Experiences of Advocacy:
Situating experiences of contemporary women’s advocates within the feminist movement to end violence against women

Diane Woolson Neville

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Abstract

This research examines how contemporary women’s advocates working with women experiencing intimate partner violence regard their work, the analysis they hold and language they use about the phenomenon of violence against women, and how this contemporary work may be situated in relation to the feminist movement to end violence against women. These aspects of the violence against women field have been minimally researched internationally. Ten women’s advocates from ten different organisations were interviewed two times. First interviews involved participants commenting on vignettes about hypothetical cases of intimate partner violence. Second interviews were semi-structured and involved discussions about participants’ work and wider thoughts on the phenomenon of intimate partner violence. Interviews were transcribed and checked by participants for accuracy. Interviews were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis with influences from discourse analysis to identify key themes within participants’ interviews as well as language used around violence as a phenomenon. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis indicated areas of enduring feminist influence to participants’ approaches to advocacy work. It also indicated areas where the relationship between advocacy and the feminist movement to end violence against women is more complicated, and sometimes disconnected. Participants’ motivations for engaging in advocacy work are also discussed as well as a number of emerging issues identified by participants. Discourse analysis was used to enhance interpretation of interview data, and was utilised to consider constructions of the causes of intimate partner violence deployed in participants’ accounts. Four constructions of the causes of intimate partner violence were identified: feminist with both micro and macro constructions, situational, relationship, and intergeneration/cycle of violence. Implications from these research findings are considered before recommendations are made for strengthening the feminist movement to end violence against women.
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Abbreviations

CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CTS Conflict Tactics Scale
CYFS Children Youth and Family Service
DPB Domestic Purposes Benefit
DV Domestic Violence
DVA95 Domestic Violence Act of 1995
FV Family Violence
FVIARS Family Violence Inter Agency Response Services
IPA Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
IPV Intimate Partner Violence
MSD Ministry of Social Development
NCIWR National Council of Independent Women’s Refuges
NZ New Zealand
UREC Unitec Research Ethics Council
USA United States of America
VAW Violence against Women
1. Introduction

Violence against women (VAW) is one of the most pervasive and ongoing issues facing our society. Women around the world continue to face violence from their partners, strangers, and their states every day (Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2005; Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2006; Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozano, 2002). The world wide feminist movement to end VAW has changed the international landscape, bringing issues like VAW to the forefront and influencing political and social change around the world (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012; Htun & Weldon, 2012; United Nations General Assembly, 2006).

In New Zealand, feminist women’s movements have been extremely influential; historically personal issues were brought into the public sphere and women organised to give voice to previously silent forms of oppression, including VAW (Cahill & Dann, 1991; Grey, 2008; McCallum, 1993). Organisations were formed to support women victims of partner violence beginning in the 1970s (Hancock, 1979; National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges, n.d.), and gradually a sector of organisations developed (J. L. Fanslow, 2005; Herbert, 2008).

The women who work for organisations supporting women to recover from partner violence became known as advocates, and their dual role became supporting women and acting as a voice to raise the issues of structural inequality which enabled the ongoing abuse of women by their male partners (Coombes, Morgan, Blake, & McGraw, 2009; Hammons, 2004; Pence, 2001; Sadusky, Martinson, Lizdas, & McGee, 2010). Advocates have a crucial role: they provide vital information and support which increases women’s safety (Coombes, et al., 2009; Hindle & Morgan, 2006), and they connect, through their advocacy and wider activism, to the movement to end VAW (Hammons, 2004; Hindle & Morgan, 2006; Lehrner & Allen, 2009).

This research is concerned with how women’s advocates experience their work, and how their language and analysis of VAW aligns with a socio-political movement perspective on VAW. It has been suggested that the narratives of advocates are the crucial ‘litmus test’ of the health and vitality of the feminist VAW movement (Lehrner & Allen, 2008). Little research in the New Zealand context has explored experiences of advocacy (for expection see Hindle & Morgan, 2006), and to my knowledge the current links between experiences of advocacy and the wider movement to end VAW is unexplored.

a. Scope

This research addresses questions surrounding VAW, specifically heterosexual intimate partner violence IPV. Men can be, and are, the victims of violence, sometimes from their female partners. However, overwhelmingly, when considering who is more frequently victimised, seriously harmed, murdered, or detrimentally impacted by controlling abuse, it is women who are victims of their male partners (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007; Garcia-Moreno, et al., 2005; Krug, et al., 2002; Stark, 2007). Forms of violence and
abuse such as the abuse of women and abuse of children, are often interconnected (J. L. Fanslow, 2005). These connections are important, and critical to forming strategies for combating VAW. While acknowledging the complexity and importance of examining interconnecting forms of abuse, the scope of this thesis is such that I will be focussing on just one form of abuse: heterosexual partner violence in the context of VAW.

b. Research questions

I have chosen to focus on three research questions. They are:

- Has the language and analysis of advocates regarding intimate partner violence within the violence against women movement shifted from its historical roots?
- How have political and social contexts in New Zealand influenced the feminist violence against women movement?
- What are the implications of any shift in language and analysis of advocates within the feminist violence against women movement for the prevention of intimate partner violence in New Zealand?

These questions will be explored through interview data with ten women’s advocates in the wider Auckland region.

c. Choice of terminology

Language is important, and has been of great importance in work to end VAW (Pence & Dasgupta, 2006). Terminology indicates underlying understandings of the phenomenon and helps define the problem (Dragiewicz & Dekeseredy, 2012). I understand the issue of partner violence within the wider context of VAW. I believe the issue of partner violence to be gendered, meaning it is an issue of men’s violence against women. To differentiate between other forms of VAW such as rape, honour killings, female genital mutilation, and others, I will use the phrase ‘intimate partner violence’ (IPV). This choice is not without problems, particularly in light of my interests in language choices from advocates and how these choices align with a structural analysis of VAW. Intimate partner violence has been criticised as a problematic term which implies gender neutrality, and that partner violence is gender symmetrical meaning men and women experience victimisation equally (Dragiewicz & Dekeseredy, 2012). I find the terms ‘family violence’ and ‘domestic violence’ problematic for similar reasons, and consequently struggle to find terminology which acknowledges the gendered nature of violence and abuse. It is important to note that the commonly used terminology in New Zealand is ‘family violence’ (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). While my choice of the term IPV is problematic in some ways, in this research it is used with the understanding that IPV is one form of abuse within the wider phenomenon of VAW.
d. Definition

Definitions of IPV can be contentious and are open to debate (J. L. Fanslow, 2005; Krauss, 2006). For the purposes of this research, IPV within a wider context of VAW may be understood as:

The misuse of power by a husband, intimate partner (whether male or female), ex-husband, or ex-partner against a woman, resulting in a loss of dignity, control, and safety as well as a feeling of powerlessness and entrapment experienced by the woman who is the direct victim of ongoing or repeated physical, psychological, economic, sexual, verbal, and/or spiritual abuse. (It) also includes persistent threats or forcing women to witness violence against their children, other relatives, friends, pets, and/or cherished possessions by their husbands, partners, ex-husbands, or ex-partners (Dekeseredy & MacLeod, 1997 as cited in DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2011, p. 6).

As noted earlier, this research understands IPV to sit within the wider context and abuses of VAW. “Gender-based violence against women is ‘violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or violence that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty’” (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women general recommendation No. 19, para. 7 as cited in United Nations General Assembly, 2006). The gendered nature of IPV will be more fully explored later in this thesis.

e. Perspective and goals of the research

Violence against women is an area of personal passion, and is the field where I have worked for nearly a decade. I have an inside perspective into this field, feminist personal philosophies regarding violence, and a vested interest in ending VAW. These interests and my position have naturally influenced my research interests and my choices for this research. I have been conscious of my position through the course of the research, and felt my position shift slightly during this process as the stories of the participants and my reading became incorporated into my thinking about violence toward women. Feminist research has been criticised as political and biased (Dutton, 2006). All research has a bias, and feminists tend to acknowledge theirs and related intentions for political change rather than claim objectivity (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007).

I feel it is important to declare that I am an immigrant to Aotearoa/New Zealand. I have lived here for eight years, and though this is not my first home, it is my home now and in the future. My intentions behind this research come from feelings of love for my new country, frustration and anger that VAW is still occurring, and a belief that while good work is happening in this field every day, we can and must do better.

It is my hope that this research will be of use to those working within the field of work responding to VAW. Upon completion, I plan to submit this research to the New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse in hope that it will be a resource to others working to end VAW in New Zealand.
2. Background

This section seeks to provide background information important to the context of this research, and to understanding the context of contemporary women’s advocacy work in New Zealand. This section will briefly discuss the phenomenon of VAW internationally and in New Zealand, and some of the many societal consequences of VAW. It is important to understand what the advocates in this research are facing on a daily basis when providing support for women in crisis. Finally, this section provides background information on New Zealand’s legal responses to VAW. These laws and treaties indicate that New Zealand governments appreciate the toll VAW takes, and have made formal commitments to acknowledge this toll. The information provided in this section provides a sense of the social and political context of contemporary advocacy work in New Zealand.

a. Violence against women

Violence against women is an international problem - no country is immune. Women in both developed and developing countries are at greater risk of violence and abuse at home than from strangers (Garcia-Moreno, et al., 2005). Violence and abuse from intimate partners affects significant numbers of women around the world. Prevalence has been found to vary from rates of 15% in Japan to 71% in Ethiopia for ever partnered women experiencing violence, though most countries were found to have rates somewhere between 29% and 62% of women (Garcia-Moreno, et al., 2005). Prevalence varies by country and by setting, with rates in clinical settings such as gynaecology and psychiatric care sitting higher than rates of VAW in general population based settings (Alhabib, Nur, & Jones, 2010). Reported rates of VAW are likely lower than actual rates for many reasons (for example, lack of faith in systems, minimisation of abuse, fear of retaliation from abuser, etc.), and are complicated by differences in understandings of what constitutes ‘abuse’ between cultures, and also within cultures (Krauss, 2006). High rates of prevalence have led to VAW being labelled an epidemic (Alhabib, et al., 2010).

Intimate partner violence falls within a wider spectrum of VAW. “Violence against women includes rape and sexual abuse, forced trafficking, intimate partner violence, female genital mutilation, maternal death, femicide, dowry deaths, honour killings, female infanticide, sexual harassment and forced and early marriage” (True, 2010, p. 39): a collection of forms of abuse facing women around the world every day.

i. New Zealand context

Intimate partner violence is a significant issue in New Zealand with high personal and social costs. In 2004, the largest population based study conducted in New Zealand found that for women who had ever had an intimate partner, between 33-39% had experienced physical violence at least once (J. L. Fanslow & Robinson, 2004). More recently, this data was re-examined to find that when psychological abuse was considered, 55% of women reported experiencing at least one incident of abuse in their lifetimes (J. L. Fanslow & Robinson, 2011). In this same study, 32.7% of women had experienced more than one type of abuse, with almost all women who had experienced physical abuse also experiencing emotional or psychological abuse. J. L. Fanslow &
Robinson (2011) found that for women who experienced psychological abuse, the majority experienced this abuse repeatedly.

Though IPV happens in every kind of relationship, overwhelmingly, IPV involves male abuse of their female partners. In 2010, the New Zealand Police recorded 85,617 Family Violence Incident Reports. In the same year, the Police apprehended 39,939 males as family violence (FV) aggressors and 9,719 females (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2012c). Though these incidents would include more than IPV, it gives some indication of the gender disparity in FV reports to the New Zealand Police. Data from the New Zealand Family Court echoes this disparity with 91% of applicants for protection orders being female and 88% of respondents for protection orders being male (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2012c), with data over the previous five years showing similar trends. In 2010/2011, the National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges (NCIWR) recorded 1,635 women using affiliated refuge safe houses, and 8,410 women accessing advocacy services in communities around New Zealand (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2012c).

It is estimated that most VAW remains unreported. In their multi-county study on women’s health and domestic violence, Garcia-Moreno, et al (2005) found that between 55% and 95% of women who had been physically abused had never sought formal support, though many had spoken to family or friends about the abuse they experienced. New Zealand research indicates that while IPV may not be the largely silent phenomenon experienced elsewhere, most women still do not seek formal support for the abuse they experience from their partners (J. L. Fanslow & Robinson, 2010). Fanslow & Robinson (2010) found that just 12.8% of women freely recalled contacting the police for assistance with IPV, indicating that the number of police reported incidents of FV may not be a true reflection of the extent of IPV in New Zealand. In the same study, nearly half (48.7%) of the women in their sample reported never accessing formal supports. Believing that the violence they experienced was normal, or not serious enough for formal support, was the most commonly given reason.

Failure to identify the seriousness or level of risk in IPV has been noted by the New Zealand Family Violence Death Review Committee (2011) when reviewing cases that have resulted in death. Between 2002 and 2008, the Family Violence Death Review Committee identified 100 couple related FV deaths. Overwhelmingly, it is women who are killed by their male partners. Of the 100 deaths, 76 were women, 75 of whom were killed by their male partners, and ten new male partners were killed by the woman’s former partner (Family Violence Death Review Committee, 2011).

Though IPV occurs in every culture and socio-economic group, some ethnicities and socio-economic areas are represented disproportionately in the statistics. In a review of New Zealand FV homicides from 2002-2006, Martin & Pritchard (2010) used the New Zealand Index of Deprivation to demonstrate the rate of FV homicides increased disproportionately as the rate of deprivation increases. Martin & Pritchard (2010) also explored the intersection of ethnicity and deprivation to demonstrate that while both New Zealand European and Māori experienced increased incidences of FV homicides as deprivation increased, the association was particularly strong for Māori. This overrepresentation occurs in non-lethal IPV as well, where Māori are more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of violence, more likely to receive hospital treatment for
severe abuse, more likely to apply for a protection order and to access Women's Refuge services (Maori Reference Group for the Taskforce for Action on Family Violence, 2009), and more likely to experience IPV while pregnant (J. Fanslow, Silva, Robinson, & Whitehead, 2008).

b. Costs of intimate partner violence
There are many costs associated with IPV: for women, their children, and for society more widely. Some of these costs will be explored briefly here to illustrate the huge harm of IPV and the significant social problem facing the advocates in this research.

i. Costs for women
The personal and societal consequences of IPV are vast. Women who experience violence from their partners are not able to actively participate in the world in the same way as other women. The violence and abuse they experience impacts their mental and physical wellbeing, health and happiness (Krug, et al., 2002). Obvious consequences concern the number of deaths each year related to IPV, the demand on the police and criminal justice systems, and the pressure on service providers to meet the needs of victims and perpetrators.

Intimate partner violence has serious health consequences for women. An Australian study has found IPV to be by far the largest preventable contributor to ill health for women between 15 and 44 (VicHealth, 2004). Mental health issues were found to be the largest area of illness for women who had experienced violence from their partners (VicHealth, 2004). Women who have experienced IPV may also experience lower quality of life and greater use of health services long after the abuse has ended (Campbell, 2002). Research has shown that poor health consequences of IPV can include: chronic pain, head injuries, gynaecological disorders, gastrointestinal disorders, sexually transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancies and numerous other physical health symptoms (Campbell, 2002; Krug, et al., 2002). Campbell (2002) hypothesized that much of the gender disparity in rates of depression may be attributable to the gender disparity of IPV.

ii. Costs for children
Intimate partner violence has consequences beyond individual women experiencing abuse. Parents may underestimate the degree to which their children are aware of the abuse in the home and the impacts of living with this violence (Edleson, 1999). Additionally, research has indicated that IPV and various forms of child maltreatment frequently co-occur (Edleson, 1999; Hamby, Finkelhor, Turner, & Ommrod, 2010). A meta analysis by Edleson (1999) of 31 high quality studies found that between 30% and 66% of children who have experienced physical abuse have also had IPV occur in their homes.

Intimate partner violence may begin to impact children before they are born and the effects may be lifelong. Elevated levels of maternal anxiety during pregnancy have been linked to increased emotional and behavioural problems in young children (O'Connor, Heron, Golding, Beveridge, & Glover, 2002). Reviews of literature have demonstrated significant and ongoing psychological, emotional, behavioural, physical and developmental impacts on children affected by IPV and child abuse (Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2011; Edleson, 1999; Flood & Fergus, 2008;
Humphreys, Houghton, & Ellis, 2008). Distinguishing between the impacts on children who experience IPV through witnessing it, and those who also experience other forms of abuse may be unimportant (Humphreys, et al., 2008). Experiencing abuse early in life can create a ‘negative chain reaction’ (Rutter, 2000 as cited in Frederick & Goddard, 2007) increasing the risk of poverty and lack of participation in normal aspects of life such as employment (Frederick & Goddard, 2007).

In addition to their own experiences of abuse, children may be used as a tactic of abuse through the abusive partner deliberately interfering with the mother’s parenting (Lapierre, 2010). Research into the mother child relationship within the context of IPV indicates many complexities. Women are often placed in the impossible position of protecting children while experiencing abuse from a more powerful partner, and are sometimes punished by service providers for failing to protect children adequately despite attempts to do so (Lapierre, 2010). When children’s exposure to violence is understood as child abuse itself, as it is in New Zealand legislation such as the Domestic Violence Act of 1995, responsibility may consequently be directed toward women as the protective parent, and away from men as abusers (Flood & Fergus, 2008).

### iii. Social costs

The wider societal impacts of VAW are difficult to quantify. In addition to the million people around the world who are killed each year through interpersonal, collective or self-inflicted violence (Krug, et al., 2002), the same impacts considered above, which are devastating to individuals, are also harmful to wider societies.

The social costs of VAW are tremendously high; the economic costs are also estimated to be substantial. The only New Zealand study attempting to estimate the financial costs of FV conservatively put the yearly cost of FV at 1.187 billion dollars when considering health care costs for injuries, welfare benefits, and social service provider costs, among other known costs (Snively, 1995). This estimate, now nearly 20 years old, was based on the number of women actually reporting FV to police at the time, roughly one in ten. Snively also calculated estimates based on one in seven women and one in four women experiencing violence. The highest of these calculations, still thought to be conservative by Snively, estimated FV costs of 5.302 billion per annum when unreported violence and loss of income are included in the calculations. Calculating the financial costs of VAW in today’s dollars, with recent prevalence data, would indicate a significantly higher financial toll. If related costs, such as those associated with children who experience violence within their homes, are also included in the calculations, the number would no doubt be considerably higher. Economic impacts of VAW, specifically how their limited choices impact the ability of women who are victims to participate in their economies, are societal consequences not often considered (United Nations General Assembly, 2006).

c. Vulnerability

Research has indicated a number of factors that may make women more vulnerable to victimisation and men more at risk of perpetrating IPV. Factors which are linked to young men’s increased risk of perpetrating IPV include young age, heavy drinking and low income as individual factors, male dominance in the family on the relationship level, poverty and weak community sanctions on IPV on the community level, and norms
supportive of violence and traditional gender roles as societal factors (Krug, et al., 2002). Krug, et al. (2002) cautions that this list is by no means exhaustive, and the relationships between risk and causation are often difficult to navigate. In an American study of femicide from intimate partners, unemployment for male perpetrators was found to be the primary risk factor demographically for femicide, and the authors argue it may underlie the increased risk often attributed to race or ethnicity (Campbell et al., 2003).

