

Auckland
**Women's
Centre**

Auckland Women's Centre

Gossip

Contact us:

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Hours: M-F, 9am-4pm

Library Hours

M-F, 9am - 4pm

First Sat of the month

Sat 11am - 1.30pm

Services:

Free Info, Referral & Advice

Community Education

SKIP Single Mums Positive

Parenting Project

Community Events

Counselling

Queer & Lesbian support

Low Cost Massage

Self Defence Classes

Opportunities to talk and

support feminism

Diversity Forums

Young Women's Youth

Development Projects

Pornography as sexual education

By Tessa Morgan

The quality of sex education in our schools varies vastly. Indeed, looking at evidence from both the popular and academic press, the porn industry is increasingly responsible for the sexual education of the majority of teenagers in our society.

While on the one hand, porn could be heralded as a liberating medium for young people looking for information on sex, which they are denied by their schools or families, a flurry of recent academic studies has revived discussions about the role porn plays in perpetuating unequal gender relations and unrealistic representations of sex.

Maree Crabbe has argued that porn has become '*a central mediator in the ways that young people learn and think about sexuality*' and consequently the '*signature sex acts of contemporary pornography are making their ways into [young people's] own sexual practices*'.

This is concerning considering that physical aggression comprises 88% of porn scenes and verbal aggression occurs in 48% of them (Bridges et al., 2010). Similarly, David Corlett concluded at the Eroticising Inequality conference held in 2014, that porn is now '*harder, rougher, and more aggressive towards women*'.

Recent work conducted in New Zealand by Professor Nicola Gavey and Alex Antevska has drawn attention to the increasingly normalised nature of violence against women in pornography, with acts such as ATM ('ass to mouth') and anal sex routinely shown in porn. Indeed, Gavey and Antevska found that the young men participating in their interviews acknowledged porn was overwhelmingly predicated on male dominance over women, yet they failed to see this as problematic.

Marston and Lewis have similarly found that heterosexual teenagers who engaged in anal sex often did so in a '*climate of coercion, with consent and mutuality not always a priority for the boys who are trying to persuade girls into having it*'.

Not only does porn - as the substitute teacher for sex education - reinforce violence against women, it also raises very serious implications, according to Crabbe, '*for young people's capacity to negotiate free, full and enthusiastic consent*'.

Similarly, Chana Joffe-Walt, in a segment for *This American Life (T.A.L)* investigated the efficacy of 'consent workshops' newly implemented across American

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Khylee Quince: specialist in Māori and the law

Thanks very much to Khylee Quince, (*Te Roroa/ Ngāpuhi/ Ngāti Porou*) Senior Lecturer Criminal Law, Advanced Criminal Law and Youth Justice, University of Auckland, our speaker at our December AGM. Khylee spoke about the intersection of colonialism, racism and gender in justice issues. She was very engaging, and an interesting Q and A followed. For info about our year please see our [annual report](#) on our website. Below are some of the AGM attendees: Felicity Moore, Meg Rayner-Thomas, Katherine McAlpine and Katie Palmer du Preez.



(Pornography as sexual education, continued from front page.)

university colleges and found that most of the boys, aged 18-21, who attended these workshops left feeling mystified about consent. She concluded that waiting until college to teach boys not to rape is far less effective than having taught them from an earlier age what healthy sexual relationships look like.

What we can do to challenge porn's monopoly on our young people's sexual education?

1. Be open about sex with your family and friends. The best lessons that young people can learn is that not only are everyone's bodies different, so too are their sexual preferences. Contrary to any messages that may be gleaned from porn, the best way to initiate a sexual relationship with someone is to ask what they like and do not like. Rather than being a 'buzz kill', as some would have it, it establishes a level of comfort and trust which will do wonders for the sexual experience. Joffe-Walt's segment 'Some Like it Not (On the Neck)' accessible through the T.A.L website provides a good discussion of this issue.
2. We desperately need a more informative, interactive and standardised form of sexual education throughout New Zealand's secondary schools. One good place to start would be accelerating the roll out of the *Mates and Dates* Programme, currently being trialled by ACC, to all secondary schools in New Zealand. The programme emphasises healthy relationships by fostering relationship skills as a way to prevent sexual and dating violence.
3. We also need to be teaching 'porn literacy'. Similar to other critical media initiatives that are being utilised to combat online bullying, 'porn literacy' courses can help young people unpack the sexist, racist, and homophobic messages they are receiving in porn. Porn literacy also promotes the understanding that porn is only one representation of sex, rather than *the* way to have sex. Michael Flood's work is a great resource on where to start with this.

