

*development  
dialogues*



\* monograph 16



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OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATION FOR SOUTH AFRICA

**'GENDER TRANSFORMATION:  
DO MEN MATTER?'**

**\*monograph 16**

ISANDLA INSTITUTE / OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATION

**About Development Dialogues**

*Development Dialogues* is a joint initiative of Isandla Institute and the Open Society Foundation for South Africa. The aim of the public dialogue series is to create a space for critical reflection and dialogue among key development stakeholders in South Africa. In doing so, the organisers seek to make a (rather modest) contribution to enhancing the quality of debate in the development sector. Through *Development Dialogues*, Isandla Institute and the Open Society Foundation intend to bring about creative and constructive multi-stakeholder meeting opportunities that push stakeholders to think beyond the confines of their immediate interests and theoretical paradigms.

This monograph captures the speakers' inputs and discussions at the *Development Dialogue* on 'Gender transformation: Do men matter?' which took place on 7 August 2008 at the Centre for the Book in Cape Town.

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**T**he Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) is a Chapter 9 institution, created by the Constitution. It is an independent commission that is not part of government. In fact, a huge part of the Commission's job is to give input into government. The GCE has several theme committees and my presentation here is based on a document out of the theme committee on gender-based violence. This document speaks directly to the relationship between women and men and is as close as it gets to an official CGE position. My comments may be specifically directed towards gender-based violence, but I am going to ask you to assist me to generalise these comments in terms of all our work. In other words, this is a document that speaks specifically to the relationship between men and women. The conceptual framework that is set out here informs the work of other CGE theme committees, like the poverty committee or HIV/AIDS committee.

When the new Commissioners were appointed last year, one of the things we did was to revise all CGE concept papers. We conceptualised gender-based violence as both a general and a specific phenomenon. In other words, gender-based violence is considered to be an inherent part of patriarchy and especially patriarchal power and the means of subjugating women for the purpose of exploiting their free labour and reproductive integrity. This may be characterised as a civil war waged by an army of men against women.

A historical approach would develop this analysis further by looking at slavery as a system of institutionalised threat. This concept is taken out of Angela Davis's classic, titled *Race, Class and Gender*. In other words, we cannot just define

## Gender-based violence is both a general and a specific phenomenon.

gender-based violence as an abstract system. We also have to locate it in a specific historical trajectory. And for South Africans in particular that historical trajectory would be slavery as a system of institutionalised rape.

You may think that this discussion comes out of specifically the Western Cape province where we had two and half centuries of slavery. But the CGE concept paper goes into a long argument proposed by several historians of slavery in the Western Cape. It argues that two and a half centuries in the Western Cape also shaped fundamentally, not only our legal systems as in the Roman Dutch law, but also our social systems, our belief systems and so on. That is why if you want to understand gender-based violence, we have to locate it in the history of slavery. The history of slavery was much longer than the period of segregation. It was much longer than the period of apartheid.

Our previous rape law, before the introduction of the new Sexual Offences Act in November 2007, was actually written in 1957. It was an apartheid law and it was constructed within the Roman Dutch legal system. So the reference to slavery is not merely an abstract concept. It has quite specific implications for the nitty gritty of gender-based violence, issues around secondary victimisation, burden of proof and so on.





## In a society where it is normal to think and act to solve conflicts through violence, one of the consequences is violence against women.

Specifically, the impact of slavery on South African society would have been our increasing levels of violence in society generally, because slavery was an incredibly violent social system. So was colonialism. And by normalising violence within human relationships, our history of slavery and colonialism also led to the normalisation of gender-based violence. Before you have the act, you must have the intention of the sort. So in a society with very high levels of violence that is normalised, where it is normal to think and act to solve conflicts through violence, one of the consequences is going to be violence against women or strong gender hierarchies.