Growing up in homes where IPV occurred can be a risk factor for the next generation’s perpetuation of violence. Young men in particular are more at risk of having attitudes which support VAW, or perpetrating VAW if they grew up in homes where IPV occurred (Flood & Pease, 2006).

The World Health Organisation writes that “women are particularly vulnerable to abuse by their partners in societies where there are marked inequalities between men and women, rigid gender roles, cultural norms that support a man’s right to sex regardless of a woman’s feelings, and weak sanctions against such behaviour” (2002, p. 16). Risk factors for young women are very similar to those for adult women. Male dominated unequal relationships, peer groups supportive of VAW or rigid gender roles, age disparity between partners, and difficulty accessing support services all serve to increase young women’s vulnerability to IPV (Flood & Fergus, 2008).

The relationship between IPV and alcohol is contested and unclear, and is the topic of debate both in research and civil society. New Zealand and Australian surveys of community attitudes about violence indicate most people do not hold beliefs that alcohol justifies IPV (McLaren, 2008; VicHealth, 2006). Indeed, research appears to indicate that alcohol does not cause IPV, but a relationship does exist (Flood & Fergus, 2008; Krug, et al., 2002). Abusive men may use alcohol as a strategy to enable their abuse, to minimise any personal resistance to using violence, and to excuse their violence after an assault (Flood & Pease, 2006; Krug, et al., 2002). Alcohol has also been associated across a number of countries and cultures with increased severity of intimate partner assaults when either the perpetrator alone has been drinking alcohol, or when both partners have been drinking (Graham, Bernards, Wilsnack, & Gmel, 2011).

d. International declarations
In addition to being considered an issue of social justice and public health, VAW is considered to be a violation of human rights. Nations around the world have made commitments to action, and international bodies have led the way by categorising VAW, both interpersonal and by the state, as a human rights violation. The United Nations has declared that

Understanding violence against women as a human rights concern does not preclude other approaches to preventing and eliminating violence, such as education, health, development and criminal justice efforts. Rather, addressing violence against women as a human rights issue encourages an indivisible, holistic and multi sectoral response that adds a human rights dimension to work in all sectors (United Nations General Assembly, 2006 para. 42).
The United Nations considers that categorising VAW as a human rights issue lends accountability to the issue and ensures that states have legal obligations to attend to VAW - obligations for which states are accountable to their own citizens and to the international community (Assembly, 2006). There have been critiques that the human rights approach to VAW does not go far enough to fully consider the complexities of discrimination women face in their public and private lives, as well as persistent structural inequalities (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012).

New Zealand has obligations under international law regarding IPV: to work to prevent it, to protect victims, and to provide remedies for victims of IPV (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). New Zealand has signed on to a number of treaties which oblige states to act against discrimination, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Though the politics of the time when CEDAW was drafted led to VAW not being explicitly stated in CEDAW (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has since acknowledged that IPV has significant and disproportionate impacts on women (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). This acknowledgment led to the adoption of VAW as an issue of human rights within the international community (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012).

e. New Zealand legislation

Increasing awareness of the risks and harm of IPV led to the enactment of legal protection for victims of IPV and sanctions for perpetrators. In 1982, New Zealand acknowledged the need for protection from domestic violence within the home and enacted the Domestic Protection Act. The Domestic Protection Act increased police powers to intervene in domestic disputes and for the first time provided formal orders to protect victims of violence: non-violence orders and non-molestation orders (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). The Domestic Protection Act began to outlive its effectiveness, and following a review, the Domestic Violence Act 1995 (DVA95) was enacted (Barwick, Gray, & Macky, 2000; J. L. Fanslow, 2005; Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). The DVA95 has the primary objective of reducing and preventing violence in domestic relationships, and aims to achieve this goal through:

(a) Recognising that domestic violence, in all its forms, is unacceptable behaviour; and

(b) Ensuring that, where domestic violence occurs, there is effective legal protection for its victims.

The Domestic Violence Act 1995 attempts to achieve these objectives by:

(a) Empowering the court to make certain orders to protect victims of domestic violence;

(b) Ensuring that access to the court is as speedy, inexpensive, and simple as is consistent with justice;

(c) Providing, for persons who are victims of domestic violence, appropriate programmes;
(d) Requiring respondents and associated respondents to attend programmes that have the primary objective of stopping or preventing domestic violence;

(e) Providing more effective sanctions and enforcement in the event that a protection order is breached ("DVA95," 1995).

The DVA95 is considered to be a sound and progressive piece of legislation (Barwick, et al., 2000; Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). The DVA95 expanded the definition of violence to include emotional and psychological abuse and clarified that both single acts of abuse as well as ongoing patterns of controlling behaviour are part of the spectrum of domestic violence and that victims are eligible for protection under the law (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). The DVA95 considers domestic violence to have a wider definition than IPV and includes relationships such as siblings and flatmates under the law.

One of the most significant aspects of the DVA95 is the protection order, which has the effect of activating other aspects of protection under the act, such as stopping violence programmes for perpetrators as well as programmes for victims and their children (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). Applicants who meet the specified conditions may apply for a protection order with or without notice of the application being given to the perpetrator, or respondent. If conditions are met, protection orders are granted and respondents are compelled to attend a programme about changing violent behaviour, unless the court identifies a reason not to attend. Once directed, respondents must attend and complete programmes unless excused by the programme providers. Protection orders, both temporary and final, are also registered with police who have the task of enforcing the orders. Respondents in breach of the conditions of protection orders may be ordered to reappear in court to account. Programmes are also available to applicants for protection orders and for their children on a voluntary basis. Research has suggested that there are a number of problems with implementation of the DVA95 (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009; Robertson et al., 2007). These issues will be explored in the literature review.

New Zealand governments have recognised the importance for action on VAW. Efforts to combat VAW are often combined with wider strategies targeting other forms of violence, such as child abuse. The Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families, established in 2005, was created for strategic leadership around FV response and prevention in New Zealand. Composed of senior officials of government departments and key non-government organisations, it reports to the Family Violence Ministerial Group (Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2010). The Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families initiated the national Campaign for Action on Family Violence, otherwise known as the ‘It’s not Ok’ campaign and other work aimed at improving local community responses to FV (Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2010).

f. Summary

This background section identifies the issue of IPV within the wider context of VAW, some detail about its prevalence and consequences for women, children, and society to convey a sense of the great need for advocacy support for women recovering from IPV. New Zealand’s commitments to VAW on the international stage are briefly detailed before discussing the New Zealand legislation regarding IPV. These are of particular relevance
to contemporary advocates, and the women who participated in this research. How successfully these laws are implemented has direct consequences for women victims of IPV, and subsequently the advocates who support them. Insufficient implementation of legal remedies for IPV has implications for the feminist movement to end VAW, and for the long term prevention of VAW.
3. Literature Review

When considering the context facing contemporary women’s advocates in New Zealand, it is important to address current issues in the New Zealand environment, and also the wider Western feminist history of which the New Zealand VAW movement is part. This literature review begins with a brief acknowledgement of the positions of other perspectives on IPV before moving on to an overview of feminist perspectives on VAW. The links between the feminist movement to end VAW and service delivery is then explored along with the importance of language to the movement. The literature then turns to the New Zealand context, and how the VAW movement has manifested locally. Finally, contemporary issues which may have some impact on the New Zealand movement to end VAW, and potentially the advocates within this research, are considered.

a. Perspectives on intimate partner violence

At least 20 theories exist in the present which attempt to explain IPV, and further theories are continually being developed (DeKeserdy, Ellis, & Alvi, 2005). A few of the most commonly used, and pertinent to this thesis, will be briefly explored here. It has been said that no one theory can completely explain why IPV occurs (Barnett, Miller-Perrin, & Perrin, 2011). These perspectives can be understood loosely as macro theories, micro theories, and integrated theories which attempt to combine both macro and micro conditions (Barnett, et al., 2011; DeKeserdy, et al., 2005; DeKeserdy & Schwartz, 2011). In basic terms, macro theories understand IPV to be rooted within wider structural reasons, and micro theories understand IPV to occur because of individual circumstances or decisions.

i. Macro

One macro theoretical position on IPV links the causes of IPV to social structural factors such as poverty or minority status (Barnett, et al., 2011). Though IPV occurs in every class and culture, this research correlates low socio-economic status with IPV (Fang & Corso, 2008; D. Fergusson, Boden, & Horwood, 2008; Magdol, Moffitt, Caspi, & Silva, 1998). This perspective has been embraced in New Zealand via the Dunedin longitudinal study (D. Fergusson, et al., 2008; Magdol, et al., 1998).

ii. Micro

(1) Social learning theory

Social learning theory is a broadly accepted theory attributing IPV to learned behaviour, sometimes understood as the intergenerational transmission of violence (Barnett, et al., 2011; DeKeserdy & Schwartz, 2011). The claim is that male children learn abusive behaviour from watching their fathers abuse their mothers, a claim which has some support in research (DeKeserdy, et al., 2005). This theory has a great deal of support amongst the general public (Barnett, et al., 2011; DeKeserdy, et al., 2005). Despite some empirical support, this theory fails to account for many children from abusive homes not abusing future partners (Barnett, et al., 2011).
(2) Alcohol
The theories about the interaction between alcohol and IPV are among the earliest proposed theories of causation for IPV (Barnett, et al., 2011). Theories about alcohol and IPV go beyond simple causation arguments. Though research has linked alcohol and IPV, the links are not necessarily causal, and other factors, such as wider drinking culture, must be considered (Graham & Livingston, 2011). Alcohol has been linked to increased potential for violence, and also to increased severity of assaults (Graham, et al., 2011). The lack of certainty about the relationship between IPV and alcohol has been found amongst wider communities outside the IPV sector, with studies finding that although some people do subscribe to beliefs about alcohol causing IPV, these beliefs do not translate to reduced blame for offenders (Graham & Livingston, 2011; Leonard, 2002).

iii. Integrated
Multidimensional models have developed to integrate macro and micro factors in an attempt to explain the different levels of impact on the causes of IPV (Barnett, et al., 2011). One that has met with acceptance in the New Zealand context is the ecological model. The ecological model contends that IPV should be understood within a nested set of factors from the macro societal level to the individual development level. The different levels include: broad cultural/societal factors, such as patriarchy; social networks within a community, both formal and informal; the intimate relationship where the abuse occurs; and the individual person (Brownridge, 2009; DeKeserdy & Schwartz, 2011). This model has been recommended and applied in the New Zealand context (J. L. Fanslow, 2005; Ministry of Health, 2002), and is potentially useful for its capacity to provide insight into risk factors and interventions at different levels, and to guide prevention efforts (J. L. Fanslow, 2005).

iv. Summary
The theoretical positions briefly detailed above are some of many theories about the causes of IPV. In some cases they provide a counter position to feminist theories, and in others integrate some feminist ideas into the position. Feminist theoretical positions on IPV will be explored in the next section.

b. The feminist movement to end violence against women
This section should be viewed as an overview of feminist perspectives on VAW. It would be impossible to catalogue the diverse range of theory and philosophy about this movement, its origins and paths over the past 40 years. It would also be a mistake to assume a unified outlook amongst the individuals and groups within international women’s movements. Feminist scholarship is prolific, and the various perspectives are nuanced and complex. This section will begin with an overview of some of the main theoretical feminist positions when the movement to end VAW began, before moving into the development of the Western movement to end VAW and its connections to service delivery. The section will end with a brief exploration of the evolution of feminist ideas about VAW and some of the current thinking within feminist scholarship.

i. Feminist theories and the violence against women movement
Prior to the 1970s, VAW was considered to be a largely private matter, unworthy of outside intervention from the state (McMillan, 2007; Newbold & Cross, 2008). This view
changed when VAW emerged as a political issue during the second wave of feminism in many western nations during the 1970s. This era saw the politicisation of areas which had historically been private matters. Violence against women was one such issue. Second wave feminists were concerned with a number of areas of inequality between men and women in addition to VAW, such as equal pay and readily available contraception (McMillan, 2007; Stark, 2007).

Though feminisms have evolved considerably over the past three decades, and these categorisations are not often used in the same way today, feminist theories were once divided into three general strands: liberal, socialist, and radical (Cheyne, O’Brien, & Belgrave, 2008; DeKeserdy & Schwartz, 2011; Dietz, 2003). Historically these strands theorised the oppression of women from different perspectives. Briefly, liberal feminism focused on the removal of barriers to equality, socialist feminism on the sources of women’s oppression within the capitalist economy, and radical feminism on male dominated systems and structures as fundamental to women’s oppression (Cheyne, et al., 2008; DeKeserdy & Schwartz, 2011; Wilson, 2004). Radical feminism has been particularly influential on the study of VAW and the focus on patriarchy as the source of women’s oppression (DeKeserdy, et al., 2005; DeKeserdy & Schwartz, 2011). While this is an inadequate summary of major and nuanced theoretical positions, the purpose here is to illustrate the historical and continuing diversity within feminist thought. As Dietz (2003) notes:

As a historical movement, feminism is geared toward action-coordination and social transformation, interrogating existing conditions and relations of power with a view toward not only interpreting but also changing the world. Consequently, the philosophical and analytical debates that arise from feminist theorizing are unavoidably political (not purely philosophical), insofar as every emancipation project that aims toward freedom must undertake the historical and theoretical analysis of power, and every theoretical project that arises out of real, material contexts of action must speak to the political and ethical dimensions of transformation and change" (p. 399).

Though there is disagreement and common ground amongst the different perspectives of feminism, it has been argued that most feminists would agree with the importance of:

(a) gender and power relationships and their utility in accounting for IPV,  
(b) the historical salience of the family as a social institution, (c) the importance of understanding and validating women’s’ experiences, and (d) the use of family violence research to help women (Bograd, 1988 as cited in Barnett, et al., 2011, p. 48).

The common thread in this analysis is the gendered nature of violence, male privilege, and social constructions which allow VAW to continue (United Nations General Assembly, 2006).

Overall, the second wave of feminism saw the creation of new narratives that were in opposition to the dominant societal constructions of VAW as for example, an issue of individual pathology, anger, and a response to provocation. New understandings of VAW
were developed which conceptualised the problem as essentially a gendered phenomenon caused by male entitlement and control supported by systems and social structures. These ideas became the basis of the socio-political, or movement, analysis of intimate partner violence and other forms of VAW (Hammons, 2004; Lehrner & Allen, 2008; McMillan, 2007).

With some agreement around conception of the issue and causes of VAW, organising began with groups of women and gained momentum to become a wider movement for change. Women's movements with some common ground began organising in nations around the world during this time (Sawer & Grey, 2008; United Nations General Assembly, 2006). Despite ambivalence amongst some feminists about the role of the state (Cheyne, et al., 2008), many feminists advocating for the end of men's VAW early on recognised the key role of the state in the fight to end IPV and sexual violence (McMillan, 2007). The state was seen as both a perpetrator of and a key agent of change for VAW (McMillan, 2007). Layers of work were carried out: women were focused on empowerment within consciousness raising groups in local settings, establishing organisations with egalitarian structures in their communities, and advocating for wider change from the systems which perpetuated VAW (Hammons, 2004).

Feminist advocacy was directly responsible for changes in law around sexual assault and IPV. Though these legal changes had varying degrees of effectiveness, they were key changes in culture around violence (Hammons, 2004; McMillan, 2007; Stark, 2007). Feminist action also raised VAW on the international stage. Identifying violence as a human rights issue, and its consequent emergence as an international policy issue, had a mobilising effect and helped to create links between national and international women's movements (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012).

As states began to act on VAW, particularly IPV, in the 1980s and 90s, responses to VAW began to be understood as the responsibility of national governments (United Nations General Assembly, 2006). States began funding organisations providing services to victims of IPV, thus beginning a new relationship between the movement to end VAW and the state (Hammons, 2004; McDonald, 2005).

**ii. The movement and service delivery**

Provision of services for women who have experienced IPV and the work for social and political change around violence toward women have been the dual arms of the movement. Providing services to women victimised by violence was seen as a political act in itself (Hyde, 2000). Refuges and shelters were established in a number of nations in the 1970s as feminists were simultaneously working for social and legal changes (Hammons, 2004; McMillan, 2007). The first feminist women's refuge was opened in the UK in 1971, and feminists in countries around the world soon began opening refuges for women fleeing violence from their partners (Stark, 2007). These organisations were considered ‘feminist social movement organisations’ and were “the embodiment of feminist theory and practice, and reflect varied missions, structures, issues, strategies and products” (Hyde, 2000, p. 47).

Counselling, group programmes, refuge or shelter, and other services, began to be delivered to women by women and were focused on personal empowerment as well as communicating to women the systemic societal issues allowing the violence women
experience from their partners to continue (Hammons, 2004). Many of these organisations were structured to be collectively governed (McMillan, 2007). Collective governance was a deliberately chosen structure in contrast to hierarchical structures in order to promote shared responsibility, participation, and accountability (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979). Collective structures were seen as compatible with feminist goals, and were designed to counter dominant structures based on inequality (Gilson, 2006). Organisations were often staffed by volunteers (Stark, 2007), and hoped to avoid treading the path toward political ineffectiveness experienced in other social movements (Hammons, 2004).

Feminists recognised that state funding for service delivery was not without risks. When feminist organisations agreed to provide services with state funding, they became vulnerable to co-option, thus decreasing the impact of work for political change (McMillan, 2007). This phenomenon has been noted in other movement based organisations where activism places funding for services at risk, and is sometimes actively discouraged by members of organisations not ideologically aligned to the movement philosophy (Bartle & Halaas, 2008). As time wore on, the activist nature of the women’s movement to end VAW was impacted by the demands of maintaining increasingly professional organisations. What could be considered the de-radicalisation of the movement may be attributed to the mainstreaming of the issue of IPV, the demands of professional service delivery, and the broadening of the sector working with victims and perpetrators of IPV (Hammons, 2004; McMillan, 2007). The mainstreaming of VAW into other areas, such as health, has also increased the prominence of therapeutic or psychology response perspectives rather than a socio-political one (McMillan, 2007).

The governance of many feminist social service organisations began to move away from collective decision making toward hierarchical structures (Hammons, 2004; Hyde, 2000), and the work became more and more focused on individual struggles of women experiencing IPV, losing the emphasis on translating personal change to societal change (Hammons, 2004). The previously largely voluntarily run organisations began to be predominantly professionally staffed (Stark, 2007).

The staff of centres changed to include mainstream feminists and apolitical women, who would previously have been neither welcome nor interested in the more radical feminist centres. The changes that centres have undergone have led to questions being raised as to whether comprehensive services for survivors of violence have been accompanied by the abandonment of social change goals and the original aim of a violence-free society (McMillan 2007 p. 25-26).

