

Tri-County Domestic Violence Intervention Provider Network Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2001

Present: Chris Huffine (Men's Resource Center), Natasha Pennington (ROSS), Devarshi Bajpai (ASAP), Stacy Womack (ARMS), Gustavo Picazo (Changepoint), Michael Davis (Changepoint) and Christine Crowe (Choices DVIP).

Minutes by Christine Crowe and edited by Chris Huffine (who is responsible for their very late distribution)

TOPIC: Homophobia, Sexism and Domestic Violence

It was discussed that the work of Michael Kimmel, Paul Kivel, and Jackson Katz indicate a direct link between battering and homophobia. Chris Huffine did two exercises showing how homophobia is directly related to sexism and misogyny. The first exercise involved generating a list of stereotypical qualities that characterize gay men. It was observed that most of those qualities are typical feminine qualities, that are generally attributed to women. A similar point is made by Paul Kivel with his "Act Like A Man" box and "Act Like A Lady" box. In each case, to "step out of the box", to display non-traditional gender qualities often leads to being labeled, in a derogatory way as being gay.

The second exercise involved generating a list of stereotypical fears heterosexual men have about being around a gay man. It was then observed that many of those fears are the exact same ones heterosexual women have/experience around heterosexual men. The point is that many homophobic men fear being treated by men the same way they treat women.

The question was raised that if there were no sexism, would homophobia exist?

Narrow views of love and relationship which are held by battering individuals also creates a narrow view of homosexuality. This was explained that if women = sex, so homosexuality = gay sex, rather than seeing gays, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals as whole people, not just sexual acts.