But the Commission is not trying to detract from individual responsibility for our actions. We can grow up in violent cultures and be non-violent, as Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King were, for instance. But when we as the CGE seek to address gender-based violence, part of the work we have to do is around denormalising violence and generally lowering levels of violence in what is an extreme post-conflict society.

We also use the tools of intersectional analysis. The CGE does not look at women as a homogenous category, but we look at the interaction of class, race and gender. Our framework does not just look at patriarchy as a system within which gender-

based violence exists, but we also look at things like the development of capitalism, how that impacts on a context-specific form of patriarchy. And we look quite clearly at the history of racial discrimination and equality, because that is going to impact on the context-specificity of each woman's situation. Clearly, that argument means we don't just think of women as being victims of violence; we look at the way in which poor victims, poor women, are easier to victimise. We look at the way middle-class women in various specific ways are more empowered. We also look at what forms of disempowerment still remain. In this country, race and class are very largely overlapping. As time goes by that becomes less and less true. But clearly issues around race, and the historical legacy of race, impact on issues around self worth, around whether your sense of personality is primarily collective or individualised, and a whole range of cultural factors that all ultimately impact on woman's ability to resist violence.

Why do we orient our analysis around women's ability to resist gender-based violence? And why do I devote a lot of time to speaking about that in a discussion around the role of men? Well, I think we need to set certain ground rules in place. Clearly, for gender-based violence to end, we need behavioural change on the part of men. But when that is said by the CGE, we say it in a sense that we would say we need to end white supremacy by behavioural change on the part of whites. Or we need to end capitalism by behavioural change on part of capitalists. That is what an intersectional analysis means. It means that you look at different forms. So in other words, the CGE is not saying anything about the process. The CGE argues that





for a particular outcome to occur, in this case an end to gender-based violence, certain behavioural changes need to occur. But it is not proposing how to accomplish those behavioural changes. The CGE is not saying that men do not have a role. Rather, the CGE's perspective is that men have a particular group interest in the same way that capitalists under capitalism have a certain class interest. So how do we seek that behavioural change?

One thing that informed the CGE deliberations around this matter was quite simply that historically – and specifically looking over the last 15 years – the single most important factor in causing male behavioural change was the women's movement. If you look what seriously accomplished change in terms of our legal framework, our policy framework, but also in terms of the rise of an activist movement, the creation of women's shelters, advice offices, consciousness raising groups, all of that happened through behavioural change on the part of women. The notion that men themselves would and could have an important role in male behavioural change is a notion from the mid 1990s. Before that you had 35 years of feminist work, or womanist work. So the CGE, bearing in mind this particular context, has decided that this approach of targeting women is most suitable.

Let me hasten to add that does not mean that men are not important. It merely means that we have to pick a certain approach to accomplishing male behavioural change. I hope you see the fine distinction. Recent research shows quite conclusively that if there is one single factor, second to that of behavioural change on the part of women that causes male behavioural change it is the role modelling of older men towards younger

men. In other words, the extent to which older men are able to model a way of being, a form of masculinity that is not inherently violent, tends to have quite an impact on younger men.

Countries that have successfully reversed the tides of HIV/AIDS are countries like Uganda where they have had quite successful male behavioural change. Men have moved from a polygamous approach to sexuality to a monogamous approach, for instance. Men have moved towards taking responsibility for their own reproduction. So again, nobody is saying that male behavioural change is not important or that it cannot be achieved; but what we are saying is that given that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in male behavioural change, we need to continue to focus on that.

Going back to the point about an intersectional approach, a major thrust in the CGE's work is to look at the link between poverty and gender-based violence. As I said, particularly in this country where race and class are so closely linked, I am reflecting them as if they were the same thing. There are obviously various degrees of sophistication, but for our purpose today we can comfortably ignore them.

