

Foreword by Guest Editor Professor Mary Pat Treuthart

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Foreword by Guest Editor Professor Mary Pat Treuthart

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I greatly appreciate the opportunity to serve as the guest editor of this special issue on domestic violence. Since its inception in 2012, the *International Review of Law* under the stewardship of Dr. Jon Truby of the College of Law at Qatar University has featured articles on a range of legal issues with global and regional significance. The vision of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, former Emir of the State of Qatar, provided the impetus for the creation of this bilingual, open access journal. The ongoing support and leadership of the current Emir, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, has allowed the *International Review of Law* to flourish.

This special issue addresses a topic that, unfortunately, continues to demand the attention of the international community. Reported incidents of domestic violence usually involve abuse perpetrated by men against women and its occurrence cuts across all socioeconomic groups, cultures, religions, ages, and geographic locales. Countries worldwide have enacted legislation and adopted public policies to prevent domestic violence, to protect those who are subjected to abuse, and to hold abusers accountable. Despite progress in these areas, challenges remain.

When I began practicing as a U.S. lawyer handling family related legal matters more than three decades ago, I had only textbook awareness about intra-family violence. I quickly discovered that I did not know very much at all about the impact of domestic violence on the day-to-day reality of people's lives.

The jurisdiction where I worked had no explicit laws against domestic violence. Indeed, a neighboring state had enacted the first civil protection order legislation and established the first statewide coalition against domestic violence in the United States just two years earlier. Rather, it was necessary to use the criminal laws of general applicability to file a complaint against an intimate partner. A request for a civil restraining order was an available remedy only as part of a divorce case, which meant if the parties were not married to one another, there was no possibility of a obtaining a restraining order.

But what I learned as lawyer from the experiences of my clients compelled me to continue focusing on issues of family violence. On behalf of women subjected to abuse, I worked in various capacities such as legislative advocate, board member, volunteer, consultant, activist, author, presenter, law clinical supervisor, and classroom teacher at the undergraduate and law school levels. The opportunity to co-teach a domestic violence clinical course on legislative drafting in Qatar during spring 2012 allowed me and my co-author Stephen Rosenbaum of "Engendering a clinic: Lessons learned from a domestic violence clinical course in Qatar" to assess a particular teaching and learning experience and then write about it in the first article that is included in this special issue.

The four other articles focus on the various manifestations of domestic violence across the globe. In her article on intra-sibling rivalry, Andra le Roux-Kemp uses a recent judgment by the South African Supreme Court of Appeal to explore the question of the scope and definition of domestic violence in a case involving siblings. Emily von Werlhof examines Pakistan's Acid Prevention Act of 2010 and posits that despite its good intentions, the Act's narrow emphasis misses the opportunity to address the broader issue of violence against women and the factors that contribute to such violence. The unique empirical research presented by Olakunle Michael Folami demonstrates the prevalence of domestic violence in two selected Nigerian communities and concludes that underreporting to law enforcement is due in large part to the concern of victims that they will not be adequately protected. Finally, Bistra Netkova's article determines that, despite significant changes in public policy and improvements in the legal framework of the Republic of Macedonia, access to legal justice is still beyond the grasp of many victims of domestic violence. Although this overall topic is a formidable one, we hope the articles in this special issue will prompt continued dialogue on effective legal reform efforts to stop domestic violence.