I wish to end by acknowledging that porn may not be inherently bad, but given the current context where violence against women remains rife and one out of four women will experience sexual abuse in their life time, porn as the '*loudest voice in shaping the sexual script*' (Crabbe), needs to be reconsidered, and critically appraised so that young people can at least have a shot at having happy, healthy and consensual sex lives.

AWC supports Mangere East Community Centre Festival



Last year, in partnership with the [Mangere East Community Centre](#) and the [Roskill South Oasis Hub](#) we established two Young Women's Projects. In Roskill South our Young Women's Coordinator, Steph Vakauta, developed a Young Women's Support Group. The group members thrive on supporting each other and enjoy the strength that comes from being part of a group where the members face similar challenges.

Steph has supported many different types of mahi carried out by the Mangere East Community Centre. The photo to the left shows some of the young women showing off their Young Women's Project, SFTL (Strictly For The Ladies) t-shirts at the festival held by the Centre at the end of last year. Their stall gained heaps of support and interest and the free condoms were particularly popular.



Forum: Migrant and Refugee Women in New Zealand

By Terhys Persad

The Auckland Women's Centre and Shakti Asian Women's Centre organised a forum on financial independence for migrant and refugee women last October. The panel featured speakers from migrant women's advocacy groups, including Farida Sultana, Shakti founder. [Shakti](#) is a national community organisation specialising in the area of women's development and domestic violence intervention, prevention and awareness for Asian, African and Middle Eastern women.



Shakti supporters at the forum

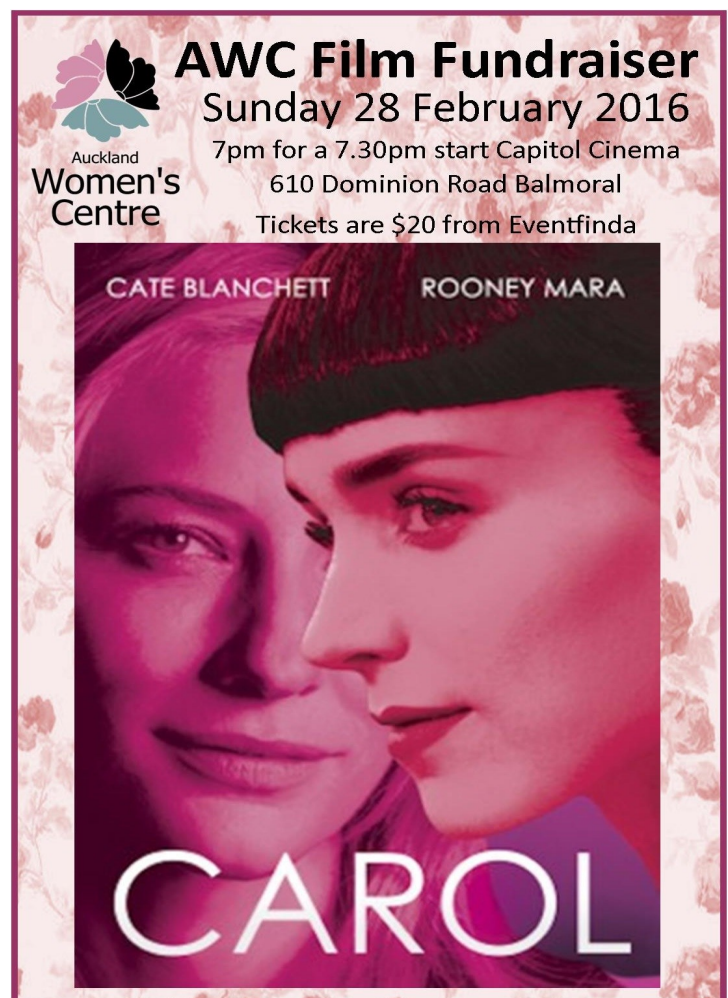
Another speaker was Lema Shamamba who came to New Zealand as a refugee and whose group, Women of Hope: Wakeup and Help Ourselves, advocates for migrant and refugee women from Africa. Anna Ponnampalam, facilitator of Shakti Asian Women's Centre, chaired the forum.

Other panellists included Emily Preston of the Ākina Foundation, which develops investment opportunities for social enterprise and Robert Choy of the Nga Tangata Microfinance Trust, which works for poverty reduction by providing no-interest microloans. The engaging speakers had an audience of more than 40, whose feedback ranged from "good" to "fantastic."