Class empowers women to resist violence in the sense that a middle-class woman is more likely to live in a safe area, have a job, a car and bank account as well as a family who is more able to take her in should she need to escape a violent relationship. So class becomes a key factor in providing a safety net from violence. Extensive research has been done on this. In the United States, for instance, it was shown that in the classic scenario when a woman is attacked with the intention to rape, middle class women were twice



## The empowerment of women is a critical factor in male behavioural change.

as likely to resist rape as working-class women. In other words, you can correlate between the level of education and the decision to resist a rape. And women who resist rape are more likely to escape being raped. Why is this? Because education promotes certain levels of self esteem and a woman with high levels of self esteem is more likely to resist, because she is more likely to believe in her ability to resist.

So a lot of the CGE's work around gender-based violence looks at factors to end poverty, and the committees on gender-based violence and on poverty work closely together. This is not to say that middle-class women do not get raped or that they are not victims of gender-based violence.

But the point of entry is slightly different. You have to look at issues around culture, around internationalisation and so on. And clearly there are institutionalised forms of violence that exist regardless of class where you need a slightly different approach. But for the majority of women in this country who are poor, part of the work around gender-based violence needs to look at poverty.

Clearly, men have a lot to do with ending poverty. Be it men in government, be it men in the private sector or be it men that do that intensive one-on-one work around providing a different form of male role modelling. The CGE's plan of action says we must work with and in partnership with men's organisations to end gender-based violence. But we must also work with women's organisations in empowering women. And it is always when you try to do two things that you are not very successful. ■



I speak from Sonke Gender Justice and I am going to talk about the campaign that we are running, which is called 'One Man Can'. This is linked to the topic of today's discussion, namely 'Do men matter?'. I want to argue that they do. But the question is, matter to do what? What do they do, why do they matter? And I see a new way of movement, if you like. The One Man Can Campaign mobilises around the need to reject patriarchy with its negative patterns and consequences. As men we realise there is a need for us to be agents of change, but then to change who, to do what? We believe in the One Man Can Campaign that it is possible to change other men, but the question is, to change them from what to what?

In the programmes that we do in the One Man Can Campaign, in Sonke Gender Justice and in the Men's Forum, which is where I come from, we find that a lot of men are beginning to realise that patriarchy is extremely oppressive to men themselves. If there are benefits that patriarchy brings to men, they are very limited. When you look at what patriarchy does, it demands that you must provide, you must protect, you must take risks and you must be competent. All of these things bring endless pressure. If you go to Limpopo, if you go to Nyanga or Langa, the men will tell you that they also feel oppressed by what we call societal pressures to behave in specific ways. If you do not behave in those ways, then you are looked at as somebody different.

**Patriarchy is extremely  
oppressive to men themselves.**

These issues look minute or inconsequential, but these are extremely oppressive things for young men in places like Khayelitsha or Sebokeng. They are unemployed, yet society dictates that they must provide. It is not only black men who feel like this; it is also Afrikaner men and young English men who feel that because of affirmative action they are not able to get employment. The one comes from university and the other has never been to school, yet they are both unemployed and they are expected to do certain things that 'real men' do.

The One Man Can Campaign says that it is possible to reject this and even to challenge the stereotypes. But we also recognise that it is extremely difficult, because they will tell you that you are walking a lonely road. What makes this road lonely is that the script dictates that you must not show your emotions. The only emotion that you are expected to show as a man, and that society accepts, is anger. When you are angry, you are a real man. If you are in Khayelitsha and you are being attacked and you don't respond, there must be something wrong with you.

The One Man Can Campaign argues that violence is a learned behaviour. All of us have learned it. It is not part of our DNA and I doubt there is any empirical evidence that men are born violent. So this is the behaviour that is part of the script that has been inscribed into us as men. Part of our work is to say that while it may be lonely, while it may be difficult to become a changed man, it is possible. And what makes it possible is that you can find lots of young and older men who in their own communities, in the work they do, in how they treat their partners, in how they raise their



children, are saying that it is possible to do these things.