It has been suggested that traditional organising models may no longer be understood or communicated among staff at social service organisations based within a wider movement (Bartle & Halaas, 2008). If this is the case within feminist social service organisations within the VAW movement, a disconnect with the wider movement may be exacerbated as feminist knowledge is lost within organisations.

iii. The role of language

Language has played a key role in the feminist movement to end VAW. It has enabled IPV and other forms of VAW to be named and brought into the public sphere. Language
is the vehicle through which the analysis and/or underlying philosophies of women within the movement are conveyed (Lehrner & Allen, 2008).

In addition to making the causes and consequences of VAW explicit, language can also conceal the nature of the violence and obscure responsibility for perpetration (Coates & Wade, 2004, 2007). Alcohol, childhood upbringing, personal trauma, among other reasons, can be used to explain away intentional VAW, thus absolving at least some responsibility for the violence (Coates & Wade, 2004; Lehrner & Allen, 2008). Language is frequently used to misrepresent the intentions and use of VAW, and can be employed by both victims and perpetrators (Coates & Wade, 2007). “Perpetrators use language strategically in combination with physical or authority-based power to manipulate public appearances, promote their accounts in public discursive space, entrap victims, conceal violence, and avoid responsibility” (Coates & Wade, 2007, p. 512). Victims of violence can use language strategically to cope with and resist abuse (Coates & Wade, 2007). Language also serves in wider societal discourse to excuse violence and create a sense of mutual responsibility for VAW for both victim and perpetrator (Coates & Wade, 2007; Ferraro, 1996). The silencing of VAW within individual intimate relationships is thus replicated and perpetuated by the wider societal silencing of VAW (Towns, Adams, & Gavey, 2003). An important aspect of progressive feminist responses to VAW has been to identify and challenge institutional discourses which continue to diminish women’s safety (Ferraro, 1996; Sadusky, et al., 2010).

Language has been used within the movement to indicate larger concepts. For example ‘power and control’ has become a commonly used expression within the feminist VAW movement to illustrate the larger concept of male dominance within society utilised by men to abuse their female partners (Lehner & Allen, 2008; Pence, 1999). The choice of terminology for violence itself is of particular importance, and implies a position and perspective (Pence & Dasgupta, 2006). Phillips (2006) writes of the shifts of preferred terminology in the Australian context:

The dominance of the term ‘family violence’, used in the current policy context can be viewed as part of the backlash against feminist analysis of domestic violence. By naming it family violence there is a twofold legitimization of conservative policy action. One, it shifts away from the ‘man blaming’ associations of the feminist agenda by diffusing responsibility for violence into ‘relationship breakdowns’ and ‘family dysfunction’ and two it demonstrates a commitment to the institution of the family by offering support and protection to the family unit as a whole (p. 210).

It is worth noting that ‘family violence’ is the preferred terminology in New Zealand (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009).

Recent international research with women workers within historically feminist organisations espousing VAW movement allegiances has indicated language use may be becoming less aligned with the socio-political analysis of intimate partner violence. Lehrner & Allen (2008) found advocates misappropriating ‘power and control’ and other movement language to convey meanings more aligned with a personal pathology analysis of intimate partner violence than a socio-political one. Research has also indicated a
movement in language away from acknowledging the gendered nature of IPV (Hammons, 2004; Lehrner & Allen, 2008; McDonald, 2005). The obscuring of the gendered nature of IPV may be due in part to the pressure on social services to secure ongoing funding and also to avoid the risks of political activism (Hammons, 2004; McDonald, 2005). This pressure may account for some deliberate shifts in language use, but would likely not explain the misappropriation of movement language found by Lehrner & Allen (2008) used by workers at various levels of organisations that are operating away from the pressure of raising funds for service delivery. Lehrner & Allen (08) suggest that the narrative of workers within the historically socio-political movement is changing toward a less politicised narrative. They speculate that this may be due in part to the deliberate adaptation of movement goals to increase their public appeal actually becoming the movement goals as communicated to new workers.

iv. Analysis and the advocate

Feminist anti-violence activities have a foundation in extensive knowledge, standards and ethics, and political analysis that are all built on the experiences of women, on collective knowledge building processes, and on listening to women’s experiences, not as patients or as clients, but as members of a social change movement (Bonisteel & Green, 2005, p. 33).

Women who work within feminist movement organisations have commonly been known as ‘advocates’, and strive to incorporate feminist principles into their practice (Hammons, 2004; Lehrner & Allen, 2008; Pence, 2001; Stark, 2007). Their work has been to empower and to support women as the experts in their own lives (Stark, 2007). It has been argued that women’s advocacy is also activism (Pence, 2001). As the point of interface between the movement to prevent VAW and the community, advocates have a key role, and as such could be expected to articulate a socio-political analysis of IPV (Hammons, 2004; Lehrner & Allen, 2008; McPhail, Busch, Kulkarni, & Rice, 2007). This analysis of VAW translated into an approach to the practice of advocacy which focused on honouring women’s voices, emphasising empowerment and choice, and the privileging of women’s experiences (Hammons, 2004; Hyde, 2000; Lehrner & Allen, 2009; McMillan, 2007). The discourse of the movement, and consequently many advocates, sits in opposition to the dominant construction of IPV as an issue of individual pathology (Lehrner & Allen, 2008). How advocates conceptualise IPV is crucial. This understanding helps to shape the way women voice experiences of abuse. The discourses and work of advocates within organisations also contribute to shaping the movement and its evolving narratives as a whole (Hammons, 2004; Lehrner & Allen, 2008).

There are potential challenges for advocates working with individual women within a wider movement for social change. It can be difficult to maintain an understanding of VAW as an issue with structural causes when supporting women whose struggles require personal attention. However, it is possible to hold an analysis that the individual struggles women face sit within wider societal issues of gender inequality, and thus maintain a socio-political analysis of IPV (Lehrner & Allen, 2008).

The limited research with women working as advocates for women who have experienced IPV has indicated that the analysis of advocates may be moving away from a socio-political analysis and toward an emphasis on interpersonal reasons behind IPV (Hammons, 2004; Lehrner & Allen, 2008). Recent research in the American context indicates that the importance placed on training and induction into feminist theory is inconsistent among feminist movement organisations (Macy, Giattina, Sangster, Crosby,
Montijo, 2009). It has also been suggested that the feminist model of approaching IPV work may be more effective by integrating other approaches into the feminist framework (McPhail, et al., 2007). The current language and analysis used within the New Zealand movement to end VAW has not previously been explored, and could provide some insight into the current movement context in this country.

v. Evolution in feminist theory
The mainstreaming of IPV as an issue has opened the movement up to the organisation of counter movements. Men’s rights groups and more specifically, father’s rights groups have been particularly influential in creating a counter discourse to feminist ideas around violence towards women. Men’s rights and father’s rights groups have become a presence in a number of Anglo-Western nations who have had organised feminist movements around violence toward women (Crowley, 2009; DeKeseredy, 1999; DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007; Flood, 2010; Girard, 2009). Though these groups have distinct identities in their home countries, they share ground in their concern about what it means to be a father, and their efforts to counter positions which they perceive to be harmful to fathering (Crowley, 2009; Flood, 2010). In various countries, father’s rights and men’s rights groups have created a narrative of men as wrongly identified enemies to counter feminist rhetoric about women’s safety (Crowley, 2009). They have also astutely used research purportedly indicating gender symmetry in IPV (DeKeseredy, 1999; Flood, 2010), presented organised counter positions in political debate (Girard, 2009), impacted family law to prioritise shared care over women’s safety in cases of IPV (Flood, 2010; Tolmie, Elizabeth, & Gavey, 2010), and generally sought to discredit women’s experiences of victimisation and feminist attempts to end VAW (Crowley, 2009; DeKeseredy, 1999; Flood, 2010; Girard, 2009).

Some shifts in feminist theory may be due to the necessity to take stock of counter movement attempts to discredit or undermine feminist work to end VAW (Crowley, 2009), though much is also due to the huge development in feminist scholarship over the past 40 years (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007). Overall, father’s right’s movements have not engaged with the evolution in feminist theory and often do not present an informed counter position (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007). This evolution in thinking from the 1970s is sometimes understood as feminism’s ‘third wave’, to distinguish it from the work beginning around 40 years ago, the ‘second wave’. It has also been labelled ‘post feminist’ to indicate any number of positions that depart in some way from 1970s feminism (Gill & Schlarff, 2011). This distinction is perhaps too simplistic, as feminist theory and action has evolved continuously during this period (Donovan, 2006). It is beyond the scope of this research to fully examine the range of ideas in contemporary feminisms, but it is important to consider how the evolution in international feminist ideas may have impacted contemporary New Zealand feminist culture.

Contemporary feminist ideas are increasingly dealing with complex global dynamics, globalisation, and the cultural influences feminism has achieved (Eisenstein, 2010; Gill & Schlarff, 2011). The criticisms from outside, and within feminism, of blindness to issues beyond gender, as well as the impact of counter movements and global change, have led to significant developments in thinking (DeKeseredy, 2011; DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007; Gill & Schlarff, 2011). Feminist scholarship now addresses a wide range of factors contributing to VAW on macro and micro levels, for example poverty and globalisation (DeKeseredy, 2011; DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007). It would be impossible here to
summarise the range of ideas in contemporary feminist thought. What can be said is that contemporary feminist ideas are complex and dynamic, and that critiques of feminist theory often come from within feminist scholarship (DeKeseredy, 2011). They take account of the influence of neoliberalism (Eisenstein, 2010; Gill & Schlarff, 2011), the return to personal narratives as tools of political change (Yu, 2011), the critique of countermovement efforts to de-gender VAW (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007), and difficult questions about racism and colonisation (among other concerns) present in feminism for which de-facto positions of ‘respect for difference’ are inadequate responses (Mane, 2012). Though there are many other strands of contemporary feminist thought, these have the potential to influence the New Zealand movement to end VAW.

c. New Zealand context
The VAW movement in New Zealand has many similarities with the international VAW movement in terms of focus and history. Though these connections continue to influence the movement today, there are a number of factors unique to the New Zealand movement which provide the context for the advocates in this research.

i. Women’s movements in New Zealand
The women’s movement in New Zealand has similarities with the women’s movement that developed elsewhere in the 1970s with its politicisation of historically private domains, such as men’s violence toward women (Cahill & Dann, 1991; McCallum, 1993). Women in New Zealand who identified themselves as feminist were involved in a raft of activities including consciousness raising groups, organising women’s centres, conferences, and direct protest action against a variety of issues effecting women’s lives (Grey, 2008). They successfully advocated for legal changes to protect victims of violence and increase accountability for perpetrators, and established organisations to provide services for victims of violence against women (Grey, 2008). There has been some contention that the connections between the movement to end VAW and the evolution of service delivery organisations may not have always been closely entwined (Stark, 2007). Indeed, the development of what may now loosely be understood as the ‘family violence sector’ in New Zealand is not a tidy story of shared origins and socio-political analysis. From the beginning, when refuges first developed in New Zealand in the 1970s, they were not all philosophically aligned to a socio-political movement analysis of IPV (Hancock, 1979).

The first refuge in New Zealand was established in Christchurch in 1973 (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, n.d.). Over the next 8 years new refuges, as well as other services for VAW such as rape crisis centres, were established around New Zealand (Fanslow, 2005). In 1981 many of the refuges in New Zealand which aligned with a feminist perspective organised to form a national collective called the ‘National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges’ (J. L. Fanslow, 2005; National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, n.d.). The NCIWR writes that the national collective from the beginning had a socio-political analysis of VAW and was established in part to support ‘the movement’ (Refuges, n.d.). Not all refuges affiliated with the NCIWR, and many continue to be independent of the national collective today.
The Duluth Model

The 'Duluth Model' originated in Duluth, Minnesota in the United States and is now an IPV response and prevention model used in part or entirety in all 50 states in the USA and in 17 countries (Pheifer, 2010). The full programme contains a number of elements involving batterer treatment programmes, victim advocacy, coordinated community responses, and systems change (Paymar & Barnes, 2007). One element of the Duluth Model considered a staple of IPV programmes is the 'power and control wheel'. The power and control wheel was created from the experiences of abuse women shared and details the many forms abuse can take besides physical violence (Gondolf, 2010). The power and control wheel has become an essential tool for victim advocacy, perpetrator anti-violence programmes, and community education for its naming of non-physical forms of abuse and potential to broaden understanding of IPV (Gondolf, 2010).

Refuges have been joined by other organisations to respond to victims and perpetrators of IPV. In the decades that followed the activism of the 1970s, legal changes and the commitments to international treaties covered earlier were accompanied by the development of a sector to provide services for IPV victims and perpetrators (J. L. Fanslow, 2005; Herbert, 2008). New Zealand was influenced from overseas, particularly the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project, the originators of the influential ‘power and control wheel’ for understanding domestic violence (see figure 1. for more information on the Duluth Model). An innovative multi-sector collaborative effort influenced by the Duluth Model of collaboration was launched in Hamilton in the 1990s called ‘HAIP’, which aimed to bring together specialist IPV providers with statutory systems, such as police, to better respond to IPV (Balzer, 1999).

As IPV moved toward a mainstream issue worthy of action beyond the feminist movement, it was not always accompanied by a feminist socio-political analysis. In New Zealand, IPV is entwined with other forms of abuse and is known as ‘family violence’. In New Zealand, FV is commonly understood to comprise a range of behaviours within a number of interpersonal relationships in the home including siblings and parents as well as partners (Ministry of Social Development, 2002, p. 8). This conception of violence is clearly much wider in scope than IPV and is carefully gender neutral.

The concept of ‘family violence’ has been at the heart of many of New Zealand’s interventions. In addition to legislation and service provision, there have been strategies initiated by government designed to respond to and prevent FV. Over the past decade, the Te Rito National Family Violence Strategy was released, the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families was established, Family Violence Courts began operating in targeted areas around the country, and the Family Violence Interagency Response (FVIARS) process was launched, to name but a few government spearheaded or supported initiatives (Fanslow, 2005; Herbert, 2008). Also launched during this time was the national Campaign for Action on Violence within Families, broadly known as the ‘It’s not Ok’ campaign, which is credited with widely raising awareness of FV (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009) and incorporates ideas regarding the importance of community attitudes to changing a culture of violence (for example Flood & Fergus, 2008; VicHealth, 2006). The recently formed regional Auckland Council has also shown the development of a
commitment to prevent FV when it co-hosted a 2012 hui for stakeholders about the role the Auckland Council should have in the prevention of family and sexual violence in the future (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2012a).

While FV may have received a degree of mainstreaming over the past 40 years, the backbone of the movement to end IPV and the social services sector responding to victims of violence continues to be women’s refuges and community advocacy services. However, the organisations in New Zealand working with women who have experienced IPV are not a united sector. They represent a range of organisational cultures and philosophies and would not necessarily all sit comfortably with a socio-political analysis of IPV. Increasingly, relationships and links are being formed between organisations with different approaches to IPV. With varying definitions and philosophies within the wider sector, and within the feminist movement itself, it can be difficult to find common ground (Grey, 2008).

ii. Tangata whenua and violence against women

New Zealand is a bi-cultural nation with Māori as Tangata Whenua\(^1\). It has been said that for Māori, colonisation is not only historical: it continues to be present today (Mikaere, 1994). As noted previously, Māori are disproportionately represented in New Zealand’s VAW statistics, and the importance of Māori perspectives on, and autonomy to address, VAW cannot be underestimated.

In recent years, increasing research by Māori has advocated for the importance of culturally specific strategies and responses to violence within whānau\(^2\). Culturally specific approaches can be protective for Māori women, and rely on extended connections to aid healing (Cram, Pihama, Jenkins, & Karehana, 2002). Approaches which are Māori led and rooted in cultural models and practices are seen as essential to the intervention against and prevention of violence within whānau (Maori Reference Group, 2009; Ruwhiu et al., 2009). Whānau Ora perspectives are increasingly being resourced to support whānau.

Whānau Ora is an inclusive approach to providing services and opportunities to all families in need across New Zealand. It empowers whānau as a whole – rather than focusing separately on individual family members and their problems – and requires multiple government agencies to work together with families rather than separately with individual relatives (Te Puni Kokiri, 2012, p. 1).

Though a number of feminist approaches have been criticised by indigenous communities for failing to recognise the complex interconnectedness of feminism, colonisation, racism, classism and poverty, among other issues (Haaken, 2008; Waitere & Johnston, 2009), there are Māori women within the feminist VAW movement in New Zealand. In 1985 the NCIWR became the first national organisation to implement ‘parallel development’ as a guiding principle which aimed to create equitable relationships between Māori and

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\(^1\) Tangata whenua: “local people, hosts, indigenous people of the land” (Te Whanake Maori Language Online, n.d.)

\(^2\) Whānau: “extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people - in the modern context the term is sometimes used to include friends who may not have any kinship ties to other members.” (Te Whanake Maori Language Online, n.d.)
Pākehā\textsuperscript{3} women within the movement (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, n.d.). Parallel development is a process guided by Te Tiriti o Waitangi\textsuperscript{4} and is centred around the side by side work of Māori and Tauiwi\textsuperscript{5} women, equity of resources, and acknowledgement of the importance of support for Māori wāhine\textsuperscript{6} and tamariki\textsuperscript{7} by Māori advocates (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, n.d.).

Finding common ground amongst the diversity of feminist and Māori perspectives on VAW is important and ongoing work. Morgan, et al (2011) provide useful suggestions for Pākehā feminists to honour biculturalism: “Pākehā responsibilities for biculturalism mean paying critical attention to mainstream processes of knowledge making and making visible the invisible whiteness of dominant culture as do feminist responsibilities for theorizing women’s lived experience” (p. 212).

### iii. Topical issues

The women’s movement in New Zealand has been responsible for many important changes in law and culture. It has been argued that this very success may have directly contributed to the decline of the movement through the impression that the goals of the movement have been achieved (Grey, 2008). While the question of whether the feminist VAW movement still actively exists may be debateable, the service sector that arose through that movement and those with a vested interest in ending VAW are faced with a number of issues in contemporary New Zealand.

Most literature available about the women’s movement to end VAW originates from the United States (McMillan, 2007), which may have some continuing influence on the movement in New Zealand. Certainly some of the issues faced within the contemporary movement in New Zealand are also playing out elsewhere internationally. The areas below do not comprise a comprehensive list of current movement issues, but are meant to illustrate the complexities facing the advocates, organisations, and wider movement to end VAW in New Zealand today.

#### (1) Violence and gender

The issue of gender and IPV is rife with debate in New Zealand and internationally. This section will consider how the issue of gender symmetry is impacting on debate within the IPV field and more widely, and also some of the difficulties which arise from New Zealand’s numerous definitions for IPV. These issues are considered as they impact the IPV sector and the feminist movement to end VAW, and consequently the advocates in this research.

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\textsuperscript{3} Pākehā: “New Zealander of European descent” (Te Whanake Maori Language Online, n.d.).

\textsuperscript{4} “The Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand’s founding document, was meant to be a partnership between Māori and the British Crown. Although intended to create unity, different understandings of the treaty, and breaches of it, have caused conflict. From the 1970s the general public gradually came to know more about the treaty, and efforts to honour the treaty and its principles expanded” (Orange, 2012).

