiful Filipino bride ended in tragedy ... The court was told Charles Schembri's whirlwind marriage in the Philippines turned to disaster because he believed his wife had used him to get an Australian passport ... [T]he four mates who went looking for love were impressed by the 'submissive character and virtue' of Filipino women, believing they were ideal brides, devoted to their husbands and children ... Mr Parsons said his client left Australia with \$6000, but was expected to spend money on Generosa's extended family. He arrived home with just \$12. Schembri was 'besotted' with his bride, but after five months of happiness, things began to go wrong. 'His wife was 25 and her happiness was found in discos and what could be described as life in the fast lane ... A big night for him was hiring a video, but she was more interested in parties and night life.' The couple had a daughter, Glenys ... but two years later Generosa left Schembri saying she had found another man. His beloved 'Gene' took everything, leaving him with 'Glenys and a fridge' ... [H]is client became increasingly worried ... that his ex-wife was seeing men while Glenys was visiting (Ross 1990:7).

Later that week in his *Sunday Age* article, "'Dream Marriage' Ends in Death: A Romance Made in the Philippines Led to Tragedy', Norbury (1990:9) restated the same themes with a few additions. Photographs of Gene and Charles Schembri are included. Although they were divorced, the caption reads: 'Filipino bride: Generosa Bongcodin, 25, and her husband, Charles Schembri; a whirlwind courtship followed by unhappiness, bitterness and death' (Norbury 1990:9). Norbury (1990:9) wrote:

He was captivated by a [news] report ... on marriages between Australians and attractive Filipino women ... Within three weeks the four were on their way to the Philippines, where Schembri found the happiness he so desperately sought ... Gene ... was a dark-haired Filipino beauty ... [H]e told his young bride as much as he could about Australia ... [Gene] was ... looking forward to a new land without wars, institutionalised corruption and an uncertain future ... [T]he cultural and age differences had begun to show and the marriage was in trouble. As Schembri's counsel was to tell Mr Justice Vincent ... her happiness was found in discos and 'life in the fast lane'. 'A big night for him was hiring a video, but she was more interested in parties and night life.' Schembri told friends that his wife started 'demanding things': electrical goods, a car ... She got a job, but instead of saving the money ... she sent it back to her family in the Philippines. When Glennys was 21-months-old, Gene left Schembri [for] another man ... Schembri won custody of Glennys ... He told friends his daughter ... had seen her mummy and another man on the floor ... [H]e again asked her about the men she was having stay at her house and accused her of using him to obtain an Australian passport. Schembri said Gene replied: 'Yeah, that's right'.

Ross and Norbury represent Gene Bongcodin as a mail order bride through their constant use of the terms 'Filipino bride' and 'dream bride'. Their articles state that Charles Schembri met Gene Bongcodin during a trip to the Philippines, and he killed her five years after their marriage ended in divorce. Yet, such details are irrelevant as they fit the case into a mail order bride framework. Both articles juxtapose Schembri's search for love with Gene's 'abuse' of his love. This is played out as desire, Schembri's dreams of an exotic 'darkhaired Filipino beauty' and subservient wife, and fear, the reality that Gene refused to be the woman of his dreams. Gene is constructed as a '*dangerous woman*'—she used Schembri as a passport to escape poverty in the Philippines for a better life in Australia. Gene's action in sending money to her family in the Philippines is seen as part of her danger. Her 'life in the fast lane', 'sexual immorality' with other men and 'abandonment' of her husband and child constitute Gene as an 'imperfect partner' as well as an 'unfit' mother. While Schembri is Gene's victim, he is also portrayed as her 'saviour', rescuing her from poverty and corruption.

In contrast, Innes' (1990:7) article on Charles Schembri's sentencing opens with a sympathetic portrayal of Gene Bongcodin. Titled 'Women Protest at Eight-Year Manslaughter Sentence', it appeared in the *Age* on 10 July 1990. Gene's death is

situated in terms of Schembri's domestic violence and the inaccuracy of her portrayal in articles such as those of Ross and Norbury is highlighted:

The protestors' spokeswoman, Mrs Melba Marginson, said ... I have been told domestic violence is always reduced to manslaughter—if this continues, husbands will kill their wives ... Mrs Marginson said she was disgusted by some media reports of the case, and the implication that Ms Bongcodin was 'cheap' and had used her husband as a passport to Australia. She said Ms Bongcodin had loved her husband and was as disappointed as he was when their marriage failed (Innes 1990:7).

From the next sentence, the tone of the article changes dramatically as Innes (1990:7) restates Justice Vincent's sentencing comments:

[Mr Justice Vincent] said, problems arose fairly quickly because Schembri's wife was more interested in helping her impoverished family to get to Australia than in maintaining the marriage ... her desire to escape from a life of uncertainty to one of relative security and affluence was understandable. 'I have no reason to doubt that you (Schembri) tried your best to make this unlikely alliance work ... but the barriers between you appear to be insurmountable', Mr Justice Vincent said.

In the end, Innes does not tell Gene's story. Her article perpetuates the stock standard stereotype of a grasping and manipulative Filipino woman.

The Philippine articles (Robles 1991:10-11; Orozco 1991:5; Seneviratne 1991:5) offer a sympathetic perspective on Gene Bongcodin. Gene is portrayed as a *woman in danger* and Schembri is her abuser. Robles and Orozco, in particular, tell Gene's story. They call into question key aspects of Schembri's account as it appeared in the Australian press and provide information most Australian journalists failed to mention.

In the *Manila Chronicle* on 3 February 1991, Robles' (1991:10) article, 'Failed Fairytales: The Filipina Tragedy in Australia', describes Gene Bongcodin's marriage as a 'fairy tale' gone wrong because of her husband's abusive behaviour:

The marriage of Charlie Schembri and Gene Bongcodin started like a fairy tale ... It seemed that Gene had found her prince ... with whom she would live happily ever after. Her friends said she tried to be a loving, loyal wife, even though life turned out to be less of a paradise ... The fairy tale became darker when he started beating her. She left him thrice ... Nobody knows if he was telling the truth. Gene couldn't give her side of the argument. Schembri killed her. Enraged by her shouting and slapping, so he told the police, he took the former woman of his dreams and strangled her ... [Schembri] thought Gene Bongcodin was a housewife who would dully do everything he wanted.

Robles' notion of 'failed fairytale marriage' contrasts markedly with Ross and Norbury's terms 'failed dream bride' and 'failed dream marriage', both negative images of Gene from Schembri's perspective. Robles contests the Australian portrayal of Gene as a woman who used her husband as a passport to Australia. He frames her desire for a better life through marriage in terms of a discourse of personal sacrifice and suffering:

Marginson thinks that 'there is more to Gene being a victim of domestic violence and injustice in Australia ... she represents the Filipinas who were forced by the unjust social and economic structures in our country to seek what they thought was a better life abroad' ... In a way, the Filipinas going to Australia are making a sacrifice. According to Marginson, '*wala naman pinagkaiba yung bride sa domestic helper na lumabas ng bansa para makatulong sa pamilya nila*' [there is no difference between those brides and domestic helpers who leave the country to help their family] (Robles 1991:10).

In her *Manila Times* article, 'Trouble Down Under: Battered, Abused Filipinas Fight Back', Orozco (1991:5) describes Charles Schembri as an unstable criminal. Unlike the Australian articles I examined, her focus is on Schembri's violence and the racist and sexist treatment of Filipino women in the Australian legal system:

Gene ... sought divorce from ... Schembri, an unstable man with a criminal record. She did not move for custody of her daughter because he had threatened to kill her if she did ... [T]he judge found him guilty only of manslaughter ... The lighter verdict was apparently influenced by Gene having been painted by Charles Schembri as a loose woman, who 'used him as a passport to Australia, and who was not morally fit to be a mother to their child' ... Marginson and 30 other Filipino demonstrators carried banners and placards to denounce the decision and the Australian legal system (Orozco 1991:5).

The cartoon accompanying Orozco's article (Figure 5) symbolises the struggle of militant Filipino women united in solidarity against the abuse of their *kababayan*, (fellow country women) like Gene Bongcodin.



Figure 5: Orozco, W. (1991) 'Trouble Down Under: Battered, Abused Filipinas Fight Back', Manila Times, 13 April, p. 5.

Although dealing with the issue sympathetically, Seneviratne's (1991:5) *Manila Times* article, published on 27 July 1991, unfortunately suggests that Gene Bongcodin and other Filipino women who experienced violence in Australia were 'mail order brides'. This is presaged in the headline 'Australia: Lax Immigration Laws Seal Fate of Filipino Mail Order Brides' and emphasised in the first few paragraphs:

The recent murder of two young Filipinas married to Australians has prompted moves to change Australian immigration rules to protect Filipino women who come to Australia as mail order brides ... Charles Schembri, a 41-year-old unemployed truck driver with a criminal record from Melbourne, was sentenced to eight years in jail for the murder of his wife [sic], Generosa ... (Seneviratne 1991:5).

The accompanying cartoon (Figure 6) of a 'foreign' man lecherously trying to embrace a young Filipina shaking in fear in a newly opened box further supports the stereotype. The article itself states Gene Bongcodin and Charles Schembri met in the Philippines. By remaining within mail order bride discourse, Seneviratne's article in some respects coincides with the Australian articles I examined such as those by Ross (1990:7), Norbury (1990:9) and Innes (1990:7).

Removed for
copyright reasons
The full thesis is available in the
University of Newcastle Library

Figure 6: Seneviratne, K. (1991) 'Australia: Lax Immigration Laws Seal Fate of Filipino Mail Order Brides', Manila Times, 27 July, p. 5.

Generosa Bongcodin's Story: Interviews with Friends

Australian journalists made much of Gene expecting more from Charles Schembri: she expected to spend 'his money' on her family; she 'demanded' material things. Gene did expect more, although not in the sense Schembri claimed. In his desire to impress Gene while in the Philippines, Schembri, like many other ethnocentric non-Filipino men, boasted about his own perceived cultural and financial superiority. Sixta gives details:

[W]hen Gene first arrived she was a bit disappointed because when these men go to the Philippines, they try to build ... a big picture. And they even look down on [Filipino people] ... They will even say 'oh, what kind of person do you have here? They're all *bugok* [useless, dumb or idiot]' ... so, we imagine that they have flashy cars here [in Australia]. But when she arrived, his car was a bomb. And didn't have his own place ... they first lived in a caravan ... Gene was at first surprised ... because ... the way they talk, you would expect more ... but of course she'd make do with that (August 1999).

Gene Bongcodin's friends and supporters were appalled at how the court and Australian media privileged Schembri's story of her as a 'gold-digger' who used him as a passport to Australia. According to Sixta, Gene genuinely loved her husband and had hoped for a good marriage. She was a self-sufficient person who had worked hard to support her family in the Philippines. She planned to use her hairdressing skills to make

a better life for herself and her new husband in Australia. Sixta was highly critical of the media silence on these aspects of Gene's life:

They could have said that it was because of her attraction to Charlie that she came. It's also as if saying that she would have married just anyone ... So what they were really trying to portray was just, she came here ... and used Charlie to have a better life ... [S]he had her own business in the Philippines before coming here. She was a hairdresser supporting the family ... [W]e were angry that they make a very bad, bad image of Filipinas ... that we are all mail order brides. And we have no other way of ... making a living but marry an Australian ... [A]ctually Charlie used her ... [Men] like Charlie who got wives for their own use, to have servants to serve them (August 1999).

Gene's desire for a better life with Charles Schembri was linked to her social obligation to help support her family back in the Philippines. From the outset, she made clear to Schembri her intention of continuing this family support:

And with having fallen in love with the guy, so she really thought she'd have a happy life ... even Charles and the other guy were saying that hairdressers ... make good money in Australia. So she thought that when she comes here she'd be able to make use of her qualifications and earn money. And then be able to help her family, and then raise her own family here (Sixta August 1999).

In the court and Australian media, Gene Bongcodin's selfless generosity towards her family in the Philippines was recast as an abuse of Charles Schembri. Schembri constructed himself as a victim of Gene's greed. Most journalists refused to say that Gene worked two jobs so she could earn the extra money to send 'back home':

She was working also ... She ... sews ... Seamstress ... she does that regularly and then on the sideline [on] weekends some friends will come to have a haircut. So she was not a 'lazy bitch' ... [but] working two jobs. And looking after the family. One baby and a husband (Sixta August 1999).

The absence of Gene Bongcodin's story can also be seen in the way her history of domestic violence was not established in the police investigation, at the trial, or in most of the media commentary. Violence was a large part of Gene's life with Charles Schembri. Yet, at so many points, his abuse was rendered invisible. In the initial police record of interview at the Homicide Squad Office, Schembri stated there had never been any physical violence in their relationship. Gene's friends were not interviewed to

ascertain the truth of his statement. In court, Schembri denied he had previously abused Gene and the prosecution did not challenge his denial (Women's Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:100, 108). His actions could thus be presented as '... a spontaneous ... and out of character resort to violence' (Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:97).

According to Gene's friends, Charles Schembri was violent and possessive. He used physical, verbal and emotional violence to control Gene's life during their marriage and long after their divorce. He also used their child to control her behaviour. Racism was central to Schembri's abuse. It can be seen in the way he actively sought a 'docile' Filipino woman who he expected to serve him and how he constructed Gene before and after her death. Unlike the suggestions of the Australian articles I examined, Gene's behaviour and cultural practices did not cause her death. As Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:113) contend, Charles Schembri killed Gene Bongcodin when she refused to comply with his attempts to live out a fantasised relationship with a 'perfect partner'. Sixta and Baby spoke about the violence Gene suffered:

... [in] general conversation in the group jokingly she'd say, 'oh he's like this and he talks a lot. He nags' ... I learned from the sister-in-law that even after one year of marriage Charles already grabbed her ... even before she had the baby ... Charlie was stalking her ... He was threatening her. That's why she let the baby go to him ... [H]e capitalised on the daughter to sort of spy on her (Sixta August 1999).

[T]here's quite a lot of violence in the relationship. A lot of threatening ... that's why she left the relationship ... she wasn't able to fight it to the extent that she gave the custody to the husband because that threat is just so enormous ... [T]hrough friends she mentioned those violence and her fear of what her husband's capable of doing ... There were threats involved for her not to get the child (Baby August 1999).

Schembri threatened to kill Gene and Glenys if she tried to take their child. Gene agreed to leave Glenys with Schembri because she was afraid. She had every reason to believe his threats. The Women's Coalition Against Family Violence (1994:110) points out that the court and media silence on his violence meant Gene's action could not be explained. Instead, she was portrayed as a bad mother.

Sixta and Baby felt the Australian media misrepresented both Gene's life and Schembri's role as the aggressor in her death. This deeply affected her closest friends:

They were worried of course, and scared. It's as if ... you're a loser ... that was the feeling. The way they portrayed her as if there's no fairness, no justice because it's always the man who has been disadvantaged or is cheated ... it seemed to be Charlie who has to be ... defended. It's as if he was the aggrieved party ... that was the impression ... Just like saying, that serves you right (Sixta August 1999).

The media misrepresentation of Gene provided some non-Filipino partners with more ammunition in their racist and sexist attacks against Filipino women:

Well most friends were defensive especially when they were at parties with Filipinas with their Australian husbands. Some husbands would make nasty comments [about Gene and Filipino women] in general ... But there are Filipinas who are married to broadminded men ... These Australian men were angry (Sixta August 1999).

The triple injustices of Gene Bongcodin's death, her portrayal in the court and media, and Schembri's sentencing created considerable unrest amongst Filipinos in Victoria and beyond. This groundswell of discontent was channelled into activism, such as campaigns and rallies, the strengthening of existing Filipino organisations and the creation of new ones. Sixta and Baby were active in the 'Justice for Gene Bongcodin' campaign, which was largely a mobilisation of Filipinos. Directed by Melba Marginson, the campaign protested against the light sentence Schembri received for killing Gene.

Sixta describes her activism:

And not only friends but those who heard ... we ... had rallies. So it's not only because I'm her friend but it's a general feeling of the Filipinas ... it's an insult to us ... That's how I became a member of SAMPa because we tried to look for support ... I've always been proud as a Filipina, even at work. And the more so at that time ... I wanted to show ... what Filipinas are. And then I became more active in ... SAMPa ... [I]f you talked to me before I would be crying and still I could still feel the anger (August 1999).

Baby was a driving force behind the Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development (see Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development Inc, nd).

CFED was a direct outcome of the 'Justice for Gene Bongcodin' campaign. As

Marginson notes (1992a:121-122), the involvement of CFED presented the Australian public with an image of militant and articulate Filipino women. It challenged the dominant stereotype of the 'Filipino mail order bride'. Baby provides more detail:

And [CFED] really focused on empowering women ... [U]nder SAMPA we had the SBN, it's a group of concerned Filipino women [and] some went out and then actually became the CFED. That's when the work really did happen ... I think they become more stronger and together in terms of saying ' ... this is not true. We all have different experiences. We are not agreeing that we use our partners as a passport ... It's not true that there's more divorce ... because there wasn't any commitment within the marriage'. We couldn't belong until we stand up and say that loudly that this is not on that they can just do this to us just because we are Filipinas ... Most of them would probably feel a lot stronger to voice out because they wouldn't want that to happen again to another Filipina (August 1999).

Conclusion

A marked dissonance between Gene Bongcodin's life and Australian newspaper portrayals of her death is evident. Problems of representation arose because journalists used sexist, racist and class-based stereotypes to describe Gene and explain her killer's actions. Their reliance on flawed court reports, non-recognition of her history of domestic violence, and failure to interview her friends silenced Gene's voice. The insightful accounts of the Filipino journalists, Robles and Orozco, further exemplify the Australian media's misrepresentation of Gene Bongcodin.

CHAPTER EIGHT

REPRESENTING ROSALINA CANONIZADO

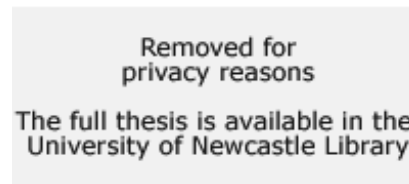


Figure 7: Rosalina Canonizado 1966-1991
Source: Family Photograph

She's a fine student ... She finished Bachelor of Commerce, major in Accounting. She's a good daughter ... She's friendly, jolly and loving ... she's got many friends. But most of the time ... she prefers to stay at home and help me ... She really likes to help us even giving something ... Because she wants to be like her older sister who help us ... to send everybody to the university (Ester, Rosalina's mother, January 2000).

My sister was a good singer ... actually, we all sing ... me, my sister and my other sister and my brother, we sing together. I miss the choir. I miss the things we use to do, the singing and the dancing and everything ... She's very talented ... [We are] a happy family (Ella, Rosalina's sister, January 2000).

Rosalina Cecilia Canonizado was born in Manila, the Philippines, on 26 August 1966.¹ She came from a middle-class family of four children. Rosalina graduated from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines with a Bachelor of Commerce degree majoring in Accounting. As a graduation gift, Rosalina's sister, Ella, gave her an airline ticket to Australia where she spent her holidays with relatives. Rosalina Canonizado met Thomas Andrew Keir at a family wedding in Sydney during February 1988. A few weeks before their meeting, Keir's wife, twenty-two year-old Jean Angela Strachan Keir, also a Filipina, had disappeared leaving behind a three-year-old son, Michael. Keir alleged Jean had run off with her lover. Coincidentally, Jean was Rosalina's second cousin, but at the time, Rosalina was unaware of their family relationship. Thomas Keir had originally migrated from England as a child with his parents. Keir pursued Rosalina, divorced Jean on the basis of his claim she had left him, and Rosalina married Keir in the Philippines in November 1989. On 13 April 1991, Rosalina Canonizado was killed in the house in Tregear, western Sydney from which Jean had allegedly disappeared. Rosalina was strangled with a lamp cord and then set on fire. She was twenty-four years old. Thomas Keir was charged with her murder. The prosecution alleged his motive was Rosalina's \$80,000 life insurance policy. On 6 April 1993, a jury found Keir not guilty of Rosalina Canonizado's murder.

In 1991, while Thomas Keir was in prison awaiting trial for Rosalina's murder, the police acting on information received, dug under the house and found fragments of human bone which were sent to the USA for DNA testing. On 17 September 1999, Thomas Keir was found guilty in the NSW Supreme Court of Jean Keir's murder (see Wall 2000:1-3; Hunt & Stubbs 1999:18). Thomas Keir was sentenced to twenty-four years imprisonment comprising a minimum term of eighteen years and an additional

¹ Rosalina's family name of Canonizado is used in this thesis out of respect for the wishes of her mother, Ester Canonizado, who does not want her daughter to be remembered in her married name of Keir.

term of six years (*Regina v Thomas Andrew Keir* 2000:11). The trial judge did not mention Rosalina Canonizado's case during Keir's sentencing. Subsequently, on 28 February 2002, the NSW Criminal Court of Appeal quashed Keir's conviction on the grounds that Justice Adams misdirected the jury regarding the DNA evidence (see *KASAMA* 2002:12). A new trial commenced in July 2002 and on 17 October 2002, Keir was again found guilty of Jean's murder. He will be sentenced on 7 March 2003.

Rosalina Canonizado's case study explores several Australian and Philippine newspaper articles about her homicide and reinstates her voice through interviews with her mother, Ester Canonizado, and sister, Ella Masigan.

Media Representations

Although there is continuity in images of Rosalina Canonizado across Australian newspapers, there is also a marked discontinuity in her portrayal over time within the same newspaper. Rosalina epitomises an inherent contradiction. She is presented as a beautiful young bride, a 'perfect marriage partner', and as a gold-digging opportunist—an object of both desire and fear.

Two particular articles about Thomas Keir's acquittal for Rosalina's murder (Macken, 1993:6; Quinn, 1993:1,8), among several others, portray their relationship as a love match and domestic bliss. On 7 April 1993, in her *Sydney Morning Herald* article, 'Jury Finds Husband Not Guilty of Murder', Macken (1993:6) stated:

Thomas Andrew Keir loved his wife, Rosalie. As neighbours who knew them said, they seemed very happy during the 18 months they were married ... In his statement to the jury, Mr Keir said: 'I loved Rosalie very much' ... 'He was her first boyfriend', Mrs Canonizado had said outside the court ... 'And for someone who is away from her family for the first time ... she would fall in love with anyone who was really nice to her'. And Mr Keir was really nice to Rosalie. As [Keir's counsel] told the jury: 'If there was any whisper of a bad relationship between Mr Keir and his wife, you would have heard it'. Of almost 50 people who gave evidence in the trial, no-one knew of any problem in their relationship.

Significantly, Rosalina Canonizado's family members were not asked to testify in court. A few days later on 11 April, the *Sunday Telegraph* ran Quinn's (1993:8) piece titled 'The Wives of Thomas Keir'. She restated the notion of the love match:

Mr Keir's mother ... describes the relationship between her son and Rosalie as 'wonderful'—a view shared by neighbours, who gave evidence at the trial that the couple seemed very happy during the 18 months they were married ... The pair seemed very much in love and spent little time apart (Quinn 1993:8).

Although Rosalina was married for nearly seventeen months, Quinn (1993:1) describes her as Thomas Keir's 'beloved bride'. Macken and Quinn presented very sympathetic accounts of Thomas Keir and gave him considerable space to tell his story. Various sources were used to bolster Keir's claim that he loved Rosalina and they were happy: neighbours, his mother and counsel. Macken (1993:6) even links the statements of Rosalina's mother and Keir and his counsel in a way that supports Keir's story.

Discourses of love match and domestic bliss are conspicuously missing from the *Daily Telegraph* report on Thomas Keir's conviction in 1999 for Jean Keir's murder. Peterson (1999a:18-19; 1999b:18) correctly portrays Keir as a violent and jealous man who brutally dominated Jean's life. In the context of Keir's violence towards Jean, he briefly mentions Keir's similar treatment of Rosalina Canonizado. When Peterson (1999b:18) refers to Rosalina, he articulates an explicitly racist discourse:

When Thomas Keir showed more than a passing interest in Rosalina Canonizado [sic] she thought he was her ticket to a better life. She came from a poor family in the Philippines while he owned a business, a house and showered her with gifts. Rosalina ignored warnings from her Sydney-based relatives that Keir totally dominated the life of his first wife.

Peterson's comments identify the behaviour and 'culture' of Rosalina Canonizado as the problem. Violence is seen as the outcome of her desire for a better life. By describing Rosalina as a 'beautiful bride' and 'petite half-Filipino girl', Peterson (1999a:18) implies she is a mail order bride. Rosalina is portrayed as a 'gold-digger' who used Tom

Keir as a passport to Australia. Gender, 'race' and class relations converge in Peterson's construction of Rosalina's 'third world' (female) opportunism and poverty and Keir's 'first world' (male) affluence. Her ascribed motive for marrying and alleged disregard of relatives' warnings about Keir's treatment of Jean, position Rosalina Canonizado as a woman who contributed to her own demise.

Rina Jimenez-David's (2000a:7; 2000b:7; 2000c:9) articles on Rosalina Canonizado stand in sharp contrast to the Australian reportage. As I mentioned previously, Rina interviewed me about my study for her column in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. After the publication of 'The Killings Go On', Ester Canonizado contacted Rina to clarify some points the article raised about Rosalina. Based on their discussions, Jimenez-David wrote a moving two-part account of Rosalina's marriage and death. 'Rosalina's Story' challenged the stereotype that Rosalina was a 'mail order bride':

Jean's and Rosalina's killings are often taken as examples of the fate that has befallen some 'mail-order brides' from the Philippines ... It was to disabuse me (and readers of this column) of this notion ... that Esther [sic] Canonizado called ... [S]he said, Rosalina was not a 'mail-order bride', or a woman who met her husband through a pen-pal agency or a marriage bureau (Jimenez-David 2000b:7).

Central was Ester's account of Keir's violence towards Rosalina:

The first signs of trouble in the marriage emerged in phone calls Rosalina made to her family some months after she arrived in Australia. 'He loves me very much', Rosalina told her mother, 'but he is very possessive. *Para akong nasasakal* (I feel suffocated). He won't even allow me to visit our relatives' (Jimenez-David 2000b:7).

The second part of Rosalina's story, 'Still Crying Out for Justice', poignantly expresses Ester's anguish over her daughter's death. Amongst those I examined for this thesis, it is one of the few articles to address the suffering of the victim's family:

Rosalina's remains came home in an urn ... But Esther [sic] insisted on placing them in a full-size casket and burying it in a gravesite at the Manila Memorial Park. 'Looking at the urn, I could feel the world closing in on me ... And if I felt this way, what more my daughter?' Burying her in a manner in which 'she could at least feel she had some room' was the least she could do for Rosalina, Esther says. But to this day, she relates, 'there is an empty space in my heart that cannot ever be filled' (Jimenez-David 2000c:9).

Rosalina Canonizado's Story: Interviews with Family

Since our interview in the Philippines, Ester and Ella have told Rosalina's story in several public places. They spoke at the 'Forum on Violent Deaths and Disappearances Amongst Filipina Migrants in Australia' in Manila on 18 February 2000 (see *KASAMA* 2000a:4-5). The forum was organised by KAKAMMPI, CPCA, and SPAN. To mark the tenth anniversary of Rosalina's death and ease her helplessness, Ester (2001:18-19) wrote a poem 'Rosalina'. It was published in *KASAMA*.

Ester and Ella contest the theme of love match which pervades the reports of Thomas Keir's acquittal for Rosalina's murder. According to her family, Rosalina did not experience Keir's 'love' as 'domestic bliss'. His jealousy and need to control her point to a history of domestic violence. Ester and Ella offer a different interpretation to the media fiction of the couple as being so much in love that they spent little time apart. Rather, Keir's jealousy and domination was a major factor in keeping them together:

Ester: Because she was not allowed to ... visit our relatives very often, she got lonely. She can't go anywhere she wants unless she's with Tom ... That's why our other relatives were saying 'oh Rosalie, we have not been seeing you so much ...

Ella: It's like she was in hiding. Because prior to her marriage, [she] had a very good relationship with our relatives there ... [S]ince she got married ... she's not allowed to go alone ...

Ester: [S]he's not free to visit them anytime she wants (January 2000).

Thomas Keir was even jealous of Rosalina's relationship with her father, Roberto, and his possessiveness extended to dictating what she could wear:

Ella: Tom ... was very possessive ... [T]here was a time when my papa ... visited them ... And my sister was wearing ... shorts ... Tom covered her legs ... maybe he thought that my father is looking at my sister's legs ... [I]n one of my relative's place that they went swimming, he doesn't want my sister to wear bathing suits. He just wants her to be in ... long shorts.

Ester: He always says, 'don't wear shorts' (January 2000).

Justice Adams' comments at Thomas Keir's sentencing for Jean Keir's murder are worth looking at here. Justice Adams notes that Keir was extremely jealous of Jean's

relationships even with male members of her own family (*Regina v Thomas Andrew Keir*, 2000:1). He added:

... the prisoner's arrogant, controlling behaviour in respect of his wife, demonstrated from time to time by his manhandling of her, his concealment of her contraceptive pills and his threats of murder, showed that he considered her as his property to be dealt with as he thought it right ... I have no doubt that he believed he had the right to violently punish his wife for not only defying but also for trying to leave him ... (*Regina v Thomas Andrew Keir* 2000:8-9).

In addition, Ester and Ella stated that Thomas Keir's drinking, gambling and smoking were significant sources of conflict in the marriage. Rosalina's arguments with Keir over his behaviour further challenge the media discourse of domestic bliss:

[M]y husband ... often sees him gargle first before he will pick up Rosalie to hide that he is already drunk. Because my daughter was really against his drinking ... [she] is always telling me 'how can I save so much when my husband is always buying liquor, cigarettes and ... I can't stop his gambling, this dog racing' (Ester January 2000).

Three days before she was killed, Rosalina called her family in Manila in a state of heightened distress about her domestic situation. Ella said:

[Rosalina] called up several times prior to her death. First she was bubbling that she was buying a car. And then the next call she was telling me 'you know this guy lost in the dog race ... \$10,000 ... I've been working hard. I want to go back. My car will be delivered soon and we don't have money ...' [T]here was a video showing that they were okay ... very sweet and that's the video that they've been showing [in court] ... [W]ill you let people know that you're fighting? ... [Y]ou just keep it to yourself when you fight (January 2000).