Two years ago we had a campaign called Not in My Name and we had a huge successful march in Soweto where we were taking back the streets, taking back the negative consequences of patriarchy and saying that its okay to do certain things that society presents as feminine. It is okay to admit that I am vulnerable. So yes, men should play an important role in becoming agents of change to other men with other men.

But it is also important for us as men to be humble and to acknowledge that women must continue to lead the struggle for gender equality. We need to support activities and programmes from women's organisations and have men's programmes that say to men 'we had our share, now we need to share power or in some instances give up power'. But when it comes to giving up power we realise that it is going to be difficult. Imagine speaking to a young African man who has always been told, from a very young age, that he must be a man. A Xhosa man who comes from the bush will be told, 'you are the head of the family and your word is final'. In the One Man Can Campaign you can speak to a group of young Afrikaners about male behavioural change who will tell you that this is not possible because they have been raised to believe that as Afrikaner males they must be in charge of the family. And if they act otherwise, it would mean that they are betraying the ethos of what their forefathers had said or taught them.

In the same way, and this is the struggle and the loneliness that I am talking, how do you then speak to a Pedi man in Limpopo who argues that these are western Euro-centric concepts of gender

equality and that these things do not exist in his culture. He then starts vilifying or condemning you, saying that you are pushing a particular agenda, namely the white man's agenda.

One man once said to me: 'You do the work you do because you don't have another hand. I beat up my wife because I am not physically challenged.' The sad part for me was how this person interprets his manhood. For him, violence defines his manhood. So I asked him whether there no other means he can use to show his manhood. He said that as an African man he had been taught to put her in her place and to give her a hot *klap* just to correct her. But there is a group of men rejecting certain cultural norms and practices, willing to challenge and engage them, no matter how difficult it is.

It is very difficult to do what we do. But the joy is that we are creating communities or societies that will raise their daughters without their daughters having to look over their shoulders. I have two daughters – one aged 18 and one 14 – and I do this work as an investment for them. I want my daughters to walk freely in the night knowing that this society respects her as a human being. The work we do in the One Man Can Campaign is investing in making a society that cares for women, a society that respects women.

Let me conclude by saying that I grew up in the Vaal Triangle townships not knowing my father, but fortunate in that I was raised by single, illiterate but strong, compassionate woman who taught me values that you cannot find at any university – values of caring, of loving. It is as a result of this teaching that my mother passed on to me that I am able to do the work I do in order to raise strong young women in a safe environment. ■



**T**he topic of this dialogue is very interesting. Take the notion of gender transformation. Gender transformation is both an aspirational statement and a description. It is aspirational because when we talk about gender transformation we are talking about things changing in the direction of gender equity. In another sense it is descriptive because things are changing all the time and transformation is simply about change. So really for me the question implicit in this topic is, how is change occurring and in what direction is it going?

**There is something contestational, something unhearing about that particular kind of masculinity that we should be worried about.**

The second part of today's dialogue is: is there a role for men? And here I need to clear a few definitions or hurdles. Men and women and boys and girls for the most part live together in the world. We do have single sex spaces and single sex institutions but mostly we live together. And despite the fact that many of us think that the way we live together is filled with conflict, in fact, surprisingly, we actually find that there is a lot of harmony. Men, whether they like it or not, whether they want it or not, do have a role. The question really is what that role is going to be. Is it going to be an obstacle to the emergence of a more gender equitable society? Or is it going to facilitate the emergence of a new society that is more harmonious, less violent, and more democratic?

The other speakers have already given some indication of how they see the future.

The second point I want to make is to refer very briefly to work done in Germany. After the Second World War when Germany as a nation had been defeated and they were looking at the wreckage of the holocaust and the huge damages done by the war, there was at least analytically an approach of re-masculinisation. Because society was in such tatters the state took upon itself the role of trying to create a new vision of what masculinity should be. Cuba did it too, introducing a thing called the new man, and the pro-feminist movement itself produced the image of a new man. I think South Africa is in a similar phase. We have come from a period of apartheid and before that colonialism and slavery. So how can we get beyond that? How can we reach for something better and something new?