\textsuperscript{5} Tauiwi: “foreign people, non-Māori, foreigners, immigrants” (Te Whanake Maori Language Online, n.d.).

\textsuperscript{6} Wāhine: “women, females, ladies, wives” (Te Whanake Maori Language Online, n.d.).

\textsuperscript{7} Tamariki: “children” (Te Whanake Maori Language Online, n.d.).
Representations of gender symmetry
Intimate partner violence as a gendered phenomenon is an area of contention within research and wider community debate. Proponents of gender symmetry have claimed that men and women use violence at equal rates and for similar purposes (Dutton, 2006). In New Zealand, some research findings have indicated roughly equal incidences of IPV victimisation for both men and women (D. Fergusson, et al., 2008; D. M. Fergusson, Horwood, & Ridder, 2005). This research, and most other research purporting gender symmetry, uses the Conflict Tactics Scale as a measure (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2007).

One of the most frequently debated issues within this area of research is whether the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) is a fair measure of IPV (Eliasson, 2002). Versions of the CTS are primarily used to measure individual acts of violence within a specific time frame. Context, motivation, initiation and pattern are not captured in these measures (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007; Dobash & Dobash, 2004; Kimmel, 2002; New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2007; Wangmann, 2011). These measures also exclude sexual violence, and other non physical forms of controlling behaviour, such as stalking, and consequently do not provide a full picture of the context of violence (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007). The importance of context for understanding patterns of abuse is evident in this quote from Ver Steegh & Dalton (2008):

Consider a situation where partner A slaps partner B. First imagine that when the incident takes place there is no prior history of physical violence or of other abusive behaviours between A and B. Then imagine that, although this incident is the first instance of physical violence, A has previously undermined B’s efforts to seek employment, denigrated B’s parenting in front of the children, and isolated B from her family and friends. Then imagine a situation where A broke B’s nose the week before and A is threatening to kill B and harm their children. The act of slapping is the same in each situation but the impact and consequences are very different (p. 457).

In recent years, research out of the USA has begun to focus on typologies of IPV in an attempt to better reconcile the arguments on gender symmetry and to better determine risk and appropriate interventions (M. P. Johnson, 2005; Pence & Dasgupta, 2006; Wangmann, 2011). One of the most well known theorists of typologies, American sociologist Michael Johnson, proposes that arguments about gender could be resolved through three typologies of IPV (M. P. Johnson, 2005, 2010, 2011). According to Johnson, intimate terrorism, which is most frequently associated with heterosexual partner violence, is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men against their women partners, is highly controlling, and involves misogynistic attitudes. Violent resistance is primarily perpetrated by women who are also victims of intimate terrorism, in self defence or to actively resist abuse from their partners. Situational couple’s violence, Johnson writes, is by far the most frequently occurring type of IPV, is not characterised by control, may be a onetime incident, and is roughly equally perpetrated by men and women. Johnson writes that the ongoing debate about gender symmetry can be traced to differences in sampling, with samples from organisations such as refuges gathering data about intimate terrorism, and community samples gathering data about situational couple violence. Women from the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project have also explored the idea of typologies of abuse after
observing through their work that not all abuse involves patterns of control (Pence & Dasgupta, 2006). The typology approach recently received attention in New Zealand when the NCIWR hosted Johnson as an international speaker at their national conference.

Authors of typologies of IPV caution that these approaches are still being developed and refined (M. P. Johnson, 2005; Pence & Dasgupta, 2006). The context of relationships remains central (Dragiewicz & Dekeseredy, 2012; Wangmann, 2011). Both the context of individual relationships, and how relationships replicate and perpetuate gendered power dynamics in wider society - whether these relationships contain physical violence or not - are essential to continuing to develop effective interventions and prevention endeavours (Stark, 2007).

Definitions and language
There is a lack of clarity in New Zealand about the meaning and definition of IPV, and the language used to describe the phenomenon. Definitions of IPV can be contentious, are open to debate, and can change over time. They are also incredibly important as a starting place for measuring IPV, and consequent policies for action (Gulliver & Fanslow, 2012). The lack of a consistent theoretical definition of IPV in New Zealand has been implicated in the ambiguity in data collection, for example different organisations identifying different numbers of deaths related to family violence in similar periods of time (Gulliver & Fanslow, 2012). One common definition used in New Zealand comes from the Te Rito strategy (Ministry of Social Development, 2002):

> Family violence covers a broad range of controlling behaviours, commonly of a physical, sexual, and/or psychological nature which involve fear, intimidation and emotional deprivation. It occurs within a variety of close interpersonal relationships, such as between partners, parents and children, siblings, and in other relationships where significant others are not part of the physical household but are part of the family and/or are fulfilling the function of family. Common forms of violence in families/whānau include: spouse/partner abuse, child abuse/neglect, elder abuse/neglect, parental abuse, sibling abuse (p.8).

There is a similar lack of cohesion in the terminology used to describe the phenomenon of IPV. Current language of advocates within the VAW movement has not been researched in the New Zealand context. Common language in New Zealand is ‘family violence’ (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009), which encapsulates the wide range of behaviours seen in the definition of ‘family violence’ from Te Rito, including IPV. It has been argued that ‘family violence’ is terminology for a school of thought that does not differentiate VAW from other forms of violence, and for which blame for violence is attributed to family issues rather than wider societal causes (Stark, 2007). The definition from Te Rito is carefully gender neutral in its language surrounding violence and abuse.

Nearly 20 years ago, Snively (1995) noted the New Zealand focus on families, in contrast to the focus on women other countries maintained. Gavey (2005) noted this continuing trend and distance from the international community, and has suggested that while the pervasive use of gender neutral language in New Zealand in policy and practice may be due to a commitment to gender equality, it obscures the gendered nature of violence and
risks backsliding in the progress that has been made for women. Recently, the CEDAW committee took New Zealand to task on the continued use of gender neutral language to describe VAW (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2012).

(2) Systems
Many women who are experiencing abuse from their partners at some point need to access formal systems, such as the police or courts, for support. It is often the role of women’s advocates to assist women to navigate through these systems. The culture and practices of these systems have direct impacts on women experiencing abuse, and consequently influence the current work of women’s advocates.

As discussed previously, it is generally argued that New Zealand has sound laws for IPV. The implementation of these laws, however, has been problematic. For some women seeking formal protection from abusive partners, attaining a protection order is not without difficulty. The process can be costly, and successful application is not guaranteed (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009; Robertson, et al., 2007). For women who do not qualify for legal aid, the cost may be prohibitive (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009; Robertson, et al., 2007). Recently legal aid funding has tightened (Ministry of Justice, 2011, n.d.), potentially increasing barriers for women. Implementing protection orders has also been problematic. With patchy arrests and prosecutions for breaches of protection orders, and inconsistent monitoring of mandated stopping violence programme attendance, some women are left unsure of the value of attempting to obtain a protection order (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009; Robertson, et al., 2007).

For some women, the Family Court has been a place of re-victimisation. Ex-partners have successfully used family law processes to continue abuse of former partners after separation (Elizabeth, Gavey, & Tolmie, 2012). The distinction between violent and non-violent partners may not be simply a binary one. Many of the ex-partners in Elizabeth, et al.’s (2012) research were not labelled abusive by their female ex-partners, yet employed dominating behaviour further sanctioned through legal processes. Family law professionals have previously been shown to be sympathetic toward men with known histories of abuse, and hostile toward mothers seen as limiting the father child relationship (Pond & Morgan, 2008). The Family Court Proceedings Bill (“Family Court Proceedings Reform Bill,” 2012), introduced for public consultation at the end of 2012, proposes a number of changes to the New Zealand Family Court. Some of these propose stronger sanctions on perpetrators of violence, for instance increasing the maximum period of incarceration for breaches of protection orders from two to three years. Others have the potential to increase women’s vulnerability; for example, mediation as the de-facto first point of access to the family court. The bill proposes that FV cases will proceed directly to court; however, a robust screening tool is not defined. Often men and women do not identify what occurs in their relationships as ‘family violence’ (DeKeserdy & Dragiewicz, 2009; DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007). The research of Elizabeth, et al.’s (2012) speaks to a family law system that replicates and perpetuates dominant gendered power relations. The proposed Family Court Proceedings Reform Bill does not propose changes which will work to redress this power differential, thereby continuing to make women victims of abuse vulnerable in a system meant to protect.

These challenges identify ongoing systemic issues for women victims of IPV. These issues are impacting women supported by the advocates in this research, and are of
concern to women with an allegiance to the VAW movement working toward systemic change.

(3) Political context

The political context in New Zealand is of great importance to the organisations which work to support women recovering from IPV. The relationship has been important, and challenging, for the past 40 years, and decisions governments make will continue to impact the ‘family violence sector’. First, recent policy and political decisions which have implications for women and advocates’ organisations will be discussed. Secondly, recent developments in the Auckland region with local government and their potential implications will be covered.

National context

New Zealand is currently governed by a National government, on the right of the political spectrum. Since National began to govern in 2008, a number of policy and legislative changes have been enacted which have implications for women in particular. In 2009 the pay equity unit in the Labour Department closed (Wilkinson, 2009), decreasing the attention on the gap between women and men’s paid wages. In that same year, the training incentive allowance on the Domestic Purposes Benefit which enabled sole parents to study for tertiary qualification was cut (Haines, 2009), thereby eliminating a form of state support for women to begin a new life after leaving an abusive relationship. Changes were made to legal aid which tighten the criteria for eligibility (Ministry of Justice, 2011, n.d.), potentially increasing women’s barriers to legal support. Funding cuts to women’s organisations have already impacted the VAW sector and the ability of services to provide comprehensive support for victims of abuse (Collins, 2012; Levy, 2012). Alterations were made to the prosecution guidelines increasing the threshold for evidential proof to progress to prosecution in court (Crown Law, 2010). Evidence can be difficult to acquire in cases of IPV, particularly when abuse is not physical. An amendment to the Crimes Act was passed which allows for the prosecution of anyone deemed to have failed to protect a child from abuse (“Crimes Amendment Act,” 2011). This change is problematic for women victims of IPV who are unable to protect their children, and themselves, as a result of the abuse they are experiencing. The government has indicated that further cuts are likely with new priorities for services and new models of funding currently being created (Ministry of Social Development, 2012).

Auckland regional context

The political environment in local government in the Auckland region may be more promising for work to end VAW. The recently formed regional Auckland Council has shown an interest in and a commitment to the issue of FV, and a willingness to engage with the community sector. This process has involved the Auckland Council hosting a large hui in March of 2012 at Ōrākei Marae.

The purpose of the hui was to provide the sector with the opportunity to come together and discuss what contribution Auckland Council could have to the prevention of family and whānau violence, and sexual violence. It was intended to support the sector to develop submissions into Auckland Council’s Draft Long Term Plan (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2012a).
This hui brought many and varied organisations together to share different perspectives on violence, with the hope of engaging the Auckland Council to act on family and sexual violence prevention. The Auckland Council committed to hosting three follow-up hui with the opportunity to discuss a possible regional network structure for organisations in the Auckland region working within the areas of family and sexual violence (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2012b). Two further hui will be held in 2013 with the agenda focussed on the possibility of establishing a network to bring together the organisations in Auckland working with family and sexual violence. It will be challenging to draw together the many organisations, approaches, and philosophical positions into a cohesive network.

(4) Summary of topical issues
This section briefly explored issues currently present in the New Zealand context. These issues will be impacting the New Zealand climate around VAW. Many of these examples represent additional barriers for supporting women to recover from abuse.

d. Summary of literature review
Creating an overview of positions and contemporary issues risks essentialising a diverse and dynamic area of research and practice. The literature considered here is not exhaustive, but this review is an attempt to gain some knowledge of the different positions on IPV, and within feminist scholarship, about VAW. The links between the movement to end VAW and the organisations working with women recovering from IPV are explored, and the importance of language and analysis of VAW to these organisations are considered. The evolution of feminist scholarship and the rise of anti-feminist counter movements are also explored. The feminist movement to end VAW in New Zealand is briefly covered along with the emergence of organisations to support women recovering from partner abuse. Topical issues affecting the New Zealand context, and consequently community organisations and the participants in this research, are also considered.
4. Methodology

This research is concerned with how contemporary women’s advocates experience their work and how they speak about and make sense of violence as a phenomenon. I have chosen to work with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis as a methodological framework. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) draws on hermeneutics and phenomenology to inform its method of analysis (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003) focusing on generating a thorough descriptive account from participants and also interpreting the meaning behind these accounts (Larkin, Clifton, & de Visser, 2009). IPA resonated with me for its ability to work holistically with the experiences of participants while interpreting themes directly from participants’ texts. It also deliberately considers the role of the researcher when making sense of the interview transcripts, viewing the interpretation as the researcher attempting to understand the participant making sense of their experiences (Smith, et al., 2009). The interpretative aspect of IPA is particularly flexible and allows the researcher to connect with other aspects of the interview transcripts, such as discourse (Larkin, et al., 2009).

When considering my research questions, and what I hoped to learn, I chose to incorporate an element of discourse analysis into my interpretation of participants’ transcripts. I was particularly interested in how the causes of IPV were constructed within the participants’ accounts and what implications these constructions have for action. It has been suggested that the construction of the causes of IPV influences the selection of appropriate responses (McDonald, 2005; Pence, 1999). The scope of this thesis would not have allowed time for two complete methods of analysis, but I felt my analysis of participants’ interviews would be enhanced by considering the constructions of causes of IPV deployed within participants’ accounts. I was interested in discourse analysis influenced by the post-structuralist ideas of Foucault, which consider how discourses limit or allow words and actions, and the availability of discourses within a culture (Parker, 1992; Willig, 2008). It has been suggested that IPA and Foucauldian discourse analysis can partner well in research (Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005; Smith, et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). They have shared theoretical ground. Both approaches are constructionist, embodying the belief that research can illuminate different constructions of the same phenomenon through analysis (S. Johnson, Burrows, & Williamson, 2004). Johnson, et al. (2004) write about the benefits of incorporating Foucauldian discourse analysis with IPA: “IPA can reveal aspects of personal and collective lived experience but FDA (Foucauldian discourse analysis) reveals how background practices, processes and social structures present in the accounts shape this experience (p. 371).” From my perspective, incorporating discourse analysis into an IPA framework helps to situate the experiences of participants within a wider cultural context which I believe will add meaning and depth to my interpretations of participants’ transcripts.

a. Validity and reliability

Issues surrounding validity and reliability in qualitative research are contested (Parker, 2005; Willig, 2012). Within a positivist framework, it can “seem as if stable facts about people can be accumulated and then taken for granted for further study by an objective
researcher” (Parker, 2005, p. 137). Interpretative phenomenological analysis acknowledges its subjectivity in interpretations of interview transcripts and does not make claims to uncover truths (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009). In both IPA and discourse analysis theoretical positions, the reliability of analysis can be enhanced through systematic and meticulous analysis or interpretation, which is supported with examples from the text (Smith, et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003; Stevenson, 2004). Reliability can further be increased through detailed documentation of the process of interpretation which can be seen in the results section of this study (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009). Additional measures were introduced to increase the quality of this research, such as triangulation (Parker, 2005), attending to a participant’s request to provide feedback, and ongoing bracketing (Tufford & Newman, 2012) throughout the research. These topics will be discussed further in the process of analysis section.

b. Sample and recruitment
To address my research interest, it was necessary to enlist women’s advocates as research participants. Advocates within organisations dedicated to working with women who have been victims of IPV are in a unique position. It has been argued that the discourses these women use can illustrate the current narratives of the wider movement, and can shed light on the interface between the movement and the community (Lehrner & Allen, 2008). It has been said that “advocates’ narratives of domestic violence provide a crucial litmus test of the current vitality of the movement” (Lehrner & Allen, 2008, p. 222).

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling from organisations whose primary work involved working with women who are experiencing IPV. To find such organisations, I researched women’s refuges, safe houses, and crisis support services for women experiencing violence within the wider Auckland region. I had planned to contact only organisations with known histories in the feminist movement to end VAW; however, this approach did not yield the hoped for participant numbers. I then contacted all organisations who were specialist domestic/family violence providers who were not kaupapa Māori. A decision was made not to include kaupapa Māori services due to my recent immigration to Aotearoa New Zealand and my inexperience as a researcher.

A manager, or a staff member in the case of collectively run organisations, was contacted and asked if I could advertise for participants among advocates and was given details of what participation would involve. If the manager or staff member agreed, an advertisement was sent to be circulated amongst women working directly with women who had experienced violence or abuse from their partners.

I had originally hoped for twelve participants from twelve organisations; however, it was much more difficult to gain organisational consent than I anticipated. Reasons managers or staff members communicated to me for choosing not to participate primarily centred around high workload for staff members and the unpredictability of crisis work making it difficult to schedule interviews. After consulting my supervisor, a decision was made to work with the ten organisations who had agreed to participate, and the ten participants from those organisations who consented to be part of the interview process. Ten participants is actually a large sample for an IPA study, particularly at master’s level (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009), but I was interested in learning of the experiences of a range of
women working as contemporary advocates to highlight commonalities and differences. When I first began thinking of this research, I had also hoped to include three women of the hoped for twelve participants who identify as Māori. This number roughly reflects the percentage of Māori within the wider population, and I felt it was important to acknowledge that Māori women may experience their work as advocates differently to Pākehā women. In the end, only one participant identified as Māori.

c. Interview schedule

Two interviews were carried out with each participant: the first was based on vignettes, and the second was a semi-structured interview. The vignettes from the first interviews and the interview schedule for the second interviews can be read in Appendices C and D. The first interview was arranged with each participant at a time and place she chose. All participants chose to be interviewed in their workplaces. All interviews were audio recorded with the participant's consent. In the first interview, which was structured, participants commented on a series of vignettes about IPV. Vignettes allow for participants to discuss how they might respond to hypothetical situations about IPV. The vignette format creates a context for participants to focus their thinking, while also leaving space for the elaboration of personally meaningful contextual information (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000).

Participants were invited to comment on four vignettes. Two of these vignettes were 'snap shot' type vignettes involving an isolated scenario for its capacity to engage participants to articulate personally meaningful contextual information (Barter & Renold, 2000). These stories featured scenarios about an abusive relationship and the questions following the vignette asked participants how they might respond should they receive a phone call with each scenario. The other two vignettes in this interview involved developmental vignettes, meaning they involved an evolving story. Developmental vignettes are designed to elicit rich data from participants (Jenkins, Bloor, Fischer, Berney, & Neale, 2010). These two vignettes involved stories about collaborative working groups with other organisations where an approach to a scenario of an IPV case was suggested by other members in the group which I believed to be in contrast to a feminist approach to advocacy. Participants were invited to share how they would respond should they be in this group. Each vignette was designed to be relevant to women working as women’s advocates and invited participants to put themselves in the context of the vignettes. Vignettes were pretested with women’s advocates who did not participate in this research. Structured questions were asked following each vignette about how participants might have responded to each scenario. Questions following vignettes are useful for clarification of perspective, analysis and positioning of participants (Barter & Renold, 2000; Jenkins, et al., 2010; Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000). First interviews were transcribed and emailed to participants for comment, clarification or to delete small sections. Second interviews were then scheduled at a time suitable for participants.