Rosalina's family were concerned that neither the court nor the media chose to investigate this angle in relation to her death. Rather, as Ella astutely notes, in the official reconstruction of events all traces of conflict were removed.

Peterson, the *Daily Telegraph* journalist, telephoned Ester Canonizado in the Philippines after Keir's original conviction for Jean's murder. Yet, despite evidence to the contrary, his article describes Rosalina as coming from a 'poor family' and using the affluent Thomas Keir as a 'ticket to Australia'. What Peterson refuses to say is that

Rosalina was a highly educated woman from a middle-class family of professionals who travel extensively. Ester and Ella were highly critical of the media portrayal:

[F]or the articles that came out after my sister's death that we were very poor in the Philippines, well I just can say that we're not that very poor ... we all went to college, four of us. My mother was a public school teacher ... I can speak English very well so we must have gone to a good school. And we all came from university ... My father ... used to work with Manila Gas Corporation as a senior collector ... [T]here was no deeper investigation ... on the part of the media ... [I]t just came out that she was a poor girl, helpless, and she just wanted to come to Australia to marry an Australian and live there (Ella January 2000).

Peterson's (1999b:18) image of Thomas Keir's 'first world' affluence and Rosalina Canonizado's 'third world' poverty unravels when set against Ester and Ella's comments. Rosalina was not a financial dependant. She was Thomas Keir's business partner. Rosalina provided further financial support to Keir through her work in an accounting firm. Keir was not rich. Rather, Rosalina worked hard at two jobs to make their upholstery business successful:

Ester: [Rosalina] said she has put a lot of money ... in the business so that it will be successful ... Tom ... really doesn't want her ... to work but ... they need the money because the business is just starting ... [The media] emphasised that Tom is a rich guy and he owns a big upholstery business when ... Rosalie helped, even funded him ... she even was working two jobs. She was working in Silverwater and after that she helped Tom ... in finishing the upholstery ... My husband said when he was still vacationing there, '... sometimes I pity my daughter because early in the morning she goes out, she does not even take breakfast. She just drinks milk and vitamins and go at once to her work. Then in the evening, she even helps in the shop' (January 2000).

In his article, Peterson (1999b:18) plays on the notion that Rosalina disregarded relatives' warnings about Thomas Keir's brutal treatment of his first wife, Jean, in her desire to escape the poverty of the Philippines. This became a background factor in the explanation of Rosalina's death. However, the knowledge that Jean's mother introduced Thomas Keir to Rosalina clarifies the situation. Jean's mother and aunt have stated publicly they were concerned about his 'distress' after Jean 'disappeared' so they introduced him to Rosalina to 'perk him up a bit' (see Cornwell 2000; Smith 2000). Ester and Ella comment:

Ester: She met Tom Keir when she attended the wedding ... He was introduced to her by [Jean's] mother ... [Rosalina] never met Jean ... because Jean was already gone by that time ... [Jean's] mother ... introduced Tom to her as Jean's ex-husband ... [Rosalina] doesn't really want to date Tom at first but [Jean's] mother ... was insistent on calling her ... she was even there with them when they go out on the first few dates.

Ella: ... I think they thought that ... Tom needed a companion because they do believe or maybe they were told that she really did leave him for another man. She just went away and this guy is really pining.

Ester: So they thought they are making Tom happy by getting Rosalie as his date. And after a few dates then he always go to the place where Rosalie stays. He was even very helpful to our relatives showing everything that is good. That's really what men do usually when they want to impress somebody. So after a time, Rosalie [fell] in love with him ... (January 2000).

Given Jean Keir's family were instrumental in bringing them together, Rosalina Canonizado had little reason to be concerned about Thomas Keir at that time.

Ester's comments point to a customary aspect of courting in many different cultures—couples usually try to impress each other in the early stages of their relationship. When Rosalina received a letter from Jean's family about Thomas Keir just before their wedding, their relationship was already established. It was only after they married, as is often the case with abusive men, that his violence came to the fore. The perceived reason for the letter and the fact that Jean's family had initiated the meeting between Rosalina and Keir also worked to dampen concern. Ella explains:

When there was already a schedule for the wedding, I remember the mother of Jean ... sent a letter to Rosalie because she was mad at Tom. But ... she and another aunty introduced him to her. And when this Tom went back to Australia to get the [certificate of no] legal impediment [so he could marry Rosalina] ... Jean's mother and Tom's mother had a fight over Jean's son ... Michael ... Then she started warning Rosalie 'oh you see, that guy is like that ... And he was very much in love with my daughter'. After all that had happened, she introduced them ... that letter is so hard to accept cause ... there was no mentioning of Jean before (January 2000).

Rosalina Canonizado did not recklessly ignore warnings from relatives. At the time of her marriage, it is understandable she did not realise the danger Keir posed to her safety.

Ester and Ella made it clear that Australian journalists could not accurately portray Rosalina as they did not interview family members about her. Instead, they privileged Thomas Keir's account and misrepresented Rosalina as a mail order bride:

Ella: Accuracy, definitely none, cause we were never asked to say something about her. And only the side of Tom was given ... The problem was they did not focus how was she as a person. That she was ... a graduate in a premier university was never mentioned ... [T]he side that was reported was from the other party to ... generalise Filipinas who come to Australia as mail order brides. They did not access information from us ... [T]hey didn't find out if what they wrote was true ... If the other side says '... these are not poor families' at least they had checked it out.

Ester: ...They did not tell the truth about Rosalina's purpose in coming to Australia. And they just assume that she got there because she wanted to marry an Australian and make him as a stepping stone to get to Australia (January 2000).

Conclusion

Australian journalists rendered the context of Rosalina Canonizado's life and death invisible by constructing her as a mail order bride, privileging Thomas Keir's account of their relationship and, in most instances, obscuring the history of violence she suffered at his hands. Rosalina's story could not be told as those who knew her well were not interviewed. Rina Jimenez-David, again, shows us how insightful journalists do bring women's stories of violence to life.

CHAPTER NINE

REPRESENTING MARYLOU ORTON

Removed for
privacy reasons

The full thesis is available in the
University of Newcastle Library

Figure 8: Marylou Orton 1959-1992
*Source: Morrell, S. (1992) 'Victim in
Wrong Place', Herald-Sun, 17 March, p. 7.*

[S]he was just wanting ... genuine happiness. You should see ... how beautiful her face is. That smile it's always there ... [S]he was involved in our organisation [CFED], and she wanted to do something really good for other women ... [S]he was always ... wanting to give the best to Jomar and the other son (Melba, activist and a friend of Marylou, August 1999).

[S]he was ... very full of life and very dynamic and always wanted to be with people. When we were doing acting ... for the Fiesta, she related with everyone no matter what their age. Even it's someone who was very much younger than her ... She was really open to everybody. And I felt like that was the kind of life she wanted to lead that she always wanted to be happy and be active ... (Inday, activist and a friend of Marylou, August 1999).

Marylou Orton was born in Cebu City, the Philippines, in 1959. She studied engineering at Cebu University but was forced to abandon her studies when her father died (Marginson 1992c:13). Marylou had her first child, Jomar, when she was nineteen. She met John Orton, an Australian engineer, when he stopped over in the Philippines in 1979. They married there on 7 March 1980, settled in Papua New Guinea, and eventually moved to Melbourne in 1981. They divorced in 1989. In the late 1980s, Marylou formed a defacto relationship and gave birth to her second child, James, in 1990. After the birth of James, Marylou quit her job as a computer operator. When her relationship with James' father ended, she struggled to support her children on a sole parent benefit (Marginson 1992b). Financial pressures led Marylou to seek work at a Fitzroy massage parlour on 10 March 1992. Marylou Orton was stabbed to death at the parlour a few days later on 13 March 1992. Kim Wa Li, the owner's brother, was also killed. No one has been charged with their homicides. Police stated it was most likely a standover killing and that Marylou was 'in the wrong place at the wrong time' (see Marginson 1992b). At the time of her death, Marylou Orton was thirty-three years old. Her sons, Jomar and James, were fourteen years and twenty months respectively. They were separated and raised by their respective fathers.

Marylou Orton's case study explores images of her life and death in four Australian articles and reinstates her voice through interviews with friends and fellow activists, Melba and Inday. Melba and Inday were founders of the CPCA and CFED. I was unable to find any Philippine articles about Marylou.

Media Representations

My analysis of images of Marylou Orton's death will largely focus on Kennedy's (1992:31) article as it caused the most pain and outrage amongst her family and friends.

On 17 March 1992, a few days after the bodies of Marylou Orton and Kim Wa Li were discovered, Melbourne newspapers began making sense of their killings. The central focus of the *Melbourne Leader* was whether the massage parlor was used for prostitution. In 'Police Probe 'Death' Site', Martinkus (1992:1, 3) wrote:

The Vice Squad and Fitzroy Council yesterday confirmed that a Chinese massage centre ... was under investigation last year ... Mary-Lou [sic] Orton, 33, and Kim Li Wa, 24, were found murdered at the premises ... Fitzroy Council town planner, Mr Ron Krieger ... said when a town planning officer inspected the premises late last year, there was no proof it was being used for any purposes other than Chinese massage ... According to Homicide Squad Sen-Constable Sol Soloman, the Vice Squad investigation turned up nothing and failed to prove the premises were used as a brothel.

Unlike some of the later reports, her article suggests Marylou was not a prostitute.

A major feature of the earlier newspaper reports of Marylou Orton's death (Morrell 1992:7; Reddy 1992:9) was her construction as both a victim of circumstance and a mother. In the *Herald-Sun* on 17 March 1992, Morrell (1992:7) presents this view of Marylou in her title, 'Victim in Wrong Place', and opening lines:

The mother-of-two killed in a double murder at a Fitzroy massage centre at the weekend had been working there for only four days ... Police sources said it appeared Mrs Orton was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Friends are caring for her sons, aged 13 and 18 months.

On 22 March 1992, Reddy's (1992:9) *Sunday Age* article, 'Poverty Paves Way to Underworld', sympathetically develops these themes of victim of circumstance and mother. Here, Marylou struggles to give her children a good life at great cost to herself:

It is difficult to say when Mary Lou [sic] Orton's life began to unravel ... Friends say she was a victim of the recession, a woman propelled by poverty into a sordid underworld to support her two young children ... She returned to work ... after maternity leave but quit two months later because she was concerned about leaving her infant son ... in childcare. It was then that her real problems began. According to the Centre for Philippine Concerns, Mary Lou supported herself and two children on a sole parent benefit of \$470 a fortnight ... The bills began to mount and her rent payments started to fall behind (Reddy 1992:9).

Reddy also notes Marylou's political activism as a founding member of the CFED. She draws out the complexity of Marylou's life in the years leading up to her death.

Unlike many of the Australian articles examined for this study, Reddy identifies the domestic violence Marylou suffered before her death. Marylou's abusive male partners, however, were not suspects in her killing. While Reddy (1992:9) does indicate problems in Marylou and John Orton's relationship, regrettably Marylou's behaviour appears more of a problem than the behaviour of her ex-husband:

The marriage was under increasing pressure from his frequent absences with work, his sometimes excessive drinking, and her passion for night life. She liked to say she would settle down and become a more dutiful wife as she matured.

Reddy (1992:9) draws on Melba Marginson's comments to clearly establish Marylou's abuse at the hands of James' father while emphasising her identity as a good mother:

'There was a new man in her life and she was very happy ... She got pregnant and ... she was delighted ... Then after two or three months, I got a call at 5am from her' said Ms Marginson. 'She was crying. She said she had become a victim of domestic violence. I went over to see her. She had a big black eye and a lot of bruises ...' Despite the violence, Mary Lou persisted with the relationship. 'She always thought it was in the best interest of her child to stay with the father', said Ms Marginson.

In contrast, Kennedy's (1992:31) article in the *Sunday Herald-Sun* on 12 April 1992 constructs a sexist and racist image of Marylou Orton. Her sensationalist title, 'Bright Lights Death Lure: Mary Lou Loved Bars and Gambling But Her Luck Ran Out', presages the article's lurid details. Marylou is portrayed as a *dangerous woman* who used her beauty and sexuality to manipulate men:

Mary Lou Orton liked to live life dangerously. She was vivacious, glamorous and was never short of boyfriends ... Like a moth attracted to a flame, Mary Lou could not resist the bright lights. Nightclubs and bars were her scene. But Mary Lou's life in the fast lane came to an abrupt and bloody end. The 31-year-old Filipina died, stabbed and handcuffed in a Fitzroy massage parlor ... 'Mary Lou wasn't a prostitute. She was a beautiful girl who loved the night life', said a close friend ... Mary Lou was petite and stunning. Men were dazzled by her and she accepted their admiration and gifts. 'She always had at least four men in her life', a friend said. 'They could not resist her.' There seemed to have been two sides to Mary Lou. Friends described her as 'sweet' and 'lovely' while others accused her of bleeding men dry, taking men's love and gifts and then dumping them ... Jomar's 'Uncle Joe' said: 'Mary Lou was a lady of leisure who bled men dry. People keep saying she was a victim. She was not a victim' (Kennedy 1992:31).

Both fear and desire are present in Kennedy's portrayal of Marylou. She is an erotic sex object as well as a predatory 'gold-digger' (see also Cunneen & Stubbs 1997:106-107).

Marylou's constitution as a 'bad woman' downplayed her political activism:

Mary Lou [sic] worked briefly as a computer operator with a Melbourne export company and, *equally briefly*, involved herself with the Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development ... But Mary Lou [sic] *did not stay in politics. The bright lights beckoned* and she started staying out all night, and getting into big mahjong games (Kennedy 1992:31) [emphasis added].

As Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:75) observe, these stereotypes positioned Marylou Orton as complicit in her death. Marylou is again cast as the cause of her own demise when Kennedy (1992:31) states '... it was gambling—with her life, the people with whom she associated and with money—that killed Mary Lou'. Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:106) point out there was no suspect in Marylou's case and, thus, no necessary connection between her death and 'lifestyle'. Kennedy did not develop her statement that there were '... two sides to Mary Lou'. Instead, she produced a one-dimensional account.

Marylou is represented as a bad mother as well as a bad woman. After stating that her children will live apart as they have different fathers, Kennedy highlights Marylou's 'irresponsibility' as a mother. There is a suggestion that Marylou's 'loose lifestyle' continues to affect her children even after death:

When Mary Lou [sic] and her friends played mahjong, young Jomar did his homework and studied ... Detective Senior Sergeant Paul Sheridan ... described Jomar as '... a remarkable product of this environment with a couple of fathers he hasn't seen much of and living with the women ... At Mary Lou's [sic] wake, there he was, with his mother dead, his little brother beside him, with very little emotional support—and the women playing mahjong in the room' ... But the women said they were playing to raise money to help Mary Lou's [sic] mother ... *And also, Mary Lou would have wanted them to play* (Kennedy 1992:31) [emphasis added].

To lend authority to her portrayal of Marylou as a bad mother and woman, Kennedy (1992:31) uses Jomar's alleged words to pass judgement on his mother:

Jomar told one of Mary Lou's [sic] old boyfriends who telephoned from America just before she died: 'I am getting very worried about my mother. She needs to grow up'.

Although knowledge about John Orton's heavy drinking was already in the public domain, Kennedy does not refer to it. Instead, she scrutinises Marylou's behaviour as the cause of the marriage break-up:

Mary Lou was entranced by the bright lights, the clubs and the bars. The marriage was rocky. She was moving with a fast crowd. Orton's friends claimed she was using drugs (Kennedy 1992:31).

Turning her attention to Marylou's relationship with the father of James, Kennedy again fails to mention Marylou's abuse, although Reddy had written about it. In her sympathetic portrayal of Raymond Henry, Kennedy (1992:31) demonises Marylou:

Mr Henry worked two jobs, as a retail manager by day and stacking supermarket shelves at night, to support Mary Lou, his son James and Jomar. Mary Lou disliked housework so Mr Henry also did the washing, ironing, cooking and taking care of the children. He almost had a physical breakdown—and as fast as he made money at his two jobs, Mary Lou lost it on the mahjong table. 'Raymond really attended to Mary Lou,' said Ms Marginson. 'But Mary Lou's life was very complicated. Raymond became an incidental accessory to the way she ran her life.'

Marylou Orton's Story: Interviews with Friends

Like many women, Marylou Orton had dreams of a better life in Australia for herself, her sons, and other Filipino women. Inday spoke about Marylou's struggle to improve her personal circumstances. Concern for the well-being of her sons and family back in the Philippines figured largely in this struggle:

To her it was important that she was successful, and she was very proud of the fact that she was working in a big office ... not only did she talk about her job, but she wanted to take up more studies ... things that would equip her so that she can get promoted ... [T]he kind of life she wanted was to be able to live comfortably while she can well provide for her family in the Philippines and be able to live happily here. Have a nice house ... really afford to look after her children and have a good status as in career-wise ... She was very conscientious. She was very ambitious. It's like she didn't stop at where she was at. She was always trying to improve herself ... (Inday August 1999).

Melba discussed Marylou Orton's political activism, particularly her concern to support Filipino women in crisis. Marylou developed a strong interest in Filipino women's

issues and joined community protests over the homicide of Gene Bongcodin and her portrayal in the media. She was also one of the founders of CFED:

I came to know Marylou Orton in ... SAMPA ... a mixed Filipino men and women's organisation ... and the first activity that we had was ... protesting against the killing of Gene Bongcodin ... I directed a short play for the Philippine fiesta [about the experiences of Filipina migrants in Australia] and she was one of the performers ... I actually organised a women's support group [CFED] from within that organisation as a result of the previous experience with Gene Bongcodin and the increasing number of domestic violence cases. And she joined in. I remembered that we even met in her place once ... and she was telling us that 'oh, I have many friends who need support, and perhaps what we should do is actually to invite them in our houses ... show them some Filipino films and then get them started talking. That way, we provide them with social support and at the same time a good avenue to start talking and discussing problems' (Melba August 1999).

Violence was a significant aspect of Marylou Orton's life with both John Orton and the father of James, a fact glaringly absent in Kennedy's article. Melba highlights the history of domestic violence Marylou experienced in these two relationships. Speaking about Marylou's marital relationship with John Orton, Melba said:

She told me about her life in PNG, Papua New Guinea, that she was also a victim of domestic violence ... He used to verbally and physically abuse her and in her anger she would just pick up her keys and Jomar and she would ride around and around the town, trying to cool herself down ... So that was her first experience of domestic violence (August 1999).

John Orton's drinking was a significant factor in their marriage break-up and caused so much stress for Marylou that she had a breakdown (Marginson 1992b; 1992c:13).

Melba then discussed the abuse Marylou suffered at the hands of James' father:

The next thing that happened was I got this call at 5 o'clock in the morning ... and she was crying on the phone, and telling me that she had been bashed, by [James' father] ... And she was raped ... and if I could go and help her. So, Simon, my husband, and myself and Inday ... we rushed to her place and saw her with black eyes and ... crying all over ... So we managed to settle her down ... I had to leave Inday to be with her all throughout the day, with Jomar, and ... the baby because she had just given birth, three months before (August 1999).

Like her marriage, Marylou Orton's relationship with this partner ended because of domestic violence. As Melba (1992c:13-14) poignantly states:

Marylou is ... a Filipina survivor in a foreign country whose time ran out before she could enjoy the fruits of her increasing feminist consciousness. Her life story reflects a strong determination to raise up from a seemingly hopeless situation ... Marylou, despite her assertiveness, always trusted the men in her life. Yet ... it was these men who brought tragedies to her. After several harrowing experiences with them, she began to understand some of the worst aspects of men. However, before she could protect herself from the risks associated in dealing with their sort, she had become a victim.

Kennedy made much of the different men in Marylou Orton's life. What she does not say is that Marylou left John Orton and the father of James because of their violence. Melba and I discussed this issue further:

NS: Do you feel that the DV might be one reason why she was no longer with the man?
Melba: Oh yes, definitely ... Because all she wanted ... was genuine happiness. So if [father of James] had been a good partner, I don't think she would have left him. I remember her even telling me she wanted a real long-term relationship ... free from violence (August 1999).

Marylou, like many women, never gave up her hopes and dreams for a relationship with a caring and loving partner:

Every time, she was a romantic and a dreamer. She would always tell 'I wish I could find the right man ...' And at a certain stage I thought, because she met my husband and she could see us very happy ... she was probably wanting to meet someone like Simon, who was decent, supportive (Melba August 1999).

Both Melba and Inday stated that media portrayals of Marylou Orton as just a prostitute were neither accurate nor adequate. Marylou was not simply a massage parlour employee. She was also a loving mother, career woman, hard worker, political activist, and friend. They felt Marylou's story could not be told when articles such as Kennedy's (1992:31) sensationalised and overstated one aspect of her life while rendering silent its complexity and many different facets. As Inday explained:

I think what was inaccurate or inadequate was how Marylou had found herself there. What had led her to this place. Because from my point of view, I didn't know her to be that kind of person. And it was inaccurate in the sense that I was led to believe that this woman was a prostitute or a lady of the night ... The general impression you were given from the report is that she was just a prostitute because she found herself in this place where a lot of illicit sex was happening (August 1999).

Melba elaborated on the notion of Marylou Orton's absent voice and spoke about how Kennedy's misrepresentation of her had caused personal anguish:

... I got this call from *Herald Sun*, this woman, Heather, saying 'oh all the media coverage is mostly about Marylou Orton and the murder itself, and her being a mother. I'm really interested in the angle of the children'. And she really had a sweet talk with me about the importance of the children's side being also discussed ... And then came that very disastrous *Herald Sun* article ... I rang the woman again and said 'why did you do that. All the time I tried to make sure that the media portrayal of this woman was to the best interest of herself and her family, especially her children ...' [S]he said, 'oh, it wasn't my fault, it was the editor' ... It was that last portrayal that I couldn't sleep for several days. I felt like I really betrayed her ... I was for sometime depressed with that. And whenever I think of that or even look at that article, there is something in me that gets hurt ... [T]he issue of accuracy for me is ... an issue of whether she was given enough fair voice or reporting ... [S]he could have written about the good things about Jomar, for example, how good he was in school. And how the mother despite her poverty did not give up taking care of him, and the baby. She could have written so much about the real situation with the difficulty in her financial situation ... The fact is that she was a really opportunistic journalist ... I did learn from that (August 1999).

Melba said that Kennedy had taken her own comments about Marylou out of context.

She asserted that Kennedy's story was to:

... portray [Marylou] badly, to all the more kill that woman by showing [her] as an unworthy human being. And that is quite a racism (August 1999).

Kennedy's portrayal of Marylou Orton provoked outrage and pain amongst her family, friends and fellow activists. CPCA and CFED actively tried to refute the portrayal and ameliorate its most harmful effects. Press conferences were held:

When Marylou Orton died and CFED ... was not happy with how her death was portrayed, I along with Melba and some other members of CFED, wrote ... to media people ... [A] TV channel responded to Melba's media release for a press conference about Marylou Orton ... [I] was interviewed about Marylou. And I did try to say my bit, but ... I ended up crying ... [A]s a group ... we did feel strongly about how it was reported and that had motivated us to do something about it ... [CFED] was very much concerned about Filipina issues ... so as a group we really tried to correct things so that we in turn can be helped and be seen in a better light (Inday August 1999).

On 15 April 1992, the CPCA, CFED, Women's Action Supporting Filipinas, and Friends of Marylou sent a protest letter to the editor of the *Sunday Herald-Sun*. It made clear that Kennedy's article had publicly vilified Marylou Orton, silenced her voice, exploited her children, and had more far reaching effects on Filipino women in general:

We are writing to register our strong protest against your coverage of our friend and compatriot, Marylou Orton on *Sunday Herald-Sun*, 12 April 1992. An interview was given in good faith to your reporter Heather Kennedy. She gave us to understand that her main interest was in the welfare of Marylou's children, and we were extremely distressed to read that instead she exploited the plight of the children to discredit their mother's memory. At his mother's funeral, Jomar asked us to please remember her because she was a loving mother, a good friend, and a special lady. Your report went against his wishes and betrayed our trust when you presented a portrait of Marylou that conformed to the racist and sexist stereotypes of Filipinas that we are struggling to refute. By perpetuating these stereotypes, you are colluding in the oppression that Filipinas face in this country ... There was no mention of the stresses and pressures that she lived under, the impact that racist and sexist oppression had on her life—an oppression that you have perpetuated after her death. By your sensationalized and irresponsible reporting, harm has been done to Marylou's memory, to the image of Filipinas in Australia, and to the right of all women to fair and equal treatment in the media.

Kennedy's opportunistic treatment of Marylou Orton, her children and friends propelled Melba to adopt a different protocol regarding media interviews. She now requests a written agreement '... that the reporting would be handled professionally and balanced'.

Conclusion

Kennedy's sensationalised sexist and racist account of Marylou Orton's life and death silenced her voice. The complexity and nuances of her reality were rendered invisible. Marylou's case study identifies major problems with how journalists use interview sources and material. Kennedy did not provide an accurate or adequate account of what Marylou's family and friends said about her. The relationship between gender and reporting is highlighted; female journalists are not necessarily more sympathetic or less racist and sexist than their male colleagues.

CHAPTER TEN
REPRESENTING ELMA YOUNG

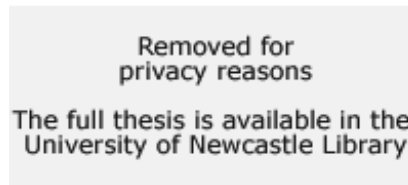


Figure 9: Elma Young 1952-1994
Source: Family Photograph

Jo: [S]he was a real fun person ... She was a very well qualified nurse and she could have worked anywhere she chose ... She was just gorgeous.

Ady: She was very well thought of and they still think very highly of her—the people that she worked with. So she did have that. She had another life other than the life at home.

Jo: She was special ... It always happens to the special ones (Jo and Ady, relatives of Elma, July 1999).

Elma Rebecca Albarracin Young was born in 1952 in the Philippines. She was one of eleven children. Her family lived in Cebu. In the mid 1970s, Elma Young graduated with a bachelor degree in nursing from South Western University. In 1977, like many Filipinos, she left the Philippines as an overseas worker for Saudi Arabia where nurses were in high demand. Elma met Paul Young while visiting her sister in Australia. He originally migrated from England and was a senior constable in the Queensland police force. They married in July 1982 and had a daughter, Amanda. Elma worked as a registered nurse in Queensland hospitals. On 20 February 1994, Paul Young beat and then strangled Elma to death in their house in Munruben, Queensland. He dumped her semi-naked body on a nearby roadside. Elma Young was forty-two. She was five months pregnant. Amanda was ten. After her mother's death, she went to live with her mother's sister and her husband. A 'Justice For Elma Young' campaign was established to monitor Elma's case and highlight the domestic violence and homicide perpetrated against Filipino women (see Distor 1994:1). In Brisbane Supreme Court on 18 February 1995, a jury found Paul Young guilty of manslaughter. He claimed he had an 'out of body experience' during Elma's killing (see Distor 1995a:1-2; 1995b:1-2). Justice Dowsett sentenced Young to ten years imprisonment. However, he served only four years and seven months (Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia 2002:6).

Elma Young's case study analyses images of her life and death in a number of Australian and Philippine newspaper articles and reinstates her voice through interviews with Jo and Ady. Their father is married to one of Elma's sisters. Jo and Ady worked as nurses with Elma and they shared the same religion as Jehovah's Witnesses. Elma's death received widespread coverage in the Australian and Philippine media. One major reason is that the CPCA, in particular, took a proactive stance in sending press releases and conducting press conferences with journalists in both countries.

Media Representations

The Brisbane newspapers, the *Courier-Mail* and *Sunday Mail*, dominated the Australian reportage of Elma Young's homicide and her killer's trial. Although Elma's ethnicity was mentioned, Paul Young's ethnicity was not accorded the same attention. Johnston's (1995:18) *Courier-Mail* article, 'Policeman Tells of Love for Wife', appeared on 15 February 1995. It again highlights the problems that arise when journalists regurgitate the story of the accused as relayed in court. Johnston presents a sympathetic portrayal of Young. Young is cast as a victim. He is a loving husband despite the turbulence and unhappiness of his marriage. Elma Young is recast as his abuser:

A policeman sobbed yesterday as he told a jury he still loved the pregnant Filipino wife he killed and dumped last year ... When prosecutor David Bullock asked 'Did you like Elma?', Young answered: 'I loved her. I still love her for that matter' ... Young told the jury ... the union had been 'stormy' and 'not happy' after about six months ... Young said he was naked and after his wife abused him, accusing him of affairs and being 'poofter' and 'queer', she grabbed him by the testicles and pulled and twisted. Young said he pushed Elma to the ground ... He said he picked his wife up, worried she had been hurt. 'She scared the life out of me' ... Elma began abusing him again and grabbing for his testicles ... He said that when he arrived back at the house he noticed blood on the bed sheets. 'Elma wouldn't have liked them being dirty so I took them off and cleaned them' (Johnston 1995:18).

By using Paul Young's statement about Elma and the dirty sheets as his article's concluding remark, Johnston reinforces the image of a considerate and caring husband.

A contrasting image of Paul Young as a wife abuser emerged in a *Sunday Mail* article on 19 February 1995, the day after his sentencing. In 'Let Dad Rot in Jail, Says Killer's Girl', Dibben and Kornyei (1995:14) sympathetically portray Elma Young. Unfortunately, their sensationalist headline obscures the fact that Amanda was also Elma's child. Dibben and Kornyei use the comments of Amanda and Elma's sisters to illuminate the history of domestic violence she suffered at the hands of Paul Young. Elma's story is brought to light, as is the poignant story of Amanda. Central here is the pain, fear and anger of a child forced to live with the effects of violence:

Wiping tears from her face, the couple's 11-year-old daughter, Amanda Young, said ... 'I hope he rots in jail. My life has changed because of him ... I hated him for a long time because of all the things he did to my mum. He tried to strangle her before and she used to have bruises all over her'. Amanda ... said she still could not sleep alone. 'I have nightmares about him killing my mum. I see her face as she's being strangled' ... Amanda's adoptive mother and one of Elma's nine sisters, Marianita Reinecke, said the killing had transformed the young girl from a happy to a withdrawn child ... Another of Elma's sisters, Chichi Jacuba, said ... Elma was the 18th Filipina wife to have been killed in Australia, and most of the killings had arisen out of domestic violence situations (Dibben & Kornyei 1995:14).