In 1969, Athol Fugard wrote a play called *Boesman and Lena*. Lena is talking to Boesman and she says to him, 'You are always making fists at the world, Boesman. The only way you know how to talk is to hit'. There is something powerful about that particular statement about how men communicate, whether it is literal or more metaphorical. There is something contestational, something assertive, something unhearing about that particular kind of masculinity that I think we should be worried about. It is the kind of masculinity in Athol Fugard's rendition that emerges from the context of servitude, of dispossession, of the history that he was engaging with in this play. And if we are talking about this society in transition, we need to engage with that legacy and also try to think about how we get beyond it.



The fourth point then is, what have we inherited? No doubt you all have a pretty good idea about the legacy of apartheid. One of the most interesting arguments I have seen raised specifically in this area is by Raymond Suttner who has written about the masculinity of MK fighters. Generally speaking we associate masculinity and the armed forces with a kind of assertive patriarchal masculinity. In contrast, Raymond Suttner seeks to present the heroism, the sacrifice and the altruism that was associated with the choices that these men made. This is an interesting way of thinking about it if you are coming at the subject from a gender angle. However, we really have a much better documented history of Eugene de Kock and the hit squads and the third force and the military forces that held much of this country's population in subjugation over several centuries to ask quite serious questions. This includes whether those kinds of beliefs and attitudes seeped more generally through the men of our country, both black and white. As I say it is not a simple story. I am not advocating that any one tradition in the country is the source of inspiration. Raymond Suttner certainly makes us think again about the underground struggle and the role that the military had in reshaping gender relations. But the hidden histories about the Quattro

**Julius Malema's utterances** remind me of PW Botha berating audiences, waving his finger telling people what to do, not listening to anybody who had a different opinion.

internment camps and long before that the many concentration camps of the British and Kitchener keep us thinking about precisely where we come from and where we are going to.

We have one of the world's most progressive Constitutions on which we can stand and project a respectful and tolerant and democratic and peaceful, non-violent future. We have institutions like the Commission for Gender Equality, the Office of the Status of Women and many other human rights bodies, which are the instruments or the mechanisms designed to ensure that the values of the Constitution are entrenched in society. We also have the legacy of the NGOs and the United Democratic Front, of consensual politics of debate and democracy.

We also have many things that have come to us much more recently, associated particularly in my part of the world with the AIDS epidemic, which is closing down spaces for debate. Issues of stigma are very serious when one is trying to think of a gender dispensation where everybody is able to talk openly and to engage people on equal terms.

Let me conclude by highlighting some of the dangers that we face and identify some markers that might indicate that we are going in the wrong direction, as well as some of the indications that I think may point to a rosier future.

In the last few months I have been really quite shocked by the effusion of what I would call simply hate speech. Julius Malema's utterances strike me as the most egregious but they are certainly not limited to him. They remind me, I'm afraid to say, of PW Botha berating audiences, waving his finger telling people what to do, not listening to anybody who had a different opinion. And I find him chilling. I find him very, very concerning because this seems

## It is as though we are living with masculinity constantly in the red on the rev counter.

to me to mark the continuation of a particular kind of masculine performance in the public arena which has served this country very, very badly. It should not be seen in isolation from more general gender trends in society. This is my first concern.

Associated with this is the xenophobic violence that occurred recently. And again, you just have to pick up one element of that, which was to resolve difficulties with violence. This for me is old style. This is what was at the heart of apartheid: you don't like the fact that people live in one place, so you get bulldozers and mow their houses down and move them somewhere else. I find that kind of mindset, the willingness very rapidly to resort to violence, very disturbing. And the violence as far as I can understand was perpetrated entirely by men. So we have to understand the particular constructions of masculinity that go into feeling that it is legitimate to express your masculinity in that particular way.