Unemployment and domestic violence are two of the biggest problems facing migrant and refugee women in New Zealand, and the speakers championed financial independence as a way to reduce migrant and refugee women's vulnerability in these areas. Many of these women are forced to rely heavily on fathers or male partners without a support system or the knowhow and/or language to navigate resources for the unemployed and domestic violence survivors that women raised in New Zealand can more easily access.

A recent study titled "The Superdiversity Stocktake: Implications for Business, Government and New Zealand", conducted by Mai Chen and funded by the Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Education, suggests that workplace discrimination, pay inequity, and unemployment are problems that disproportionately affect migrant women. A survey conducted by Shakti found that 20-30% of all its clients reported long term unemployment.

In response Shakti has organised a poverty reduction programme called Second Chance, founded to prevent dependency and social isolation of its target community. Second Chance is free to access, and it teaches women about creating and sustaining their own social enterprise. The program gives women a platform from which they can foster independence through economic self-reliance.

A promotional poster for the film 'Carol'. The top left features the Auckland Women's Centre logo, which is a stylized flower with pink and purple petals. To the right of the logo, the text reads 'AWC Film Fundraiser', 'Sunday 28 February 2016', '7pm for a 7.30pm start Capitol Cinema', '610 Dominion Road Balmoral', and 'Tickets are \$20 from Eventfinda'. The main part of the poster is a close-up, high-angle shot of two women's faces, Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara, looking towards each other. The names 'CATE BLANCHETT' and 'ROONEY MARA' are printed in white at the top of the image. The word 'CAROL' is written in large, white, serif capital letters at the bottom of the image.

Our 2016 Governance Collective



Our [Governance Collective members](#) are elected every year by our members at our AGM. They provide AWC with big picture, strategic, guidance and support within a collective framework. Re-elected at our recent AGM were **Anita Lacey, Meg Rayner-Thomas, Sabrina Muck, Nicola Brebner, Sylvia Barnes, Katie Palmer du Preez, Ruth Busch, Mira Taitz, Tessa Morgan and Teri Fong**. New to the Collective this year is **Felicity Moore**, pictured top left.

Fliiss works in film, TV, and graphic design and is interested in using her skills in areas of social justice, feminism, the anti-nuclear movement, and climate change awareness/justice.



At our AGM **Katie Palmer du Preez**, our 2015 Chairperson, stood down as Chairperson in order to give more time to her PhD studies. Thankfully, Katie has chosen to stay on the Collective. We wish to especially acknowledge Katie who has readily given thoughtful advice when called upon between meetings. Our new Chairperson is **Meg Rayner-Thomas**, pictured bottom left, who joined our Governance Collective in July 2013. Meg works for Women's Health Action as the health promoter for the body image programme and also shares the position of Coordinator, with Holly Coulter. For the last two years she was a co-coordinator of Feminist Action. Meg has been involved in feminism and social justice since she was 16.

In brief:

- Here is a fabulous, funny, feminist, kiwi, 2 minute version of Game of Thrones. [It's the perfect solution for people who love fantasy drama, but don't like rape!](#)
- The gap between what women and men are paid at New Zealand's 29 public service departments was revealed for the first time. The figures showed the gap between men's and women's annual full-time salaries in 2015 was widest at the Ministry of Defence and the Crown Law Office. [This article tackles the myths regarding the causes of the gap and calls on the Government to take effective action.](#)
- *Saturday Night Live* cast member [Sasheer Zamata Tackles White & Male Privilege In A Hilarious & Accessible Video](#).
- The rainbow Pride Festival runs from 5 - 21 of February in Auckland. One highlight for women is [Rock & Speir - in a Twist of Lesbian](#) where the comedy duo Cissy Rock and Anne Speir will make their uproarious debut at Garnet Station Café.
- A controversial group of American pick-up artists [cancelled a planned event in New Zealand, following an outcry over the group's promotion of violence towards women](#) in a petition signed by 60,000 people.
- This article explains [how women in the USA used twitter to bring down a music publicist accused of sexual assault](#).
- ["Smart employers will make sure that women they employ in female-dominated jobs get equal pay this year, not wait and be made to change later"](#) – TEU's women's officer Emma Kelly.
- Inspirational US feminist [Roxane Gay previews her forthcoming memoir, Hunger](#): "This isn't a book about successful weight loss. It's about trying to change my relationship with food."