In her article 'Murder By Mail-Order', Dibben (1995:66, 95) draws on the interviews of Elma Young's sisters to construct a moving account of the violence Elma experienced in her marriage. Dibben captures Elma's suffering, her love for her husband and fear of his abuse. There is also a strong sense of Elma's dedication and devotion—as a nurse, in her religion and to her husband—despite his violence:

A month before her death, Brisbane nurse Elma Young took legal advice about taking out a domestic violence protection order against her husband. Chichi Jacuba says her sister ... was too afraid to lodge the application while she was still living with Paul Young ... Chichi and another sister, Lourdes [said] Elma Young had been a victim of domestic violence for several years ... Elma loved Paul, but after Amanda was born she complained about the way he [treated] her. They described her as a kind person ... who had always wanted to be a nurse ... Elma, a practicing Jehovah's Witness ... told her sisters she was praying for change. Paul Young told the court his 12-year marriage had been stormy, and not happy ... Chichi said ... 'We couldn't go there to their home and have laughter' ... Despite her fears and unhappiness about the marriage, Chichi and Lourdes said Elma loved Paul right up until she died. 'Even if she was still alive, she would still love him' (Dibben 1995:95).

Dibben's framing of Paul Young's court statement about their marriage being stormy and unhappy in terms of Elma's story of abuse exposes the flaws of his account.

Dibben's sensationalist headline 'Murder By Mail-Order' (figures 10 and 11) mars her otherwise excellent article. It suggests Elma was killed because she came to Australia as a mail order bride. Yet, Dibben's story on Elma contains information which undermines the stereotype:

Elma Rebecca Albarracin Young met her future husband while holidaying in Australia ... She was visiting her sister, Bella, when she was introduced to Paul Young ... After migrating here, sponsored by her sister, Elma began seeing Paul, and after several months they were married (1995:95) [emphasis added].

The juxtaposition of the main story concerning the homicides with the subheading, ‘Study Tour Will Target Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Filipino Women’, and text, ‘... the study will target the mail order bride network and sex tour operators’ (Dibben, 1995:66), reinforces the notion of mail order bride. It implies an association between Elma, the other women victims of homicide, and sex tours in the Philippines. While Dibben sought to highlight the CPCA’s exposure tour to the Philippines, her article bolsters negative stereotypes about Filipino women. As I stated in Chapter Six, Dibben’s editor imposed the offensive headline. What becomes clear here is that despite the best intentions of progressive journalists, their efforts are still to a large extent dictated by the editor’s pen and the particular structural environment they work within.



Figure 10: Dibben, K. (1995) ‘Murder By Mail-Order’, *The Sunday Mail*, 26 February, pp. 66, 95.



Figure 11: Dibben, K. (1995) ‘Murder By Mail-Order’, *The Sunday Mail*, 26 February, pp. 66, 95.

The Philippine articles similarly offer a sympathetic perspective on Elma Young. On 4 March 1994, Fernandez's (1994:12) article appeared in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Titled 'Pregnant Cebuana Strangled in Australia; Kin Seek Help', her article addressed the concerns of Elma Young's family in the Philippines about the integrity of the Australian police investigation into Elma's death:

Relatives of a pregnant Cebuano nurse who was strangled by her British husband in Queensland, Australia, appeal to president Ramos to ensure a just solution to the case ... Paul Young is a police officer of the Logan police station ... Elma's relatives here fear a whitewash because the case is being investigated by the same police unit that Paul worked for (Fernandez 1994:12).

Even after death, Elma remains a *woman in danger*. The spectre of corrupt police and the inequity of the Australian criminal justice system now constitute her vulnerability.

The perceived injustice and racism of the Australian justice system is again a major concern in the *Manila Chronicle* (1995:3) article 'Strangler Gets 10 Years in Jail', which was published on 21 February 1995:

An Australian policeman found guilty of strangling his pregnant Filipina wife last year was given a ten-year jail term for manslaughter yesterday, raising a howl among Filipino groups there that the sentence was too light ... 'We are concerned about the outcome of this trial because statistics on cases of Filipinas murdered by their Australian husbands show a very pathetic pattern of either half-served justice or unresolved crime', Emerita Distor, coordinator of the Center for Philippine Concerns Australia (CPCA) ... said.

However, the article links domestic violence against Filipino women with sex tourism.

It implies Elma and the other Filipina homicide victims were involved in the sex trade:

[Elma's] case highlights the plight of Filipino women and children migrating to the island continent who have reportedly been victimized by domestic violence, sex tourism and oppressive immigration laws (*Manila Chronicle* 1995:3).

While Elma was victimised by domestic violence, she was not a victim of sex tourism. Sex trafficking and domestic violence are often linked but not always. They are analytically distinct yet interconnected practices of exploitation. In setting up such links, the *Manila Chronicle* sustains stereotypes of Elma and other abused Filipino women.

Bagares' (1995:1, 5) *Philippine Star* article '18 Pinay Brides, Fiancees meet Death in Australia' suggests Elma Young was a 'mail order bride'. As noted in Chapter Five, it implies the deaths of Filipino women in Australia are linked with sex trafficking for marriage. The play on 'brides' in the title stigmatises Elma and the other women and is misleading. I am reminded here of the 'Murder By Mail-Order' headline in Dibben's article. Elma Young was not a so-called 'mail order bride'. She met her husband in Australia and was married for years before her death. Bagares (1995:1, 5) cites CPCA spokesperson, Melba Marginson, in a way that reinforces this construction of Elma:

At a press conference held in Quezon City yesterday, the Center for Philippine Concerns-Australia (CPCA) said the [homicides] are 'a result of trade in Filipino women' involving a syndicated network run by Australians to exploit Filipino women and children. The latest killing documented by the CPCA involved Filipina Elma Young ... 'We came here to discuss extensive issues of Filipina mail-order brides and the abuses they face in Australia', Melba Marginson, CPCA head, said.

Elma Young's Story: Interviews with Family

The most prevalent themes to emerge from Jo and Ady's interview were the abuse Elma Young suffered at the hands of Paul Young and the failure of the court to establish his previous domestic violence during the trial. It allowed Young to present his killing as an isolated act. Central here is the silencing of Elma's voice in the judicial process:

Jo: There's some things within the legal system ... that prevent people from getting the truth ... [I]f a white woman is murdered ... with a history of domestic violence ... that's not allowed in the court either ... it's just a miscarriage of our justice system ...
Ady: [W]e're angry at the judicial system for allowing [that] ... [I]n the whole legal proceedings ... we heard people speaking for everyone but no one there ever got to speak for Elma ... No one got to say her side of the story ... [Justice Dowsett] judged that all other violence was irrelevant. All that he was interested in was that particular act at that particular time that led to her death (July 1999).

Distor (1995b:2) makes the same point about the way the court silenced Elma's voice:

[W]hat was absolutely distressing about the ... trial was the failure to establish the history of domestic violence experienced by [Elma] during the course of her marriage ... Elma's mother [was brought] from the Philippines only to have her evidence of Elma's mistreatment ... ruled ... as 'inadmissible' ... The unresolved mystery of this trial is how the jury was supposed to come to a decision ... when the relevant history of the relationship is judged to be inadmissible in Queensland's supreme court.

Distor (1995b:2) notes how Paul Young's defence lawyer played down the words 'domestic violence' into 'domestic uproar'. Jo and Ady felt the refusal of some journalists to address his violence was related to the silencing of Elma's voice in court.

Although Johnston's (1995:18) article supported Paul Young's self-image as a loving husband caught in an unhappy marriage, Elma's reality was different. Their marriage was not simply 'stormy' and 'unhappy'. Elma suffered years of physical, verbal and emotional abuse and her husband's violence isolated her socially:

Jo: [I]t was very miserable her life in Australia after her marriage ... he was violent to her. I'd try and encourage her to go and see the doctor and take restraining orders out ... then she stopped talking about it til later on.

Ady: She always put a really good face on ... [I]t was only later when everybody sort of talked about it that we realised the full extent of it all because she tried to cover it up ... [H]e was telling us ... how well thought of he was ... because he was a policeman. And we went off ... saying ... 'he's well thought of because his wife is a nurse and she's lovely'. And he took all of that on himself and he took away even her reason to be proud ... It was really hard to visit when you feel all these undercurrents and ... negativity ... so we found ourselves not having as much to do with her.

Jo: ... [W]e let go of her because she wasn't prepared to leave him or do anything about it ... take him to the police ... I can understand her reasons for not doing so now.

Ady: ... [S]he had taken out a warrant against him but was afraid to have it served because it would have to be served from his police station ... she was just so afraid of the power that he had (July 1999).

Elma tried hard to keep her marriage together until she could no longer deal with the escalating violence. By then, she feared for her life and was too afraid to take action.

Jo describes the cruelty of Paul Young's abuse in the home and the devious strategies he devised to conceal his violence from outsiders:

[S]he would tell me that he would hit her ... she eventually did take her bruises to the doctor and she told him that she had reported his violence to the doctor ... [A]fter that ... he changed his tactics and instead of hitting her and bruising her he would squeeze her so that she couldn't breathe ... that left no marks ... [I]n the middle of the night he'd get dressed in dark clothes and ... pretend he was an intruder and stand behind doors and flash out ... [I]t was a systematic harassment and stalking of her (July 1999).

Ady also highlights the traumatic effect on Amanda of living with her father's violence, as had Dibben and Kornyei (1995:14) in their article:

[Y]ou can't live in that sort of household when you are a young impressionable two, three, four and five year old and come out at the other end unscathed ... And apart from that Amanda wasn't little. You can't live in that environment and be an immature child ... She'd experienced things that an adult shouldn't experience. So she couldn't then revert and go back to being a little girl because that wasn't possible (July 1999).

As Irwin and Wilkinson (1997:17) point out, children living in a violent environment '... are often subjected to a reign of terror, either as a result of the abuse of their mother, or by threats to, and actual abuse of, other family members' (for a discussion on domestic violence and children see Partnerships Against Domestic Violence 1999:13-16; 2001: 23-26; Domestic Violence Resource Centre nd:1-4).

Although violence was a major part of her marriage, Elma Young did have a life beyond her husband's abuse. Apart from Amanda and her close-knit family, nursing and religion held special significance for Elma. While some articles stated that Elma Young was a dedicated nurse and a Jehovah's Witness (Dibben & Kornyei 1995:14; Dibben 1995:66), Jo and Ady felt these aspects of her life were not adequately highlighted. Elma was not only a qualified nurse, but she gave special care to abused women:

Elma use to work in A and E [Accident and Emergency] and ... take such good care of women who had been abused ... Because when abused women come in it's really hard for nurses to patch them up knowing that they're going to come back in two or three weeks time and they're going to be abused again, and you patch them up, and it's a continuous cycle. Yet Elma use to treat them all with such good care and looked after them so well (Ady July 1999).

Despite Paul Young's opposition, Elma remained a devoted Jehovah's Witness and actively pursued her religious ideals. She studied the Bible and had a large network of friends within her religion. However, it was Elma's religious beliefs and those of people close to her that influenced her to stay in an abusive marriage:

Jo: [S]he was very strong in her religious belief and one of those beliefs was that you support your husband ... [S]he surrounded herself with people that said to her 'you must stay with your husband'. Whereas us being feminists [we said] 'leave him, we'll help you ...'

Ady: And so people like us were quite threatening to her ... She wanted to have this so-called happy family life ... Actually it's not (July 1999).

Jo and Ady identified three major flaws in the media portrayals. Firstly, in some media commentary about the trial, like Johnston's (1995:18) piece, Elma was portrayed as violent and abusive. Yet, as Jo argued:

[T]hey said she pulled his testicles ... she was fighting for her life ... [T]hey portrayed that as the initial provocation whereas in fact it was self-defense. And the difference in their height and stature didn't come out ... He was about three times as big as her ... They didn't portray him as a violent man ... They said that she did this act and so he retaliated ... [T]hey just hid all that ... they didn't research it well enough (July 1999).

Secondly, journalists did not emphasise the fact that Elma Young was pregnant:

Jo: [S]he was pregnant and that fact was just totally ignored. So he really killed two lives ... legally it wasn't a viable fetus but it was still a fetus.

Ady: [E]ven in the whole court case I think it was only mentioned twice in passing. And hardly at all in the media (July 1999).

Thirdly, journalists often implied Elma Young was a 'mail order bride'. Speaking specifically about Dibben's (1995:66) article 'Murder by Mail Order', Ady stated:

I can remember thinking that at the time they lumped her in with a lot of the other Filipino murders ... She was very righteous and very moral person ... I'm not saying they're not upright or moral ... But she was lumped in with all of them. There was no distinction made ... And Elma was never a mail order bride ... [W]e've spent our lives explaining what really happened to other people who would question and, 'no Elma didn't get sent over here by mail order. She met her husband when she was visiting us and her sister'. We've spent our lives sort of explaining what really happened and what really went on (July 1999).

Conclusion

While some journalists misrepresented Elma Young's reality by restating her killer's story, other journalists brought forth her story. Elma's case study highlights that even sympathetic journalists need to be reflexive of how they construct their accounts. Their descriptions of Elma as a mail order bride and linking of her abuse with the so-called 'mail order bride' trade perpetuate negative stereotypes and risk silencing her voice. Despite the best intentions of progressive journalists, it is clear that the editor's pen and the structural environment they work within largely dictate the final copy.

CHAPTER ELEVEN
REPRESENTING ANNABEL STRZELECKI

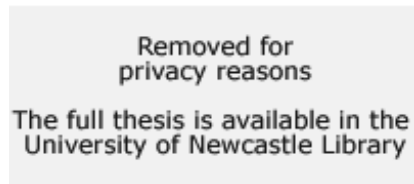


Figure 12: Annabel Strzelecki 1969-1998 (Disappeared)
Source: National Missing Person Unit,
Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence (n.d.)
Retrieved 13 March 2001 from
<http://www.missingpersons.info.au/missing/strzelecki.htm>

[S]he is a very loyal woman ... I admire her. For her age [she is] very mature, very understanding to cope up with this situation ... Annabel is a devoted ... and a very loving mother and caring ... She wouldn't leave without her children (Olive, a friend of Annabel, August 1999).

Had a great love for gardening, which was probably an emotional outlet too for her. It's probably the only thing she wasn't really restricted in. She'd come down here and she'd give me all the advice on the garden ... (Charles, a friend of Annabel, August 1999).

Annabel Sabellano Strzelecki was born in the Philippines on 3 August 1969. She was the youngest child in a large and impoverished family. Annabel met Włodzimierz ‘Jim’ Strzelecki, a former opal miner, through a newspaper advertisement. Her friends said Jim was also writing to several other Filipino women. They married in the Philippines in 1989. Annabel was nineteen and Jim Strzelecki was sixty-three. They had two children, Richard and Rachel. On 6 June 1998, Annabel Strzelecki disappeared from her home in Clare, South Australia. She was twenty-eight years old. Jim Strzelecki told police four different stories about Annabel’s disappearance. In one story, he claimed she left in the middle of the night in the company of a Filipina and a man. At the time of their mother’s disappearance, Richard and Rachel were aged seven and five years respectively. They were placed in the care of their half-sister, who is James’ child by a previous marriage. Sometime during the weekend of 17–18 June 2000, James Strzelecki committed suicide in his home. Police investigations into Annabel Strzelecki’s case continue (for a discussion of Annabel’s case see *KASAMA* 2000b:4; Hunt 1999:1).

Annabel Strzelecki’s case study explores the portrayal of her life and disappearance in several Australian newspaper articles and reinstates her voice through interviews with friends, Olive and Charles. Olive and Charles were the first people to meet Annabel when she arrived in Clare and they helped her adjust to life in a new country. I was unable to find any Philippine articles about Annabel.

Media Representations

Towards the end of June 1998, articles about Annabel Strzelecki’s disappearance began appearing in Australian newspapers. The media coverage overall was sympathetic and interviews with Annabel’s friends remained a central feature. Three major themes were articulated: the construction of Annabel Strzelecki as a ‘Filipino bride’, her portrayal as

a devoted mother, and shifting images of Jim Strzelecki and their marital relationship, depending on whether his perspective or that of Annabel's friends was presented.

On 5 July 1998, Haran's (1998:17) *Sunday Mail* article 'Missing Mum 'Planned to Leave Country'' portrayed Annabel Strzelecki as a 'Filipino bride' and a good mother. In addition, he hints at Jim Strzelecki's exercise of control in their relationship:

Ms Strzelecki, a *Filipino bride*, 28, vanished from her Clare home ... [O]ne of her close friends, Lillian Lane, said: 'She was a wonderful mother and a devoted wife. She would not walk out and leave her children' ... *The pair married nine years ago in the Philippines* ... Problems between the couple started towards the end of last year when 'Annabel began to express herself' ... [Mrs Lane said] 'she was the sort of woman who was totally devoted to her children—and I don't believe she would consider taking them away' (Haran 1998:17) [emphasis added].

Debelle (1998:7) illuminates these themes in her poignant account, 'Tears for Annabel'. It featured as a special report in the *Age* on 12 September 1998. Debelle relied heavily on the accounts of Annabel Strzelecki's friends. She describes Annabel's disappearance as '... the latest chapter in a sad story of broken dreams' (Debelle 1998:7). The caption FILIPINO BRIDES appears directly above the headline. The repetition of the term in the text bolsters the notion Annabel was a mail order bride. She is also portrayed as a devoted mother who loved her husband despite his harsh treatment. Jim Strzelecki emerges as an uncaring man who dominated his wife:

... Annabel Strzelecki, a *Filipino bride* ... disappeared three months ago ... *Annabel Sabellano came to Australia in 1989 to marry Jim Strzelecki* ... Annabel ... struggled against the odds to build a home ... 'She was very gentle and a good mum ... She tried to be happy for the children' [friends said] ... Strzelecki was hard on Annabel. He resented her having outside friends and would ... [order] her home to cook his lunch. He seemed to regard her as being there to do his bidding and she was entirely reliant on him for money ... Strzelecki said publicly after Annabel disappeared that ... the marriage was not happy and he did not want her back (Debelle 1998:7) [emphasis added].

Debelle is describing relations of abuse. However, like Haran (1998:17), she stops short of actually naming Strzelecki's behaviour as domestic violence.

In her *Northern Argus* article, 'Disappearance a Major Crime', Hannagan (1998:1) does not even refer to Strzelecki's violence. While Annabel is still a good mother and wife, he is represented as a kind husband. On 8 July 1998, she wrote:

[Olive] said although Annabel was only 28 and a naïve girl from a rural area of the Philippines, she loved her husband ... and adored her children, Richard, 7, and Rachel, 5. 'She was a good and devoted wife and mother and loved her husband even though there was a great age difference ... *She used to say he was kind and generous, and was very pleased that he agreed that she could take the children back home on a holiday this year*' (Hannagan 1998:1) [emphasis added].

Jim Strzelecki's violence is again obscured in Pudney's (2000:11) article, 'Suspect in Missing Wife Case Dead'. He was reporting on Strzelecki's suicide for the *Advertiser* on 20 June 2000. Two years after disappearing, Annabel Strzelecki remains a bride:

An elderly man suspected of murdering his young *Filipino bride* has been found dead in his home at Clare ... Annabel Strzelecki (nee Sabellano) was 19 when *she moved from the Philippines in 1989 to marry Mr Strzelecki*, then 63 (Pudney 2000:11) [emphasis added].

Although Haran (1998:17), DeBelle (1998:7) and Pudney (2000:11) portray Annabel Strzelecki as a 'Filipino bride', they also undermine the notion. All three refer to the length of her marriage. Annabel was not a newly married woman or one about to marry, women we commonly refer to as brides. She had been married for nine years. The reporting here again raises several questions. Firstly, when does a Filipina cease to be a bride? Other women in similar situations are not described in the same way, and after marriage men are not referred to as grooms. Secondly, why do journalists persist in labelling Filipino women as 'brides' when they do not fit the description? Thirdly, how does a single event come to define a woman's entire existence? Annabel's life had a richness and significance beyond meeting her husband through an advertisement, a form of what is popularly called the 'mail order bride' trade. Rather than stigmatising women, the trade in women needs to be scrutinised. I am reminded of the language of prostitution. Speaking about this issue, Hofmann (1998:5-6) states:

The culture directs no scorn whatsoever at the men who use prostitution. The word *prostitute* is therefore loaded with that contempt, but no word at all exists for the men users of prostitution although they constitute by far the larger population and the more important factor in the existence and maintenance of the system of prostitution. It is different from the case of rape, where there is a word for *rapist*.

Rather than name women ‘prostitutes’, many NGOs and POs in the Philippines use the terms ‘women in prostitution’ or ‘prostituted women’ to highlight the social, economic, and political factors behind prostitution (Hofmann 1998:8). These terms help make visible the men who create the demand for prostitution. They are the reason the trade exists. In relation to ‘Filipino brides’, there is no corresponding term for the men who contract Filipino women through introduction agencies, advertisements, and the Internet. Journalists did not label Jim Strzelecki a ‘mail order husband’ in their articles.

Annabel Strzelecki’s Story: Interviews with Friends

One of the most glaring aspects of Annabel’s relationship with Jim Strzelecki was the enormous difference in their ages: a forty-four year age gap. A situation in which a sixty-three year old man can go to the Philippines and marry a nineteen year old woman indicates a profound imbalance of power, of sexism, racism, and class. Later paragraphs shed some light on why Jim Strzelecki sought marriage with a young Filipino woman. To understand why Annabel married him, it is necessary to understand the hardship of her life in an impoverished peasant family in rural Philippines and how a ‘kind’ foreign man promised her a better life. Annabel was eager for the happiness she thought would come from establishing her own family away from the insecurities of her daily life:

Because she’s the youngest in the family they used to ask her to help them look after the children so they can go to work ... [W]hen I ask her ‘why did you have to marry him? He’s too old for you. You are too young for him’ ... [S]he said, ‘well this is my life’ ... she has a big family, that the sisters and brothers have their children, and she just used to look after them and they were not giving her anything ... [W]hen this man came along ... he bought her clothes and bag ... She’s young, but then this man show to her everything that he could in the Philippines, his fineness, his generosity ... I could remember Annabel telling me, ‘oh he’s like a millionaire there. He’s giving money to

everyone' ... But I can tell that Annabel has married him not for his money ... All I can see on her is to raise her children and be happy with her husband (Olive August 1999).

While Annabel Strzelecki saw her 'better life' as having happiness in a loving family with her husband and children, Jim Strzelecki's idea of a better life was a wife who would obey him absolutely and attend to his every need. Charles made this clear:

... restricted life Annabel got out here. It was very restricted doing everything ... She had to conform to his beliefs and his ways ... It was quite obvious she never had any say in anything (August 1999).

For example, Jim Strzelecki believed that televisions and telephones emitted poisonous rays and he refused to have these appliances in the house. He thus denied Annabel and their children access to modes of communication that most Australians take for granted.

Olive and Charles described the horrific abuse Annabel experienced in her marriage. Although they reveal a long history of domestic violence, they did not name it as such, a point I take up later in the chapter. This failure to 'name' domestic violence was also a feature of the media reporting. In some cases (Pudney 2000:11; Hannagan 1998:1), Strzelecki's violence was invisible. Hannagan (1998:1) further misrepresented Annabel's relationship with Jim Strzelecki by misquoting Olive. Olive told me she did not say that Annabel had said her husband was kind and generous and had agreed she could take the children to the Philippines for a holiday. The next few pages document the extent of the violence that was a large part of Annabel Strzelecki's life with Jim Strzelecki. It is central to her story.

Jim Strzelecki was cruel and domineering. He tried to control Annabel's every move. Annabel's suffering was enormous:

Charles: He would expect her ... to walk into Clare and walk back out again ... and they'd walk from the caravan park to Clare which is ... three, four kilometres.

Olive: With a baby.

Charles: On a ... very hot day ... I offered them a lift and he said no.

Olive: 'I will take you ... to the shop and I'll go back and pick her up' I said to Charles. So I went back, offered a ride ... she wanted to but the husband said, 'no, we have to go Annabel. We are walking'. And I said, 'it's not you I am asking. It's the baby I am concerned of'. But 'no you cannot' (August 1999).

His need to exercise control included dictating the food Annabel could eat:

[H]e wanted Annabel to eat what he eats. Not the Filipino food. He always check on Annabel's food. 'You eat this because this is good for you'. So they keep on boiling lentils and no meat ... There are other Filipina girls in Riverton and they asked her to dine with them for lunch ... and Annabel ordered something, and Jim keeps on telling her 'that is pork Annabel. You are not eating pork'. She said, 'no I did not order that pork' ... And then they had a fight again ... I ask her one time to come around because I know she likes fish ... [S]he was very happy with that one whole fish ... But when she gets home he would again question her 'what did you eat there Annabel?' And she became very unhappy of that (Olive August 1999).

Further, Jim Strzelecki dominated Annabel's interactions with their children. He did not allow her to make important decisions regarding them. His cruel treatment of Richard and Rachel and refusal to permit Annabel a say in their upbringing was an increasing source of conflict in their marriage. Strzelecki saw any challenge to the harsh rules he imposed on his family as a threat to his authority, as Olive indicates:

She tries to avoid argument all the time ... she prefers to be quiet. But then as the children were growing older and needing more, like playing outside with other children ... attending parties also of other children so they can enjoy their young-hood, and playing with toys ... he disliked it ... Annabel told me that 'oh it's Rachel's birthday yesterday' ... So I bought some books ... and a teddy bear ... And I gave two dollars each also and Richard and Rachel were so happy. And Annabel was happy. After that I could see Annabel always was very unhappy. And they had an argument ... And one day he came to see me ... he said '... I don't want you to give any gifts to my children ... I don't want you to give them books or toys'. 'Books are important for children', I told him ... 'I know books is good, but I will be the one to choose the books that my children will read' ... He said to me, 'don't try to destroy my marriage' (August 1999).

Strzelecki used the children as a way of controlling Annabel's behaviour and movements. An incident that occurred not long before her disappearance illustrates:

Charles: Annabel wanted to go back to visit the Philippines. And he would let her go initially but she had to leave the two children behind. This is ... an insurance ...
Olive: ... [Annabel's mother] ... advised her ... not to leave ... the kids because of his ... relationship with his children [from the previous marriage]. So Annabel was very ... determined to take the two kids ... she even went to this Australian friend to help her file an application for a passport for the little girl (August 1999).

Annabel Strzelecki's stand against her husband was unsuccessful. She disappeared before she could take Richard and Rachel back to see their relations in the Philippines.

As part of his violent regime, Jim Strzelecki subjected his wife to social and emotional abuse. He made Annabel constantly accountable for her movements and tried to isolate her from friends. Strzelecki played psychological mind-games in his attempts to confine Annabel in their house. He went to extreme lengths to make Annabel feel guilty for wanting contact with other people:

Charles: Another time she came here ... and Jim walked in the back door ... he said ... 'I wanna be with you. I might die any minute and I want you to be there when I die'. No reason in the wide, wide world why he should die but this is the things he use to say.
Olive: Yeah because she asks permission to go out. And he said okay. But after that, when she gets home, they fight. He will disagree again of that ...
Charles: [H]e ... collapsed one night on the floor ... after a while he just jumped up. He'd only feigned it. What he wanted to do was to find out Annabel's reaction if it was for real life, just what she'd do. This is the type of thing he would do (August 1999).

Despite her husband's abuse, Annabel established a wide network of friends. This contact gave her the courage to challenge his authority in an attempt to improve her life and the lives of her children. As Annabel struggled to do something about her oppression, Strzelecki's violence intensified as he tried to maintain his control over her:

Charles: He couldn't make friends and he more or less wouldn't let her have friends ... this is probably her downfall when she started seeing a little bit more to life than what she'd been putting up with ...
Olive: Well she was looking for a better life, to have a real family life in bringing up her children ... I even told Jim before 'if you choose the books that your children read and you want everything to be done within your own principle, what is the role of your wife then?' So those are the reasons why Annabel was having problems already with him. He never give her freedom to choose. Never give her freedom to decide for her children. And he started brainwashing her children ...
Charles: And probably you could see it towards the finish that she was very happy about fitting in with other Filipinos, and other people ... which in turn gave her more confidence to more or less stand up to him a little bit ... [T]his is getting to him ... he had the idea that people were trying to influence her through her making friends, and particularly Olive (August 1999).

Annabel disappeared when she 'started seeing a little bit more to life'. She had failed to live up to Strzelecki's sexist and racist idea of a 'perfect partner'.

Charles and Olive did not name Jim Strzelecki's abuse as domestic violence. It became apparent during our interview that they defined violence as physical abuse, or 'real' violence as they termed it:

Charles: I don't think there was any real portrayal of violence in the media reports mainly because we weren't really aware of any real violence. She led a very restricted life but no real [violence] ... you can have a disagreement, you can have an argument and that type of thing, which I don't think can be considered as violence ...

Olive: Because by that time we cannot have any proof that he has done any violence to her. Although we have heard a lot of news that she went through violent treatment from her husband, we did not see it with our own eyes. And she never told us, she told to other people. So we did not really want to mention it to the media ...

Charles: I think what you have to remember too ... is that people were a little bit reluctant to say anything that would offend Jim for the simple reason he was still walking around ... So they still were very much afraid of him, including Olive.

Olive: ... That's why I had a restriction. And I even told the media to please edit that because I don't want him to come and ... harm ... me ... (August 1999).

The inability to recognise all forms of domestic violence has implications for the telling of Annabel's story. So too does the playing-down of that violence through fear.

Another major issue to emerge from the interview was that Jim Strzelecki was a serial sponsor. Charles said:

[H]e brought out another Filipino woman and she was in her fifties. And she was out here on a fiancée visa for ... six months ... she went back to the Philippines and there was an agreement that he would go back and marry her and bring her out here ... Then he changed his mind about it ... he had her believing that he was going to marry her and bring her out. And he went across and he'd been writing to these other Filipino girls and he arranged to marry this younger one (August 1999).

Strzelecki's actions in seeking to sponsor women from the Philippines he thought he could dominate highlight a racist dimension of his abuse. The articles I examined did not address Jim Strzelecki's sponsorship arrangements. Although Debelle (1998:7) briefly mentions he had lived with another Filipina who returned to the Philippines, she does not see his behaviour as serial sponsorship. Nor does she identify it as part of his violence. Under current Australian migration laws (see Hunt 2002:9), Jim Strzelecki would not be allowed to sponsor another partner from overseas.