In my province, and this may or may not be true in other provinces, there has been quite a lot coverage of the 'blue lights', which are the official convoys that drive between Pietermaritzburg and Durban. They drive by at speeds generally of about 160km an hour in the fast lane. There have been a number of fatalities, motorists who have not gotten out of the way or who have tried to get out of the way, who have been killed by these very fast big cars driving them off the road. Equally there have been cases of assault where people have objected

and then been stopped and assaulted. Again it is just such a bombastic way of conducting human relations to behave in that manner. And what has made it much worse is that the local Minister of Transport, Bheki Cele, when questioned about this, has immediately gone on the offensive and called into question their credentials. It is this highly assertive masculine performance in which there is zero tolerance for dissent.

Of course the blue lights phenomenon is also associated with the terrible incidences of road rage around the country, which have nothing to do with the state. It has to do with men of all ages, colours and backgrounds losing it incredibly quickly and quite often inflicting fatal damage one another. It is as though we are living with masculinity constantly in the red on the rev counter. People are very close to moving from relatively passive moments to very violent moments. And we need to find ways of working with men to prevent that, because not only is it not good for them but it is also very bad for the people they encounter and for the way we develop cultures of intolerance and cultures of violence.

I could also go on about what happens in Durban and Johannesburg, where one finds the feature of bouncers at nightclubs. These are often people beyond the law, who are known to portray excessive aggression and violent behaviour to students, for example.

The next area I quickly want to speak about is school violence. It comes in many forms but I just want to identify one. I gave a speech a couple of years ago at a private school in Johannesburg about single-sex boys' schools. I said violence was associated with single sex boys' schools – not only



single sex boys' or all single sex boys' schools – but historically a particular masculinity that is cultivated in those environments. The audience was very angry with me. But you actually see violent masculinity emerging in schools, and not just the type of schools where everybody likes to think that is where the problems are. In other words, the problem is not just coming from particular part of society, it goes across society.

In turning to the positive signs, Mbuyiselo Botha referred to the places where you can actually draw inspiration. I think there are such spaces. There is a kind of fatherhood movement, slightly chaotic and not particularly well organised. There are new forms of masculinity emerging among fathers through AIDS. A lot of young men now have to look after relatives or siblings. Some of the caring professions are also beginning to change the youth. And there are men, like Desmond Tutu, who speak out on the dangers of hate speech and intolerance.

## **In certain contexts men are doing much worse than women, so what kind of programme can be unfolded to assist them?**

Lastly, the question of whether men should ever be the recipients of gender equity programmes is, in actual fact, a hot potato. I would be interested to hear what people think because not all men are the same. Some men actually are battling. It is not the case that women are always worse off than men. On this continent there is plenty of empirical evidence that in certain contexts men are doing much worse than women. So if that is the case, what kind of programme can be unfolded to assist those men? I think particularly of unemployed men in South Africa, because for the first time African working class males are leaving school in greater numbers than women. ■



### AFTER THE INPUTS THE FLOOR WAS OPEN FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS. ISSUES THAT WERE RAISED INCLUDED:

- What is the role of women who are in elected positions in shaping policies that support gender equality?
- How easy or difficult is it to change cultural practices?
- What is the role of religion and religious communities in promoting or hindering gender transformation?
- Given the systemic violence against women, would it not be appropriate for women to retaliate and resort to violence in response to violent males?

### IN RESPONSE THE SPEAKERS MADE SOME CONCLUDING COMMENTS:

#### Yvette Abrahams

South Africa now has more girls than boys in secondary education and universities, which is a staggering achievement for a developing country. However, the unemployment rate amongst women is double that of men, according to the broad definitions. Something happens in the transition from school into the working world, and so the notion that education for girls is advancing us towards gender equality in the labour market is not true.