Second interviews were held with participants following the receipt of the first transcript. They were semi-structured, an ideal format for IPA (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009; J.A. Smith & Osborn, 2003). Participants were first invited to share any thoughts about the first interview. A number of questions were asked of every participant such as her role as an advocate, how she came to be in this work, and her thoughts on causes of violence.
These questions were used as a starting place; other questions were asked during the course of interviews about topics participants raised which were relevant to my research questions. These second interviews were also transcribed and emailed to participants. I endeavoured to do this within two weeks of each interview.

I chose to conduct the vignette interview first for several reasons. The vignettes were designed with the hope of accessing situational data that could be difficult to cover in a typical interview. I also wanted participants to have the opportunity to expand on the vignette interview upon reflection; an opportunity allowed by having two interviews. Additionally, I was able to reflect on the first interview and ask clarifying questions in the second interviews. The semi-structured nature of the second interview was designed to build on the rapport from in the first interview with the hope of gathering more meaningful interview data.

d. Ethical considerations
Ethics approval was obtained by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC). Informed consent was required of the organisations where participants worked which were then forwarded to UREC. Informed consent was then obtained from participants prior to the first interview commencing. Verbal consent was again obtained before the second interview.

All participants were informed that participation was voluntary despite the consent of their organisation to participate, and they were free to withdraw up until two weeks following their receipt of the final transcript (please see Appendices A and B for participant information sheet and consent agreement). All interviews were transcribed verbatim and emailed to participants. Participants were invited to look over the transcripts and clarify any areas of personal importance or delete small areas they preferred not to be in the final analysis. Participant organisations will not be named; neither will organisations mentioned in interviews (exceptions being Police, Child Youth and Family, and Work and Income). Participants are given pseudonyms.

Due to the relatively small size of the ‘family violence sector’ in New Zealand, I was aware of the potential that I would know one of the research participants, and provisions were made that another researcher would conduct the interviews should this eventuality arise. This was unnecessary as none of the participants were known to me prior to them agreeing to participate.

As stated above, it was my original intention to have a number of research participants identify as Māori. This did not eventuate, but it was important to consult early on with Maia Māori Development Centre at Unitec to discuss conducting an interview with a Māori participant appropriately. This early advice about awareness of abused trust in some historical research with Māori participants instilled in me the great responsibility of engaging in ethical research that involves participants as much as possible in the process. These considerations were of particular importance with the one Māori woman who later became a research participant, and indeed were important with each woman who participated.
An important consideration as a qualitative researcher, particularly one who works within the field of research and who has an investment in the subject matter, is that of bracketing my position. Bracketing is a strategy in qualitative research attempting to alleviate the potential for the researcher's preconceptions to negatively impact the research if they remain unacknowledged (J. A. Smith, 2007; Tufford & Newman, 2012; Willig, 2012). Bracketing can play an important role in research:

While bracketing can mitigate adverse effects of the research endeavour, importantly it also facilitates the researcher reaching deeper levels of reflection across all stages of qualitative research: selecting a topic and population, designing the interview, collecting and interpreting data, and reporting findings. The opportunity for sustained in-depth reflection may enhance the acuity of the research and facilitate more profound and multifaceted analysis and results (Tufford & Newman, 2012, p. 81).

I reflected throughout the process and journalled in an attempt to be conscious of my own position and preconceptions, and how these influenced the research. There is value in considering bracketing an ongoing exercise, as preconceptions surface at different stages in the research process (J. A. Smith, 2007; Tufford & Newman, 2012).

e. Process of Analysis

i. Interpretative phenomenological analysis

Data was analysed with a process modified from that proposed by Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) for analysing research in a manner suitable for IPA. This is a process which draws on the hermeneutic circle, where each part’s meaning can be understood only through looking to the whole, and the meaning of the whole relies on each part (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009). This form of analysis “speaks to a dynamic, non-linear, style of thinking” (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009, p. 28), and considers how the context of increasingly wider circles of the part within the whole from the interview at hand may be shaping the researcher’s interpretation of the participant’s experience (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009).

Interpretation of interview data began once all interviews were completed. Each participant’s two interviews were analysed in turn, with the two interviews being interpreted together to generate one full account. To begin the process of interpretation, I first read the two interviews for one participant, listening to the audio recording as I did so. Listening to the recorded interview during a first reading can assist in maintaining the focus on the participant and can aid interpretation (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009). After each reading of the two interviews, I wrote my initial thoughts and impressions about the interview, and considered possible elements in the interview which had helped to give me these impressions, which is a useful first step for IPA (J.A. Smith, et al., 2009).

The second stage involved taking a second look at the two interviews (considered one participant account) and making initial notes with three different foci (all adapted from Smith, et al., 2009):

- Descriptive notes with a clear phenomenological focus on the explicit meaning made by the participant.
• Linguistic notes focused on the word choice, metaphors and other language used by participants. Notes were also made about possible discursive constructions to return to later.

• Conceptual notes regarding any possible overall understandings of my research interests the participant holds.

The third stage involved using the notes from the previous stage to develop initial themes from the text. These were then analysed for patterns and connections to form groups of emerging themes or to note differences. Themes were tracked in a table along with notations of places within the interview which supported the interpreted theme. The same process was carried out for subsequent participant accounts and previous participant accounts were revisited in light of new themes. The stages in this process aim to keep the participants and their interview texts at the centre of the interpretation.

This excerpt from Caroline’s transcript demonstrates the process of interpretation I used. The transcript material is in the centre, with my initial notes on the left, and the emerging themes on the right:

Working collaboratively with women to manage risk

I mean, ideally, I’d like them all to leave and have great lives free from violence and oppression, but you know, the reality is that some women are just not going to do it. So all you can do is work collaboratively with them to keep them as safe as possible - emotionally and physically. Yeah. So I guess that’s probably what I meant. But I fundamentally believe that they are the experts of their own experience.

Advocacy as women led

Advocacy as risk management

Women as experts

Women as experts in their own lives

It was at this stage in the analysis where I attempted a version of triangulation to gauge the quality of my interpretation. I asked two women, both experienced in the IPV field - one a social worker and one a researcher/community development worker - to each look at an excerpt of different participant accounts with my second and third stage notes on the transcripts. I asked them to read the excerpts and my notes to determine if my interpretations were ones which seemed closely tied to the text. Their feedback was extremely useful. Both women reported that my notes on themes adhered closely to the participants’ accounts, and both provided helpful additional thoughts on what I had said which contributed to my thinking about themes. This process was designed to enhance the quality of my interpretation and my research, rather than confirm that my interpretation was the only correct one (Parker, 2005).
Once I had gone through each of the above stages for all 10 participants, I created a master list of themes (see Appendix E). The master list allowed me to note the presence of themes in each participant's account, to see how frequently a theme appeared across the accounts, and to note where themes did not appear. It was at this stage in the analysis that I attempted to contact a participant who had asked to be consulted about my analysis of her interviews. I contacted her via email, which was how we had historically communicated. I re-sent the transcripts from the two interviews as well as a list of themes I had interpreted from her interview transcripts along with page and line numbers where I believed they appeared. I wrote that her feedback would be most welcome, and due to my time limitations, set a deadline of two weeks for response. I did not receive feedback from her.

The process I have described here may sound linear, but as Smith, et al. (2009) write, stages are fluid and may be revisited several times. My interpretation continued to evolve and deepen as I moved further along the process of analysis.

**ii. Discourse analysis**

To gain understanding of some of the discursive constructions present in the participants' transcripts, I chose to incorporate an element of discourse analysis into my analysis. Rather than look at the entire 20 interviews for a full discourse analysis, which would have been beyond the scope of this thesis, I chose to look at the discursive constructions in the transcripts around the causes of IPV. Philosophical positions about the causes of IPV are extremely important. "How and why violence is understood to occur underpins the directions taken by policy makers, service providers, and community activists to intervene and prevent male violence against women. Theories also play a critical role for suggesting new directions for research" (Johnson & Dawson, 2011, p. 13 as cited in DeKeseredy, 2011, p. 297). As previously discussed, the constructions of causes of IPV are of particular importance for how responses to the problem of IPV are in turn constructed.

I re-read each transcript and highlighted areas where the causes of IPV were discussed or alluded to. I then analysed each account in turn, referring to the stages as outlined in Willig (2008). These are detailed below:

- Stage one of the process involved identifying the discursive constructions, in this case how were the causes of IPV constructed within the accounts?

- Stage two involved identifying the wider discourses where the constructions are situated.

- Stage three involved considering the action orientation, asking myself what the various constructions achieve and what their functions may be.

- Stage four involved considering subject positions made available through the various constructions. This stage involves considering the positions available within a discourse, rather than prescribed roles. As Willig (2008) writes, “discourses construct subjects as well as objects and, as a result, make available positions within networks of meaning that speakers can take up” (p. 116).

- Stage five involved considering possibilities for action: what can be said and done within each construction.
The sixth stage considers subjectivity within the subject positions in the construction, and is the most speculative. It considers what may be felt about the positions identified within the discursive constructions.

I incorporated into this process some of the ideas of Parker (1992), which refer back to Foucault, about situating discourses within a historical context.

**f. Summary**

I have chosen a primary method of analysis of IPA, focused on the experiences of participants, and incorporated an element of discourse analysis into my methods of analysis. It has been argued that methods are chosen to meet the goals of individual research endeavours (Johnson, et al., 2004). Interpretative phenomenological analysis and discourse analysis have common ground, and were combined in this research in an attempt to best accommodate the research questions.
5. Results - Interpretative phenomenological analysis

Participants

My original intention was to interview 12 advocates from organisations with feminist histories. This proved extremely challenging. It frequently took a lengthy period of time to gain organisational consent to advertise for participants, and once consent was gained, interviews were often rescheduled due to the workload of advocates. I used the entire year of research approval to gain consent from ten organisations and ten advocates and to hold 20 participant interviews. I believe these challenges reflect the dynamic and demanding nature of working with women in crisis. As it was so challenging to achieve consent from organisations, it became necessary to amend my original criteria to include organisations without externally obvious feminist histories but who work with women victims of IPV. As I note later in my analysis, this inadvertently led useful research findings about the shared ground between advocates from organisations with different histories.

The demographic details for the ten participants are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+ years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2. Ages of participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pākehā/Other European</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Māori</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasifika</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4. Participant ethnicity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time at current organisation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 year</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 10 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 3. Participant time at organisation*

Many participants noted previous work at other organisations within the same field. I had also hoped to have three research participants who identified as Māori; however, due to
challenges gaining participants, this did not eventuate and only one participant identified as Māori.

Participant organisations had been operating for different lengths of time and were various sizes. Most included refuges/safe house services, though not all participants were involved in this aspect of the organisation. All participants work with women who are victims of IPV.

**Notes on Transcription**

Interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Participants were given pseudonyms and details which may identify their organisations have been omitted. The themes which emerged from interpretation of the transcripts are illustrated with excerpts from the interview texts. The following symbols within excerpts note:

[. . .] part of text has been removed for brevity or to exclude identifying details, though it was a priority to leave quotes whole whenever possible

( ) text within parentheses is by the researcher and attempts to clarify context of the excerpt

**Interpretative phenomenological analysis themes**

When considering my research questions, a number of themes emerged through the IPA analysis. These themes were: ‘Feminism - Alive in experiences of advocacy’, ‘Advocacy’s complicated relationship with feminism’, ‘Motivation’, and ‘Emerging issues’. These themes indicated both enduring influences of feminist socio-political theory and practice amongst all participants, and also themes which indicated a more complex relationship with feminism, and in some cases a departure from feminist movement roots in the experiences of the advocates in this research. A number of sub-themes within these overarching themes are explored. Participants’ reasons for being involved in this work are shared. While their motivations are not largely related to participation in a movement for social change, they show the investment, passion and commitment of these participants to the women they work with each day. Finally, the IPA analysis revealed a number of emerging issues for the IPV field of social services and for considering the future of the feminist movement to end VAW.

**a. Feminism - Alive in experiences of advocacy**

This overarching theme involves the diverse ways in which feminist ideas, language, and work practice are alive in the everyday work of the advocates in this research. These examples of feminism were often tacit, though a few participants explicitly discussed the importance of feminism to their work. A small number of participants actively resisted a connection with a feminist movement while also utilising language or models rooted in feminist theory. The sub-themes within this theme illustrate the feminist VAW movement’s enduring influence on the work of advocacy, and also the complicated relationship the advocates in this research have with a feminist socio-political analysis of violence. Though I characterise these themes as broadly indicating the presence of the feminist
perspective amongst participants, the themes evidence the complexities present in this relationship.

i. Honouring women

This sub-theme was strongly present in each of the ten participant accounts, and was characterised by a belief in the importance and truth of women’s stories - a theme that has long been a hallmark of feminist scholarship and practice. The importance placed on honouring women and their experiences was an element which distinguished the role of the advocate from other organisations which also provide assistance for women who have been abused, for example Child Youth and Family Services (CYFS), but which have a different focus. The different aspects of this sub-theme combine to indicate that the women in this research experience their roles as advocates to be distinct. This sub-theme is central to how the participants in this research approached their work with women, and in a few cases extended to a motivation for entering this field of work.

(1) Women’s stories as truth

Six of the participants spoke of the importance of believing women’s stories when they say they are abused; that their stories reflect their lives as they see it and should be believed. Francie said,

I think it’s really important for them to be believed, to be listened to, and to know that they’re not going crazy, because that’s something I hear, I think more than anything - is that ‘I think I’m going crazy’. And that is very much a strategy of abusive - of abusers, is to make the partner feel they’re going crazy - that’s real psychological abuse (personal communication, May 21, 2012).

It’s not difficult to imagine the huge relief a woman in crisis must feel when her experiences are finally validated after potentially a long period of time in which she is continuously discredited by her partner.

(2) Women led process

All ten participants’ transcripts contained this sub-theme. A woman led process holds the woman, and her choices, at the centre of practice. Sarah said it simply,

“So, it’s just always making sure that the woman knows that she has choices and reminding her of that (personal communication, November 7, 2011).”

Maria spoke of her role as an advocate as distinct from others who may have a different focus. For her, the idea of the woman making her own choices was of utmost importance. The idea of people making their own choices was also central to her wider outlook on her work and life. She contrasted her perspective with other organisations such as CYFS who sometimes adopt a more punitive approach. She said, “I can’t threaten, I think it’s pointless. So, more like I’m giving information and I’m helping to educate, you know? And I leave the choice up to the person (personal communication, February 24, 2012).”

This excerpt from Melanie’s interview highlights some of the challenges of working with this perspective:
You would believe for people, and you would hope for people, and you would be positive for people, but in the end, you hold them lightly, because they've got to do what they need to do. You can't - you can't change their life, you can try and point them in the right direction and motivate them and encourage them, to go in that direction, but you can't change them. And you need to - well I think you need to - you need to keep that in the back of your mind because otherwise you'll break your heart. And we would always welcome people back (personal communication, March 28, 2012).

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The concept of being on a journey with women was a strong theme appearing in eight of the participant interviews. The journey referred to the woman's life and her recovery from IPV. Participants were present on this journey, but it was clearly the woman leading the way.

Suzanne said “we just really journey with them, so she really needs to stay in control, so we just try to give her some sense of control back that she can make decisions for her life and decide what she wants to do (personal communication, October 26, 2011).”

The idea of returning control back to women when they have lived in relationships where they are powerless was mentioned by a number of participants. I had a real sense that it was important for advocates to distinguish themselves not only from abusive partners, but also from other parts of the system where the woman may not be in control (for example Family Court or CYFS). This idea alludes to an understanding of IPV related to power, and that systems often replicated this unequal power relationship. This excerpt from Francie demonstrates this idea:

It is a big thing, often the women don't leave - they stay and stay. And you can only work with them where they are. I know that CYFS, sometimes for CYFS, they have to leave abusive relationships, or CYFS say, ‘if you stay in this relationship, we will have to uplift your children, because they're being exposed to too much violence.’ Um . . . for us, it's not a policy to say, ‘you should leave.’ I will work with women where they are - absolutely support them where they are. And hopefully walk with them - maybe to leaving - or maybe, he will do a programme, I don't know. But, our - we're not here to break up relationships; we're here to support the woman in what she wants to do. To, offer her choices, to give her - to explain to her what is available in the community for her. But also, to make her see that she doesn't have to stay, that there are other options for her (personal communication, June 25, 2012).

Georgia establishes early on that she is a safe port on this journey where women can feel free to express their emotions, even if they involve grief over leaving their abusive relationships.

I do say to them, ‘well in a couple of days, if you need to talk to me, you know, come back about the grieving’, and a lot of women say, ‘oh really? women’s refuge, don't you hate men? You know? Are you sure I can come to you and say, hey I'm missing him, I love him?’ And I say ‘absolutely. Cause you're only human, you haven't left the relationship because you
don’t love him, you’ve left the relationship because it’s violent, you know for safety reasons, many different reasons, not because you haven’t got these feelings.’ So, of course they’re going to go through the grieving process. And I think the one thing that I really understand with the grieving process is . . . that if a person has passed on, you grieve, grieve, grieve, and you go through the process. It’s a lot harder in a relationship when you’ve left because you’re going through all those emotions knowing that you can go back to them. So it’s a lot harder, and I sort of believe - I believe that coming into refuge, yes it’s the first step, but it’s the journey ahead (personal communication, May 17, 2012).

(3) Responsive to individuals

All ten participants spoke of the importance of working with each woman as an individual with her own unique needs. Says Sarah,

“Sometimes women are quite clear about what they want, and, you know, some other women just want the information and want to go away and think about it. So, it’s yeah - everyone’s different (personal communication, November 7, 2011).”

The process is collaborative, with the advocate and the woman working together to make a plan for her safety and healing from abuse. Caroline spoke of this give and take,

“When you’ve got someone on the phone of course or someone in front of you, there’s an interaction going on. You know, so it’s not just me deciding how I would respond or what I would do. Because that evolves based on her engagement and her interaction (personal communication, March 11, 2012).”

The participants spoke of the work with women as a fluid process based on interaction, and paced by the woman. Maria emphasised the importance of not rushing; going too fast with women could terminate the relationship before the work has begun. She said when responding to a scenario in the first interview about a woman phoning for help:

Because this is the first time she’s probably called, and if I go on too much about how bad it is for children, she’s going to feel even more guilty and she probably won’t call back. So you’ve got to be very careful. The most I’ll say is - well I’ll ask, ‘So, how are the children?’ You know, ‘is he abusive - do the children see it?’ And I might say something like, ‘you know, the violence does affect them, you know, even if they don’t see it, they hear it, they feel it, they sense it.’ But not go into too much detail there because I’m wanting her to go away and think about it and call back. Then we can go into the next step, which is, you know, maybe she might decide to leave because she understands he won’t change, then her step really is to leave the relationship. So then we go into whether she needs a refuge, or she might need to talk to a lawyer to get the parenting orders and protection orders. And all that sort of thing, but you can’t push it. If you push it too much they won’t come back (personal communication, February 3, 2012).