Both Charles and Olive stated that the media portrayal of Annabel Strzelecki had been fair and sympathetic except where journalists presented Jim Strzelecki's point of view. Charles' comments draw attention to the significance of whose voice is given space in the media to tell the story:

I thought the media were pretty good. All they knew was that she was missing, and they had to rely on her friends to pass possible theories on why she disappeared ... And the only thing that was particularly played up was the interview with Jim where he said she'd left him and ... he said 'no I don't want her back' ... Everyone that they interviewed had the same opinion that she would never ever go off and leave her children. And this is very dominant all through the interviews ... the media got that message across that something was amiss ... [T]he only real reporting they did was what ... people told them. There wasn't much hearsay in it ... or jumping to conclusions ... I couldn't really fault it (Charles August 1999).

Conclusion

Of central concern in Annabel Strzelecki's story is the profound imbalance of power between her and Jim Strzelecki. Annabel's case study shows how sympathetic journalists attempting to tell her story instead misrepresented her reality by drawing on racist and sexist stereotypes. Like the previous case studies, it demonstrates the longevity and resilience of mail order bride discourse in the Australian media. Annabel's case study again highlights that to hear women's voices, journalists must clearly 'name' domestic violence, call it what it is.

PART THREE

COMMON THREADS

CHAPTER TWELVE

DIFFERENT VOICES/COMMON THREADS

This chapter summarises the common threads in the seven case studies explored in Part Two of this thesis. In addition to these, it draws on interviews I conducted with twelve other Filipino women not associated with the case studies. A number of these women had previously been in violent relationships. Some women work in the area of domestic violence in Australia. Others work in the media or on media and communications issues. The data from the additional interviews reinforce and complement the themes and issues which emerged in the case studies. Firstly, these women's narratives illuminate how too often the media reportage *neither accurately nor adequately* portrays Filipino women and the violence they suffer. Secondly, they bring into clearer focus the *dialectics of discourse* or the way media and other discourses about Filipino women feed into and sustain each other. Thirdly, the women's narratives highlight the *social effects of media representation*. They show how portrayals such as those analysed in the case studies shape the lives of Filipino women and their social relationships. Fourthly, they reveal the *agency* Filipino women exercise within the constraints of their particular situations. Together, the case studies and these additional interviews demonstrate that the relationship between the lives of Filipino women and media images of their abuse is often one of misrepresentation and contest. As Marshall (1997:15) indicates:

The struggle is between the media image of the 'Filipina Bride' (whore, victim, manipulator) and the diverse and complex realities faced by individual Filipino women living in Australia (migrant, mother, worker, daughter, wife).

Unlike the media construction of Filipino women, these women also are not a homogeneous group as they come from diverse class, regional and educational backgrounds. They can be viewed as three subgroups:

- Five Filipino women who experienced domestic violence in a relationship with a former non-Filipino partner and now assist other women in crisis: Belinda, Georgia, Rissa, Jill and Fay.
- Four Filipino women in Australia who work around issues of domestic violence: Rosa, Ilda, Joan and Tess.
- Three Filipino women in the Philippines who have a considerable understanding of violence against Filipino women in Australia: Chat and Mavic (Isis International-Manila), and Rina (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*).

Pseudonyms are used except where the interviewee wished to use her own name. Rather than give these women specific newspaper articles to read, I asked them to talk about the articles they had read in the past so we could explore what was meaningful to them. In many instances, particularly regarding Australian newspapers, the women had already read and were familiar with some of the articles I examined in this study.

Accuracy and Adequacy

As the case studies demonstrate, the interviewees evaluated the accuracy and adequacy of media images of violence according to their lived experiences and knowledge of Filipino women they knew in abusive relationships with non-Filipino partners. There was a general feeling that Australian media portrayals failed to resonate with the lived realities of Filipino women. I am not suggesting media images bear no relationship to the real. While often they distort the lives of Filipino women, as Jolly (1997:121) argues in relation to Euro-American fantasies about Islander life, such representations ‘... are not inconsequential, precisely because they are an instrumental part of the processes of colonization, militarism and neo-colonial dependency’. It is largely due to these structural processes that a ‘marriage trade’ in Filipino women exists and thrives.

Journalism as a Patriarchal and Racist Gaze

First, the interviewees clearly identified as inaccurate and inadequate the way mail order bride discourse is used consistently to portray Filipino women and their experiences. This process serves to conceal, among other things, the fact that Filipino women are not a homogeneous group but come from diverse backgrounds, as do the non-Filipinos they marry. In some or all of the articles I examined about their deaths or disappearance, the seven women in the case studies were portrayed as mail order brides through signifiers of the discourse: bride, mail order, pen friend and gold-digger. Although the articles in Teresita Andalis' case study did not construct her as a 'mail order bride', she is represented thus in Dibben's (1995:66, 95) article 'Murder By Mail-Order'. Second, journalists' use of mail order bride discourse to explain abuse was seen as inaccurate because it misrepresents violence as the women's own fault. It is fundamentally flawed since it shifts the burden of responsibility from the perpetrator onto the victim. Third, every woman I interviewed spoke vehemently about the media fallacy of the Filipina and her migration as the source of violence. This is regarded as a racist and sexist myth which turns on the notion of poor, stupid, submissive, sexually accommodating and desperate women who will do anything and put up with anything, even violence, for a 'better life' in Australia. As Belinda wryly remarks about abusive non-Filipino male partners, it is '... more like the need for them to use that Filipina [to improve] their own lifestyle'. Although the interviewees spoke from varying positions of political consciousness, all saw sexism, racism and the abuse of male power as the root causes of violence rather than the presence of Filipino women in Australia.

In discussing these distorted and sensationalised constructions of Filipino women's abuse in the accounts of media and abusive non-Filipino partners, Rissa illuminates some of the main themes that arise out of the case studies:

I think media generally is unfair in reporting violence against Filipino women. It comes across to me ... these Filipinas deserved it. That they've done something that's why they were hit ... [T]hey are misrepresenting most Filipinas [as 'mail order brides'] ... when in fact, like the rest of the women in the world, we are all individual ... [T]hese men think that just because the Filipino women came from a poor country that they will put up with anything ... the poor women owe them for the rest of their lives because they have been rescued ... [T]hey believed that they have the right to abuse ... they have to be grateful for being able to come to Australia. And many of these Filipinas think ... they have to put up with the abuse ... And if [they] will not do that, then they will be branded as no good ... And the media tend to play this up or make it worse by writing that because of our race that's why this happened (July 1999).

The notion Filipino women should be grateful for 'being saved' highlights the dynamics of violence in the relationships of Gene Bongcodin and Charles Schembri, and Annabel Strzelecki and Jim Strzelecki. It is also present in media images of Gene's abuse.

Like the women in the case studies, Georgia saw her 'better life' in Australia as having happiness in a loving marriage. Her ex-husband saw his marriages to Georgia and four other Filipino women as rescuing them from poverty. They, in gratitude, were expected to serve him totally. Georgia discussed her abuse and how journalists often recast Filipino women as the abusive partner when they leave violent relationships:

[H]e say that you have to serve me ... Give him a bath, clean everything, pick up the clothes ... [H]e go [to the Philippines] like an angel. When we arrive here, the devil ... He said to me ... 'you have to do what you're told to or get out ... But you have to leave the baby here you cannot bring it. You can do what you want but leave the baby here' ... I can't leave the baby ... He go there and said 'I'm rich' ... But he live in a caravan when he come to Australia ... They pretend that they can give you a better life ... But when I arrive in Australia it's the other way around. A worse life not better life ... And then the media ... said, 'oh they're bad ... because they come here and leave the husband after a while if they are already Australian citizen' (August 1999).

Georgia's story of life with a violent man and the media inversion of victim and abuser—blaming the victim for her abuse—display marked similarities with Gene Bongcodin's story. For men and media in both stories, Australia *is* the better life for Filipino women, even if they are subjected to violence.

Most of the interviewees described how journalists repeatedly misrepresent the abuse of Filipino women by shifting attention away from the perpetrator and onto some

aspect of the woman's characteristics or behaviour—Nenita as a butterfly, her abortion; Gene's 'life in the fast lane', using Schembri as a passport, sending money to the Philippines; Rosalina using Keir as a 'ticket to a better life'; Marylou's 'lifestyle'; Elma's part in a 'stormy', 'unhappy' marriage, are examples of this process. Attacking such racist and sexist notions, Joan reinscribes the perpetrator as the source of abuse:

... the media ... think that, 'oh this woman will suffer because she got married to one who is much older than her'. And that's not true. Age doesn't matter ... [i]t's really their ... intolerable behaviour ... If they get angry with someone on the streets ... they don't beat them up. But then, just for a little thing within the house ... if they don't get what they want they beat up their wife. So that's actually a very wrong presentation of the media ... Although I believe that maybe these men are racist because they think that we are black or we are brown so that they can do anything with us ... (August 1999).

Joan challenges the common belief only socially inadequate men (like those 'old blokes' who marry young Filipino women) are violent towards their female partners. She thus opens up the issue of institutionalised violence against women in Australia.

Cultural Insensitivity in Reporting

Australian journalists were often perceived to exhibit cultural insensitivity when discussing Filipino women and violence. Although there is an abundance of culturally sensitive material on the subject readily available, overall it does not seem to inform their writing on the abuse of Filipino women. Journalists frequently display cultural insensitivity in reporting violence by using certain words, for example calling Nenita a butterfly, and in their construction of cultural values and practices. Rosa explains:

[The media portrays the violence as] their fault, why did they come here? Why don't they just go back? Why wouldn't they want to go back to their own country? So they don't look at the problem of that even—the loss of face, the loss of hope, the loss of meaning, especially if they've got children, and also if they were thinking of helping their extended family back home ... why is it that people might think that's not a value they would themselves approve of, or adhere to, but they are valid values for certain cultures (July 1999).

Both Schembri and journalists demonised and devalued Gene's action in sending money back home to her family in the Philippines. However, as Rosa indicates, it is a significant Filipino cultural practice and tradition of family support.

Failure to Address Structural Factors

Most of the Australian articles about the women in the case studies described their migration to Australia as simply a result of poverty. Joan and Chat saw this failure to effectively address the structural processes that encourage Filipino women's migration as a major inadequacy in media images of their abuse. As this study contends, male violence against Filipino women in Australia needs to be situated in terms of factors such as neo-colonialism and international relations. Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:2) argue these factors shape women's positions in the Philippines, encourage their emigration and constitute their vulnerability to abuse by foreign males. Joan expressed strongly:

I expect [Australian media] to do a bit of research ... We were actually taken advantage [of] by so many people who colonised us. And we were already misrepresented as being 'third world' country people and just being poor but they did not know how we became poor. It's not only the [natural] calamities that are always affecting us but also the colonisation ... [T]he western countries ... come to the Philippines and give some capital there or lure us to borrow money from them ... And they know we cannot repay it ... So why don't the media give us a bit of background on why we are here, on why we are poor, on why we have to come out to Australia (August 1999).

Chat points out that while there is an overall absence of attention to issues of migration in Australian reports of Filipino women and violence, activists in the Philippines have helped raise the consciousness of journalists there about the issues:

[The Australian media] doesn't address immigration, the push factors, the situation of women when they come to Australia ... understanding what the women go through ... here [in the Philippine media] there's more discussion around ... migration and women, why Filipino women migrate ... [T]he people's movement ... have probably made it an issue [and] a point of discussion that they don't just accept migration and that there are ... social consequences of migration (January 2000).

This activism around migration issues in the Philippines helps explain some of the differences in reporting between Australian and Philippine media.

Obscuring the Complexity of the Issues

There was a strong perception in these women's narratives that the problem of media portrayal of violence in Filipino cross-cultural marriages was as much due to the inability or refusal of journalists to deal with the complexity of the issues. Ilda felt the tendency to frame the women's migration for marriage exclusively in terms of poverty failed to capture their multifaceted realities. For the women in the case studies, migration and marriage was not simply about economics. All interviews suggest they loved their husbands and hoped to establish families in a caring relationship. While economics is often a major factor in a Filipino woman's decision to marry an Australian resident, in most cases it is not the only factor. It is never the whole picture:

... it is true that there is an economic push to some of the marriages and it is very difficult to explain it to other people ... at the same time not to portray a woman as a manipulator and as a gold-digger ... It's normal for anybody to want economic stability ... Middle class people want to be economically secure, let alone poor people ... There's a lot of poverty in the Philippines, so it's normal for us to want to improve ourselves economically and financially but that doesn't mean we become manipulators or gold-diggers when we go into a relationship with another person ... (Ilda July 1999).

Another way journalists obscure the complexity of the issues is by not addressing the racist dimension of violence against Filipino women. Tessa notes:

It's usually the really severe kind of physical or social abuse that's portrayed. And therefore Filipino women don't recognise the other forms of abuse ... [T]here was a lot of racial abuse clearly because they came from a 'third world country', from a poor province ... Anglo-Australian husbands ... think it's a joke ... they don't see it as part of the controlling and the put-downs ... that would impact upon the way the children would relate to her too (August 1999).

While most of the articles about the women in the case studies did not recognise the previous violence in their relationships, the racist dimension of their abuse was never

acknowledged. Yet, Teresita's killer, David Mathiesen, deliberately chose a Filipino woman to murder. Charles Schembri and Jim Strzelecki both sought docile and submissive wives from the Philippines they thought they could control and abuse.

Media Fallacy of the 'Poor Filipina'

The interviewees frequently remarked about how the Australian and Philippine media misrepresented abused Filipino women as helpless victims. This is what I call the media fallacy of the 'poor Filipina'. Unlike some feminists, I do not have a problem with using the term victim. Filipino women, like women from other ethnic backgrounds, are sometimes the victims of horrendous abuse which may severely restrict their opportunities to act. It may even result in their deaths. However, it is erroneous to inscribe women within a victim discourse—to fix them in a permanent state of victimhood with no other identity, no hope, and no sense of agency. Teresita, Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel all struggled in various ways to do something about the oppression they experienced at the hands of their abusive male partners. Yet, in most articles, their struggles were not highlighted.

According to Roces (1998:2; 1996:145, 150), the view of Filipino women as victims obscures the blurring between victim and agency; while women are often victims, they have other roles and actively participate in the wider society. For example, many women working in women's refuges were themselves victims of domestic violence. They use their knowledge of abuse and survival to organise around violence and empower other women in abusive relationships. In Australia, the Philippines and other countries, women in and out of crisis establish groups and networks to support each other and exchange information and resources. Nenita Westhof, Marylou Orton and Elma Young, for instance, used their own experiences of domestic violence to

support other women in crisis. Fay and Mavic make clear that being a victim is only part of the picture. It needs to be balanced with an awareness of women's initiatives to deal with abuse. In relation to the Australian media, Fay stated:

[T]hey portray us Filipino women as stupid and not knowing what to do ... We are trying to educate ourselves. We attend conferences, seminars ... They play on the idea that we are mail order brides, that we are hopeless in our country, we come here to use men, and because of that we are prone to domestic violence. Which is not true because many Filipinas who come here are highly educated and have extensive work experience ... [W]e are capable of defending ourselves ... we're capable of understanding the law and know how to get about like other women around here ... Because we speak a different language back in the Philippines they don't realise that we are educated in English ... So that's not fair when they say that we are the poor Filipina (July 1999).

Speaking about the Philippine media, Mavic said:

[T]here's a lack or even absence of attention on the initiatives of women to counter violence. A number of women's groups are already doing work to support or to help the victims or survivors of violence recover emotionally, physically ... But rarely that this has been covered. Like, for example, the work of Women's Crisis Centre or the work of KALAKASAN ... these are very positive initiatives that would change the pervasive, sexist patterns that dominate the reporting of women's issues and women's concerns in the media ... I don't have anything against them reporting cases of violence, but they would need to report accurately and they would need to highlight attempts or initiatives so women could counter this violence (January 2000).

Chat and Rina noted that while many journalists in the Philippines tend to frame violence against Filipino women in Australia and other countries in terms of the 'poor Filipina', they often downplay the abuse of women in the Philippines. Chat claimed:

And they report in terms of *our* Filipino women ... 'Oh, what are they doing to *our* Filipino women?' ... But then they don't when women in the Philippines are murdered ... are beaten up ... then the portrayal is dissimilar. It's not as if it's any different the way they sensationalise rapes and murders ... But when they are [happening] somewhere [else] in the world ... they feel—its the same same sexist thing—they own these women. That's why they have to protect them (January 2000). [emphasis added]

Rina provides more detail:

[Y]ou see a lot of self-righteous anger over the abuse of Filipino women, overseas workers or mail order brides in Australia ... because it came from the hands of a foreigner ... I rarely see a discussion that it's because he's a man and she's a woman or because she is poor and her employers are rich. It's always seen in a racial aspect like 'you know these foreigners how badly they treat our women' ... there is always that ... blindness to the local, to the links between the violence abroad and the violence here at home. And I don't think it's conscious. I think they just aren't aware or concerned about

the violence that occurs here locally ... Men have been able to frame this whole issue the way they see it. So it's always economic ... without any discussion of male responsibility ... (January 2000).

This othering of violence in terms of 'race'—abusive foreign men—suggests partner abuse happens elsewhere rather than being a daily reality for many women in the Philippines (see de Dios 1999:157-163; SIBOL 1997:8-9), as it is in most countries.

Dialectics of Discourse

Earlier in this chapter, Rissa and Georgia showed us that similar themes of victim blaming underpin both the actual violence Filipino women experience at the hands of abusive non-Filipino partners and media images of their abuse. Here I expand on the idea there is a dialectical relationship between media and other discourses about Filipino women in that they feed into and support each other, as Gene Bongcodin's case study has revealed in relation to the discourses of the court, her killer and the media. The interviewees stated that some non-Filipino men made racist and sexist remarks about their Filipina partners. It was felt this abuse was related to stereotypical media portrayals of Filipino women, an argument Filipina activists from the CPCA, FWWP and CFED, for example, have long made. It is the point of intersection between media discourse and those of non-Filipino partners, the particular ways they buttress each other, which often has harmful consequences for Filipino women. Fay explained:

And I think it's very common that those women who've gone through domestic violence have the same report. The men, their Anglo partners, always say, 'you only come from the Philippines. All of you are the same. You're all stupid. You're all the same. You're so stupid you couldn't learn this and you couldn't learn that' ... [T]he men ... believe the media ... they've got that idea that you go there because you find a slave ... You don't have to feed her, you don't have to do this and you don't have to do that. She'll just serve you hand and foot (July 1999).

Belinda's comments point out that the dialectic is not simply between media image and male partners but also involves the talk men do amongst themselves:

[I]t is the Australian men who put down the Filipino image ... [They] say to their mates ... it is easy to get these Filipinas ... [T]hey are already branded as a mail order bride. The Australian men are the ones doing the branding in the Philippines. You can hear in their conversations when they get together in their Australian Club ... My husband ... picks on the Filipina ... he mixes with Filipino-Australian married couples and these Australian men are the ones who are branding their own wives ... 'oh you are not good. You are dopey' ... [T]he things that my husband had said to me ... 'you're hopeless' and things like that, that's the same words that I hear from those Filipinas I have helped. And that flows on because this all comes from the media and the portrayal of the men going over [to the Philippines] (July 1999).

These themes are illustrative of Gene's case. In court, Schembri said a news report inspired him and his mates to go to the Philippines together to find 'submissive' wives. Gene's portrayal as a 'gold-digger' in the court and media legitimated his racist abuse.

Media Effects

Cultural meanings conveyed through media stereotypes have real and significant social effects. As Grossberg, Wartella and Whitney (1998:224) argue, stereotypes:

... can affect the self-esteem of those being stereotyped, and they can often come close to determining the way some people think of and behave toward members of the group being stereotyped.

While media representations shape and regulate people's conduct and practices, they do not determine behaviour. The same media content can be read in various ways and may have different effects on behaviour (Grossberg et al. 1998:314). The effects of any portrayal depend on the entire context of social relationships and cultural phenomena that help define and shape the construction of differences (Grossberg et al. 1998:27). This section explores the effects of media images of Filipino women's abuse, like those analysed in the case studies. As in most of the case studies, the narratives of these interviewees show how such portrayals commonly stigmatise Filipino women and construct boundaries around and between them. In so doing, they contribute to women's vulnerability to male violence. Some women spoke about more positive media effects.

Their comments remind me of the part progressive media has played in contemporary struggles to raise public awareness about the inequities of war, racism and globalisation.

Stigmatisation

Journalists who described Nenita, Gene, Rosalina and Marylou as pen pals, ‘brides’, ‘gold diggers’—women who used men as a ‘passport to a better life’—stigmatised them. According to Goffman (1963:12-13, 15) a stigmatised person is tainted, discredited and seen as not quite human. Every interviewee said the Australian media stereotyping of Filipino women as mail order brides had stigmatised all Filipino women and their marriages, even those in relationships with Filipino men. Firstly, stigmatising reporting fuels a general assumption that the violence Filipino women experience is not as bad as the abuse other women suffer. Secondly, it supports the notion Filipino women will, and indeed should, put up with anything because of their desperation to escape the Philippines for *the better life* in Australia. Lastly, the portrayals strengthen ideas that Filipino women both deserve and cause the abuse they experience.

Stigmatising media portrayals of Filipino women and violence affect Filipino women’s standing in the wider Australian community. Rissa claimed they discredit the women and invalidate their stories of abuse:

[A]s a [refuge] worker, I helped two Filipino women from a domestic violence situation and it was reported twice to the police and there was no record [made] of it ... [W]hen the police came, the husband said there was no problem and everything was okay. The Filipino woman said ‘no, no, no wait I have a complaint ...’ The police just left. He didn’t even want to listen to her ... the police sometimes I think behaved the way they do because of what they’ve heard or what they’ve read in the media. They don’t respect us as much as Australian women maybe because they think that we will just put up with anything ... No one will believe the women because there’s already a stereotype in the community that we deserve it, that we must have done something to be abused (July 1999).

The media stigmatisation of Filipino women as ‘mail order brides’—as women who cause their own suffering—was perceived as a particular problem for Filipino

women in abusive cross-cultural relationships. Firstly, such portrayals contribute to the reluctance of many Filipino women to discuss their abuse and the general unwillingness of the broader Filipino communities to acknowledge domestic violence:

Filipinas try to address a lot of the issues. They try to get assistance for the women. But there are people in the community that don't really want to make it too well known because of the stereotyping and the shame involved with being a Filipino woman ... [T]here are some people who just don't want to talk about the violence being perpetrated on Filipino women because of the stereotyping and the stigma that they experience (Tessa August 1999).

Ilda elaborates on this theme. Public discussion of domestic violence is seen as strengthening the negative image which is already in circulation in media and other popular discourses. This is analogous to some Aboriginal people's position on the domestic violence in their communities. They are often reluctant to speak out due to a (very real) concern that public exposure would legitimate stereotypes. She explains:

There was actually at one point a backlash against Filipino workers who kept on harping about the issue of domestic violence on Filipino women because the general Filipino community felt that it was portraying a bad image ... [M]y employer in the Filipino welfare community himself could not understand why I was paying so much attention to the issue of domestic violence on Filipino women. He felt that ... the Filipino community didn't need any more information about domestic violence because it was bad news and it was portraying us in a bad light. It has to be put into context ... with the Filipino value system ... There are two factors ... fear, which is '*takot*', and shame, which is '*hiya*'. They don't want anything that would put them to shame. They don't want anything that will make them fearful as a community. So the issue of domestic violence on Filipino women was a source of shame for the general Filipino community ... some of them didn't want to actually have anything to do with the kind of work we were doing to highlight that it was a problem because they wanted to ignore it as a problem ... If the media portrayal wasn't so negative, then the general Filipino community would have been more co-operative in dealing with the issue. But because it was so negative then they preferred to just lie low and brush it aside because it was too problematic (July 1999).

Ilda felt the reluctance to acknowledge the problem:

... would put more women in danger. And that would also put more fear into some of these women because if they approach other people for help and then the people would say 'oh that's not really a problem' then the woman would not approach people for help anymore because they're saying it's not a problem. 'Who can I turn to then?' So, yes, it becomes a cycle (July 1999).

These comments support the research of Woelz-Stirling, Kelaher and Manderson (1998:289, 293) which found the stigmatisation of Filipino women limits public discourse on domestic violence and has led to an underreporting of abuse.

Secondly, the stigmatising portrayals contribute to the decision of some Filipino women to stay in a violent relationship:

... a lot of Filipino women get self-conscious about being in an [abusive] cross-cultural marriage and being seen to be like one of those women ... [T]hey'd feel a lot of embarrassment and shame if their friends knew about what was happening or whether their friends would even support them leaving ... [W]ord gets around very quickly ... the embarrassment and feeling like you're being looked at or being judged by what was being reported in the newspaper (Tessa August 1999).

This is not to suggest negative media portrayal is the only or even the major issue here. Many factors encourage women to stay or leave abuse, such as fear of further violence, feelings for the perpetrator, concern for children, the racism of courts, police and housing authorities, and lack of alternatives regarding economic support and housing.

Construction of Boundaries

The Australian media's stigmatisation of Filipino women is closely related to the construction of boundaries which, in turn, hinges on the notion of being 'out of place'. The case studies of Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel have shown that images of mail order brides construct boundaries between Filipino women and other women in Australia. The interviewees in this chapter highlight how these portrayals also divide Filipino women from each other. Boundary construction in itself has important social effects. According to Opatow (1990:1-6) and Erikson (1962:309-310), human groups construct boundaries to differentiate between experiences that belong within their group and those forms that lie outside its borders. While considerations of fairness and justice apply to those included within the group's boundaries, those excluded are located beyond the scope of justice. Harming or

exploiting them, thus, appears legitimate (Opatow 1990:1-4), as does inaction to address such abuse. Boundary construction, both external and internal, has particular consequences for Filipino women already in abusive relationships.

Belinda points to the construction of external boundaries. She contends that negative portrayals of Filipino women isolate them from other women. Isolation makes it difficult for abused women to seek outside help:

The media portrayal affects a Filipina in violent situation, that's why they cannot ask for help. Because the neighbour themselves isolate them ... those of the neighbourhood would say, 'oh that's your fault because you cannot speak in English'. And that's what other Filipinas said to me 'oh my neighbour won't even know about me because I'm Filipina'. Because they read it in the newspaper and they watch it on the television so they know where we come from ... that makes the Filipina more isolated and they are very vulnerable to any violence because of the media portraying all of this. They're more vulnerable to be killed by the husband and to take their own life (July 1999).

Internal boundary construction is the way dominant media images of Filipino women and violence help create divisions amongst Filipino women. Rosa explained that some Filipino women, particularly those who had come to Australia as independent migrants, practiced social distancing from Filipina victims of domestic violence:

I noticed in the eighties that some professional middle class Filipino women's response [to the media portrayal] is to distance themselves from the victims because what concerns them more is how it affects their social standing in the Australian community in general. They left the Philippines to start a new life. They don't want any development that would be a barrier to their obtaining better ... employment prospects, and would like that they be held in high esteem by other members of the community (July 1999).

Speaking about a consultative meeting of Filipino women about Filipino women's migration and settlement in Australia, Rosa remarked about some of the participants:

... they were concerned about the image of Filipino women because from a middle class point of view they felt that the criticism of Filipino women as being victims of domestic violence as if they're problems or they're uneducated ... doesn't reflect their status ... [T]hey probably wanted to help out ... but I think they were more concerned about the erosion of their status ... [M]ost ... just wanted to be invisible because of the racism that existed ... they would rather not attract attention. So this kind of media publicity was putting them in the limelight because they would be tarnished with the same brush ... So it's really very hard on the poor victims ... because they wouldn't get the support from their own people (July 1999).

The boundaries constructed here obscure the fact that domestic violence occurs in all social classes. The intersection of gender, 'race', class and violence in women's lives and media images increases Filipino women's vulnerability to male abuse.

Chat's story of internal boundary construction reveals how media portrayals of Filipino women and violence divide Filipino communities into two main groups. The first group sees the issue of domestic violence as negative. It avoids discussing abuse and assisting victims. The second group wants to address the problem of (male) violence. The Justice for Gene Bongcodin and Justice for Elma Young campaigns are excellent examples of how Filipinos and their supporters have mobilised around the issue of domestic homicides and violence. Chat notes that while the media portrayal divided the community it also helped unite Filipinos in the struggle against domestic violence:

[I]t has been an issue in the Filipino community ... and it has divided the community. Some [are] very supportive, but others would say, even the women who are married to Australian men, ... 'why do you keep talking about negative issues. This provides negativity. It's not true. We are all happy, very happy' ... But on the other hand, it has also galvanised the Filipino community in Australia. If it hadn't been for the actions [of] the Filipino women's organisations in Australia, the issues wouldn't have been uncovered. There wouldn't have been that attention to the issues (January 2000).

Here we can see the heterogeneity and ambivalence of media effects. They limit public discussion of domestic violence while inciting people to struggle around the issue.

Raising Consciousness

Some of the women discussed how media could be a positive technology of information in raising consciousness about violence. Like Sarah stated about the Philippine reports of Teresita Andalis' murder, Chat felt the Philippine coverage of Filipino women and violence in Australia had raised awareness about the issue in the Philippines:

... there's now more consciousness around the issues of Filipino women in Australia [in the Philippines] ... [T]here have been times when I was in the Australian Embassy

talking to women there, and asking women who are moving to Australia to marry, if they are aware of the issues, or possible violence. They are aware of the murders ... If that's an indication, I would suppose that it did increase the consciousness of people here around violence against women in Australia ... (January 2000).

Heightened awareness could help save women's lives. This acknowledgment of the positive aspects of media reportage of violence, however, was often contextualised in terms of its harmful effects. Jill points to the way such portrayals have the potential to inform and assist Filipino women but also further stigmatise and harm them:

You can take it positively, not positively, but at least the issue is raised in that context that we are not really safe here. I've taken that step in the Philippines that just because you happen to be overseas, whichever country, it doesn't mean that you are safe from domestic violence. Not that it will happen to you, but just be aware of that. That's what I said [in the Philippine newspapers]. And just be prepared and what to do if that happens. So that's the positive aspect of having that in the media. On the negative side was the presentation of domestic violence. The injustice of the presentation, the biased opinion, can also otherwise affect the family and the children (August 1999).

