

The Body Shop surveys community attitudes on relationship violence

The Body Shop Australia's survey of community attitudes, understandings and responses to abuse in relationships 2006: A summary of findings. (2007). Mulgrave, Vic: The Body Shop Australia.

Research commissioned by The Body Shop Australia surveyed 30,000 customers across Australia about their attitudes to, and understandings of, abuse in relationships. The Body Shop's use of the term "relationship violence" refers not only to violence that occurs in marriages or de facto relationships, but also to abuse that may occur in dating relationships among younger people (p. 9). Participants in the survey were asked about what they thought constituted relationship violence; their suggestions of where they would tell a friend to go for help if their friend disclosed experiencing violence; what they thought the gender of the perpetrator and victim were; and what they thought the causes of relationship abuse were. Key findings include:

- More than 90% of people identified punching, kicking, hitting, slapping, pushing, not being allowed to see family and friends, and pressure for sex as relationship abuse.
- In relation to pressuring someone for sex, 15.8% of males thought it was not abusive or weren't sure whether it was abusive, compared to 7.5% of females.
- Men were less likely than women to see name-calling, put-downs, stalking, or being told how to dress as abusive behaviours, or were more likely to be unsure.
- About one-third of people thought relationship violence was gender symmetrical. Thirty-five per cent of all respondents thought that men and women were equally perpetrators, and 30% thought men and women were equally victimised. The proportions of men and women who believed in this symmetry of violence were similar, with men only slightly more inclined to hold this view.

- In relation to what "causes" relationship violence, drugs and alcohol (97%), trouble controlling anger (96%), and having a violent personality were the top three reasons nominated by respondents.

The report also found that age was an important factor in people's attitudes towards relationship abuse. Older people were more likely to think that abuse was common in the community and were more able to identify subtle forms of abuse. For example, in the under-18 group, males were three times more likely to think that pressure for sex is not abuse. The findings add to existing research about attitudes to violence against women.

The Jammed by Dee McLachlan

In 2006, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) listed Australia as the 11th main destination for victims of trafficking. Project Respect estimates 1,000 women are trafficked into Australia each year. While trafficking in persons refers broadly to the movement of individuals involving deception, coercion, fraud or force, it is sexual trafficking that has been the most visible issue in the public domain.

The Jammed, written and directed by Dee McLachlan, goes behind broad claims and sensationalised media coverage to tell the stories of three women trapped in situations of sexual exploitation.

The Jammed was awarded the best Australian feature film at the 2007 Inside Film awards.

Visit www.thejammed.com for more information on the film.

ACSSA would like to thank the producers for inviting us to attend the international premiere of the film, and we offer our congratulations to the cast and crew for their outstanding achievement.

Reference

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2006). *Trafficking in persons: Global patterns*. Retrieved 7 November 2007, from http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_persons_report_2006-04.html