Maria’s excerpt illustrates the fine line walked when building rapport with vulnerable women; the need to assess safety and also maintain an opportunity to provide support which could decrease her risk. Responsive support was seen as essential. Both Corrine
and Jen spoke of the importance of culturally appropriate approaches and how the right approach can make the difference between women engaging with the advocate or not. Listening to the participants talk about building rapport with women, and the process of beginning to build a relationship of trust with women in crisis, indicated many connections to feminist movement approaches to advocacy work.

**(4) Facilitating empowerment**

Half of the participants explicitly saw their role as facilitating women’s empowerment, a key component of feminist conceptions of advocacy. The importance of empowerment came from the idea that a woman recovering from IPV is at her lowest, often having been controlled for a long period of time. Participants spoke of the importance of communicating to women that they have choices, and supporting them to feel strong enough to make decisions for themselves.

Caroline demonstrated this idea: “I don’t believe you can empower people - I believe people empower themselves - but what we can do is provide the opportunity and environment for them to do that. Where they might not have had that before (personal communication, November 23, 2011).”

Maria spoke of the difference that even a short contact can make with a woman who has felt powerless. Maria said:

> I’ve had conversations, most of them, where you finish the conversation and you can hear the strength in that woman’s voice. It’s a little bit stronger, you know? Because I’ve talked to her about her choices, and about how she can do this and this, and whichever way she wants to go. And you feel they are a bit, you know, at the end of the conversation, they are a bit stronger (personal communication, February 3, 2012).

This excerpt from Maria’s interview shows both her belief in the difference an advocate can make in the life of a woman who has been abused and a bit of the personal satisfaction many of the advocates said they found in their work.

**(5) Summary**

Honouring the stories of women who are recovering from partner violence, and walking alongside them as they heal from abuse, was a theme absolutely central to all participants’ experiences of their work. Truly listening to each woman’s individual needs, and working collaboratively with a woman to address her needs and rebuild her strength were highly important to participants. These ideas were at the core of participants’ articulated experiences of their work and resonate strongly with feminist theories of advocacy within the movement to end VAW.

**ii. Connection with movement**

I was interested in responses involving the wider movement to end VAW. I chose not to ask explicitly about participants’ thoughts on being part of a movement in an effort to learn what about their work was important to them, and instead created opportunities for participants to bring up a wider social change agenda if it was an important part of their work. I was also concerned that a direct question may produce an answer to please me the researcher, rather than indicate what was of importance to each participant.
Francie, Maria and Sarah had what I would consider a consistent socio-political dialogue of IPV in their interviews, with their outlook of IPV as a gendered phenomenon and a social rather than interpersonal issue. Other participants had less consistent socio-political narratives. This theme illustrates where some of the participants depart from a connection with a feminist movement, yet still utilise concepts from the feminist movement.

Three participants positioned themselves outside the feminist movement. I describe this positioning before exploring shared feminist concepts across all participants. Melanie and Corrine spoke about organisational decisions to sit outside the feminist movement to work with whole families, and a belief that work with families was incompatible with the movement in the past. Melanie talked about the political feminist movement in the past, and how her organisation made a decision, when it was founded, to sit outside this movement. It was important to her organisation that they could work with families, or women who wanted to remain with their partners. She said,

There was a bit of a push for that whole, ‘leave him, don’t have anything to do with him and if you do, you know, we’re not going to have anything to do with you sort of thing’. But I mean, that’s a long time ago, that was sort of like in the 70s or when that whole sort of women’s movement, took off, so - I think you’ve got to work with human nature, you can’t change people if they don’t want to change (personal communication, March 28, 2012).

Melanie also talked a bit about the refuges of today being much less political, and that perhaps the distance between her organisation and the formerly political ones is not as great today. She emphasised that the political activism of the women’s movement was in the past, and saw much common ground today between organisations with a feminist activist history and organisations such as hers which positioned itself outside the feminist movement to end VAW.

Jo, who mentioned personal interest in other forms of social action, was intentional that her work with IPV was personal rather than political. From conversations with other young women involved in IPV work, she distinguishes herself from older women in the work, who might have a different reason for involvement,

I speculate, that my generation of young people have kind of grown up with that experience of being in refuge, you know, we grew up with mothers who might have gone through women’s refuge and been saved by it. And so, it’s something that we give back or have an understanding of. Whereas their generation, when they were in their 20s, they probably didn’t get involved in women’s refuge until it was women’s rights and they were doing it from kind of an activist, kind of a political activism kind of perspective, whereas myself and a couple of the other women there - we were doing it because we wanted to help. You know, it wasn’t a political statement we were making to be in these fields of work, um, just somewhere that comes from the heart that we want to do it (personal communication, November 23, 2011).
Jo’s words indicate to me knowledge of the movement, and a conscious decision to remain outside of a movement.

Interestingly, despite three women positioning themselves outside a movement, and the use of language which leaves the gender of victims and perpetrators ambiguous (which will be discussed later in this thesis), all ten participants used language associated with a movement outlook or mentioned tools in their work which originated in the feminist movement. All participants used the phrase ‘power and control’ at some point in an interview. There were a number of different ways the phrase was used.

Corrine spoke about male perpetrators accessing support through her organisation:

> It’s not telling them what to do, it’s just trying to make themselves better and the whole of family better, so they can, if they - if it works out well, so they can be together again. Yeah. And then, especially with the counselling, and again, without judging or condemning them, they come to acknowledge their faults. They come to acknowledge, oh wow yeah, that’s right, I shouldn’t have done that. Where does this power and control come from? Why? (personal communication, September 10, 2012).

Melanie spoke of ‘power and control’ as information communicated with women so they have more tools to help keep themselves safe if they decide to return to the relationship:

> So when people genuinely say to you, ‘look, I’m going home and I want to give this a shot’, we do, if we’ve given all the information that we can, we’ve talked to them about power and control, we’ve given them a safety plan, you feel that you’ve covered all the bases. If they want to go home, we’re not averse to that (personal communication, March 28, 2012).

Suzanne spoke about women minimising IPV in response to a scenario in the first interview where the woman said she was pushed around by her partner: “Once there’s shoving, there’s a lot of times other signs of power and control. Which might be, you know, financial stuff, but even the physical sort of harm can be really minimised (personal communication, October 26, 2011). “

I believe this shows the enduring impact of feminist movement scholarship, if perhaps not all the ideals which accompanied it. The idea of ‘power and control’ as a feature of IPV is very present within the participants’ interviews in this research, though I don’t believe the interpretation of the concept is the same across participants. For example, the expert from Corinne above uses ‘power and control’ from a male perpetrator’s perspective with a sense of frustration and pain that he is holding power over his partner because he doesn’t know another way. In contrast, when Caroline uses the terminology ‘power and control’-- “it’s classic power and control where the offender knows exactly how to push the buttons of the victim (personal communication, November 3, 2011)"-- the terminology implies active agency on the part of the abusive partner with deliberate intent to control. These examples demonstrate the potential to use the same terminology and employ different meanings, with different implications for analysis of IPV.
(1) **Summary**
This is a complicated sub-theme, where the connections to the feminist movement to end VAW are both accessed through terminology, and sometimes rejected actively. It speaks to the influence of feminist work within the social service field responding to IPV, and also has implications for future work. These will be further explored in the ‘Discussion’ chapter.

### iii. Truth telling
As I worked through each participant’s interview, an impression of advocates as holders of specialist knowledge emerged quite strongly. Participants had the role of conveying knowledge about the nature and reality of IPV to women. They also had the role of lobbyists on behalf of women and sharing their specialist knowledge with other organisations and systems. This theme speaks to the idea that the participants saw their role as specialist, and that this knowledge and experience differentiates the role of advocate from others who provide support for women recovering from IPV. This differentiation was present whether or not participants explicitly aligned with feminism and also speaks to a shared feminist legacy. All ten participants’ transcripts had elements of this theme. I will first explore the idea of conveying knowledge to women seeking help for IPV.

(1) **Explaining abuse**
As holders of specialist knowledge about the nature and risk of IPV, participants acknowledged that it becomes the role of the advocate to communicate this knowledge to the women with whom they work. Says Suzanne about her approach,

> We always, we just support her where she is at really. And maybe just work on enhancing the, the uneasy feeling, really about, about the power and control, and the issues. So we kind of just enhance the discomfort with those feelings so that, and then she will find the best solution for her really (personal communication, November 16, 2011).

Working with a woman at her own pace does not come at the expense of acknowledging the danger she may be in. Sarah spoke of the tone she takes as expressing concern without giving direction. She said,

> And it’s not about not expressing concern, you know, I can say, ‘well I am concerned about this, because this has happened before, and I don’t think that that’s very safe - you know I’m concerned that it’s not safe for you to go back.’ But I would word it, in ‘just be aware of, this happened the last time (personal communication, November 28, 2011).’

All ten participants talked about the importance of prioritising safety for the women with whom they work. Risk and safety concerns were the first consideration of the advocates. This excerpt from Jen’s interview demonstrates how safety is prioritised after Jen hears a scenario of a woman calling to ask for help:

> So I would definitely just ask a little bit more about what was going on, see if she’s unsafe there, like if she feels she’s unsafe there, try to find out more about the pushing. Asking questions like, ‘has he ever hit you?’; 'has he
ever strangled you?’ Trying to establish her safety first - her and her children’s safety (personal communication, February 28, 2012).

Planning to make clients as safe as possible often involved extremely creative work from the advocates and was highly individualised. As Sarah says,

Yeah, there’s lots of things - having code words with the children, having a drill. So kind of like at the same time doing an earthquake drill, or a fire drill, and then another type of drill, so that the children don’t necessarily associate it with - this is what you do when daddy’s, you know - so there’s no kind of guilt around the father, just knowing that this is ok if you hear this word, then it just means that this is what you do (personal communication, November 28, 2011).

Planning for safety became even more important in cases where women returned to their partners, which was acknowledged by all participants as extremely common. Women are quite adept at managing their lives around the abuse. Caroline says,

Because she can. . . . anticipate when violence is going to occur, and she can - my experience of working with women like that is that they become incredibly resourceful at either getting themselves out of the way - getting their kids out of the way, or managing the level of the violence (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

Caroline then says the role of the advocate entails supporting the woman to be as safe as possible when she returns home, “and what we can do, is help her to manage it (personal communication, November 23, 2011).”

A few participants expressed a feeling of unfairness that women are left to bear the burden of change when a partner is abusive. They spoke of the injustice of women and children having to uproot their lives, though they are not the abusive partner. This quote from Jo expresses this idea, "obviously she’s tried to talk to him and it hasn’t worked so well so perhaps it’s now, unfortunately, her responsibility to make the relationship shift somehow (personal communication, November 3, 2011).” This quote illustrates the tension and the fine line between the realities of abusive relationships advocates see and holding women, as victims, accountable for change. What Jo was saying, with perhaps some frustration, is that an abusive partner can’t be changed by someone else; he has to want to make the changes. The unfortunate consequence of this is that women are held responsible for change.

Eight of the participants spoke of women minimising the abuse they experience as it can incrementally increase over time. Maria spoke of attempting to cut through this coping strategy to communicate to women the potential danger she is facing:

I’m not going to give my personal opinion of what she should do, I’m going to tell her the facts of what might or might not happen. You know depending on how bad he is, often the abuse gets worse, you know, it might start off fairly mild, to the end she might be in a situation where he might kill her. So that’s something I might say, because I’m not going to
pretend that it won’t happen, because it might (personal communication, February 3, 2012).

Striking a balance between addressing risk in abusive relationships and many women’s hope for reconciliation was a challenge recurrent in all participants’ transcripts. Says Georgia,

I don’t disrespect the offender as such - I’m not here to put them down. If I believe that family can work, well then, yeah, by all means, it’s totally different. But I’m here to remind her of what it was like back home (personal communication, May 17, 2012).

Participants took this role of communicating the truth, as they have learned it, of abusive relationships to the women they work with. Participants spoke of women often not seeing what they experience as abuse, leaving participants with the role of naming the abuse and its harm to women and their children.

(2) Voice for women
A theme common in all transcripts was the idea of advocates as a voice for abused women with other organisations or within systems where others often do not have the same experience as advocates with IPV. All participants work with other organisations to support women and children. These relationships will be explored further in the results section. This theme involves how advocates view their role as holders of specialist knowledge and how that knowledge is shared in settings with representatives from other kinds of organisations. Being trained to understand the dynamics of IPV was noted as giving participants a different ‘lens’ to view cases of IPV handled collaboratively with other organisations. Caroline said that when confronted with a new case, “things are very rarely as they appear. Yeah, you know, uh, what you’re confronted with is usually the tip of the iceberg (personal communication, November 3, 2011)."

Caroline felt that advocates are uniquely positioned to see the complexities of IPV “because I’m trained in domestic violence, I know how complex these situations can be (personal communication, November 3, 2011). “

Jen spoke of her role as an advocate in collaborative groups as making sure the woman’s individual needs were adequately supported, and made particular note of supporting women in culturally appropriate ways. When commenting on a scenario being managed collaboratively by a number of organisations where the woman had rung the police repeatedly but remained in the relationship, Jen said:

I think I would have just suggested that maybe she needs a different agency to work with, she might be Tongan and we’re sending all these white people to her and she can’t understand them or she doesn’t want to listen. there might be other issues, like drug and alcohol, maybe she needs some support around that first. Mental health, same kind of thing. So, yeah, just offering other solutions to, yeah maybe addressing other issues, like a language barrier, yeah, and giving her more options of where to go (personal communication, February 28, 2012).
Sarah saw her role as a voice for women and used her knowledge as an advocate to ensure that agreed processes are followed in the collaborative case management group her organisations participates in. Sarah ensures that attention is paid to the details of cases. In her group, it has been agreed that three questions are asked at the first port of call helping to determine risk. Sarah says she is careful to ensure that this process is always followed so as not to mistakenly determine a woman at high risk of violence as low risk. She says,

I’ll say, ‘what was her reply to the three questions?’ And it’ll say, ‘was this the most frightening - what’s the most frightening incident?’ and you know, this one might be something like that (low risk violence), but she’ll say, ‘oh, three months ago when he tried to strangle me.’ So there’s, you know, and because I work for this agency, I’ve got that kind of analysis - that I’m looking a bit deeper. I’m not just taking things on face value. Cause, you know, it can be hidden (personal communication, November 7, 2011).

This sub-theme connects to the idea of advocates as having a distinct role from others who may be involved with women as they recover from IPV, a role that is uniquely woman centred amongst other roles which are not. These ideas strongly connect to feminist conceptions of advocacy.

(3) As a guide through systems

Women who have experienced IPV often need to access systems as a result of the abuse they have experienced. These systems can be unfamiliar and intimidating to women in crisis who have been made vulnerable from abuse. Jo spoke of explaining to women how formal statutory systems operate and how they might support women:

We go out to the (IPV police call out report) - see what their needs are, explain to them what their rights are and important things like they can get protection orders, and parenting orders, and trespass orders, and explain to them what services will come their way. If CYFS will be involved, and victim advisors will give them a call, and how that process will work out (personal communication, November 3, 2011).

Participants spoke of supporting women through appointments with lawyers to apply for protection orders, through doctor’s appointments to attend to injuries, with Housing New Zealand for long term accommodation, and most frequently at Work and Income (WINZ) for financial assistance. Many participants spoke of this form of advocacy as a key component of supporting women. As Caroline says,

We advocate for them at WINZ appointments, at lawyers appointments, in court if necessary, help them to get protection orders, parenting orders, Housing New Zealand - so helping them get a house, either through private rental or through a Housing New Zealand house (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

This advocacy is indispensable for women, and some participants spoke of becoming an accepted part of the process by those within statutory systems. Says Jen, “and Work and Income won’t usually see clients, our clients, without one of us being there. Just for the
safety of our refuge and the client and the worker (personal communication, March 5, 2012)."

Maria spoke of the impact support from advocates has had with clients involved in court processes. She and other advocates at her organisation support clients to share their views with judges “giving the clients a chance to say how they feel about what has happened. We’re taken quite seriously in court by the judges (personal communication, February 24, 2012).”

Jen and Maria's examples in particular illustrate the impact advocacy can have in systems on behalf of women. Their presence seems to be assumed, and in the case of WINZ, preferred. This outside voice speaking on behalf of women within systems which are unfamiliar to them, and where they likely do not have power, was viewed as an important aspect of advocacy by participants. The recognition of women’s powerlessness within systems, and their need for support within these systems, speaks to underlying assumptions of power imbalances within systems which disadvantage women. Though this idea wasn't often directly articulated, this legacy of a feminist model appears to be an important component of advocacy demonstrated by the women in this research.

(4) Discerning truth

A third aspect of this theme concerned the role of discerner of true stories. This was seen most strongly in the first interview where participants were asked to share their impressions based on short scenarios about IPV. One of the scenarios involved a man phoning their service saying he was being abused by his female partner. A number of participants expressed suspicion about whether his call was genuine. Said Maria:

I have on a number of occasions, had men call and they could be either - they could be the abuser. And usually I think they could be genuine if they're talking about the children and worried about the children - they're probably genuine. If they ring and start to say, 'She did this', then I'm going no - they are the abuser. So, I would think, I would be more inclined to think that he's possibly the abuser - in my mind. Because he's saying, 'she does this, she needs this.' Ok? So that's kind of controlling kind of language. Not, 'I feel-' , 'I'm worried about the children' - so . . . (personal communication, February 3, 2012).

Participants’ ideas about the gendered nature of IPV will be explored further later in this section, but Maria’s quote illustrates this aspect of this theme shared by all ten participants. Participants used their specialist knowledge of IPV to determine what is happening in the relationship and who the abusive partner is. This has been an important element of feminist advocacy where women’s stories of experiencing abuse where not believed in the face of a compelling denial from an abuser.

(5) Summary

This sub-theme was characterised by the participants using their specialist knowledge to explain the realities of IPV to women victims, who may be unable to identify and name the abuse they have experienced. They also acted as a voice for women within statutory systems, both to advocate on their behalf within collaborative working relationships with representatives of these systems and to guide the women through systems, such as
WINZ, they may need to access for support. Finally, their specialist experience is called on to discern the truth of stories of IPV, and act accordingly. This sub-theme along with the previous sub-theme ‘Honouring Women’ combine to form a picture of the role of advocate for the participants in this research. The participants understood their role to be unique from others who provide support for women in crisis, such as the police or WINZ. This difference was understood by participants to originate in their approach to the work and their understanding of the dynamics of IPV. This conception of the role of advocate is consistent with a feminist movement approach to advocacy.

iv. Summary of theme
The three sub-themes within this larger theme provide examples of how feminist socio-political ideas about VAW have influenced the work with women victims of IPV, and continue to be seen within the experiences of the advocates in this research. Though the impact of feminism may be seen in participants’ accounts, it is not always consistent, with some participants both utilising feminist terminology, such as ‘power and control’, and explicitly positioning their work as not feminist. Despite some participants not identifying with feminism, all participants discussed their role as holders of specialist knowledge which was used to advocate for and empower women recovering from abuse, an important element of advocacy within a wider movement for change.

b. Advocacy’s complicated relationship with feminism
While the previous theme detailed the many ways feminist analysis continues to influence the participants in this research, this section explores the elements where participants’ connections with feminism are more complicated, and in some cases indicate a departure from feminism. In this section, there are also indications of connections with feminism, but the connections are murkier and occur less frequently than in the previous theme.

i. Characteristics of intimate partner violence
Articulating the causes of IPV was something many participants struggled with. As will be seen in the section utilising discourse analysis, participants understood the causes of IPV to be complex and multi-faceted. The sub-themes characterising and defining IPV were numerous. It was described in a number of ways, often within one account. IPV was talked about predominantly in terms of its impacts on women and children. This section discusses conceptions of IPV which show feminist conceptions of understanding abuse, but also perhaps the influence of other schools of thought on how advocates are making sense of IPV.