As it did the families and friends of Nenita, Gene, Rosalina and Marylou.

Agency

The women's narratives further illuminate the theme of Filipino women's agency which emerged in the case studies. Filipino women, like all women, are never total victims. Even when they are victims of extreme violence, other facets of their lives take them beyond absolute victimhood. Teresita, Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel were also beloved mothers, daughters, sisters and friends, as well as workers, community volunteers and activists. The lives of these women demonstrate that Filipino women are not simply passive victims of male abuse. Smith (1988a; 1988b:38-39) argues that women make choices and take an active part in the construction of their social world. However, as this thesis makes clear, there are structural restraints on the ways Filipino women can act. Male violence is a major factor. The racist and sexist culture of the Australian tabloid press and lack of access to media space is another.

Marylou Orton's activism involved membership in CPCA and CFED. Her participation in the Justice for Gene Bongcodin campaign and theatre performance directly contested media stereotyping of Filipino women and their abuse. Similarly, Georgia shows through example that stereotypes of Filipino women and violence are flawed. She is a member of the Filipino women's theatre group, Buklod Ng Kababaihang Filipina. Georgia has used media in a positive way to inform Filipino women of their rights, educate the general public about the abuse of Filipino women, and challenge negative media images:

I had my interview [with] the media ... And by doing that some women learn ... And white people wake up that ... what the media report is not right. What the white husband say that the Filipina are bad, they do my interview to wake up that everything is not that. And we have that organisation ... Buklod ... Nick Bolkus [the government minister responsible for migration] send me a letter and say thank you to speak out to help other Filipino women ... It is a good lesson for everyone, especially white people ... because they think that we are all bad. We are gold-digger ... (August 1999).

Joan gives more detail on the remarkable work of Buklod around violence and media:

We have to analyse the media portrayal, the domestic violence ... so we can come up with a theatre group to educate people ... And we have been performing everywhere ... the educators on domestic violence here used us, like the Domestic Violence Unit under the Attorney General's office ... And we were ... involved in the producing of the video film that's being shown in the Embassy and also in the Department of Immigration in the Philippines to educate migrants coming to Australia ... [T]hese women ... decided to plan an educational media because we know that the media is ignorant or they are not doing their part to educate people ... They are very courageous women. They decide this is the only way we can educate ... on what kind of people we are. So this theatre group really is very effective in ... letting them know that this is how we were abused. So that in itself is a statement of their coming out into the open. And also challenging the media. That's a media in itself (August 1999).

While highly critical of the media, Joan strongly expressed that media is an important means of educating people and passing on information. Like Dee Hunt, Melba Marginson, other members of CPCA, and Debbie Wall and FWWP, Joan negotiates with the media and has developed good working relationships with sympathetic journalists. Her skill in using media to expose male violence is particularly impressive and effective. She explains:

... I said 'why do you only talk about the woman in the negative way and the man in a positive way' ... I would actually challenge that and I would even ask them to also interview the men in their unguarded moments ... So men actually were interviewed by journalists with our conditions and we involved ourselves also in that interview ... If you will watch the video of these television interviews you will see how the men get angry. They say that they are very good men. They are kind or they have given so much to the woman or they've been men who were not violent. They are loving ... very generous. But then in these interviews you will notice that they are not ... [you] can see on video or in the television that these men are capable of getting very angry and very violent (August 1999).

Mavic too has cultivated productive relationships with journalists, such as Rina Jimenez-David, in her struggle to counter media images of Filipino women and violence. As part of her work at Isis International-Manila, Mavic educates media practitioners about the need for gender sensitivity in reporting:

We emphasize the need, especially for NGOs, to establish and cultivate that relationship with the media if you want to really make media as an ally. And we need to. We have no choice. It's a very significant social institution that could be used as a tool to advance women's status and at the same time could hinder the advancement of that status. And in the conferences that we've organised, for example, we always emphasise that and we always talk of strategies ... And we even invited people from the media who are at decision making level positions ... We also encourage them to come up, not only with general gender sensitive kind of reporting or programming, but with women-focus kind of media productions (January 2000).

Despite structural constraints, such as racist and sexist cultures of the Australian tabloid press, sexist and national chauvinist cultures of the Philippine tabloid press, and difficulties in accessing media space, these women found ways to challenge portrayals of Filipino women and violence. Their efforts make clear that media images are not simply reflections of Filipino women's realities but rather sites of conflict.

Conclusion

This chapter has drawn on additional interviews with Filipino women which summarise and reinforce the main themes and issues that emerged in the case studies. It further illuminates the problems of representation that arise when journalists use racist, sexist and class-based discourses such as 'mail order bride' to portray Filipino women and

their abuse. These discourses sensationalise the issues. Such portrayals may contribute to Filipino women's vulnerability to male violence. The women's narratives support the argument made in the case studies; although the relationship between Filipino women's lives and media images of their abuse is often one of misrepresentation, it also involves struggle and conflict over meaning. It is a site of contested realities. Their narratives reaffirm what the case studies made clear. While every woman's story is unique, they all have common threads.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN
CRYSTALLISING AUSTRALIAN AND PHILIPPINE MEDIA
REPRESENTATIONS OF VIOLENCE

In this chapter, I bring together and summarise the key themes and processes which emerged from the thesis. I not only draw on the articles referred to in the case studies but additional ones as well. The additional articles further highlight the concepts and themes drawn out in the case studies. Firstly, they illuminate how media discourses of gender, 'race' and class construct Filipino women and their abuse. Secondly, the analysis highlights similarities and differences between Australian and Philippine portrayals. As the case studies have made clear, not all media are the same, either within countries or between countries, a point I address towards the end of this chapter. While often invoking stereotypes of Filipino women, the Philippine articles I examined were not as overtly sexist or racist as most of the Australian representations. The differences between these images of violence must be seen in light of the historical, social and structural processes discussed in Chapter Three. Their points of difference further elucidate the gendered class-based racism of many Australian journalists.

Mail Order Bride Discourse

'Mail order bride' is the dominant theme in the Australian articles examined in this thesis. These articles construct Filipino women as an imagined community in Anderson's (1983:15) sense of the term. That is, they are all 'mail order brides' and, as such, are likely to be victims of violence. This is the case even when the article itself contains information that undermines the notion. Such reporting takes the form of a moral panic. Cohen (1980:9) describes this phenomenon as when a:

... condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people ...

‘Mail Order Brides’ and Violence

A good example is Lowe’s (1988:3) article on abused ‘Filipina mail order brides’ which featured in the *Weekend Australian* in 1988. Sensationally titled ‘Mail-Order Misery’, it repeatedly uses the term ‘mail order bride’ to construct identity, practices and social relationships. Lowe’s descriptions of Nolita illustrate:

Nolita is a mail order bride who left her native Philippines 18 months ago to escape poverty for the chance of a better life for herself and financial support for the family she left behind ... I met Nolita at a social gathering of former residents of a women’s refuge in Melbourne that *caters specifically for bashed and abused Filipina mail-order brides*. Her story of the cruelty meted out by her husband matched in substance, if not in detail, the narratives of other mail-order brides at the gathering ... [H]er narrative [was] occasionally interrupted by the squeals of the numerous Filipino-Australian children who fill the room at the gathering of abused mail-order brides (1988:3) [emphasis added].

While ethnic specific refuges certainly do exist in Australia, none cater for *abused Filipina mail-order brides*. Like Dibben’s (1995:66, 95) article ‘Murder By Mail-Order’, and the reporting of Annabel Strzelecki’s disappearance, Lowe uses the term ‘mail order bride’ synonymously with Filipino woman. From the outset, Lowe implies that all Filipino women who marry Australian residents are mail order brides. However, the article contains textual incoherencies. Lowe cites Father Byrne, who I interviewed as part of this study. In the following passage, Father Byrne is clearly talking about marriages between Filipino women and non-Filipino men. Yet, Lowe (1988:3) reconstructs these relationships as ‘mail order’:

The only major study on the subject shows that not all mail-order marriages end like those of the women forced to flee to refuges. A Catholic priest in Brisbane, Father Paul Byrne, believes only about 10 per cent of these marriages follow this road to disaster ... He found that *the mail order bride agencies ... accounted for only about 30 per cent of the marriages. Most couples were introduced by friends and relatives, many of whom had earlier mail-order marriages* [emphasis added].

This blurring of Filipino woman and ‘mail order bride’ continued through the 1990s. In 1991, the headline of Dempsey’s (1991:12-13) *Sun-Herald* article, ‘Filipino Brides: Eleven Killed in Australia’, represented the Filipina homicide victims as mail order brides. Her article includes Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Gene Bongcodin and Rosalina Canonizado. Dempsey’s (1991:13) statement that ‘... [a]dvertising for brides in the Philippines has been banned [b]ut it is still legal in Australia’ strengthens the notion even though the article indicates otherwise. For example, she refers to Charles Schembri’s killing of Gene ‘... a hairdresser he met in the Philippines’ (Dempsey 1991:13). While the play on ‘brides’ and ‘killed’ in the headline suggests Nenita was murdered by her husband, Dempsey identifies Antonio Curado as the killer. Some of the deceased women mentioned had been married for a number of years or separated from their partners and can hardly be called ‘brides’.

Whiting’s (1999:20-21) report in the *Sunday Mail*, ‘Click Here For Your Dream Girl’, is characteristic of how violence against Filipino women has been portrayed in the Australian media in recent years. The article incorporates a discussion about the Filipino women who were killed or had disappeared. Whiting continually conflates Filipino woman with ‘mail order bride’. Her opening statement describes women as ‘e-mail order brides’. She goes on to further commodify the women:

Want a bride from the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Russia, Vietnam, Moldova, South America, Mexico or even Kazakhstan? Just click on the country of your choice—there appears to be a ‘special’ on Korean women—and home-shop your way through the images of hundreds of potential partners (Whiting 1999:20).

The article suggests all marriages between Filipino women and non-Filipino men are ‘mail order’ transactions regardless of how the women migrated to Australia:

Of course, business deals involving human transactions are nothing new. Mail order brides were first brought to the United States from Japan in the early 1900s and, it must be said, many successful and happy unions have been, and continue to be, brokered. According to the Philippines Government, for example, about 95% of Filipino/Australian marriages are successful ... (Whiting 1999:20).

Moreover, Filipino women are a special category of ‘mail order bride’. While Russian partners are women, ‘Asian’ wives are ‘girls’:

The demise of the Soviet Union has seen a marked increase in the number of *Russian women* looking for husbands in the West, particularly in the United States. There, the demand for Russian partners is now higher than for *Asian girls*, but in Australia, Asia, particularly the Philippines, continues to be the major supplier of mail order wives (Whiting 1999:20) [emphasis added].

By evoking ‘mail order bride’ discourse, these three articles, like many of the articles about Nenita, Rosalina, Gene, Marylou, Elma and Annabel, suggest a ‘contractual’ basis to a Filipino woman’s relationship with her non-Filipino partner. They recast such relationships as commodity transactions akin to prostitution and devoid of romantic love. The articles draw on western ideas of contract. They imply that a Filipino woman can be ‘discarded’ or ‘returned’ if she is not up to scratch. As Pateman (1988:231) points out in relation to the sexual contract, the husband or client who contracts the service ‘... must have the right to command that a body is put to use, or access to the body is made available, in the requisite manner’. Lowe (1988:3), Dempsey (1991:12-13) and Whiting (1999:20-21) may have endeavoured to present sympathetic accounts about the abuse of Filipino women. Nevertheless, they sustain the dominant stereotype of the women as commodities, subservient (‘girls’ not women), opportunists and poor—people who are prepared to do anything to escape poverty.

Sexualising Violence, Poverty and Victimhood

Media reports that draw on mail order bride discourse tend to sexualise Filipino women’s experiences of violence and poverty. They construct an eroticisation of victimhood. For instance, Nenita, Gene and Marylou were often portrayed as sexually immoral and their poverty was highlighted. Dibben’s (1995:66, 95) article sets up an association between Teresita, Nenita and Elma and sex tours in the Philippines. Whiting

and Dempsey make similar connections between sex, violence and poverty.¹ By linking the deceased Filipino women with the sex industries in the Philippines and Australia, Dempsey (1991:12) constructs Teresita, Nenita, Gene and Rosalina as erotic victims:

Melbourne Filipinas were the first to begin protesting about the killings in their state. Melba Marginson, from the Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development, explained her group was lobbying for an end to 'sex tours' and the closure of two Filipino-style girlie bars in Melbourne which feature go-go girls dancing in bikinis.

Whiting's (1999:20-21) opening statement likewise eroticises victimhood:

They're young, beautiful, desperate and caught in a world wide web. They're e-mail order brides. And they're yours at the click of a button.

Non-Filipino Partners

The media represent non-Filipino male partners of 'mail order brides' in relation to a particular discourse on Filipino women. Australian articles often stereotype these men as socially inadequate abusers of a desirable woman. However, the articles in the case studies did not do so. Jimmy Westhof and Antonio Curado (Nenita), Charles Schembri (Gene), Thomas Keir (Rosalina), John Orton and Raymond Henry (Marylou) and Paul Young (Elma) were frequently portrayed as victims of women who abused them. Given the heterogeneity of mail order bride discourse with its shifting identities of Filipino women, male partners were sometimes portrayed as brutal men who dominated the lives of Filipino women. This is the case for David Mathiesen (Teresita), Jim Strzelecki (Annabel) and Paul Young (Elma). Young was portrayed as both victim and abuser.

¹ One of the more disturbing examples of the sexualising of violence and poverty I came across during my research was in *Australian Penthouse*, a pornographic magazine. It involves the juxtaposition of two articles titled 'Lust: Battered Husbands' (Bentley 1988:18, 144) and 'Smoky Mountain' (Allen 1988:79). Bentley's (1988:18, 144) article on the battered 'mail order grooms' of Filipino women connects poverty and sex with the women's 'abuse' of their non-Filipino partners. In talking about 'abusive' Filipino wives, Bentley (1988:18) states '... marriage to a foreigner *does* offer escape from an impoverished country where social welfare is a bad joke'. In the middle of his article is the piece on Smoky Mountain. Allen (1988:79) writes, Smoky Mountain '... is a rubbish dump, and the Earth's most squalid human habitat—home to more than 3000 Filipinos'. It is also a very violent place where '[d]eath is close' (Allen 1988:79). Pages of glossy pictures of human misery are a major feature and they highlight the poverty Bentley mentions. While poverty is sexualised by its very appearance in a pornographic magazine, the juxtaposing of the two articles further strengthens the nexus between sex, violence and poverty.

Philippine Articles

Journalists in the Philippines also use mail order bride discourse when reporting the homicides of Filipino women in Australia, as Bagares (1995:1, 5) does in discussing Teresita and Elma. But, rather than sexualising violence, they tend to frame the discourse as a warning to Filipino women on the dangers of marrying foreign men. The *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (1991:1) article, 'Bridal Path to Better Life May Also Lead To Tragedy', suggests such marriages pose a threat to the women's safety. The *Manila Chronicle* (1993:4) editorial, 'Outrage is Not Enough', expresses a similar warning:

The cases of Mila Wills and 14 other Filipinas killed by their spouses in Australia bring to the fore the plight of thousands of Filipino women forced to settle in strange lands, marry for convenience and lead lives of total vulnerability because of their gender and nationality ... Apart from actual deaths and mutilations, there are those who have lost sanity or who nurse deep psychological wounds. The situation is particularly severe among the so-called 'mail order brides'. Women in this category marry foreigners to escape the poverty. It is usual that they agree to marriage before having met their spouses. They build houses where no love is shared—where, more often, there is constant annoyance rather than fondness. The alien cultural milieu merely compounds the social, psychological and physical burden these women are constrained to bear. Few survive such an arrangement without very deep emotional scars.

Philippine articles, like Australian media, represent non-Filipino partners of 'mail order brides' in stereotypical terms. Rather than victims of Filipino women, however, the dominant image of these men in Filipino newspapers is the inadequate misfit. For example, writing about Gene's death, Orozco (1991:5) describes Charles Schembri as '... an unstable man with a criminal record ...' As the *Manila Chronicle* (1993:4) makes clear:

Those who were married via 'mail-order' to Europeans, in the main, discover they have contracted themselves out to socially maladjusted or physically deformed men who have little means for contracting marriage by normal means.

In the *Manila Bulletin*, de la Torre (1989:8) more pointedly describes Australian husbands as 'semi-savage male foreigners' who insure 'our Filipino girls' and kill them for money. It is highly likely that Teresita's murder informed his reporting.

Construction of Boundaries

I have demonstrated throughout this thesis that the Australian media construct boundaries by using ‘mail order bride’ discourse to represent Filipino women and violence. In various ways, the seven women in the case studies were differentiated from other women in Australia. In Chapter Twelve, I showed how such portrayals construct boundaries for other Filipino women and the impact this has on their lives. In summarising the key themes from the thesis, I return here to look at the process of boundary construction at the point of the image. Media representation defines the ‘normal’ and marks boundaries (Bonwick 1996:63). As a marker of difference, the ‘Other’ in the Australian media allows ‘us’ to define ‘... what ‘we’ are not ...’ (see Jakubowicz et al. 1994:72-73). For example, in describing the homicides of Filipino women, Dempsey (1991:12) states that the ‘... deaths are often quite bizarre ...’ The ‘normality’ of death becomes a boundary marker. The ‘difference’ of the women encapsulated in the expression ‘bizarre’ sets them apart from other murdered women. However, there is nothing ‘bizarre’ about their deaths. Teresita, Nenita and Gene were killed by their partners or ex-partners, as is the case for most female victims of homicide in Australia (see Women’s Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:1-2).

Images of Filipino women and violence frequently sexualise and racialise boundaries. Whiting’s (1999:20) Filipina ‘e-mail order bride’ is a good example:

Like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle coming together, the pretty young face of Loly Ana Macarrio slowly appears on the screen ... the world wide web.

The image of Loly Ana’s *pretty young face slowly coming together* is racially and erotically charged. Like Rowett and Edmondson’s (1987:1) description of Nenita as a ‘butterfly’, and Kennedy’s (1992:31) image of Marylou as a ‘moth to a flame’, it evokes an image of an(other) exotic woman, Salome, and her sexual dance of the seven veils.

Desire and Fear

The themes of desire and fear are central to understanding both Filipino women's lived realities and media images of their abuse. In the Australian media overall, Filipino women, like Nenita, Gene, Rosalina and Marylou, are often both objects of desire and fear: erotic victims and scheming 'gold-diggers'; wife and sex object. The media's ambivalent portrayal of these women in terms of *desire and fear of the 'exotic' other* is directly related to the heterogeneity of mail order bride discourse. Game (1991:169) captures this play between desire and fear when she argues our '... relation to nature as other is one of ambivalence: desire structured around fear. The landscape is beautiful but threatening'. Fear of and desire for Filipino women is closely related to their position as boundary markers. As Hamilton (1990:18) argues, although there is a fear of an 'Asian' entity outside the boundaries, there is also desire for her exotic otherness.

Filipino women as objects of desire are present in 'Mail-Order Misery' (Lowe, 1988:3). While Lowe (1988:3) states early in his article that men seeking brides have 'unrealistic expectations and perverted values', he later discusses Filipino women as though the myths about them as 'perfect partners' are indeed facts:

They are attracted to the prospect of marriage to a Filipina because they want an attractive wife, a good housekeeper with traditional family values who prefers to work in the house and care for the children, will remain faithful to her husband and be unlikely to walk out of the marriage and file for divorce.

An undercurrent of fear is also discernible. As women who can leave the marriage for their very own 'mail order bride refuge', Filipino women threaten 'Australian family life'. Moreover, Lowe's treatment of the topic as a moral panic conjures up an image of a 'mail order bride' invasion of Australia and an ensuing increase in domestic violence.

Filipino women not only appear as desirable objects in media discourse but their country of origin is often similarly portrayed. This is what Manderson and Jolly (1997) call an eroticisation of exotic places. In her article, Dempsey (1991:12) represents

Filipino women as erotic sex partners and traditional wives while eroticising the most recognisable city in the Philippines:

Originally dubbed 'The Thrillers from Manila', most of the women generally settle in well and try very hard with their marriages.

As a place which produces sexually exciting women, Manila is both desirable and debased. Chapkis (1986:57-58) makes a similar point when she states that split images of so-called 'third world' countries in popular western media provoke both lust and moralising about the debasement of the place. Dempsey's (1991:12) linking of the above statement with the immediately following lines:

[i]n most of the 11 killings, the husband has been convicted or charged with the murder of his Filipino wife—though sometimes it was a lover

suggests Teresita, Nenita, Gene and Rosalina were 'thrillers from Manila'. Fear is also apparent in images of grasping women '... who control the purse strings at home [and] expect to send money back home to their poor relatives' (Dempsey 1991:12). There are parallels here with Gene's portrayal in the court, by the media and in her killer's story.

It seems as though Whiting's (1999:20-21) article is advertising Filipino women as desirable 'brides'. In this respect, it coincides with Ross (1990:7) and Norbury's (1990:9) image of Gene as a 'dream bride' and her marriage as a 'dream marriage'. Whiting's headline, 'Click here for your dream girl', and introduction agency photos of beautiful, young Filipino women with the caption 'BRIDAL CATALOGUE: An endless parade of women can be beckoned to the screen for selection' (see Figures 13 and 14), convey erotic discourses about Filipino women. She eroticises the abuse of these women. The description of pretty Loly Ana who '... looks unbelievably young: certainly too young to cast her fate to the casual click of a computer mouse' (Whiting, 1999:20) feeds into male fantasies of sex with a desirable young woman. As Smith (1988:41) argues, discourses of femininity are articulated in a commercial process and

Removed for
copyright reasons
The full thesis is available in the
University of Newcastle Library

Figure 13: Whiting, F. (1999) 'Click Here for Your Dream Girl', *The Sunday Mail*, 24 January, p. 20.

Removed for
copyright reasons
The full thesis is available in the
University of Newcastle Library

Figure 14: Whiting, F. (1999) 'Click Here for Your Dream Girl', *The Sunday Mail*, 24 January, p. 21.

create the 'motivation' that returns the (male) purchaser to the commodity market. Whiting's article may incite men's desires for a 'perfect wife and sex partner' and encourage them to look towards the Philippines for one. But her article also fuels fear. The presence of 'e-mail order brides' like Loly Ana on computer screens in Australian homes signals a penetration of the racial and sexual boundaries of 'White Australia'.

Constructions of desire were generally absent from articles about Filipino women and violence in Australia in the Philippine newspapers. Fear of Australian men and the dangers they pose for Filipino women is a pervasive theme in articles about the killings of Teresita, Gene, Rosalina and Elma. One further example shall serve to illustrate. Referring to Katherine Paredes who was working for the Commission on Filipinos Overseas at the time, de la Torre (1989:8) states:

She mentioned Australia, Japan, Germany, England, some Middle Eastern countries, and some European countries where Filipinas suffer most in the hands of their supposed protectors and husbands. 'But we have not yet received any report of untoward incidents from the US; this shows that the Americans are more educated than most of the males in other countries', Paredes said.

While Australian men are to be feared, American men in some instances become objects of desire for Filipino women.

Woman in Danger/ Dangerous Woman

In the articles analysed for this thesis, Filipino women are portrayed as *women in danger* and *dangerous women*. They are 'out of place'. Mary Douglas (1966:36, 160) defines matter out of place as a violation of ordered relations and a threat to good order.

Australian Articles

In the Australian media, Filipino women as 'mail order brides' are seen as out of place when they marry Australian men and do not remain in the Philippines where they

belong married to Filipino men. Each of the seven women in the case studies had crossed boundaries that should not have been crossed and their displacement endangered themselves and/or others. In media images, Filipino women are in danger but also dangerous women. They are both victims of male violence and abusers of men.

Lowe's (1988:3) continual linking of 'mail order brides' and domestic violence bolsters the notion of *women in danger* and victim status:

Scores of marriages between Australians and mail-order brides from the Philippines are ending in similar trauma and social workers report an alarmingly high proportion of mail-order brides seeking help at women's emergency shelters.

Here, Filipino women are *in danger* because of their 'oriental' and 'cultural' identity as 'mail order brides'. Considering the circumstances, Filipino women, like Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel, are likely to become victims. Pettman (1992:35) argues women are often represented in ways which suggest they experience dangers because they are 'Asian'. Cultural difference or 'race' becomes the explanation rather than other factors that locate women socially, such as racism, sexism and class. Notwithstanding the high homicide rate of Filipino women in Australia, such reporting obscures the widespread domestic violence perpetrated against women of all ethnic backgrounds. Further, it presents a distorted image of marriage between Filipino women and non-Filipinos as inevitably involving violence. Lowe's image of *women in danger* constructs a victim paradigm and renders invisible the initiatives of Filipino women to address violence in their own communities.

In the Australian media, the theme of *woman in danger* is tied to the representation of the Filipina as a poor woman from a poor country needing to be rescued by a western male. Charles Schembri and Thomas Keir were portrayed as saving Gene and Rosalina, respectively, from poverty in the Philippines. Manderson (1997:142) terms this the 'white saviour myth'. The notion of rescue has its basis in

western assumptions of moral superiority and is closely related to the view that Filipino women should be forever grateful for 'being saved'. In Whiting's (1999:20-21) article, the desire of Loly Ana and the other 'e-mail order brides' to be rescued from poverty places them in danger:

... too young to cast her fate to the casual click of a computer mouse. But that's exactly what Loly, and thousands of others like her, are doing. All are looking for love, or at least a partner, in the 90s version of the singles bar, the world wide web ... In the meantime, Loly and others like her will continue to smile hopefully at strangers on the Internet, and gamble their futures away on the click of a button.

Although Whiting does draw attention to the possible dangers for Filipino women inherent in Internet arrangements, her sensationalism undermines the warning.

Like Nenita, Gene, Rosalina and Marylou, while Loly and the other 'e-mail order brides' are in danger, they are simultaneously *dangerous women*. Whiting (1999:20) describes 'e-mail order brides' as '... young, beautiful, desperate and caught in a world wide web'. Dempsey (1991:12) expresses a similar discourse when she cites Ann Smith in discussing women's motivations for leaving the Philippines. Smith was head of the Women's Unit of the Department of Immigration at the time:

If you came from a country where there is shortage of men of marriageable age and there is *so much domestic turmoil and poverty*, you would take *the first escape route open*,' she said [emphasis added].

In these articles, Filipino women are opportunists and they will do anything to escape the Philippines for a better life in Australia. Being *desperate* and taking '*the first escape route*' points to women who plot to achieve their desires. These women are prepared to use Aussie men as passports to Australia. They are a danger to 'unsuspecting' Aussie men. Given the desperation and scheming of Filipino women, is it any surprise they are likely to become victims of violence. Being 'out of place' in a racial and spatial sense is seen as the cause of male violence rather than (male) abuses of power and control. The Australian articles are very much a warning about the dangers of Filipino women.

In media discourse, Filipino women pose dangers to boundaries. Douglas (1966:123-124) describes the dangers to community boundaries:

The first is danger pressing on external boundaries; the second, danger from transgressing the internal lines of the system; the third, danger in the margins of the lines. The fourth is danger from internal contradiction, when some of the basic postulates are denied by other basic postulates, so that at certain points the system seems to be at war with itself.

Firstly, Filipino women transgress external boundaries by marrying Australian men rather than stay 'in place' in the Philippines. Their racial presence in Australia is seen as the source of danger. They threaten cultural order especially romantic love and 'racially pure' White Australia. Secondly, Filipino women transgress internal lines by engaging in 'dubious' cultural practices that could undermine the patriarchal authority of their non-Filipino partners. For example, Gene sent money to relatives in the Philippines. Thirdly, Filipino women point to danger in the margins as they may not live up to the subservient stereotype. Nenita, Gene, Rosalina and Marylou 'used' Australian men and most had left their relationships. Elma physically and verbally 'abused' her husband. Fourthly, Filipino women are dangerous as they epitomise an inherent contradiction. Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou and Elma, in many instances, were portrayed as abusers of Aussie men as well as traditional wives and mothers (or future mothers).

Philippine Articles

In contrast, the Philippine articles, such as those about Teresita, Gene and Elma, tend to construct Filipino women as *women in danger*. They constitute a warning for women about the dangers in marrying Australian men. This is explicitly foreshadowed in the titles of two of the articles: 'Not All Bed of Roses: Girl's Wanting to Marry Foreigners Get Warning' (de la Torre 1989:8) and 'Bridal Path to Better Life May Also Lead To Tragedy' (*Philippine Daily Inquirer* 1991:1). The *Manila Bulletin* stresses the warning:

Katherine Paredes, director for administration and finance of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, issued the other day a warning to Filipino women intending to marry foreigners (de la Torre 1989:8).

Sometimes the warning for Filipino women in danger contains two subtexts. Firstly, that intimate relationships with non-Filipino men will always end in violence and, secondly, Filipino women are in need of protection from foreign men. These twin themes often coalesce in the form of a paternalistic ‘our women’ discourse, as Chat and Rina pointed out in the last chapter. The following quote illustrates:

‘And in some cases, *our Filipino girls*, in the hands of semi-savage male foreigners, would have them insured for large sum and then have them killed so they could collect the insurance’s face amount,’ Paredes and her companions said ... She mentioned Australia, Japan, Germany, England, some Middle Eastern countries, and some European countries where Filipinas suffer most in the hands of their supposed protectors and husbands (de la Torre 1989:8) [emphasis added].

While many Filipino women have been and continue to be victims of violence in Australia, they are not simply *women in danger*. By not addressing their networks of support in Australia and their organising around violence, de la Torre shores up the discourse of Filipino women’s victimhood.

Victim-Blaming Discourse

Australian media representations of violence often identify Filipino women as the source or cause of the abuse they experience. This is a victim-blaming discourse, the idea that an abused woman is to blame for her assault; she not only provoked but also, in many cases, deserved it (Women’s Coalition Against Family Violence 1994:36, 52). Images of Nenita as a ‘butterfly’; Gene using Charles Schembri as a ‘passport to Australia’; Rosalina using Thomas Keir as a ‘ticket to a better life’; Marylou’s ‘lifestyle’ and ‘bleeding men dry’; Elma’s verbal and physical ‘abuse’ of Paul Young, are all victim-blaming discourses. ‘Mail order bride’, as an explanation for violence,

was the most frequently used blame–the–victim discourse in the newspapers surveyed for this study. For example, despite an earlier focus on male violence, the concluding statement in ‘Mail-Order Misery’ (Lowe 1988:3) suggests the key to violence is Filipino ‘mail order brides’ and their migration to Australia:

But the problem of domestic violence in mail-order marriages is expected to grow as more Filipina brides are brought to Australia and as their marriages are placed under the stress of time.

