



# *Diverse voices, many stories*

*Tu Mai Awa - Project and Research*

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*Tu Mai Awa*





**The Domestic Violence  
Interventions and  
Services Research  
Programme**

**1993-2015**



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# The five discourses Damien identified

**Discourse of pathology:**

*deficit, disorder, dysfunction*

**Expressive tension discourse:**

*anger, frustration, explosion*

**Liberal humanist discourse:**

*rationality, choice, control*

**Learning discourse:**

*the transgenerational cycle of violence*

**Social systems discourse:**

*poverty, violent culture, patriarchy*



## **The four operations Linda and Allan identified:**

**the concealing of violence**

**obfuscating of perpetrators' responsibility**

**concealing of victims' resistance**

**blaming and pathologizing of victims**

*Tu Mai Awa: Our Stories*



## **Preliminary Analysis: Six themes**

- **intimacy with violence**
- **an awakening of social/political conscience**
- **the injustice of victim-blaming and frustrations with “the system”**
- **the need for transformational interventions that orchestrate social change**
- **foregrounding the diversity in the stories of those closest to violent relationships**
- **re-languaging stories**

- intimacy with violence

*. . . I grew up with a father who was at times violent . . . violence has always been part of my context . . . (Peter, 7)*

*I've had an interest in family violence and mental health because of my own kind of upbringing really (Mātai, 21-21)*

*so there was a lot of sexualised violence in my life when I was a child. Then when I was 22 a guy broke into my house. I went through the court process. He was up on charges of burglary and attempted rape... I went to go because he pleaded not guilty. He wasn't guilty, wasn't guilty. I had to go to court. They were going to make me testify. Then the morning of the court thing he changed his plea. So then they weren't going to let me in (Guen, 53-58)*

*I just remember being so dumbfounded by that I was treated again as an outsider. (Guen, 75-76)*

***. . . a lot of different stories through many generations and on both sides of my family . . . [ranging from] extreme physical violence. . . [to] having to function in a very patriarchal sort of social environment . . . (Tara, 26-31)***

***. . . pretty much everything I was doing with my study somehow tracked back to family violence and that just carried on right through . . .(Marion, 30-31)***

***. . . most of the kids that came down to the youth centre . . . were from families where there was violence . . .(Peter, 17-19)***

***I was working in the [mental health unit at ....] with people from the moderate to severe end of mental health. I did see quite a bit of [domestic] violence and I don't think that was because of the mental health stuff (Mātai, 449-452)***

- **awakening social/political conscience**

***It just transformed my way of thinking about how people relate to one another and I just thought that was such a cool thing . . .***

**(Tara, 71-72)**

***when you see around you what you believe to be social injustice, whether its people having more than others, like, you know, the disparity between rich and poor or people being discriminated against . . .you become aware of it happening in the world . . . and then you start to notice it in your own community as well . . .***

**(Tara, 82-87)**

***. . . there was lots of violence . . . [but also] really amazing scenes of freedom and justice . . .during high school became I guess interested in issues of social justice . . .issues of oppression, and, sort of, the antidotes for that . . .(Peter, 8-14)***

***. . . everything's all ambulance at the bottom of the cliff stuff . . . there's nothing proactive about what we're doing. We're trying to keep women and children safe and, you know, we talk about being political and try to create social change but not effectively. . . (Marion, 310-313)***

- the injustice of victim-blaming and frustrations with “the system”

*...Our police do not understand the DVA [Domestic Violence Act]. They don't understand how domestic violence works and they don't train effectively... (Marion, 72-73)*

*. . . quite a lot of people, I think, are really suspicious of the police, you know, have had really bad experiences with them, if not in their own lifetimes, then intergenerationally . . . one of the advocates was telling me her own family stories about pretty awful police discrimination . . . you can sort of understand why people wouldn't necessarily want to go to the police ( Tara, 306-312)*

*A cop who didn't um believe that the protection order had been breached because the address um wasn't the address on the protection order (right) so totally missing the fact that actually it is a protected person not a protected address. A couple who have said it is not um a breach a breach of a protection order because she had invited him to the house (Marion, 159-162).*



***... how do you evidence someone who has been controlling and manipulating and terrifying and intimidating . . .(Marion, 132-133)***

***...Or men can't control their violence or the violator can't control it and she somehow, or the victim somehow asked for it; so that if she dares disclose it to anybody then somehow she's done something wrong by pressing charges (Mātai, 670-672)***

***...she was a pain in the arse . . .picked her up heaps of times . . . she's mentally ill . . . she's, you know, a prostitute . . . she was definitely considered a second class citizen and not worthy of decent respectful treatment and decent inquiry . . . (Tara, 339-343)***