(1) Complex
Common to all participants was a sense that working with IPV is incredibly complex, and the issues women are facing can be extremely complicated. Georgia spoke about working with women who have many things happening at once and the difficulty juggling these:

I mean, there’s financial problems, there’s debt, there’s bad credit ratings, so now it’s not ABC, ok? Yeah, there’s more work involved. There can be mental illness, children, having problems and having to refer them to a
CYFS worker maybe, dealing with them as well, yeah (personal communication, May 17, 2012).

Caroline echoes this idea, the problems are usually very varied and complex. “It’s never just about domestic violence. There are always other issues (personal communication, November 3, 2011). “

Maria spoke about the complicated issues women are facing when deciding to leave or remain in a relationship and how many people do not understand the many aspects of living with an abusive partner that women have to weigh up:

They follow them, they stalk them, you know. Some of them are absolutely vicious in what they’ll do, they just can’t let go either, that’s the thing. They’re very jealous, they’re very possessive. And they just can’t let go - the thought that she might leave. And that’s the most dangerous time. Because when she leaves, he might kill her. You know, if he thinks she’s going, his kind of attitude is ‘well, if I can’t have her, then nobody else can.’ So he will. And they do, you hear about it on the news every now and then. They do kill them. So it’s all kinds of things. See, most people don’t understand that. It’s just like, ‘why don’t they get up and go?’ Well, it’s not that easy (personal communication, February 3, 2012).

Corrine says,

It’s complicated. It’s hard to understand. But when you’re with this person, too, some women they - it’s like all their hopes and dreams, it’s like they’ve been looking for love all their lives and all of a sudden, they just think if they lose this man, they won’t get anyone else. And some of them do go through ups, but mainly downs, and a lot of women hold onto those ups (personal communication, May 14, 2012).

These four different quotes provide a good illustration of the many things participants described women having to face when they are victims of IPV. The situations themselves can be complex, with other struggles co-existing alongside IPV. In addition to that, women must decide what will keep them and their children safer, while coping with potentially both fear of and love for their partners. It seemed difficult for participants to reconcile the many different issues that women are experiencing along with IPV with how they understand the causes of IPV.

(2) Control

The idea of control as central to IPV was noted by all participants and has been a hallmark of feminist ideas of the causes of IPV. Maria talked about how abusive partners can control every aspect of women’s lives,

He wants to know what she does 24/7. He wants to know who she rings, who she goes and sees. And he will check on her. He will check on the phone, he will check everything. You know? So he knows what she is doing. She has no freedom at all (personal communication, February 24, 2012).
Other participants also shared the idea of IPV being oppressive, that men who use abuse can be incredibly savvy and how this manipulation damages over time. Georgia talked about how it destroys women, and affects every aspect of their wellbeing. Though control fits within a feminist model of understanding IPV, participants did not engage with the idea of individually controlling behaviours as a product of structural inequality - an important element of a feminist socio-political understanding of IPV.

(3) Women minimise abuse
Eight out of ten participants discussed how women often minimise the abuse they experience. As Caroline says,

People who are abused and oppressed - especially over a long period of time- stop believing they have any choice in the matter. They have lost sight of what is ok, what's a healthy relationship. That's why we use the power and control wheel and the equality wheel so much is because we actually show them what a healthy relationship is like. Because they have normalised the abuse so much that it has become their normal life and it is normal for them and they stop being outraged about it (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

Francie talked about the gradual escalation of abuse over time as difficult to notice: “because so often, they get used to the way things are, and abuse often increases incrementally. And, it’s almost as though, all their energy is used up just dealing with the day to day surviving (personal communication, June 25, 2012).” This aspect of understanding IPV speaks to a feminist legacy, that is present amongst these other conceptions of IPV.

(4) Relationships with other issues
All ten participants discussed in some capacity the various relationships between IPV and other issues. Intimate partner violence’s relationship with alcohol was the most common with six participants mentioning it, primarily as a trigger for violence or increasing the likelihood that violence will occur. Maria spoke first about IPV caused by male entitlement, and then talked about the relationship between IPV and alcohol:

You have other triggers, like if there’s alcohol and drugs - especially alcohol - can make it worse, but it’s there anyway, but alcohol can be a big contributing factor to why it happens. Because you get a lot of women saying, ‘he’s fine when he’s not drunk (personal communication, February 24, 2012).’

Maria’s example is similar to the other women who mentioned the relationship with alcohol, that it can trigger an incident of violence but is not the cause. Jo and Sarah mentioned the connections between colonisation and IPV. Jo in particular spoke about the impact of systemic oppression. She said:

You know, when the oppressed become the oppressors kind of idea. If you’re treated badly outside of the home, and there is no space for you to - or no education on how to vent that anger - you know, the home is that one place where people feel, you know, most able to be themselves. Or feel the most that they are not going to be judged or there are no consequences
for their actions. Which is why I think domestic violence occurs there (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

This sub-theme highlights how difficult it was for participants to make sense of the other issues which often co-occur with IPV. There seems to be lingering ideas of feminist conceptions of IPV’s relationship with triggers like alcohol in Maria’s statement about it not being a cause of IPV. She then qualifies this with her own experiences of working with women who say partners are only abusive after drinking. Jo’s words about systemic oppression was a concept not often spoken about amongst participants, and while it may align with feminist socio-political conception of IPV, Jo said she did not see her advocacy work as fighting this oppression.

(5) Summary
This sub-theme focused on participants’ conceptions of IPV as a phenomenon. They discussed it as an incredibly complex phenomenon, typified by control and complicated by factors such as alcohol. They further discussed how women often minimise the abuse they experience as a result of the nature of the abuse itself and its incremental increases over time. These understandings of IPV are woman centred, meaning they focus on how IPV is experienced by women and what these experiences involve. I believe this focus to be partly consistent with a feminist movement analysis of IPV, but an incomplete analysis where discussion of the structural roots of violence against women is largely absent. This sub-theme indicates the struggle participants’ had when discussing the causes of IPV. Some legacies of feminist socio-political conceptions of the causes of IPV remain, however they are complicated through the introduction of other conceptions of IPV leaving participants with uncertainty about the roots of IPV.

ii. Terminology
With each participant, I noted her chosen terminology about IPV and echoed this during the course of both interviews. In the second interview, I asked each participant how she arrived at her chosen term. Both ‘domestic violence’ or ‘DV’ and ‘family violence’ were used by participants, and many participants used both terms. Eight participants did not view the choice of terminology as an important one, with most using the terminology others used around the workplace, or the terminology they learned when beginning work in the IPV field. Georgia had an impression that terminology was externally driven, that it was “just the changes” in the times that led to her organisation moving from ‘domestic violence’ to ‘family violence’. Jo viewed her choice of ‘domestic violence’ as deliberate. She said,

The word domestic violence kind of describes to me the domestic situation a lot more. The home or kind of anthropological ideas of domesticity and kind of the domestic household - that kind of fits more with that model. Yeah. And also, that domestic violence is something that people more readily understand than when they use family violence or just violence alone. When you say violence people often forget about all the other forms of violence that aren’t physical (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

Sarah also deliberately chose ‘domestic violence’ as her terminology. I asked her if she could tell me a bit about her choice:
Diane: There’s lots of different language around violence - but I notice you use domestic violence. I just wondered if you had any thoughts around how you arrived at that term?

Sarah: Yeah, as opposed to family violence?

Diane: Yeah -

Sarah: Cause family violence, for me I had this discussion in the office - it kind of softens it, and I think, you know, it is what it is. It’s - you know family violence, it just seems like a much softer - softer term to give it, you know? It’s almost more palatable when you put ‘family’ around it, for some reason, so . . . I call it domestic violence - yeah.

Diane: What does soft mean, to you?

Sarah: Soft . . . I suppose for me, to give that context, it kind of . . . what’s the word I’m looking for? Minimises it a little bit - yeah. Hmmm . . .

Diane: Minimises the importance of it? Or . . .

Sarah: Uh . . . I think the strength of what it is, you know? The impact of it. Yeah (personal communication, November 28, 2011).

Sarah was the only participant who linked her choice of terminology with her understanding of the phenomenon of IPV. I was surprised to find that only two participants viewed terminology as important. For most, terminology was not a deliberate choice, and did not seem significant to participants. It is possible that this could indicate that debate about terminology is not actively discussed among the organisations where participants work, with the exception of Sarah, who specifically mentioned a workplace discussion about terminology. While language has historically been very important to the feminist movement to end VAW, terminology for IPV does not seem to be an important choice to most participants in this research.

iii. Organisational philosophy

I was interested in how participants were oriented into their organisations, how organisational philosophy about working with women in crisis was communicated, and in turn how theoretical positions may have been imparted from the beginning of a participant’s tenure at her position. I asked each participant what she knew about the history of her organisation, to understand how this history might fit with current practice as experienced by her. I chose to explore this area to learn whether a feminist organisational history and philosophy were experienced as vital and present aspects of advocacy work for participants in their current organisations. A number of themes emerged which indicated that for many participants, the imparting of organisational theory did not happen systematically.

(1) History

I had expected organisational history to be highly present in organisational life, particularly for organisations with feminist movement histories, and I asked each participant about her organisational history. Half of the participants were aware of the history, or were present when their organisations were founded. Half were uncertain, and a few expressed
surprise at my interest. For the five participants who were aware of their organisational history and reason for beginning, there was an emphasis on the growth from those roots and the strength of the current work of the organisation as opposed to how it aligns with the original purpose. Georgia spoke about this growth from the original safe house,

But you know, from what I believe, it was a safe house - and that was it, whereas no, our services, you know, we do referrals, there’s counselling, there’s groups, you know, children’s programmes, women’s programmes. So yeah, we’ve really branched out a lot (personal communication, May 17, 2012).

(2) Cross sector analysis

It is not uncommon for women within this sector to have worked previously at another organisation supporting women recovering from abuse. Six participants had worked at other IPV organisations prior to beginning their current roles. All of these women spoke about how this previous experience was useful learning for their current positions. I asked Maria if she was trained at her current position about how to work with women.

Diane: Do you remember if there was training about how you would work with women? Like what that interaction would be like?

Maria: No, not really, no. But see, I already knew that - like I say, the [previous] training was invaluable. So when I came here - I also did my placement at [another IPV organisation] - and they work very much like I do, so I wasn’t really looking for that kind of training anyway, cause I already knew it, and I probably would have found it quite boring it they had. But they didn’t so . . . (personal communication, February 24, 2012).

Similar sentiments were spoken by four of the other participants, which indicates to me that there may be an assumption among IPV organisations that other organisations have similar approaches to working with women. I did not ask about what interview processes were like prior to appointment, so the current organisations may have established similar philosophical approaches to advocacy work during that stage. One participant, Jo, was retrained at her current organisation despite previous experience. Jo’s was one of the larger organisations in this research, and consequently may have more organisational resources available for staff orientation. It was apparent to me throughout the expression of this theme that availability of organisational resources was closely connected to the orientation process for the participants in this research.

(3) Baptism by fire

Theoretically, the period of induction in an organisation would be a time of learning about how the organisation approaches working with women recovering from IPV, and whether the organisation situates that work within a wider social change agenda. Four participants spoke of training processes as being thrown in the deep end, though all of them laughed while describing these experiences. Jo looked back at her orientation at a previous role by saying "I was thrusted into that refuge environment and I had to learn to run before I could walk really (personal communication, November 23, 2011)." She reflected that her experience of being given a manual to read and then being allocated clients with less
complex needs to begin with, was due to high client volumes and significant under resourcing of her previous employer.

The connection between high demand and an informal orientation process was expressed by five other participants, and I had a sense that this was accepted as commonplace when working with organisations with high demand, low resourcing, and where overlapping periods of employment with replacements are often luxuries outside of budgets. The lack of apparent resources for orientation in many organisations poses challenges for the communication of feminist theoretical approaches to advocacy work to new employees.

(4) Organisational structures

Only three of the ten participants, Sarah, Francie, and Suzanne, made mention of working within an organisation with connections to feminism. My research when searching for organisations to participate left me with an impression from websites and community resource searches that at least seven organisations had incorporated at least an element of feminist ideas into their organisational philosophy, such as violence as a gendered phenomenon. I had expected to hear from more participants about the connections of their work to feminist theories of VAW.

Suzanne spoke of working from a feminist perspective. I asked her what that meant to her:

It’s really kind of, just the unbalance in society, that women are mostly not in the same position as men, that our society enables men to have control over women, and our laws support that. And as women, we are pushed to kind of a secondary role, and that has severe implications in some relationships (personal communication, November 16, 2011).

In her interviews, Suzanne spoke frequently about feminism. Previous to her beginning her current position, she had not participated in work or discussions about feminism. She talked about how much it resonated with her and her own ideas about relationships being based on equality between men and women. Suzanne’s expression of an affinity with feminism was rare amongst participants with only Sarah and Francie also espousing an alignment with feminism.

Three of the ten participants, Francie, Suzanne, and Jen, mentioned that their organisations had at some point been structured as collectively governed; one currently was at the time of the interview. Suzanne spoke of her organisation moving on from the collective structure prior to her beginning her work there. She said, “initially that worked extremely well because there was a really generous feeling and good relationships. As time went on and changes were needed, some - as people do - some were more resistant to change, and others see that things need to change (personal communication, November 16, 2011).”

The idea that organisational growth leads to collectives becoming unmanageable was echoed by Francie, who was present for the change in her organisation. She spoke with a slight sense of loss of the move away from the collective. I asked her if the move to a different structure was an improvement. She said,
Well, it’s mixed. It’s easier sometimes, but it also, I have more responsibility than I did, so it’s more important that I get it right. Because it comes back to me really, I’ve got to get it right. Whereas before, it was everybody’s responsibility. Any decision (personal communication, June 25, 2012).

Jen was the only participant who spoke about working within a collective currently. She saw a clear benefit to the structure in terms of autonomy with her work. Overwhelmingly though, I had a sense of her frustration with the structure and the challenges she found working within a collective. One aspect she found particularly difficult was the lack of a direct supervisor:

And I guess for me not having somebody that I can go to talk to who’s like my superior, who is focused on what I do. Because there’s only three of us that are paid staff, yeah, sometimes you need somebody who manages that, but there really is nobody. Yeah, so that’s quite hard (personal communication, March 5, 2012).

(5) Summary
The interviews in this research did not provide a comprehensive understanding of how organisational culture is imparted to workers, but the themes here provide a sense that feminist organisational culture is, perhaps more often than not, imparted in an ad hoc fashion rather than via a systematic orientation into an established feminist organisation working for cultural change. This transmission of culture is quite separate from organisational procedures and policies, which all participants mentioned explicitly as part of their orientation, consequently emphasising the professional nature of advocacy work. The potential implications of this sub-theme are explored in the discussion section.

iv. Summary of theme
This theme explores aspects which emerged from participants’ accounts which indicated that the relationship between advocacy and feminism is complicated, and in some cases disconnected from a feminist socio-political perspective on VAW. Understandings of the causes of IPV are murky, with feminist ideas of IPV combining with other causal perspectives. The lack of importance of terminology and what appears to be piecemeal transmission of organisational theories of violence are signs of this departure from feminist roots.

c. Motivation
When considering how the themes emerged from the interviews, it felt important to mention briefly what participants shared about their motivation for being involved in this work. I was struck by the empathy and care expressed by participants, and the impression that for all ten, their work is more than a job. Four of the participants mentioned personal experiences of IPV, either from partners or as children growing up in homes where their mothers were abused. These were powerful motivators for being involved in their current work. Each felt she had something to give back, and that she had a real understanding of what it is like for women in relationships with IPV. Georgia said, “I
always wanted to put something back in the community and work with women and children because I just know so much about it (personal communication, May 17, 2012)."

Georgia and Sarah, the two women who spoke about their experiences of abuse from their partners also spoke about spending a considerable amount of time and energy healing from the abuse before undertaking a role to support other women with IPV.

Nine women spoke of a love of working with women and watching them grow stronger as a motivator. Sarah spoke about the power of women supporting other women, “I love being able to support other women - I love the concept of women supporting women. I think it’s really powerful. I see it all the time (personal communication, November 28, 2011)."

Most women had a particular passion for working with IPV; however four participants spoke about personal beliefs in the importance of community and addressing social injustices, which would be consistent with a socio-political movement framework for advocacy. Francie spoke about the importance to her of working in an area that attempts to right social injustice,

> I have huge loathing of injustice, and social justice is really important to me. The fact that - inequality between the genders, or between races is something I hate. I just, it's something I really work to balance. And a lot of domestic violence I think is rooted in - I mean it is rooted in inequality, but there is also a social aspect to it. I mean, the men have a sense of privilege because they are privileged. And, that’s - so I think trying to set right imbalances and injustices are why I work in this field (personal communication, June 25, 2012).

Jo mentioned something during one of her interviews about how each woman who worked at her organisation had a different reason for being there, and to me that seemed to be true of the participants in this study. However, there were some commonalities, and in each interview I felt a genuine passion for the work with individual women behind the words. It also struck me that the participants in this research were primarily motivated by love of working with women, and a motivation to end VAW through social change was not often articulated.

**d. Emerging issues**

Throughout the interviews, participants reflected on what they saw as important issues for women and their work as advocates. These range from comments on increasing financial pressures on women to reflections on cultural change. These emerging issues raise areas of concern when considering the future directions of the feminist movement to end VAW in New Zealand.

**i. External pressures**

A number of participants spoke about the impacts of external pressures on their work. Georgia spoke about the increasing work load and how it is becoming more and more difficult to get necessary support from WINZ and Housing New Zealand. She said,
However, take the woman down there and years ago, it was sort of ABC and they got it, whereas now, I'm finding that the women have used up all their grants, so WINZ are kind of stuck, so gee we can't help them. 'We can't help you with your rent and bond, because they've exceeded their limit.' So then, we face a problem. [...] Housing New Zealand have made so many changes, that it's actually really really frustrating, I'm not getting any support from them, any assistance from them at the moment, to be honest. I need to have a meeting somewhere along the line, because we get the women in here, and it's like how do we get them back into the community if we haven't got the support from the other services? So, yeah, in that sense, there's a lot more work (personal communication, May 17, 2012).