Responsibility for men’s violence is diverted away from perpetrators and onto victims. The problem of domestic violence, however, is not the arrival of Filipino women in Australia but abuses of (male) power and control. By individualising violence and identifying Filipino women as its source, Lowe obscures the fact that male abuse of female partners is a feature of a significant proportion of all relationships in Australia.

Similarly, in ‘Filipino Brides: Eleven Killed in Australia’, Dempsey (1991:12-13) invokes mail order bride discourse to explain the deaths of Teresita, Nenita, Gene and Rosalina. She constructs these women as the cause of their abuse by stating:

But many cultural problems occur when the women—who *control* the purse strings at home [in the Philippines]—*expect to send money* back home to their *poor relatives* (Dempsey 1991:12) [emphasis added].

Relations of violence are recast as grasping, money-oriented, domineering and poor Filipino women, like Gene, who make unreasonable demands on their Australian partners. The women are ‘gold-diggers’ who threaten the financial security of both their non-Filipino partner and the Australian nation by sending money out of the country. Their actions provoke abuse. In addition to shifting the responsibility for violence away from the perpetrator, Dempsey renders invisible the often laborious and tedious work Filipino women undertake to earn the extra money that is sent ‘back home’. Gene, for example, worked two jobs to help support her families in Australia and the Philippines. Moreover, it is erroneous to reduce the act of sending money to poverty. It is not only

poor relatives who receive support from family members living abroad. True, the remittances do improve the economic circumstances of family back in the Philippines, but the act is much more than simply economic. It is part of a strong cultural tradition of family support and reciprocity (*katungkulan*). Sending money to family in the Philippines strengthens ties of kinship and establishes ones place in the family. The *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (1991:12) represents this practice very differently:

Other strains arise because Filipino women *generally have strong family ties* and often feel obliged to send money back home to *help relatives* [emphasis added].

After discussing an Internet advertisement and its descriptions of the (undesirable) men who find (desirable) Filipino women, Whiting (1999:21) states:

It's almost a *carte blanche* invitation to abuse, and yet it's an invitation thousands of women are still accepting, even though they've heard the horror stories. CPCA figures show that since 1987, 17 Filipino women have been killed in Australia and four are missing ... Given that this information is freely available to women in the Philippines, courtesy of lobby groups and a Department of Immigration video on domestic violence, perhaps the most remarkable factor of all is that anyone would want to come here ...

The seven women in the case studies are to blame for their circumstances as they recklessly disregarded warnings. Whiting solves the problem of how to understand their abuse by allowing readers to pity Filipino women while simultaneously identifying them as the cause of violence. The stupidity and desperation of 'mail order brides' who knowingly risk death for a 'better life' are highlighted. They, thus, deserve violence. There is a parallel here with the media construction of the so-called 'boat people'.

Discourse of a Better Life

In both Australian and Philippine articles, it is always Filipino women seeking better lives through marriage to a foreigner and never non-Filipino men. Yet, the partners of Teresita, Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel used these women to better their own lives. And it is the women's desires for a better life rather than (male)

abuses of power and control that result in violence. The following quotes make this clear:

Dreams of a better life have attracted thousands of Filipina brides to Australia, but for many the journey has ended in violence (Lowe 1988:3).

The bridal path to a better life, however, does not always lead to economic security much less happiness. For some it ended in violent deaths. In Australia at least a dozen Filipinas have been killed in the past four years ... (*Philippine Daily Inquirer* 1991:1).

Moreover, Lowe (1988:3) suggests a desire for a better life is something intrinsic to 'Filipino brides' rather than a phenomenon with a long history in Australia. As I stated in Chapter Three, during the 19th century, Caroline Chisholm imported young women wanting a better life into Australia to marry Anglo-Celtic men.

In both Australian and Philippine articles, discourses of a better life construct marriage as an escape from poverty. Such discourse obscures the diversity of Filipino women, their different class positions for example, and the many reasons why they marry non-Filipino men. As Ilda argued in Chapter Twelve, reducing the complexity of their lives to poverty does not accord with the lived experience of all Filipino women.

Individualising Women's Poverty

Australian media discourses of a better life tend to individualise women's poverty and decisions to marry. Both Gene and Rosalina were portrayed as poor women who married their husbands to escape poverty. Lowe (1988:3) provides another example:

The brides tend to come from poor and lower middle-class backgrounds and to be motivated chiefly by economic factors when they sign up for a mail-order husband. These factors include the prospect of a better life in material terms, helping their families financially by sending them regular remittances, and creating the opportunity for family members to emigrate to Australia.

As Joan pointed out in Chapter Twelve, poverty and migration for marriage must be seen in terms of broader structural processes, such as neo-colonialism and international

relations. Dempsey's (1991:13) image of Filipino women escaping their poverty through marriage for wealthy and safe Australia silences the fact that Australia too has poverty and is not a safe place for many of its residents, especially Filipino women.

Discourse of Personal Sacrifice and Suffering

In contrast, marriage as an escape from poverty in the Philippine discourses of a better life is framed more in terms of personal sacrifice and suffering. An article on Filipino women and violence in Australia titled 'Bridal Path to Better Life May Also Lead To Tragedy' (*Philippine Daily Inquirer* 1991:1) states, '[p]overty is forcing many Filipino women to seek better lives by marrying foreigners and going abroad'. The cartoon accompanying the article depicts a 'Filipina bride' (bridal attire indicating her bride-status) and her non-Filipino bridegroom (a long nose and tallness defining his 'Australianness'). The bride exclaims '*Swerti ko na 'to makapag abroad pa ko*' (It's my luck because I can go abroad). An older female mother figure responds '*... Baka sa impiyerno ka umabot*' (It might be suffering instead). In the *Manila Chronicle* (1993:4), Filipino women seeking a better life from poverty means they are:

... forced to settle in strange lands, marry for convenience and lead lives of total vulnerability because of their gender and nationality ... They build houses where no love is shared—where, more often, there is constant annoyance rather than fondness. The alien cultural milieu merely compounds the social, psychological and physical burden these women are constrained to bear. Few survive such an arrangement without very deep emotional scars.

Robles' (1991:10) image of Gene's sacrifice and suffering is particularly poignant:

[Melba Marginson said Gene] ' ... represents the Filipinas who were forced by the unjust social and economic structures in our country to seek what they thought was a better life abroad' ... In a way, the Filipinas going to Australia are making a sacrifice.

Explaining the Differences Between Australian and Philippine Media Representations of Violence

Like the violence many Filipino women experience in Australia, Australian and Philippine media portrayals of their abuse are intricately connected to the historical, social and structural processes I outlined in Chapter Three. These broader forces help explain the differences between the Australian and Philippine reportage.²

Firstly, the Philippines has experienced a long history of migration and activism around migration issues is an established part of the country's political landscape. As Chat pointed out in Chapter Twelve, activists in the Philippines have helped raise media consciousness about the structural factors that provide the impetus for Filipino migration. This increased understanding has, on many occasions, informed reporting. Thus, journalists in the Philippines tend to see Filipino women's migration more in terms of heroism and personal sacrifice. Both Joan and Chat noted the failure of many Australian journalists to effectively address the reasons behind Filipino migration, as evidenced by reconstructions of Filipina migrants as calculating 'gold-diggers'.

Secondly, although journalists in the Philippines are often far from gender sensitive, I detected a strong focus on political economy in the articles examined for this thesis. The migration of Filipino women was usually associated with poverty and the policies of the Philippine government, in particular the institutionalisation of overseas labour migration. Central here was recognition of the cultural and economic value of remittances to the family and the economy of the Philippines. Biased accounts of Filipino women and violence in the Australian media can be seen largely as a failure to

² The political economy of newspapers in Australia and the Philippines is insufficient to account for these differences. The media in both countries, although certainly not the same, share features of globalised media empires. They have foreign ownership and intense competition for a share of the market and profit (see Isis International-Manila 1999:15, 105; Windschuttle 1988:3-52, 274-299). Newspapers in both countries are marketed aggressively to attract mass readership and generate maximum profits for multi-national conglomerates. Sensationalist news stories about sex and violence are a major marketing strategy in Australia and the Philippines.

address the global and structural conditions which affect the Philippines. They tend instead to individualise both the women's poverty and the poverty of their country.

Thirdly, the Australian media is itself a product of a long history of colonisation and pervasive racism and sexism, of which anti-Asian racism and orientalism are major facets. This milieu has provided fertile ground for the genre of reporting that has developed around Filipino women: as mail order brides who will do anything to escape the Philippines (*dangerous women*) and/or are in need of rescue by Australian men (*women in danger*). I am not denying the sexism and racism of large sections of the Philippine media, which typically portray Filipino women as victims, subservient housewives and mothers, or sex objects, prostitutes and mistresses (Tiongson 1999:7-8; Azarcon-dela Cruz 1988:4,128). Apart from the victim discourse, however, these other themes were not apparent in the Philippine articles I surveyed for this thesis.

Fourthly, the different expressions of Filipino *woman in danger* or victim discourse in the Australian and Philippine articles are an outcome of differing understandings of the problem of violence against Filipino women in Australia. As Chat and Rina indicated in Chapter Twelve, many journalists in the Philippines use 'our women' paternalistically to claim ownership of women who are perceived to be in need of (Filipino) male protection from abusive 'other' men. In contrast, the Filipino *woman in danger* in the Australian articles hinges on the notion of a poor woman who needs to be rescued from the Philippines by an Australian man.

Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the key themes that emerged from the articles surveyed and examined for this thesis. In general, regardless of the sympathetic tenor of some of the articles, they legitimate the stereotype of the 'Filipino mail order bride', women who

are 'out of place' both racially and spatially. Rather than address the issue of violence against Filipino women compassionately, the sensationalist approach of much of the Australian reportage recasts the lives of Filipino women through a racist and sexist lens. Although the Philippine articles I analysed often reinforced stereotypes of Filipino women, they were not as overtly sexist or racist as most of the Australian portrayals. Moreover, they were more likely to address the political economy of the Philippines and other structural factors behind the migration of Filipino women to Australia. It is these factors, as Cunneen and Stubbs (1997:2-7) note and I have argued, which constitute the vulnerability of Filipino women to violence in Australia. A summary of the key themes in the articles points to the tendency of journalists in both Australia and the Philippines to construct a victim paradigm for Filipino women without adequately addressing their struggles to challenge male abuse, organise around issues of domestic violence in their own communities and establish support networks amongst their friends, families and service providers.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored the relationship between the lives of Filipino women and Australian and Philippine print media representations of the violence they experience in Australia. Its central concern was to hear and reinstate the voices of Filipino women. The case studies of Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Generosa Bongcodin, Rosalina Canonizado, Marylou Orton, Elma Young and Annabel Strzelecki, together with additional interviews and newspaper articles, have illuminated the relationship between women's reality and media images of their abuse. Reinstating these women's absent and silenced voices through interviews with their families and friends highlights how journalists frequently distorted the contexts of their lives and deaths. There was often a gap between media portrayals and the reality they purport to represent. Many of the Australian newspaper articles, in particular, bore little resemblance to these women's lives. This caused further pain and suffering as well as anger for their families and friends. While the Philippine newspapers I examined frequently shored up stereotypes of Filipino women, they provide more culturally sensitive and informed accounts than most of the Australian reportage. This study demonstrates that while the relationship between lived reality and media image is often one of misrepresentation, it also involves struggle and conflict over constructions of identity. It is a site of contested realities.

This thesis has also shown how some insightful journalists can bring women's stories to life. In addressing the richness, complexity and different facets of women's lives, they provide a foil for one-dimensional and sensationalist images. Such accounts point to the possibility of further informative and culturally sensitive stories about violence against Filipino women in the media. Moreover, they stand as a warning

against overzealous demonisations of the media. However, the cultures in which progressive journalists work are often racist and sexist as well as capitalist profit-orientated. They use sensationalist copy and stereotypes to sell newspapers. It is these structural environments and the editor's pen that largely dictate the final copy.

Hearing the Voices Of Filipino Women

This thesis establishes that journalists cannot accurately or adequately portray the lives of Filipino women or the circumstances of their deaths when they exclude and silence their voices. The stories of Teresita, Nenita, Gene, Rosalina, Marylou, Elma and Annabel should be told from their perspective.

Acknowledging Violence

To hear these women's voices means accounting for the material relations of patriarchal and racist power and domination that was a large part of their lives. All the women were victims of domestic violence. Their partners or ex-partners treated them as their property. These relationships were regimes of terror that intensified as abusive men attempted to maintain control over the women's lives and destroy their self-esteem, self-confidence and identity. Often the men used children to control and inflict pain on their mothers. In nearly every case, it was when these women attempted to resist male domination and assert their rights that lead to their deaths or disappearance. Male partners felt they were not accountable for their violent behaviour. They did not acknowledge their abuse. They lied about their relationships to police, in court and to the media. In most instances, police, courts and journalists failed to acknowledge the long history of violence that preceded the women's deaths or disappearance. Silence on domestic violence and men's role in women's suffering meant women's actions in

dealing with violence, for example leaving an abusive partner, can be reconstructed as abusive. These women's experiences of domestic violence need to be clearly 'named'. It must be called what it is.

Recognising Diversity

While the women in the case studies share common experiences, their lives exhibit diversity. They came from different class, regional and educational backgrounds. The ways they met their male partners and their means of migration to Australia differed. Many of the media articles in this study, however, failed to recognise these differences. The women were treated as a homogeneous group. In contrast, journalists do not generally treat Anglo-Celtic women who are victims of abuse as belonging to the same group, unless they are demonised women, for example 'prostituted women'. As Rissa pointed out in Chapter Twelve '... like the rest of the women in the world, [Filipino women] are all individual'. Journalists must address the particularities of each woman's situation, particularly when telling the stories of the women's abuse.

'Mail Order Bride' Discourse and Violence

Telling the story from the woman's perspective means moving beyond the use of sexualised and racialised class stereotypes such as 'mail order bride' to describe Filipino women and explain their abuse. Apart from its stigmatising quality, the 'mail order bride' term is analytically imprecise. None of the women in the cases studies was technically a 'bride'. Most had been married for quite some time or were separated from their partners. Some of the women met their partners in Australia. Others met during the man's visit to the Philippines. The use of 'mail order' to describe these women is especially tenuous. Even journalists endeavouring to present sympathetic accounts

collude in perpetuating stereotypes of these women when they invoke mail order bride discourse. Such images sensationalise the issues and shift responsibility for violence away from the perpetrator. They inflict violence on the women long after their deaths. While it is easier to dismiss overtly racist and sexist portrayals, it is more difficult to dislodge images that appear positive yet reproduce notions of difference, of women who are 'out of place' both racially and spatially. They normalise the negative stereotype, give it an authority and a sense of 'that's the way those women are'. These discourses contribute to the vulnerability of other Filipino women to male violence in Australia.

Media Sources and Interviews

This study raises several important issues regarding media sources and the use of interviews. First, journalists cannot tell the victim's story unless they interview families and friends, those in familiar and caring relationships with her, who knew her well. Second, journalists must provide a fair account of what these families and friends have to say. They need to resist shaping interview quotes to fit dominant stereotypes of Filipino women. Third, the reliance of journalists on court, police and the story of the suspect and/or accused allows little space for the woman's story. As the case studies have shown, problems of representation arise when journalists rely on flawed court and police accounts rather than investigate the case. Journalists compound these problems by privileging the story of the accused without considering the element of self-interest in the presentation of the relationship with the victim in as good a light as possible.

Further Research

This thesis points to several areas that could benefit from further research. First, more exploration needs to be undertaken into the relationship between media portrayals of

Filipino women and their lived realities. This could include how media images affect Filipino women as well as the behaviour of the men in their lives. One major area that has not received adequate attention is how media coverage affects the children of Filipino women. Research on the ways media images impact on these children's lives and their relationships with their mothers as well as their fathers is long overdue. Second, a comparison of Australian media images of Filipina victims of violence with those who are not Filipino women could help further illuminate racism in Australia's media. Third, another fruitful line of enquiry is a comparative analysis of Philippine media reports of Filipino women and violence in the Philippines and in other countries. Fourth, this study suggests the benefits of exploring how the gender, 'race' and class identities of journalists informs their reporting of Filipino women and violence.

Strategies For Change

My discussion of strategies for change in media practice regarding the representation of Filipino women and violence rests on two fundamental premises. First, men must be accountable for their violent behaviour. Second, strategies need to be culturally relevant and sensitive; they should resonate with the lives of Filipino women. Filipino women must have major input into devising strategies. Consultation with community organisations that have a focus on Filipino women's issues is essential.

When reporting violence, there is a need for cultural sensitivity and respect for cultural differences, rather than sensationalism and sexualisation of those differences. This study has amply demonstrated that female journalists are not necessarily more sympathetic and sensitive or less racist and sexist than their male colleagues. Racism and sexism awareness training and cross-cultural communications training for the media, as well as police, judiciary, lawyers, advocates, social workers and educators is

vital. Clearly practitioners in these institutions require more education regarding domestic violence and all its manifestations, and how to treat victims with respect and dignity.

Further, journalists in Australia and the Philippines need to more adequately account for the initiatives of Filipino women in Australia in countering male violence. In addressing the ways Filipino women struggle in their own homes, organise around domestic violence in their communities, and establish support networks, the media could help empower other Filipino women in abusive relationships. This would also inform and educate men about their behaviour. The development of networks in which media practitioners and Filipino women have ongoing dialogue and consultation could help ensure reporting accurately reflects these women's lives and is culturally sensitive.

Another strategy for change is more investigative journalism. Many of the interviewees in this study suggest there is a need to 'dig deeper', to go beyond the stories of the police, court and accused. More broadly, this means journalists must acknowledge the historical, social and structural factors behind the migration of Filipino women to Australia which help constitute the women's vulnerability to violence. It is difficult to envisage change in media practice while Australian journalists continue to reproduce ahistorical accounts that simplistically frame the issue of violence against Filipino women in terms of the women's poverty or the poverty of their country.

Building on the Initiatives of Filipino Women

Strategies for change should build on the courageous struggles of Filipino women in Australia to resist and contest domination, whether in the form of male violence or iniquitous media portrayals. Their initiatives offer guidelines for improving the lives of Filipino women. The ongoing research of CPCA (2002) into the deaths and

disappearances of Filipino women and their children in Australia alerts governments, police, educators, welfare service providers and others to the problem of male violence against Filipino women. The FWWP media-training manual, *Dealing With the Media* (Mowatt & Wall 1992), is another excellent resource. The manual could be used in the media, university departments of journalism and in high schools to raise consciousness and help inform portrayals of Filipino women and their abuse. Public performances of theatre groups such as Buklod Kababaihang Filipino are a powerful way to empower women in abusive relationships, expose male violence and educate about violence. Filipino women in Australia and the Philippines have long recognised the need to use the media for their own agendas. Many of the women mentioned in this thesis have cultivated productive relationships with sympathetic journalists in their struggles against male violence and sexist and racist media portrayals.

Conclusion

Reinstating the voices of Teresita Andalis, Nenita Westhof, Generosa Bongcodin, Rosalina Canonizado, Marylou Orton, Elma Young and Annabel Strzelecki makes clear that the media often provided little insight into the violence they suffered in their everyday lives. In many cases, journalists corruptly rather than equitably portrayed these women's lives. As Thiesmeyer (1996:4) argues, 'it is precisely in the disappearances ... performed by media, in a silencing of particular discourses, that real bodies are sacrificed'. This thesis exemplifies Wall's (1994:1) argument that media reports of crimes against minority groups may reinforce the very stereotypes they struggle against. The challenge for the media is how to represent violence while ensuring the victims, in this case Filipino women, are not stigmatised and further abused. It means above all else hearing the voices of Filipino women.

APPENDICES

- 1.** Organisations and Institutions Accessed and Consulted Throughout the Course of This Study

- 2.** List of Interview Themes

- 3.** Centre For Philippine Concerns-Australia (2002)
‘Violent Deaths And Disappearances Amongst Filipino Women and Children in Australia Since 1980’ Statistics

APPENDIX 1

ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS ACCESSED AND CONSULTED THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF THIS STUDY

Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health

— Australian Government national research project on women's health.

Australian Centre for International and Tropical Health and Nutrition, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

Batis Centre for Women

— feminist NGO providing services and advocacy for Filipino migrant women and their children, particularly those in Japan.

Room 711 Don Santiago Building, 1344 Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila, Philippines.

Buklod Kababaihang Filipino

— group of Filipino women in South Australia who use theatre performance to empower Filipino women, educate the public about their experiences of domestic violence and challenge negative stereotyping.

c/- Central Eastern Domestic Violence Service, PO Box 47, Campbelltown, South Australia, Australia.

Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific (CATW-AP)

— the regional office of an international network of women's organisations involved in the struggle against the sexual exploitation of women and children, especially prostitution and trafficking, through research, education, publications, advocacy and campaigns.

Room 406 Victoria Condominium, 41 Annapolis Street, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila 1500, Philippines.

Central Eastern Domestic Violence Service

— domestic violence counselling and outreach support service for women and children, accommodation, referrals, information, advocacy and court support.

PO Box 47, Campbelltown, South Australia, Australia.

Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development (CFED)

— feminist NGO of Filipino women in Victoria which provides education, training, research, support services and advocacy for Filipino women, and education for the general public about the situation of Filipino women in Australia.

Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Brisbane Branch (CPCA)

— a national community-based network of Filipino activists and organisations concerned with improving the lives of Filipino peoples through information sharing, networking, referral, advocacy, research, data collection on deaths and disappearances of Filipino women and children, lobbying and campaigns.

Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Melbourne Branch (CPCA)

— see above — the Melbourne Branch is funded to provide settlement services to migrants.

New South Wales Filipino Women's Working Party (FWWP)

— feminist NGO of Filipino women in NSW involved in developing projects for Filipino women, information sharing, networking, research, advocacy, lobbying and media communication and awareness.

GABRIELA (General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Leadership and Action)

— a national grass-roots based feminist alliance of women's organisations in the Philippines offering a broad range of support services, education and programs for women, and research, advocacy and campaigns to improve women's lives.

c/- Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Melbourne Branch, 1st Floor, Ross House, 247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Brisbane Branch, Justice Place, 84 Park Road, Woolloongabba, Qld, Australia.

Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Melbourne Branch, 1st Floor, Ross House, 247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

c/o 152 Wilson Street, Newtown, NSW, Australia.

35 Scout Delgado Street, Barangay Laging Handa, Roxas District, Kamuning, Quezon City, Philippines.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
— an NGO concerned with a broad range of migration issues and providing services, support, advocacy, information and education for migrants and their families.

2nd Floor Victoria Building, 429
United Nations Avenue, Ermita,
Manila, Philippines.

Isis International-Manila

— feminist NGO focused on meeting women’s information and communication needs through Isis Resource Centre, publications, training in gender-sensitive media broadcasting, research, lobbying, advocacy and networking.

3 Marunong Street, Barangay
Central, Quezon City, Philippines.

Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-anak ng Migranteng
Manggagawang Pilipino, Inc (KAKAMMPI)

— community-based organisation of migrant families and returned migrants concerned with migration issues, advocacy, education, crisis intervention and child development centers for the children of migrant workers.

70-1 Matahimik Street, Teacher’s
Village, Diliman, Quezon City,
Philippines.

Kababaihan Laban sa Karahasan
(KALAKASAN)

— feminist NGO offering information, counselling, referral services and advocacy for victims of gender violence.

1 Matiwasay corner, Maginhawa
Streets, UP Village, Diliman,
Quezon City, Philippines.

Katipunan ng Kababaihan Para sa Kalayaan
(KALAYAAN)

— feminist NGO concerned with women’s migration and gender violence, and providing research, advocacy, information sharing and education in these areas for women.

41 Maginhawa Street, Teacher’s
Village, Diliman, Quezon City,
Philippines.

Kanlugar Centre Foundation

— NGO working for the advancement of overseas Filipino workers’ rights and welfare, especially women, through crisis-intervention, education, training, community-care, publications, advocacy and research.

77 K-10 corner K-J Street, Kamias
Road, Kamuning, Quezon City,
Philippines.

Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ)

— an independent media organisation that is concerned to produce quality news stories through investigative reporting.

107-E Crisilda II Building, Scout de Guia Street, Barangay Sacred Heart, Quezon City, Philippines.

Women's Education, Development, Productivity and Research Organization (WEDPRO)

— feminist NGO engaged in community-based education, research, projects and advocacy for women.

Rm 305, IMA Bldg No. 40 New York cor Montreal St. Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines

Women's Crisis Center

— an independent feminist organisation offering a range of services for survivors of gender violence: intervention programs, counselling, medical and legal assistance and advocacy, women's shelter and support groups, education and research on gender violence.

7F East Avenue Medical Center, East Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines.

Women's Legal Bureau

— feminist NGO which makes available legal services, advocacy, research, education, training and information for women.

11 Matimtiman Street, Teacher's Village, Quezon City, Philippines.

Women's Media Circle

— an independent feminist NGO providing education on health and sexuality, media advocacy and communications for women and gender sensitive media production.

1 Matiwasay corner, Maginhawa Streets, UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF INTERVIEW THEMES

Interview themes for family and friends of _____

- What was _____ life like in the Philippines?
- Why did she leave the Philippines?
- Tell me about _____ and her life in Australia
- What was _____ looking for in Australia?
- What was she hoping for?
- What sort of life did _____ want?
- What sort of life do you think she got?
- Did _____ get support from anyone?
- Did _____ talk to you about her worries or problems?

I want to look now at how the media portrayed _____ and your reaction to the portrayal.

- When the media talked about violence against _____, what do you think were the main messages that came across?
- How did/ do these portrayals make you feel?
- How did/ do these portrayals make other family members or friends of _____ feel?
- How did their reactions to these portrayals then make you feel?
- Do you feel that the media reports presented an accurate and adequate picture of _____ situation and the violence against her?
- Are there any areas/issues that you feel the media did not address?
- Are there any areas/issues that you feel the media over emphasised?

- Are there any issues that the media discussed but which you feel should not have been raised?
- Do you think the media ought to raise the question of _____ethnicity?
- How has the media portrayal of violence against _____ affected your everyday life?
- How has the media portrayal of violence against _____ affected the life of her family and friends, including children?
- How do you deal with the effects of such portrayals?
- How do other family members and friends, including children, deal with the effects?
- What could the media have done differently when it reported violence against _____? How could media portrayal of Filipino women be changed?
- Have you any further comments regarding the media portrayal of _____, or the reporting of violence against Filipino women in general?

Interview themes for Filipino women not associated with the cases studies

- When the media talks about violence against Filipino women, what do you think are the main messages that come across?
- How do these portrayals make you feel?
- Do you feel that the media reports, in general, present an accurate and adequate picture of violence against Filipino women?
- Are there any areas/issues that you feel the media tend not to address?
- Are there any areas/issues that you feel the media over emphasise?
- Are there any issues that you feel the media should not raise?
- Do you think the media ought to raise the question of ethnicity?
- How has the media portrayal of violence affected your everyday life?
- How has the media portrayal of violence affected the lives of your children or the children of other Filipino women?
- How has the media portrayal of violence affected the lives of your clients (if applicable) and other Filipino women and Filipino men?
- How do you deal with the effects of such portrayals?
- How do you deal with the effects of media portrayals of violence against Filipino women on your children or the children of other Filipino women?
- How do clients (if applicable) and other Filipino women and Filipino men deal with the effects of media portrayals of violence?
- How do you deal with the effects of such portrayals on clients (if applicable) and on other Filipino women and Filipino men?
- What could journalists do differently when they report violence against Filipino women? How could media portrayals of Filipino women and violence be changed?