Regarding the question on culture, the CGE's position is that cultures do change. Historically they have changed to become more patriarchal,

therefore they can just easily change to become less patriarchal. I strongly recommend the autobiography of Phyllis Ntantala, Pallo Jordan's mother, where she talks about being a newly married bride early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and having an argument with her husband and her husband's uncle going to her husband to say: 'You cannot argue with your wife like that. We took her from her family and it is the job of the clan to make sure that she is happy here.' So this notion we have of African culture as inherently violent towards women is not at all true, if we look back in history.

The CGE's position is phrased very carefully in saying that poor women, and poor black women specifically, are less able to resist violence. But the CGE is not suggesting that poor black men are more violent. This is not proven, nor is it provable. In fact, historically the most violent – if you look at the prevalence of things like slavery and colonialism – have been white males with the support of certain black males. I am raising this because of the debate about what are we supposed to do about poor young black men. I would say poor black men need to stand up and take responsibility for their lives.

On the issue of women resorting to violence, we are seeking to lower levels of violence in society. We need to because the higher the levels of violence, the higher violence against women. There is a connection between violent cultures, violent structures and violence against women.

Turning to the issue of women's representation, this takes us to the debate about structure versus



content. Equal representation is a constitutional right. There can be no discrimination on the basis of gender. That means essentially that 51.2% of our parliamentarians should be women. But nowhere in the Constitution does it say that 51.2% need to be feminists or women who are vaguely conscious of women's interests. And that is a very fine but important distinction.

### **Mbuyiselo Botha**

It is perhaps ironic, but I think we need a certain level of anger in response to gender discrimination and violence against women and girls. In our projects, all trainers would probably argue that it is about time that the whole country gets angry about how women are continually violated. Why is it that this country does not come to a standstill when two lesbian women are brutally murdered in Soweto? Why does Cosatu not say we must have a stayaway? Two human beings have been violated, have been killed purely and simply because of who they are, because of their sexual orientation.

It is depressing that in our post-apartheid society the women's movement has dwindled. There are a number of reasons to explain that, but my point is that the women's movement could do more to galvanise and mobilise the public.

### **Robert Morrell**

In my view, the challenge of gender transformation is not to get violent with everybody. We should not look to role models who either use the language of violence or actually use violence itself. In this country we have had enough violence in the recent and the distant past. So my approach to gender transformation is to try and make a role for men, to increase that. What I teach in the education faculty and the philosophy of current debate is inclusivity. We need to find a way of creating a space and a purpose for men to be involved in gender transformation. If we see them as people who are trying to hold on to power, people who carry the weight of some kind of new society, then I only see difficulty.

The One Man Can Campaign is a very important way of doing that. Part of the project is to say that every man is a father, whether in the biological sense or otherwise. You have an opportunity to love somebody and to care for somebody. It is an opportunity that a great many men do not fulfil properly and I think they are the poorer for it. We need to point to areas where there is an opportunity to do something, rather than going back to that model of shaking the fist saying 'you shouldn't do this or this'. That will not take us forward. ■





## 'GENDER TRANSFORMATION: DO MEN MATTER?'

7 AUGUST 2008

CENTRE FOR THE BOOK, CAPE TOWN

### ABOUT THE PANEL:

**Yvette Abrahams** studied at the University of Cape Town where she qualified with a PhD in 2002. She has authored numerous research reports on gender, cultural identity and the environment. Until 2006 she worked at the Gender and Equity Unit, University of the Western Cape, and the Institute of Historical Research, UWC. She left UWC to become a Commissioner of Gender Equality based in Cape Town.

**Mbuyiselo Botha** is a founder member of the South African Men's Forum and its General Secretary. With Dean Peacock he co-authored a chapter in the book *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa* (a book edited by Robert Morrell and Linda Richter). He writes a weekly column for the newspaper Sunday Sun and is a frequent commentator on radio and television dealing with violence against women and children. Last year, he was acknowledged and praised by State President Thabo Mbeki in his 2007 Women's Day speech in Kimberley. Mbuyiselo is presently doing consultancy work for Sonke Gender Justice Network in KwaZulu/Natal, Limpopo and the Eastern Cape.

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