Violent Deaths and Disappearances Amongst Filipino Women and Children in Australia since 1980

Last updated as at 25 November 2002

Compiled by CENTRE FOR PHILIPPINE CONCERNS AUSTRALIA

based on personal accounts, news clippings, press releases, court transcripts, doctoral and Institute of Criminology research.

| Date | Name of Victim | Age | Place of residence | Incident | Outcome | Suspect or accused | Legal Verdict/ What is being done |
|------|--------------------------|-----|--------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 1980 | Teresita Beatriz Andalis | 21 | Brisbane, Qld. | Reported as "Drowning accident in a boat" on 10 August 1980 off Tippler's Resort. | David Mathiesen, her employer, had insured Teresita's life for \$AUS 400,000. | David Grant Mathiesen, 26, alleged he was Teresita's fiance. | On 16 April 1981, after 8 months of investigation, David Mathiesen was found guilty of murder and given a life sentence with hard labour by Judge Connely of the Supreme Court, Queensland. |
| 1984 | Carmelita Lee | 22 | Hoxton Park, NSW | On 21 January 1984 shot dead, bound & naked, at home with her de facto husband, Edward 'Billy' Cavanagh, 57, who had also been killed. | Edward Cavanagh's death was a gangland revenge murder. Carmelita was also killed because she witnessed his murder. | Lindsay Robert Rose | On 3 September 1998 Lindsay Robert Rose was tried for their murder (and 3 others in separate incidents). He was given 5 life sentences. His appeal on 11 October 1999 failed and the convictions and sentences upheld. |
| 1986 | Pauline Kelly | ?? | Wollongong, NSW | Beaten to death on 23 December 1986 during a domestic argument. Her body was thrown over a cliff. | Husband arrested 25 December 1986 | Kevin Emmett Kelly, 45, husband | Kevin Kelly was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced on 13 November 1987 to 7 years gaol with a non-parole period of 2 years by Justice Roden in Wollongong Supreme Court. |
| 1987 | Rowena Pasandalan Sokol | 17 | Blacktown, NSW | Shot 5 times and beaten about the head with the butt of a rifle on 23 February 1987. | Ten days before her death Rowena had complained to the Blacktown Local Court of her husband's violence toward her but a hearing was set for 18 March, 23 days after her death. | Joseph Christopher Sokol, 41, separated husband | Joseph Sokol was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to 10 years gaol, with a non-parole period of 6 years. However, having begun his sentence on 23 February 1987, he was released on parole on 10 September 1990 after serving 3 yrs and 7 months. |

| Date | Name of Victim | Age | Place of residence | Incident | Outcome | Suspect or accused | Legal Verdict/ What is being done |
|------|-------------------------|-----|--------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 1987 | Azucena "Asing" Pollard | 33 | Tumbarumba, NSW | Disappeared with her 3-yr-old son, Harry jnr. sometime between 8 January 1987 and 4 June 1987. | In July 1987 relatives in the Philippines notified police of their disappearance. Her husband says "she ran away to Melbourne with another man in mid-March 1987." | Harry Pollard, husband (suspect) | A coronial inquiry concluded that there was a prima facie case against Harry Pollard for murder, but the DPP decided at that time not to proceed. The case was reopened late 1995 and was initially listed for hearing on 14 March 1997 in the NSW Supreme Court. On 15 September 1997 Pollard's motion that proceedings on the indictment be stayed was rejected by the court. We do not know what date was set for trial. |
| 1987 | Nenita Westhof | 33 | Brisbane, Qld. | Her throat was slashed on 18 February 1987 and her body found at home on 26 February. On 27 February 1987 her ex-husband was shot by the same man. | Both Nenita and her ex-husband, Willem "Jimmy" Westhof, died of their injuries. | Antonio Juan Curado, 39, her de facto partner. | Antonio Curado was convicted and sentenced on 7 March 1988 of both murders. He was sentenced to life imprisonment by Justice McPherson in Queensland Supreme Court. |
| 1987 | Lusanta de Groot | 35 | Narrabeen, NSW | Both she and her 11 month old baby were repeatedly hit on the head with a hammer. | The baby died, Lusanta survived the incident. | Jacob de Groot, husband, 53, who subsequently committed suicide by jumping from a cliff at North Head, NSW. | |
| 1987 | Nenita Evans | 33 | Melbourne, Vic. | Disappeared 8 January 1987 after visiting the Melbourne Club where she had worked. | Body never found. | Vincenzo Leonardi, had been Nenita's supervisor at the Melbourne Club (suspect). Gregory Evans, husband (suspect). | On 28 September 1995 an inquest concluded that Nenita was the "victim of foul play by an unknown assailant" and that Leonardi was the last person to see her alive. But, there was insufficient evidence as to whether Vincenzo Leonardi or Gregory Evans were involved. [see also the case of Mila Dark and endnote #1 below.] |

| Date | Name of Victim | Age | Place of residence | Incident | Outcome | Suspect or accused | Legal Verdict/ What is being done |
|------|---------------------------|----------|---------------------|---|--|---|--|
| 1987 | Bibiana Doria Singh | ?? | Springvale, Vic | Disappeared. | After marrying Harry Singh, Bibiana left for Australia in 1987. She moved to an address in Victoria. She has not contacted her family since then. | | |
| 1987 | Socorro North | late 30s | Gladstone, Tas | Disappeared in Tasmania in 1987. | SN moved to Tasmania from Sydney. She was married to an Australian, Clem North, and had a child. No other details are available. | | |
| 1988 | Bella Rodriguez Elmore | 28 | North West Cape, WA | Stabbed in her home on 16 March 1988; her body was thrown off a pier into the ocean at Exmouth. Reported missing by her husband on 18 March 1988. | | Charles Wayne Elmore, 41, her husband, a US serviceman stationed at Northwest Cape, WA. | Charles Elmore is now jailed in Phoenix, Arizona, USA The murderer & his wife were not Australian citizens but subject to US military jurisdiction. |
| 1988 | Jean Angela Strachan Keir | 22 | Tregear, NSW | Murdered on 9 or 10 February 1988. Her body was buried under her house. | Her husband claimed she had run off with her lover. The family of Rosalina Canonizado, Keir's second wife, pressured the police to keep the investigation into Jean's disappearance ongoing. While in prison awaiting trial for the murder of Rosalina, he told a fellow inmate where he had buried Jean and police found small bone fragments in 1991. | Thomas Andrew Keir, 30, her husband. | On 17 September 1999 Thomas Keir was found guilty in the NSW Supreme Court of murdering his first wife, Jean. On 29 February 2000 Justice Adams sentenced Keir to 24 years imprisonment to serve a minimum of 18 yrs. (from 20 February 1998 to 19 February 2016 plus a possible further 6 yrs to 19 February 2022). On 28 February 2002 the NSW Criminal Court of Appeal quashed the conviction on the grounds that the jury was misled as to the significance of DNA statistical evidence. A new trial commenced on 5 August 2002 and on 17 October 2002 he was again found guilty of Jean's murder. Submissions on sentencing were heard on 22 November 2002. Justice Kirby is scheduled to pass sentence on 7 March 2003. (see also the case of Rosalina Canonizado below) |

| Date | Name of Victim | Age | Place of residence | Incident | Outcome | Suspect or accused | Legal Verdict/ What is being done |
|------|--------------------------|-----|---------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 1989 | Julietta Apacway Herring | 37 | Berowa Heights, NSW | Her husband reported he found her drowned in their backyard pool on 25 November 1989. | Forensic evidence showed that her death was caused by tap water not pool water with chlorine in it. Her husband had almost \$AUS 500,000 in insurance policies on her life. | Keith David Herring, 43, her husband. | Keith Herring was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment in NSW Supreme Court in October 1991. On appeal a re-trial was ordered. He was re-indicted and again found guilty. On 4 December 1995 his sentence was changed to 22 years and 3 months with a minimum term of 18 years commencing 19 March 1990. Further appeals against conviction and sentence were dismissed on 24 November 1998. |
| 1989 | Generosa Bongcodin | 34 | Oak Park, Vic. | Strangled on 9 July 1989 | Died of strangulation in her ex-husband's Newport, Vic. residence. | Charles Schembri, 41, her ex-husband | Charles Schembri was allowed to plead guilty to the lesser charge of manslaughter and on 9 July 1990 he was sentenced to 8 years to serve a minimum of 5½ years by Justice Vincent in Melbourne's Supreme Court. However, he was released on 11 July 1993. |
| 1989 | Nanette Villani | 36 | Moorabbin, Vic. | Her decomposing body was found by police in June 1989 in her flat with cut wounds to the head and other parts of her body. She was separated from her 57 year old husband. | | No suspect | Cause of death not determined. |
| 1990 | Milagros "Mila" Dark | 39 | Noble Park, Vic. | Reported by her husband as having gone missing on 14 February 1990. | On 17 February 1990 she was found in Endeavour Hills, 10 km from her house, bashed to death, with her head bound in a plastic bag. | Neville Lawrence Dark, 52, her husband (suspect) | In early August 1991 Neville Dark was acquitted of the murder of his wife due to lack of evidence. Mila worked at the Melbourne Club where Vincenzo Leonardi, had been her supervisor. [see also the case of Nenita Evans and endnote #1 below.] |
| 1991 | Eve Roweth | 44 | Marrickville, NSW | She had been stabbed 30 times in March 1991. | Found dead in the Lace Massage Parlour where she was the Manager | No one has yet been charged with the murder. | The NSW State Coroner set a hearing for 6/7/1994. |

| Date | Name of Victim | Age | Place of residence | Incident | Outcome | Suspect or accused | Legal Verdict/ What is being done |
|------|---|-----------|-----------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 1991 | Normita Barrios Garrott and Teresita Matan Garrott | 36 and 34 | Tantawangalo, Candelo, NSW | Mass suicide on 1 May 1991 of the two women and their husbands who were brothers, John, 53, and Brian Garrott, 44. | The close foursome were said to be traumatised when they learned that one brother, John, had a fatal heart disease. | | A coronial inquiry on 22 October 1992 found that all 4 "cooperatively" planned their joint suicide. Teresita's family disputes this finding. |
| 1991 | Rosalina Cecilia Canonizado We refer to Rosalina by her family name of Canonizado out of respect for the wishes of her mother who does not want her daughter to be remembered in the name of Keir. | 24 | Tregear, NSW | Strangulation and burning. | Strangled with a lamp cord and then set on fire on 13 April 1991 | Thomas Andrew Keir, 33, her husband was tried for murder. The prosecution alleged his motive was the \$80,000 insurance policy. On 6 April 1993, Thomas Keir was acquitted due to lack of evidence. | Thomas Keir was eventually convicted of the murder of his first wife, Jean Strachan. She was also a Filipina and second cousin of Rosalina. (see also the case of Jean Angela Strachan Keir above) |
| 1991 | Pia Navida | 38 | NSW | Her body was found in the Royal National Park, NSW | She was last seen quarrelling with her boyfriend in the Railway Club Bar | No suspect | The NSW Coroners Court has set a hearing for 5-7 December 1994. |
| 1992 | Marylou Orton | 33 | Fawker, Vic. | Stabbed to death | Found handcuffed having died of multiple stab wounds on 13 March 1992 together with the body of the owner of the massage parlour where she was employed. | No suspect | |
| 1993 | Milagros "Mila" Bordador Wills | 36 | Morningside, Brisbane, Qld. | Deaf and mute, Mila was repeatedly bashed on the head with a blunt object in her flat on 3 April 1993. | Her de facto, Bruce Hughes, reported finding her dead. A "Justice for Mila Wills" Monitoring Committee was created | Bruce Hughes, 38, her de facto partner | Bruce Hughes was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment by Brisbane Supreme court on 29 September 1993. |

| Date | Name of Victim | Age | Place of residence | Incident | Outcome | Suspect or accused | Legal Verdict/ What is being done |
|------|--|----------|-------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| 1993 | Elizabeth Mary Haynes and Yohana Rodriguez | 5 and 12 | Rosemeadow, Campbelltown, NSW | Both children were on their regular access visit with Elizabeth's father at his home in Port Kembla, NSW. | The two girls were found strangled and suffocated on 24 April 1993 in a bedroom of Mr. Haynes' house in Port Kembla. Mr Haynes was found in a nearby road suffering from a drug overdose 45 minutes after the discovery of the dead girls. | Ivor James Haynes, 63, the estranged husband of Mrs. Sorosita Haynes, the mother of the two girls. Charged with murdering the two children, Mr. Haynes' trial was postponed because he changed his plea to "not guilty on the basis of diminished responsibility". | Ivor James Haynes was found guilty of manslaughter on 25 March 1994 in the Darlinghurst Supreme Court. Justice Studdert sentenced Haynes to two concurrent maximum 12-year jail terms for which he will serve a minimum of 6 years. |
| 1994 | Elma Rebecca Albarracin Young | 42 | Munruben, Qld. | Elma died on 20 February 1994. She was reported "missing" by her husband on February 21. | Elma's dead body was found dumped by a roadside not far from her home. She had been beaten and strangled. Elma was 5 months pregnant. A "Justice for Elma Young" Monitoring Committee was created | Paul Young, 42, a senior police constable, her husband | On 18 February 1995 Paul Young was convicted of manslaughter in the Brisbane Supreme Court after telling the court that he had an 'out of body experience' during the time of the killing. Although Young was sentenced to 10 yrs imprisonment with no recommendation for parole he was released after serving only 4 years and 7 months of his sentence. |
| 1995 | Priscilla Squires | 40 | Darwin, NT | Died on 29 November 1995 | A number of witnesses saw the victim punched and repeatedly stabbed to death outside a child care centre. | AS, 51, her estranged husband. It was reported that PS had a domestic violence protection order issued against him. AS' previous wife was also a Filipina and she also had a protection order against AS. | AS was charged with murder and committed to trial which was listed for hearing in November 1996. |

| Date | Name of Victim | Age | Place of residence | Incident | Outcome | Suspect or accused | Legal Verdict/ What is being done |
|------|------------------------------|-----|---------------------|---|---|--|---|
| 1996 | Susan Dimatulae Pecson | 32 | Paradise Point, Qld | Disappeared on Thur 26/9/96 on her way to work. Her blood stained car was found nearby. | Her body has not yet been found. She was 5 or 6 months pregnant at the time. | Although Susan's body has not been found, Michael Pecson, her husband was tried for murder. He is a Filipino. | Michael Pecson found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. |
| 1998 | Annabel Sabellano Strzelecki | 28 | Clare, SA. | Reported "missing" by a friend. | Her husband, Wlodzimierz "James" Strzelecki (71) said he last saw Annabel when she left him and the children in the middle of the night on 6 June 1998 in the company of a Filipina friend and a man. | No charges have been laid. Wlodzimierz "James" Strzelecki was found dead in his home having committed suicide sometime during the weekend of 17-18 June 2000. | Police investigations into Annabel's case continue. |
| 1999 | Marie Ann Stanton | ?? | Lake Clifton, WA | Shot at her home by her estranged husband, Kenneth Francis Stanton on 11 March 1999. | | Kenneth Francis Stanton was charged but at the first trial the jury could not reach a verdict and he was discharged. At a re-trial he was convicted of wilful murder on 18 September 2000 | On 20 April 2001 Kenneth Stanton's appeal was heard and on 22 June 2001 the conviction was quashed and a re-trial ordered. |
| 2000 | Ruth Amores Butay | 34 | Werribee, Vic. | On 23 June 2000 police found Ruth in her bedroom at home bludgeoned to death with a half kilo hammer. | Ruth had returned to her home after a week's separation from her husband to discuss an amicable divorce. | Her husband, Jesus 'Jess' Butay (44) was arrested on 24 June 2000 and charged with her murder. He claimed that because of provocation he lost control and has no recollection of attacking her. Jesus Butay is a Filipino. | The jury found Butay not guilty of murder but guilty of the alternative charge of manslaughter by way of provocation. He was sentenced to eight years imprisonment with a non-parole period of 6 years. |

| Date | Name of Victim | Age | Place of residence | Incident | Outcome | Suspect or accused | Legal Verdict/ What is being done |
|------|--|----------------------|--------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 2001 | Ashley Fraser, Ryan, Fraser and Jarrod Fraser | 7, 5, and 4 | Sydney NSW | The children's paternal grandmother, Anna Fraser, called a locksmith to enter her son's apartment in Caringbah NSW, 20 August 2001. The children were on an access visit for the weekend at their father's apartment where he had been living for 2 months after the break-up of his marriage to Maria Fraser. | The three children were found with handwritten messages on their bodies and on the walls of the apartment. Their father was discovered in the bath having possibly ingested poison. | The father, Steven Anthony Fraser, 33, has been charged with murder. He is being detained in the psychiatric ward of Long Bay Prison Hospital for medical assessment. | Fraser sobbed continuously in the Sutherland Magistrates Court during his first appearance on 21 August, and was excused from the subsequent court hearing on 5 Sept. The next hearing is set for 23 November 2001. |

NOTES:

1. In early 1954 Anna Maria Pontarollo, allegedly the mistress of Vincenzo Leonardi, disappeared. She was never officially reported as a missing person. We do not know if Pontarollo is a Filipina. Investigations into the links between the cases of Anna Pontarollo, Nenita Evans, and Mila Dark were reactivated for DNA testing on 28/10/98.

SUMMARY OF THE ABOVE DATA:

Since 1980, 6 children and 21 women have been killed, 1 woman survived an attempted murder, 2 women died in a mass suicide incident, 4 women and 2 children have disappeared.

7 of the accused were convicted of murder and 6 of manslaughter (1 man killed 2 children, another also murdered the woman's estranged husband). As well, 1 man committed suicide after attempting to murder his wife and killing his child. The husband, in the case of one missing woman, has since committed suicide.

In 3 cases the result of the trial is not known. Of the 2 trials which resulted in acquittals, 1 man though he was acquitted of the murder of his second wife was eventually convicted of murdering his first wife. All 37 victims are Filipinos and where the ethnicity of the perpetrators is known, all but two to the best of our knowledge, are non-Filipinos.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Melba Marginson
Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia (CPCA)
1st Floor, Ross House, 247-251 Flinders Lane,
Melbourne, VIC 3000
Tel: 03 9689 2888 or (03) 9663 2874
Fax: (03) 9663 7620
Email: mmarginson@optusnet.com.au

Dr. Veth Guevarra
Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia (CPCA)
37 Magnolia Ave
Epping, NSW 2121
Tel: (02) 9868 6254
Mobile: 0412173958
Email: vguev@optushome.com.au

Emere Distor or Dee Hunt
Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia (CPCA)
Brisbane Branch
Justice Place, 84 Park Road,
Woolloongabba, QLD 4102
Fax:(07) 3891 6944
Email: cpcabris@cpcabrisbane.org

Joan Dicka
Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia (CPCA)
c/o Dawn House SA Inc.,
PO Box 47,
Campbelltown SA 5074
Tel: (08) 8365 5033 - Fax:(08) 8365 5388
Email: joan@cedvs.com.au

You may, with written permission, quote from these statistics provided you acknowledge the source and send us a copy. Contact CPCA at the above addresses.
We recommend you also refer to *Gender, 'Race' and International Relations: Violence against Filipino Women in Australia*, published by the Institute of Criminology, Sydney, Australia

REFERENCES

- 1. General References**
- 2. Newspapers and Other Media**
- 3. Filipino Organisations: Newsletters, Press Releases,
Documents, Websites**
- 4. Court Reports and Other Government Documents**

GENERAL REFERENCES

- Abrera-Mangahas, M. (1997) 'Violence Against Women Migrant Workers: A Philippine Reality Check' paper presented at the First National Convention, Philippine Migration Research Network, Quezon City, the Philippines, 6 February.
- Aguilar, D. (1988) 'Women in the Political Economy of the Philippines' in *The Feminist Challenge: Initial Working Principles Toward Reconceptualizing the Feminist Movement in the Philippines*, Metro Manila, Asian Social Institute.
- Aguilar, D. (1989) 'The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 13, pp. 527-551.
- Aguilar, D. (1993) 'Feminism in the New World Order' in J. Gershman & W. Bello (eds) *Reexamining and Renewing the Philippine Progressive Vision*, Quezon City, Forum for Philippine Alternatives.
- Aguilar, D. (1998a) *Toward a Nationalist Feminism*, 'Feminism and the National Liberation Struggle in the Philippines', Quezon City, Giraffe Books.
- Aguilar, D. (1998b) *Toward a Nationalist Feminism*, 'Servants to the Global Masters: The Half-Hidden World of Filipina Migrant Labor', Quezon City, Giraffe Books.
- Aguilar, D. (1998c) *Toward a Nationalist Feminism*, 'Behind the Prosperous Facades: On Global Restructuring, Rethinking Marxism and Filipino Women', Quezon City, Giraffe Books.
- Aguilar, D. (1998d) *Toward a Nationalist Feminism*, 'Questioning the Ethics of Feminist Internationalism', Quezon City, Giraffe Books.
- Aguilar, D. (1998e) *Toward a Nationalist Feminism*, 'What's Wrong With the "F" Word?', Quezon City, Giraffe Books.
- Aguilar, D. (2000) 'Questionable Claims: Colonialism Redux, Feminist Style' in *Race & Class: A Journal For Black and Third World Liberation*, vol. 41, no. 3, January-March, pp. 1-12.
- Alunan, G. (1992) 'Foreign Debt Crisis and the Export of Women Labor' in *The Culture of Foreign Domination: Women's Issues, Alternatives and Initiatives, Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines '91*, Metro Manila, GABRIELA Commission on International Relations.
- American Anthropological Association (1999) 'AAA Statement on Race' in *American Anthropologist*, vol. 100, no. 3, pp. 712-713.

- Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso.
- Angeles, L. (1993) 'Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Transnational Issues and Trends in Trafficking of Filipino Women' in *Women Empowering Women: Proceedings of the Human Rights Conference on the Trafficking of Asian Women*, Metro Manila, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia.
- Ateneo de Manila University Research Team (1999) 'The Ateneo de Manila University Report: Trafficking in Women between the Philippines and Belgium/Other European Countries' in *The Philippine-Belgian Pilot Project Against Trafficking in Women*, Makati City, Ateneo Human Rights Center.
- Azarcon-dela Cruz, P. (1988) *From Virgin to Vamp ... Images of Women in Philippine Media*, Metro Manila, Asian Social Institute.
- Batrouney, T & Stone, W. (1998) 'Cultural Diversity and Family Exchange', *Family Matters*, no. 51, pp. 13-20.
- Bartky, S. (1988) 'Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernisation of Patriarchal Power' in I. Diamond & L. Quinby (eds) *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*, Boston, Northeastern University Press.
- Behrendt, L. (1993) 'Aboriginal Women and the White Lies of the Feminist Movement: Implications for Aboriginal Women in Rights Discourse', *The Australian Feminist Law Journal*, vol. 1, pp. 27-44.
- Bertaux, D. (1981) 'From the Life-History Approach to the Transformation of Sociological Practice' in D. Bertaux (ed) *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences*, London, Sage.
- Bhabha, H. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, London, Routledge.
- Boer, C. (1988) *Are you Looking for a Filipino Wife?: A Study of Filipina-Australian Marriages*, Sydney, General Synod, Anglican Church of Australia.
- Bonwick, P. (1996) 'Appetisers, Not the Main Course: The Representation of Cultural Difference in Australian Media' in H. Ericksen (ed) *The Media's Australia*, Melbourne, The Australian Centre, University of Melbourne.
- Broinowski, A. (1992) *The Yellow Lady*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press.
- Brown, P. (1996) 'For Wedded Bliss: Satisfaction of Migrant Partners of Australian Residents' in G. Battistella & A. Paganoni (eds) *Asian Women in Migration*, Quezon City, Scalabrini Migration Center.
- Cahill, D. (1990) *Intermarriages in International Contexts: A Study of Filipina Women Married to Australian, Japanese and Swiss Men*, Quezon City, Scalabrini Migration Center.

- Cain, M. (1993) 'Foucault, Feminism and Feeling: What Foucault Can and Cannot Contribute to Feminist Epistemology' in C. Ramazanoğlu (ed) *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*, London, Routledge.
- Carby, H. (1982) 'White Women Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood' in *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain*, Sydney, Hutchinson.
- Chant, S. & McIlwaine, C. (1995) *Women of a Lesser Cost: Female labour, Foreign Exchange and Philippine Development*, Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Chapkis, W. (1986) *Beauty Secrets: Women and the Politics of Appearance*, Boston, South End Press.
- Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific (1996) *Trafficking in Women & Prostitution in the Asia Pacific*, Manila, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific.
- Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific (CATW-AP), web site <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/catw>
- Cohen, S. (1980) *Folk Devils and Moral Panics. The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, Oxford, Martin Robertson.
- Connell, R. (1991) 'Live Fast and Die Young: The Construction of Masculinity among Young Working-Class Men on the Margins of the Labour Market', *ANZJS*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 141-171.
- Connell, R. (1995) *Masculinities*, St Leonards, Allen & Unwin.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991) 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color', *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 43, July, pp. 1241-1299.
- Cunneen, C. & Stubbs, J. (1996) 'Violence Against Filipino Women in Australia: Race, Class and Gender', *Waikato Law Review*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 131-154.
- Cunneen, C. & Stubbs, J. (1997) *Gender, 'Race' and International Relations: Violence against Filipino Women in Australia*, Sydney, Institute of Criminology, University of Sydney.
- Cunneen, C. & Stubbs, J. (2000) 'Male Violence, Male Fantasy and the Commodification of Women through the Internet', *International Review of Victimology*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2, 3, pp. 5-28.
- David, H. (1991) *The Stereotype of the Filipina*, unpublished Honours Dissertation, Queensland, School of Humanities, Griffith University.

- Davies, K., Dickey, J. & Stratford, T. (1987) *Out of Focus: Writings on Women and the Media*, London, The Women's Press.
- de Dios, A. (1992) 'The Sale and Commodification of Women: A Continuing Colonization' in *The Culture of Foreign Domination: Women's Issues, Alternatives and Initiatives, Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines '91*, Metro Manila, GABRIELA Commission on International Relations.
- de Dios, A. (1993) 'The Global Trafficking in Asian Women' *Women Empowering Women: Proceedings of the Human Rights Conference on the Trafficking of Asian Women*, Metro Manila, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia.
- de Dios, A. (1999) 'Hidden No More: Violence Against Women in the Philippines' in F. Cheung, M. Karlekar, A. de Dios, J. Vichit-Vadakan & L. Quisumbing (eds) *Breaking the Silence: Violence Against Women in Asia*, Hong Kong, The Equal Opportunities Commission of Hong Kong.
- de Dios, A. (2002) 'Subversions and Resistance: Women's Voices on Violence Against Women in Asia' Keynote Speech presented at the Expanding Our Horizons: Understanding the Complexities of Violence Against Women—Meanings, Cultures, Difference, University of Sydney, Australia, 18-22 February.
- de Lepervanche, M. (1989) 'Breeders for Australia: A National Identity for Women?', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 24, no. 3, August, pp. 163-182.
- de Lepervanche, M. (1991) 'The Family: In the National Interest?' in G Bottomley, M de Lepervanche & J. Martin (eds) *Intersexions: Gender/Class/Culture/Ethnicity*, North Sydney, Allen & Unwin.
- Diamond, I. & Quinby, L. (1988) 'Introduction' in I. Diamond & L. Quinby (eds) *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*, Boston, Northeastern University Press.
- Distor, E. (1996) 'Sex Tourism and Trafficking: Study Tour Ejected From Angeles Hotel' in E. Distor & D. Hunt (eds) *Confronting Sexual Exploitation: Campaign Against Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Filipino Women*, Woolloongabba, Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Brisbane Branch.
- Domestic Violence Resource Centre (nd) 'Domestic Violence and Children' (Factsheet), South Brisbane, Domestic Violence Resource Centre.
- Douglas, M. (1966) *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Durkheim, E. (1984) *The Division of Labor in Society*, W.D. Halls (translation), New York, The Free Press.
- Easteal, P. (1996) *Shattered Dreams: Marital Violence Against Overseas-born Women in Australia*, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service.

- Erikson, K. (1962) 'Notes on the Sociology of Deviance', *Social Problems*, no. 9, pp. 307-314.
- Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW (1992a) *Filipino Women: Challenges and Responses 1989-1991*, Sydney, Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW.
- Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW (1992b) *Serial Sponsorship: Perspectives for Policy Options*, Sydney, Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW.
- Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW (1994) *Serial Sponsorship: A Background Paper*, Sydney, Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW & NSW Ministry for the Status and Advancement of Women.
- Eviota, E. (1992) *The Political Economy of Gender: Women and the Sexual Division of Labour in the Philippines*, London, Zed Books.
- Family Violence Professional Education Taskforce (1994) *Family Violence: Everybody's Business, Somebody's Life* (revised edition), Sydney, Federation Press.
- Foucault, M. (1972) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, London, Tavistock.
- Foucault, M. (1978a) *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, vol. 1, England, Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1978b) 'Politics and the Study of Discourse', *Ideology and Consciousness*, vol. 3, pp. 7-26.
- Foucault, M. (1979) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, England, Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1980a) 'Truth and Power' in C. Gordon (ed) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Great Britain, Harvester Press.
- Foucault, M. (1980b) 'Two Lectures' in C. Gordon (ed) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Great Britain, Harvester Press.
- Foucault, M. (1982) 'The Subject and Power' in H. Dreyfus & P. Rabinow (eds) *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Great Britain, The Harvester Press.
- Frankenberg, R. (1993) *White Women, Race Matters*, London, Routledge.
- Game, A. (1991) *Undoing the Social: Towards a Deconstructive Sociology*, Buckingham, Open University Press.
- Garcia, C. (1993) 'The Bride Trade in Australia: A Case of Trafficking' in *Women Empowering Women: Proceedings of the Human Rights Conference on the Trafficking of Asian Women*, Metro Manila, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia.

- Gilbert, H. Lo, J. & Bobis, M. (1994-1995) 'What "Priscilla" Said' *Real Time* 4, December-January.
- Gilroy, P. (1987) *'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack': The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*, London, Routledge.
- Gledhill, C. (1997) 'Genre and Gender: The Case of Soap Opera' in S. Hall (ed) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London, Sage.
- Glodava, M. & Onizuka, R. (1994) *Mail-Order Brides: Women for Sale*, Colorado, Alaken.
- Go, S. (1997) 'Towards the 21st Century: Whither Philippine Labor Migration' paper presented at the First National Convention, Philippine Migration Research Network, Quezon City, the Philippines, 6 February.
- Goffman, E. (1963) *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books.
- Gordon, C. (1980) 'Afterword' in C. Gordon (ed) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Great Britain, Harvester Press.
- Grossberg, L., Wartella, E. & Whitney, D. (1998) *Media Making: Mass Media in a Popular Culture*, London, Sage.
- Grosz, E. (1988) 'Introduction' in B. Caine, E. Grosz, & M. de Lepervanche (eds) *Crossing Boundaries: Feminisms and the Critique of Knowledge*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin.
- Grosz, E. (1990) 'Contemporary Theories of Power and Subjectivity' in S. Gunew (ed) *Feminist Knowledge*, London, Routledge.
- Guanio-Bartels, M. & Pe-Pua, R. (1994) *The Development of A Radio Information Package for Filipino Women*, Jannali, Filipino Women's Working Party.
- Guerrero, S. (1999a) 'Preface' in S. Guerrero (ed) *Gender-Sensitive & Feminist Methodologies: A Handbook for Health and Social Researchers*, Quezon City, University Center for Women's Studies, University of the Philippines.
- Guerrero, S. (1999b) 'Broadening the Concept of Reproductive Health and Thinking Feminist' in S. Guerrero (ed) *Gender-Sensitive & Feminist Methodologies: A Handbook for Health and Social Researchers*, Quezon City, University Center for Women's Studies, University of the Philippines.
- Guerrero, S. (1999c) 'What is Feminist Research?' in S. Guerrero (ed) *Gender-Sensitive & Feminist Methodologies: A Handbook for Health and Social Researchers*, Quezon City, University Center for Women's Studies, University of the Philippines.

- Guerrero, S. (1999d) 'Sampling Designs: Choosing Purposeful Samples' in S. Guerrero (ed) *Gender-Sensitive & Feminist Methodologies: A Handbook for Health and Social Researchers*, Quezon City, University Center for Women's Studies, University of the Philippines.
- Hacking, I. (1986) 'The Archaeology of Foucault' in D.C. Hoy (ed) *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell.
- Hall, S. (1992) 'The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power' in S. Hall & B. Gieben (eds) *Formations of Modernity*, Cambridge, The Open University.
- Hall, S. (1997a) 'Introduction' in S. Hall (ed) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London, Sage.
- Hall, S. (1997b) 'The Work of Representation' in S. Hall (ed) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London, Sage.
- Hall, S. (1997c) 'The Spectacle of the Other' in S. Hall (ed) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London, Sage.
- Hamilton, A. (1990) 'Fear and Desire: Aborigines, Asians and the National Imaginary' *Australian Perceptions of Asia: Australian Cultural History*, no. 9, pp. 14-35.
- Hamilton, A. (1997) 'Primal Dream: Masculinism, Sin, and Salvation in Thailand's Sex Trade' in L. Manderson & M. Jolly (eds) *Sites of Desire: Economies of Pleasure. Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Hammerton, A. (1979) *Emigrant Gentlewomen: Genteel Poverty and Female Emigration, 1830-1914*, London, Croom Helm.
- Hennessy, R. (1993) *Materialist Feminism and the Politics of Discourse*, London, Routledge.
- Hilsdon, A. (1995) *Madonnas and Martyrs: Militarism and Violence in the Philippines*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin.
- Hofmann, C. (1998) *Questions and Issues on Prostitution: What We Need To Know*, Metro Manila, The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific.
- Holt, E. (1993) 'The Presence of the Past: Inez Davis and Junie Morosi' in R. Iletto & R. Sullivan, (eds) *Discovering Australasia: Essays on Philippine-Australian Interactions*, Townsville, James Cook University.
- Holt, E. (1996) 'Writing Filipina-Australian Bodies: The Discourse on Filipina Brides' *Philippine Sociological Review*, vol. 44, no. 1-4, pp. 58-78.
- hooks, b. (1984) *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, Boston, South End Press.

- hooks, b. (1989) 'Black Women and Feminism' in L. Richardson & V. Taylor (eds) *Feminist Frontiers 11*, New York, McGraw-Hill.
- Huggins, J. (1991) 'Black Women and Women's Liberation' in S. Gunew (ed) *Reader in Feminist Knowledge*, London, Routledge.
- Hughes, D. & Roche, C. (eds) (1999) *Making the Harm Visible: Global Sexual Exploitation of Women and Girls, Speaking Out and Providing Services*, Rhode Island, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women.
- Hunt, D. (2002) 'Filipino Community Organising on Women's Issues in Australia' paper presented at the STOP THE TRAFFIC SYMPOSIUM: Addressing trafficking in women for prostitution, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia, 25 February.
- IBON Foundation (1999) 'Filipinas as Global Slaves' *IBON Facts & Figures*, vol. 22, no. 5-6, pp. 1-12.
- Illo, J. (1999) 'Fair Skin and Sexy Body: Imprints of Colonialism and Capitalism on the Filipina' in J. Illo (ed) *Women and Gender Relations in the Philippines: Selected Readings in Women's Studies*, vol. 1, Quezon City, Women's Studies Association of the Philippines.
- Iredale, R. Innes, J. & Castles, S. (1992) *Serial Sponsorship: Immigration Policy and Human Rights*, Wollongong, University of Wollongong.
- Irwin, J. & Wilkinson, M. (1997) 'Women, Children and Domestic Violence', *Women Against Violence*, issue. 3. pp. 15-22.
- Isis International-Manila (1998) 'The State of Women and Media: Focus on Violence Against Women' report presented at the 42nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.
- Isis International-Manila (1999) *Changing Lenses: Women's Perspectives on Media*, Quezon City, Isis International-Manila.
- Israel, L. (2001) 'The Troika of Class, Gender and Sexuality: Shame and Women's Labour Migration' paper presented at the Sixth Women in Asia Conference, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, 23-26 September.
- Jakubowicz, A., Goodall, H., Martin, J., Mitchell, T., Randall, L. & Seneviratne, K. (1994) *Racism, Ethnicity and the Media*, St Leonards, Allen & Unwin.
- Jolly, M. (1997) 'From Point Venus to Bali Ha'i: Eroticism and Exoticism in Representations of the Pacific' in L. Manderson & M. Jolly (eds) *Sites of Desire: Economies of Pleasure. Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Kabbani, R. (1994) *Imperial Fictions: Europe's Myths of the Orient*, London, Pandora.

- Kaminskas, G. & Smith, A. (1990) 'Brides or Women—Female Filipino Migration to Australia' paper presented at the Second National Conference of the Australian Women's Studies Association, Melbourne, 25-27 September.
- Kanlungan Centre Foundation (1997) *Destination: Middle East. A Handbook for Filipino Women Domestic Workers*, Quezon City, Kanlungan Centre Foundation.
- Kanlungan Center Foundation (1999) *Fast Facts on Filipino Labor Migration*, Quezon City, Kanlungan Centre Foundation.
- Karpati, Z. (1981) 'The Methodological Use of the Life History Approach in a Hungarian Survey on Mobility and Urbanization' in D. Bertaux (ed) *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences*, London, Sage.
- Largoza-Maza, L. (1994) 'Keynote Address' *Gaining Ground, Building Strength: Advancing Grassroots Women's Struggles for Liberation, Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines*, Quezon City: GABRIELA.
- Lauber, S. (1996) 'Pertinent Australian Laws and Other International Instruments on Inter-cultural Marriages, Migration and Prostitution' in E Distor & D. Hunt (eds) *Confronting Sexual Exploitation: Campaign Against Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Filipino Women*, Woolloongabba, Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Brisbane Branch.
- Law, L. (1997) 'A Matter of "Choice": Discourses on Prostitution in the Philippines' in L. Manderson & M. Jolly (eds) *Sites of Desire: Economies of Pleasure. Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Lewis, R. (1996) *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation*, London, Routledge.
- Lidchi, H. (1997) 'The Poetics and the Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures' in S. Hall (ed) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London, Sage.
- Lubi, E. (1992) 'Militarism: Its Cost on Women and Society' in *The Culture of Foreign Domination: Women's Issues, Alternatives and Initiatives*, Metro Manila, GABRIELA Commission on International Relations.
- Macherey, P. (1978) *A Theory of Literary Production*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Maher, B. (1984) 'Ireland Over Here'—Nineteen Century Irish Immigrants in Southern New South Wales' in R. Reid & K. Johnson (eds) *The Irish Australians*, Marrickville, Wentworth Press.

- Maltzahn, K. & de Guzman-Marginson, M. (1996) 'Introduction: Strengthening Solidarity with Filipino Women Against Sexual Exploitation' in E Distor & D. Hunt (eds) *Confronting Sexual Exploitation: Campaign Against Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Filipino Women*, Woolloongabba, Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia, Brisbane Branch.
- Mama, A. (1989) 'Violence Against Black Women: Gender, Race and State Responses', *Feminist Review*, no. 32, pp. 30-47.
- Mananzan, Sr. M. (1992) 'Keynote Address' in *The Culture of Foreign Domination: Women's Issues, Alternatives and Initiatives, Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines '91*, Metro Manila, GABRIELA Commission on International Relations.
- Manderson, L. (1997) 'Parables of Imperialism and Fantasies of the Exotic: Western Representations of Thailand—Place and Sex' in L. Manderson & M. Jolly (eds) *Sites of Desire: Economies of Pleasure. Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Manderson, L. & Jolly, M. (1997) 'Sites of Desire/Economies of Pleasure in Asia and the Pacific' in L. Manderson and M. Jolly (eds) *Sites of Desire: Economies of Pleasure. Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Marginson, M. (1992a) 'Not for the Money' in J. Scutt (ed) *Breaking Through: Women, Work, and Careers*, Melbourne, Artemis.
- Marshall, L. (1997) *The Representation of Filipino Women in Australian Film: The Case of 'Mail Order Bride'*, unpublished Master of Arts Degree, Victoria, School of Arts and Media, Latrobe University.
- McNay, L. (1992) *Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender and the Self*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Miranda, N. (1994) 'Impact of Structural Adjustment Programs on Women Workers' *Gaining Ground, Building Strength: Advancing Grassroots Women's Struggles for Liberation, Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines*, Quezon City, GABRIELA.
- Mohanty, C. (1988) 'Under Western Edges: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses', *Feminist Review*, no. 30, Autumn.
- Morosi, J. (1975) *Sex, Prejudice and Politics*, Victoria, Widescope International.
- Mowatt, J. & Wall, D. (1992) *Dealing with the Media. Filipino Women in Cross Cultural Marriages: a Training Course Manual for Community Workers*, Jannali, The Filipino Women's Working Party.
- Navarro-Tolentino, R. (1992) 'Philippine Government Perspective', *Serial Sponsorship: Perspectives for Policy Options*, Sydney, Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW.

- Nuqui, C. (1998) 'Birds of Prey: The Feminization of Migrant Labor', *Lila: Asia-Pacific Women's Studies Journal*, vol. 7, pp. 67-75.
- Oakley, A. (1981) 'Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms' in H. Roberts (ed) *Doing Feminist Research*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- O'Donnell, C. & Saville, H. (1982) 'Domestic Violence, Sex and Class Inequality' in C. O'Donnell & J. Craney (eds) *Family Violence In Australia*, Melbourne, Longman Cheshire.
- Olesen, V. (1994) 'Feminisms and Models of Qualitative Research' in N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London, Sage.
- Opotow, S. (1990) 'Moral Exclusion and Injustice: An Introduction', *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 46, pp. 1-20.
- Paredes-Canilao, N. (1999) 'Ethics in Feminist Research' in S. Guerrero (ed) *Gender-Sensitive & Feminist Methodologies: A Handbook for Health and Social Researchers*, Quezon City, University Center for Women's Studies, University of the Philippines.
- Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (1998) *Against the Odds: How Women Survive Domestic Violence*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.
- Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (1999) *Current Perspectives on Domestic Violence*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.
- Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (2000) *Attitudes to Domestic and Family Violence in the Diverse Australian Community*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.
- Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (2001) *Working Together Against Violence*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.
- Pateman, C. (1988) *The Sexual Contract*, Oxford, Polity Press.
- Pecheux, M. (1975) *Language, Semantics and Ideology*, New York, St. Martins.
- Penny, J & Siew-Ean, K. (1996) *Intermarriage: A Study of Migration and Integration*, Canberra, Australian Government Printing Service.
- Peredo, P. (1992) 'Foreign Domination and the Conditioning of Women in Colonized Countries' in *The Culture of Foreign Domination: Women's Issues, Alternatives and Initiatives, Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines '91*, Metro Manila, GABRIELA Commission on International Relations.
- Pettman, J. (1991) 'Racism, Sexism and Sociology' in G. Bottomley, M. de Lepervanche, & J. Martin (eds) *Intersexions*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin.

- Pettman, J. (1992) *Living in the Margins: Racism, Sexism and Feminism in Australia*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin.
- Pettman, J. (1996) *Worlding Women: A Feminist International Politics*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin.
- Plummer, K. (1983) *Documents of Life: An Introduction to the Problems and Literature of a Humanist Method*, London, George Allen & Unwin.
- Polk, K. (1994) *When Men Kill*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press.
- Purvis, T. & Hunt, A. (1993) 'Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology ...' *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 44, no. 3, pp. 473-499.
- Radford, J. Kelly, L. & Hester, M. (1996) 'Introduction' in M. Hester, L. Kelly, & J. Radford, (eds) *Women, Violence and Male Power: Feminist Activism, Research and Practice*, Buckingham, Open University Press.
- Radford, J. & Stanko, E. (1996) 'Violence Against Women and Children: the Contradictions of Crime Control Under Patriarchy' in M. Hester, L. Kelly, & J. Radford, (eds) *Women, Violence and Male Power: Feminist Activism, Research and Practice*, Buckingham, Open University Press.
- Ramazanoğlu, C. (1993) 'Introduction' in C. Ramazanoğlu, (ed) *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*, London, Routledge.
- Ramazanoğlu, C. & Holand, J. (1993) 'Women's Sexuality and Men's Appropriation of Desire' in C. Ramazanoğlu, (ed) *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*, London, Routledge.
- Ramirez, M. & Deza, A. (1997) *When Labor Does Not Pay: The Case of Filipino Outmigration*, Manila, Asian Social Institute.
- Ransom, J. (1993) 'Feminism, Difference and Discourse: the Limits of Discursive Analysis for Feminism' in C. Ramazanoğlu, (ed) *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*, London, Routledge.
- Raquiza, T. (1992) 'The Role of Mass Media in the Standardization and Subjugation of Women: A Filipino Women's Perspective' in *The Culture of Foreign Domination: Women's Issues, Alternatives and Initiatives, Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines '91*, Metro Manila, GABRIELA Commission on International Relations.
- Reid, R. & Mongan, C. (1996) 'a decent set of girls ...' *The Irish Famine Orphans of the Thomas Arbuthnot 1849-1850*, Yass Heritage Project, Fyshwick, CPN.
- Riley, K. (1985) 'Black Girls Speak for Themselves' in Weiner, G. (ed) *Just a Bunch of Girls: Feminist Approaches to Schooling*, England, Open University Press.

- Roberts, H. (1992) 'Answering Back: the Role Of Respondents in Women's Health Research' in *Women's Health Matters*, London, Routledge.
- Robinson, J. (1994) 'White Women Researching/Representing "Others": From Antipartheid to Postcolonialism?' in A. Blunt & G. Rose. (eds) *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geography*, London, The Guilford Press.
- Robinson, K. (1996) 'Of Mail-Order Brides and Boys' Own Tales: Representations of Asian-Australian Marriages' *Feminist Review*, no. 52, pp. 53-68.
- Roces, M. (1994) 'Some Thoughts on Images of Female Power in Post-War Philippines' *Lila: Asia-Pacific Women's Studies Journal*, no. 3, pp. 51-67.
- Roces, M. (1996) 'Filipinas in Central Queensland: Gender, Migration and Support Services' in D. Cryle, G. Griffin, & D. Stehlik, (eds) *Futures for Central Queensland*, Rockhampton, Central Queensland University Press.
- Roces, M. (1998) 'Kapit sa Patalim (Hold on to the Blade): Victim and Agency in the Oral Narratives of Filipino Women Married to Australian Men in Central Queensland' *Lila: Asia-Pacific Women's Studies Journal*, vol. 7, pp. 1-19.
- Said, E. (1978) *Orientalism*, New York, Pantheon Books.
- Sancho, N. (1992) 'Today's Poverty, Repression and Women' in *The Culture of Foreign Domination: Women's Issues, Alternatives and Initiatives, Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines '91*, Metro Manila, GABRIELA Commission on International Relations.
- San Juan Jr., E. (1998) 'Symbolic Economy in the Narratives of Filipina Overseas Contract Workers' in *Filipina Insurgency: Writing Against Patriarchy in the Philippines*, Quezon City, Giraffe Books.
- Saroca, N. (1997) 'Filipino Women, Sexual Politics, and the Gendered Racist Discourse of the Mail Order Bride' *Journal of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 89-103.
- Sawicki, J. (1991) *Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, Power, and the Body*, London, Routledge.
- SIBOL (Sama-Samang Inisyatiba ng Kababaihan sa Pagbabago ng Batas at Lipunan) (1997) *Women's Health and the Law*, Quezon City, Philippines, Women's Legal Bureau.
- Smith, D (1988a) *The Everyday World as Problematic: a Feminist Sociology*, Stony Stratford, Open University Press.
- Smith, D. (1988b) 'Femininity as Discourse' in L. Roman & L. Christian-Smith (eds) *Becoming Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture*, London, The Palmer Press.

- Smith, D. (1990) 'Introduction' *Texts, Facts and Femininity: Exploring the Relations of Ruling*, London, Routledge.
- Smith, K. (1986) 'The Murder of Teresita Andalis', *Australian Police Journal*, July-September, pp. 92-102.
- Soper, K. (1993) 'Productive Contradictions' in C. Ramazanoğlu, (ed) *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*, London, Routledge.
- Soriano, G. (1995) 'Filipino Families in Australia' in R. Hartley (ed) *Families and Cultural Diversity in Australia*, St Leonards, Allen & Unwin.
- Spivak, G. (1988) 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in C. Nelson & L. Grossberg, (eds) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Chicago, University of Illinois Press.
- Summers, A. (1994) *Damned Whores and God's Police*, (revised edition) Victoria, Penguin Books.
- Thiesmeyer, L. (1996) 'U.S. Comfort Women and the Silence of the American Other' *HCM: A Journal of Asian American Cultural Criticism*, vol. 3, no. 2, Spring Retrieved 13 March 2001 from <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~critmass/v3n2/thiesmeyerl.html>
- Thompson, P. (1981) 'Life Histories and the Analysis of Social Change' in D. Bertaux (ed) *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences*, London, Sage.
- Thorogood, M. and Coulter, A. (1992) 'Food for thought: women and nutrition' in H. Roberts (ed) *Women's Health Matters*, London, Routledge.
- Tiongson, M. (1999) 'The State of Women and Media in Asia: An Overview' paper presented at the High Level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, Bangkok, 26-29 October.
- Torres-Calud, E. (1992) 'Philippines' in A. Santos, L. Lee & E. Torres-Calud (eds) *Awake 2 Women Migration and Sex Tourism*, Manila, Asia Partnership for Human Development.
- Turner, B. (1984) *The Body and Society*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell.
- Turner, B. (1987) *Medical Power and Social Knowledge*, London, Sage.
- Turner, B. (1992) *Regulating Bodies*, London, Routledge.
- Wall, D. (1994) 'Representations of Filipino Women in the Australian Media' paper presented at the Stopping Violence Against Filipino Women in Australia: A Government and Community Responsibility conference, Abbotsford, Australia, 6-7 October.

- Walton, P. (1993) 'Media and Murder: Some Problems of Culture, Representation, and Difference' paper presented at the Second National Conference on Violence, Canberra, Australia, 15-18 June.
- Weedon, C. (1987) *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell.
- White, R. (1981) *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980*, St Leonards, Allen & Unwin.
- Whiten, A. (1999) *History of the PASQ INC: The Philippine-Australian Society of Queensland, the First Filipino Association in the State*, Fortitude Valley, Philippine-Australian Society of Queensland Inc.
- Windschuttle, K. (1988) *The Media*, 3rd edition, Victoria, Penguin.
- Woelz-Stirling, N. Kelaher, M. & Manderson, L. (1998) 'Power and the Politics of Abuse: Rethinking Violence in Filipina-Australian Marriages', *Health Care for Women International*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 289-301.
- Women's Coalition Against Family Violence (1994) *Blood on Whose Hands? The Killing of Women and Children in Domestic Homicides*, Fitzroy, Arena.

NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER MEDIA

- Allen, R. (1981a) 'Dead Filipino Girl Shy and Lonely—Court Told', *The Sunday Mail*, 12 April, p. 8.
- Allen, R. (1981b) 'Filipino 'Fiancee' Killed for \$400,000 Policy: Murder to Force a Change in Insurance', *The Sunday Mail*, 19 April, p. 5.
- Allen, R. (1981c) 'Pity me,' Lonely Girl Said in Letter', *The Sunday Mail*, 19 April, p. 5.
- Allen, L. (1988) 'Smoky Mountain', *Australian Penthouse*, April, pp. 78-83.
- Bagares, R. (1995) '18 Pinay Brides, Fiancees meet Death in Australia', *Philippine Star*, 4 July, pp. 1, 5.
- Barrowclough, N. (1995) 'The Shameful Story of Australia's Serial Husbands', *Good Weekend, Sydney Morning Herald Magazine*, 6 May, pp. 46-67.
- Bentley, D. (1988) 'Lust: Battered Husbands', *Australian Penthouse*, April, pp. 18, 144.
- Cornwall, D. (2000) '24 Years' *NBN News*, 29 February.
- Courier-Mail* (1981) 'Man Jailed for Murder of Filipino Fiancee', *Courier-Mail*, 18 April, p. 2.
- Cullen, J. (2002) 'Flashback', *The Australian Women's Weekly*, April, p. 192.
- Debelle, P. (1998) 'Tears for Annabel', *The Age*, 12 September, p. 7.
- Dempsey, S. (1991) 'Filipino Brides: Eleven Killed in Australia', *Sun-Herald*, 14 July, pp. 12-13.
- de la Torre, C. (1989) 'Not All Bed of Roses: Girl's Wanting to Marry Foreigners Get Warning', *Manila Bulletin*, 19 August, p. 8.
- de Quiros, C. (1992) 'There's the Rub: She Said, He Said', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 26 December, p. 14.
- Dibben, K. & Kornyei, O. (1995) 'Let Dad Rot in Jail, Says Killer's Girl', *The Sunday Mail*, 19 February, p. 4.
- Dibben, K. (1995) 'Murder By Mail-Order', *The Sunday Mail*, 26 February, pp. 66, 95.
- Dwyer, N. (1987) 'Murderer Earns Uni Degree From Prison Cell', *The Sunday Mail*, 13 December, p. 3.

- Enciso, N. (1981) 'Cite Cohesiveness of Pinoys in Brisbane', *Bulletin Today*, 25 April, p. 7.
- Fernandez, C. (1994) 'Pregnant Cebuana Strangled in Australia; Kin Seek Help', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 4 March, p. 12.
- Filipina Dreamgirls* (feature film) (1991) Wales, BBC Production, Director Les Blair.
- Hannagan, S. (1998) 'Disappearance a Major Crime', *Northern Argus*, 8 July, p. 1.
- Haran, P. (1998) 'Missing Mum 'Planned to Leave Country'', *Sunday Mail*, 5 July, p. 17.
- Hills, B. (1974) 'Morosi Storm Rocks Govt', *The Age*, 6 December, p. 1.
- Innes, P. (1990) 'Women Protest at Eight-Year Manslaughter Sentence', *The Age*, 10 July, p. 7.
- Jimenez-David, R. (2000a) 'The Killings Go On', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 14 January, p. 7.
- Jimenez-David, R. (2000b) 'Rosalina's Story', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 20 January, p. 7.
- Jimenez-David, R. (2000c) 'Still Crying Out for Justice', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 21 January, p. 9.
- Johnston, B. (1995) 'Policeman Tells of Love for Wife', *Courier-Mail*, 15 February, p. 18.
- Kennedy, H. (1992) 'Bright Lights Death Lure: Mary Lou Loved Bars and Gambling But Her Luck Ran Out', *Sunday Herald-Sun*, 12 April, p. 31.
- Laurie, V. (1999) 'War of the Rose', *Sun-Herald*, 28 March, p. 65.
- Lowe, B. (1988) 'Mail-Order Misery', *The Weekend Australian*, 25-26 June, p. 3.
- Macken, L. (1993) 'Jury Finds Husband Not Guilty of Murder', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 April, p. 6.
- Manila Chronicle* (1993) 'Outrage is Not Enough', *Manila Chronicle*, 15 April, p. 4.
- Manila Chronicle* (1995) 'Strangler Gets 10 Years in Jail', *Manila Chronicle*, 21 February, p. 3.
- Martinkus, A. (1992) 'Police Probe 'Death' Site', *Melbourne Leader*, 17 March, pp. 1, 3.
- Morrell, S. (1992) 'Victim in Wrong Place', *Herald-Sun*, 17 March, p. 7.

- Norbury, K. (1990) ‘‘Dream Marriage’ Ends in Death: A Romance Made in the Philippines Led to Tragedy’, *The Sunday Age*, 8 July, p. 9.
- Orozco, W. (1991) ‘Trouble Down Under: Battered, Abused Filipinas Fight Back’, *Manila Times*, 13 April, p. 5.
- Perdon, R. (1994) ‘Aussie Films Reinforce Negative Image of Filipino ‘Mail Order Bride’, *The Pilipino Herald Newspaper*, 15 October-15 November, pp. 1, 8.
- Peterson, A. (1999a) ‘Husband on Trial the Verdict: Jealous Enough to Kill His Wife’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 September, pp. 18-19.
- Peterson, A. (1999b) ‘Husband on Trial the Verdict: Second Marriage Also Ended Tragically’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 September, p. 18.
- Philippine Daily Inquirer* (1991) ‘Bridal Path to Better Life May Also Lead To Tragedy’, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 3 October, p. 1.
- Pudney, J. (2000) ‘Suspect in Missing Wife Case Dead’, *The Advertiser*, 20 June, p. 11.
- Quinn, S. (1993) ‘The Wives of Thomas Keir’, *Sunday Telegraph*, 11 April, pp. 1, 8, 9.
- Reddy, M. (1992) ‘Poverty Paves Way to Underworld’, *The Sunday Age*, 22 March, p. 9.
- Reynolds, J. (1988) ‘Letters Led to a Killer’s Conviction’, *The Sun*, 11 March, p. 10.
- Robles, A. (1991) ‘Failed Fairytales: The Filipina Tragedy in Australia’, *Manila Chronicle*, 3 February, pp. 10-11.
- Ross, N. (1990) ‘Man Strangled ‘Dream Bride’’, *The Sun*, 4 July, p. 7.
- Rowett, L. & Edmondson, T. (1987) ‘Slain Couple’s Baby Found Safe as Police Quiz Man: Tip-off Leads to Family Caring for Tragic Orphan’, *Courier-Mail*, 28 February, p. 1.
- Russell, M. (1999) ‘Whine and Rose’s’, *Courier-Mail*, 20 March, p. 25.
- Russell, M. (2000) ‘Affairs of Estate’, *Courier-Mail*, 18 November, p. 35.
- Russell, M. (2001) ‘Rose-coloured Drama’, *Courier-Mail*, 7 April, p. 18.
- Seneviratne, K. (1991) ‘Australia: Lax Immigration Laws Seal Fate of Filipino Mail Order Brides’, *Manila Times*, 27 July, p. 5.
- Sipin, L. (1994) ‘Did You Come Here to Die?’, *Manila Times*, 22 July, p. 4.
- Smith, D. (2000) ‘Wife Killer Jailed’, *Prime National News*, 29 February.

- The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (motion picture) (1994) Australia, Latent Image/Specific Films Production, Director Stephan Elliot.
- The Age* (1974) 'Cyclone Junie Back Again', *The Age*, 30 December, p. 1.
- The Australian Financial Review* (1974) 'The Morosi Affair: One Man's Poison is Another's Meat', *The Australian Financial Review*, 9 December, p. 1.
- Tucak, L. (2001) 'Rose is Most Evil Person, Dad Said', *The Australian*, 5 September, p. 5.
- Watt, D. (1987) 'Bizarre Double Murder', *Telegraph*, 27 February, pp. 1-2.
- Wainwright, R. (1992a) 'Scandal of a Rambling Rose: Bigamy and Murder Kill a Fairytale', *Herald-Sun*, 25 April, pp. 4-5.
- Wainwright, R. (1992b) 'The Real Rose Hancock: 'That was the Sort of Girl She Was ... She Wanted a Rich Man and She Got Him'', *Sunday Herald-Sun*, 26 April, pp. 14-15.
- Whiting, F. (1999) 'Click Here for Your Dream Girl', *The Sunday Mail*, 24 January, pp. 20-21.
- Wilmoth, P. (1996) 'Junie—The Rest of the Story', *The Sunday Age*, 7 April, p. 1.

**FILIPINO ORGANISATIONS: NEWSLETTERS, PRESS RELEASES,
DOCUMENTS, WEB SITES**

- BABAE (1992) 'BABAE Criticises Media', Newsletter of the Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment & Development- Melbourne and BABAE-Sydney, no. 2.
- Buklod Kababaihang Filipina (1997) 'For Better or for Worse ... Till Death Do Us Part?', Campbelltown, Buklod Kababaihang Filipina.
- Canonizado, E. (2001) 'In Memory of Rosalina Canonizado', *KASAMA*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 18-19.
- Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia (1994) 'Stereotyping In Film Causes More Violence Against Filipinas', (media release), 5 October.
- Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia (2002) 'Violent Deaths and Disappearances Amongst Filipino Women and Children in Australia since 1980', (unpublished statistics), 25 November.
- Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development Inc. (nd) *Buklod Pinay*, North Melbourne, Collective of Filipinas for Empowerment and Development Inc.
- Distor, E. (1994) 'Justice For Elma Young', *KASAMA*, vol. 8. no. 2, pp. 1-2.
- Distor, E. (1995a) 'Justice Denied', *KASAMA*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 1-2.
- Distor, E. (1995b) 'In the 'Twilight Zone'', *KASAMA*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 1-2.
- Hunt, D. (1999) 'Filipina Still Missing in Australia', *KASAMA*, vol. 13, no. 2. p 1.
- Hunt, D. Stubbs, J. (1999) 'Thomas Keir Convicted at Last', *KASAMA*, vol. 13, no. 4, p. 18.
- KASAMA* (1995) 'Media', *KASAMA*, vol. 9, nos. 2 &3, p. 5.
- KASAMA* (2000a) 'Forum Tackles Violence Against Filipinas in Australia', *KASAMA*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 4-5.
- KASAMA* (2000b) 'Suspect in Missing Wife Case Commits Suicide', *KASAMA*, vol. 14. no. 2, p. 4.
- KASAMA* (2002) 'Appeal Court Grants Thomas Keir Retrial', *KASAMA*, vol. 16. no. 1, p. 12.
- Marginson, M. (1992b) 'Marylou Orton: Her Story' (unpublished document).

Marginson, M. (1992c) 'In Memory of Marylou', Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia Newsletter, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 13-14.

Philippine Issues (1989) 'A Tribute To Gene', July-September, p. 11.

Ramilo, C. (1998) 'Filipino Women in Australia: When Fantasy Leads to Murder', *KASAMA*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 9, 14.

Solidarity Philippines Australia Network (SPAN), web site
<http://www.cpcabrisbane.org>

Wall, D. (2000) 'Justice for Jean', *KASAMA*, vol. 14. no. 1, pp. 1-3.

COURT REPORTS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (1999) 'Help for New Migrants: Filipino-Australian Marriages and Migration', (fact sheet), Belconnen, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2000) 'Multicultural Australia: The Philippines-born Community', (fact sheet), Commonwealth of Australia.

Government of the Republic of the Philippines (1974) *The Philippines: A Nation Reborn*, Manila, National Media Production Center.

National Missing Persons Unit, Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence (n.d.)
Retrieved 13 March 2001 from
<http://www.missingpersons.info.au/missing/strzelecki.htm>

Regina v Thomas Andrew Keir (2000) *Regina v Thomas Andrew Keir*, Supreme Court of New South Wales Criminal Division, (transcript of sentence), 29 February, Adams J.

R v Schembri (1990) *R v Schembri*, Supreme Court of Victoria, (transcript of sentence), 9 July. Vincent J.