In a different vein, Georgia spoke about some women's fear of being investigated for benefit fraud leading to an inability to seek support for IPV.

Georgia was also concerned about the implementation of the protection order. She recommended conditions be placed on protected persons as well as respondents for no contact. She believed this would strengthen the success of the protection order to protect women, though she acknowledged that this view was controversial amongst her fellow advocates. Jo spoke with frustration about the justice system letting women, and men, down by not consistently arresting for beaches of protection order conditions. She said,

I think courts can be quite lenient on offenders. And if they were prosecuted and charged every time they offended, then maybe they would stop. And I've seen someone who has breached their protection order five times get dismissed of their charges because they attended a stopping violence programme. Five breaches of a protection order isn't about them not controlling their anger, it's about power and control. You know, it's about them not respecting the law and discharging them from their charges, and letting them off, isn't going to teach them that the next time they breach that protection order - which is basically the only thing in law at the moment that victims can seek to protect themselves (personal communication, May 17, 2012).

These concerns would be consistent with concerns of the feminist movement to end VAW, and provide an indication of how women's advocates are uniquely placed to catalogue emerging issues for women victims of male partner violence.

**ii. Intimate partner violence and gender**

In the first interview, one of the vignettes featured a man phoning their service saying he was being abused by his partner. All participants responded with openness to the concept of men as victims of IPV, though each one also said this would be a very rare phone call at her organisation. In later stages of interviews, six participants expressed understanding or empathy for men who abuse their partners, but were clear that this understanding was not a justification of his behaviour. Corrine said,
You know, we're not here to judge anyone. It's all about having that open heart, and listening, and counselling. But to never, you know, justify, or say that it's ok, with what he did. You know it's about finding solutions for us - it's really about finding solutions (personal communication, September 10, 2012).

Jo expressed empathy in particular when men who abuse their partners are oppressed or marginalised in another way in society. She said,

If they're right at the top rung, and have no really no - really if they're a middle class white man who has a nice cushy job and is just squeezing the life out of this woman, then I have no empathy for him, But when they're at the other end of the scale, I get it. I really do (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

Corrine and Jo’s words illustrate empathy without justification, and demonstrate two different perspectives. Corrine spoke of an openness to work with men and have understanding for their own personal pain as coming from her belief that there is goodness in everyone. She also spoke of the necessity of working with men when the approach to practice is woman led - and the woman wants to stay with her partner. Jo’s excerpt illustrates the complex interaction of IPV and class, race, and other areas of inequality and how these intersections compound for individuals.

Four participants spoke explicitly of IPV as a gendered phenomenon where overwhelmingly women are the victim and men are the perpetrators. The other six participants used mostly ‘she’ when referring to victims and ‘he’ when referring to abusers, though it is difficult to say whether this is a result of participants’ work being mostly with women or because of an analysis about violence as a gendered problem.

**iii. Work with families**

Perhaps as a response to the understanding, without excusing, of abusive behaviour, four women spoke about the importance of working with families, or being open to working with families. Melanie talked about her feelings that the work with IPV is headed toward a family or whānau model of work as opposed to a model where only the woman and her children are supported. She said,

The FVIARS system that we’ve set up . . . is a whānau based model. So MSD is talking to us that that’s how it should - so the MSD funders who are funding us for FVIARS are saying that this a family, whānau, based model. In reality, it sort of isn’t - CYFS don’t work like that. I mean it’s like, ‘sort her out or she loses the kids.’ And it’s like - well, he puts his hand up and says, ‘I would like to do something’, well you know – ‘sort yourself out’, you know? However, I think it’s important, and yeah, we still are mainly working with women, but we’re not exclusively doing that. [. . .] it’s not an us and them situation. So I would always, and again, it’s very important I think to treat families, the whole family, with respect . . . And yeah, I think it breaks down barriers - like another woman I went to, he wouldn’t let her come to our women’s programme, I went to their house, I dropped her off one day and he was there. And I made a point of actually going in and saying hello
so he sees I’m not some sort of women’s army out to get him, and again, I think that’s a historical thing. But there’s not really enough time to sort his life out as well. But it’s more about being open to it I suppose, and referring people on if you can (March 28, 2012).

Corrine also said it was important to work with families rather than women on their own. She said,

But we really wanted to work with the whole of the family, um, working with our men, because that we had found that we were just - the problem was still out there, and we were just getting the women, these women in all the time, and we weren’t really sourcing the problem (personal communication, September 10, 2012).

Corrine spoke about the peace at her refuge since they began approaching work with whole families, initiated at the request of the woman. Melanie spoke about work with IPV moving toward a focus on families as though this should have happened years ago. Both women prioritised safety for women, and I was not left with an impression that work with families came at the expense of safety. Corrine in particular spoke about woman led practice, and that family work came as a consequence of working with women’s choices to remain with their partners. Melanie’s organisational history was outside a feminist movement, and Corrine’s had deliberately distanced itself from a movement in part to work with whole families. Though this issue emerged largely from these two women whose organisations did not align with a feminist movement perspective on advocacy, it has implications for the wider movement to end VAW.

iv. Collaboration with others

Each participant was involved in some capacity in collaborative work with other sectors. Though there were advantages and challenges with these relationships, participants spoke largely of the benefits for clients when they work collaboratively with others, and the potential to better support families. Corrine spoke of the importance in approaching IPV as a community,

And it’s important for us to network and strengthen our relationships with other networks, because it’s about . . . again it’s a community thing, isn’t it? We can’t do things on our own and so . . . the more of us there are to help support our families and clients, then the better (personal communication, September 10, 2012).

Amongst many participants, there was an acknowledgement that they couldn’t do it all, that other forms of support were needed for families with often complex needs. Jo talked about working in isolation as a dangerous practice,

There’s no reflective practice in working in isolation, I think. It’s easy to get stuck in one pattern of doing things, which isn’t useful for the client because the clients are so diverse and their needs are so diverse. So, believing that you can provide it all is actually really dangerous (personal communication, November 23, 2011).
I asked participants about challenges with working collaboratively. Maria spoke of a frustration of a lack of action from police at times, or an inappropriate response, such as failure to arrest an offender for a breach of conditions of a protection order. Jen spoke about the frustration of working with others with whom she doesn’t have a close working relationship,

When a client - so a new client will ring up and she’s like ‘oh, I called the police and then they came around like 4 hours later’ and like oh wow. That didn’t really help did it? Yeah, that’s quite a challenge, especially dealing with - like I only deal with [local police station], so (laughter), I’m lucky. But when I’m trying to deal with somebody in a different place, I’m like ‘oh, why is this so frustrating? What’s going on here? Why can’t you just help me?’ (personal communication, March 5, 2012).

Jen gave this example to illustrate how much she values the working relationships with the police and others. It was common for participants to speak with equivocation about the challenges by saying they were outside of the norm, and that these relationships frequently assist their work with women. Participants spoke of collaborative relationships to support women as increasingly important to advocacy work.

v. Culture and change
Six participants spoke explicitly about community norms which support IPV. When speaking about the causes of IPV, Caroline said,

Fundamentally they do it because they can - they think they’re entitled to. I mean, you know - but the sad thing is, most offenders who believe that have had it hard wired into them - it’s not their fault that they choose it, but they absolutely they choose it. It comes from society's attitudes towards women, patriarchal attitudes, a sense of entitlement (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

Maria talked about the same attitudes being present in the community, and also within institutions, such as the police, and how difficult this makes change. She spoke as well about how the current system is structured to mandate change, such as attendance of stopping violence programmes ordered by courts. Maria felt that this did not lead to long term change for individual men, and felt that real change occurred through choice. Georgia also said that long term interventions were often needed for lasting change.

When I asked Francie what she thought caused IPV, she spoke about the continuing inequality between women and men:

I think that injustice, and that imbalance in society, has got a lot to do with it. A lot to do with it. I think if we were brought up completely equal, I think there would be far less family/domestic violence. So I think it’s going to be a long time before it’s gone quite honestly. Because male privilege has been around forever. And it’s slowly going. Yeah, the changes are really slow (personal communication, June 25, 2012).
I believe this emerging issue indicates the continued need for a feminist movement to end VAW which is working to address the structural causes of VAW. This will be discussed further in the discussion section.

vi. Summary of theme
Participants reflected on current issues for them in their work with women, and issues they saw as relevant more widely. There was indication from some participants of increasing workload due to financial pressures on women in the community and squeezed government resources which support women to exit abusive relationships. Some participants expressed that work with families and whānau is the future for IPV; that real change occurs with more than just working with individual women. Finally, some advocates who deliberately identified with feminist ideas during their interviews reflected that cultural change was slow, indicating the ongoing importance of work for social change.

e. Summary of interpretative phenomenological analysis themes
The IPA analysis indicates many examples of feminist socio-political history alive in the current work of women’s advocates. Ideas of honouring women’s truths, using the role of woman’s advocate to advocate on behalf of women, and the language of ‘power and control’ are living examples of the influence of feminist activism in today’s practice. Participants’ complicated relationships with feminist socio-political roots are also evident in how they experience the causes of IPV, their use of terminology about IPV, and the transmission of organisational theories about violence toward women. Participants shared their motivation for ongoing work in the field, revealing ten women for whom their work as advocates is a vocation, rather than a job. Reflections from advocates indicate possible emerging issues within the field, and scope for further reflection about the progress of the feminist movement.
6. Results - Discourse Analysis

Four constructions of the causes of IPV were identified in the participant transcripts, feminist with both micro and macro constructions, situational, relationship, and intergenerational. This figure shows the presence of constructions within the accounts:

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<th>Caroline</th>
<th>Corrine</th>
<th>Francie</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
<th>Jen</th>
<th>Jo</th>
<th>Maria</th>
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*Figure 5. Presence of varying constructions within participant’s accounts*

These will be explored with associated positioning and practice implications of each construction discussed in turn. Though frequency data for these constructions is not included, all constructions which I identified within the transcripts appear in this section.

**a. Feminist**

Six transcripts contained accounts of the causes of IPV within a feminist framework. These were further distinguished by constructions of IPV within a ‘micro feminist’ framework where the causes of IPV were constructed on an individual, or interpersonal level. The second feminist construction of IPV was termed ‘macro feminist’ framework as the causes of IPV were understood through structural explanations beyond interpersonal reasons.

The micro feminist construction was employed with statements about male entitlement. As Maria said, “these men, they really believe they have a right to do it (personal communication, February 3, 2012).” Sarah also referred to entitlement of abusers and their choice to use violence with their partners saying, “It’s about making a choice to be purposely violent and abusive . . . to people, you know, that they choose within their family (personal communication, November 28, 2011).” Caroline’s account echoed these ideas saying, “Belief of entitlement, ownership, choice. I believe that people - one family member chooses to have power over another. Absolutely (personal communication, November 23, 2011).” These statements construct a phenomenon characterised by individual choice and personal entitlement, which is consistent with historical feminist ideas of individual abusive actions within a patriarchal society.

The construction of causes of IPV within a macro feminist framework involved deploying concepts of historical, systemic oppression and patriarchy. Maria spoke of the roots of historical patriarchy in English law by mentioning the ‘rule of thumb’ saying a man could
legally punish his wife and children with a switch no thicker than his thumb. She then said this is still very much present in contemporary culture. Jo said, “At the end of the day, I think it’s this whole entire system of oppression that causes it. I think that a lot of the reasons that it happens is to do with power and control. And the reasons people seek that power and control are related to systems of oppression (personal communication, November 23, 2011).” Francie talked about historical inequality between genders, saying, “The social cause, the inequality, between men and women, I think is a huge cause of it. The fact that men have always been more important than women . . . societally (personal communication, June 25, 2012).” These examples depict a phenomenon rooted in historic systemic oppression. The current abuse of women is seen to be directly caused by this oppression, and the laws and culture which continue to support it.

Caroline explicitly linked the micro and macro frameworks saying,

Fundamentally they do it because they can - they think they’re entitled to. I mean, you know, but the sad thing is, most offenders who believe that have had it hard wired into them - it’s not their fault that they choose it, but they absolutely choose it. It comes from society’s attitudes towards women, patriarchal attitudes, sense of entitlement [. . .] we have some appalling attitudes, absolutely appalling (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

Linking the micro and macro constructions is consistent with a socio-political movement analysis of the causes of IPV. It constructs IPV as caused by systemic oppression with individual abusive actions a consequence.

Invoking ideas of choice and entitlement as causes of IPV, and patriarchy and systemic oppression as causes of IPV, both construct the causes of IPV within a feminist discourse, but with different associated implications. Discussing the causes of IPV within a micro feminist discourse uses historically feminist rhetoric of male entitlement and privilege, and also places the emphasis on IPV as an interpersonal issue. When the cause of IPV is constructed as the choice of individual men, it positions the advocate as support person for women recovering from abuse, but removed from the root of the problem - the man himself and his behaviour. The advocate’s position within this discourse provides opportunities for interventions to reduce current IPV when working with women alone and potentially presents the opportunity for the women’s children to no longer witness IPV should the woman leave the relationship. This construction allows advocates to engage in meaningful and satisfying work with individual women, but does not engage with a socio-political discourse of cultural change. Georgia perhaps acknowledges this when she said with some frustration, “I feel that domestic violence with all the services available - so many services, yet it’s . . . it’s still out there and it’s getting worse and worse and worse (personal communication, May 17, 2012).”

The macro feminist construction within this research was characterised by language about systemic oppression, inequality, and patriarchy. All women who deployed this construction also deployed the feminist micro construction as well, though only three linked the two constructions. Constructing the causes of IPV within a macro feminist lens allows different opportunities for action than the micro feminist construction alone. When constructing the causes of IPV within a macro feminist lens, the state, systems, and social
structures are the source of the problem and the objects of change. Individual perpetrators may be supported to change their behaviour, but this will not address the root causes of IPV. Women are abused by individual men, but the act of abuse is the visible sign of structural oppression, rather than only the action of individual men.

The three advocates who linked the micro and macro feminist constructs deployed constructions of the causes of IPV that align most closely to a historical socio-political feminist movement perspective. The position of the advocate within this discourse remains supportive work with individual women, but this work is situated within a wider framework to change the systems and structures which cause IPV. One advocate, Jo, did not link the two constructions. In the IPA analysis it was quite clear that Jo did not experience her work with women as political, though the construction of the causes of IPV within her account allows for the advocate to be positioned within a framework for social change.

Despite the presence of the macro feminist construction within four accounts, the micro feminist construction dominated the accounts. As described previously with the quote from Georgia, above, there seemed to be a sense of frustration within the advocates that change was either not occurring, or was extremely slow. After deploying a macro feminist construction to discuss societal attitudes and patriarchy, Caroline returns to what she sees as a potential starting point of change -- individual men taking accountability for their abuse:

But until they are going to take some ownership and accountability for the choices they are making, there's no hope for the relationship. And I'm really blunt with women about that, and as much as I don't want to victim blame - and I don't think they should be the ones to make the changes, in their lives, the reality is that they are the only ones that can. Because unless he's going to take accountability for his actions, and his choices and man up and take responsibility and make some changes - nothing's going to change. It's only going to get worse (personal communication, November 23, 2011).

Caroline seems unhappily to come to the conclusion that women who have been abused are responsible for action, perhaps because no other solutions are apparent.

This is a tension seen throughout the advocates’ accounts that contained feminist constructions: the frustration that individual men are failing to take responsibility for their abuse at greater numbers. While frustrated with the positions open within this micro construction of IPV, participants’ engaged minimally with the potential position within the macro feminist discourse, that rather than individual men taking responsibility for their actions, emphasis is placed on structural change. Maria comes close to engaging with this idea saying,

So, yeah, that's how these men - they really believe they have the right to do it. And while they believe that, there will be no change. No matter how many courses they do - you’ve got to get the way they think about it to change. And if they believe they have a right to do it - well, yeah, that’s-there will be no change (personal communication, February 24, 2012).
This quote demonstrates the sense of frustration I felt amongst the advocates who deployed feminist constructions, that though meaningful and important work occurs with women every day which makes dramatic differences to their lives, the problem of IPV remains.

b. Situational
The construction of IPV as associated with other factors was the most commonly seen construction, appearing in seven accounts. The most frequently discussed variable within this construction was alcohol, with poverty also often discussed. Most participants were clear that alcohol and other situational variables are not the cause of violence, however it seemed difficult to reconcile how frequently situational factors are involved in their work with IPV. These ideas resonate with both individual discourses, for alcohol, and sociological discourses, for poverty. These constructions will be explored separately below as they have different potential positions and implications.

i. Poverty
Poverty and financial pressures were constructed as increasing pressure and stress within a relationship and as exacerbating the potential for IPV. Melanie spoke of challenging another worker about a statement that poverty causes domestic violence saying, “Well it’s not because of poverty, I don’t think. You’ve got a - you’ve got to know how to do it, and want to do it, before the poverty makes you do it (personal communication, March 28, 2012).”

Georgia’s account depicts a charged relationship state made increasingly stressful by the nature of state support and punitive responses for those who flout the rules:

A lot of these women are living on the edge, ok? They are living with their partner, they’ve got three kids and another one on the way, she’s on the DPB, he’s on the dole, their living together, any minute they can all be snapped, you know what I mean? So that pressure’s there already, whether they think it is or not, they’re in a Housing New Zealand house, he’s not meant to be there, there’s so much of this going on, you know? So because of that, there must be a lot of unreported incidences out there because they don’t want to get snapped (personal communication, May 17, 2012).

Georgia’s statements construct a phenomenon made worse by financial pressure on a couple, and systems that are unsupportive of women’s efforts to leave abusive relationships.

The position of the advocate is crucial within this construction, as the systems which can financially support women are, as Georgia said, not currently designed to support women in abusive relationships. The advocate has inside knowledge of these systems and her knowledge can be of great benefit for women. There is capacity for addressing poverty as a socially constructed problem within this discourse, but this potential position for social action becomes less likely when confronted with the complex needs of individuals requiring support.
Alcohol was the most frequently stated contributing variable in the participants’ accounts, mentioned by seven participants. Participants’ transcripts that contained this construction used language to describe the connection between variables like alcohol such as “fuel” in Caroline’s case, or “trigger” in Maria’s and Melanie’s. Corrine spoke about the reason behind the use of alcohol or drugs. She said, “I mean, a majority of it may be caused by . . . like a lot of ours are involved with alcohol abuse, but it’s a lot deeper than that. Why are they always drinking? Why are they . . . always taking drugs, you know there’s always a reason (personal communication, September 10, 2012).” This excerpt from Corrine shows a slightly different aspect of this discourse by moving closer to situational variables like alcohol as a cause, though the rest of her account related to the causes of IPV focuses strongly on intergenerational factors. When alcohol is seen as a cause of violence, it constructs IPV as caused by individual vices and perhaps historical personal pain which may lead an individual to use alcohol or drugs to cope with life.

Participants struggled with this construction. For some, it was difficult to reconcile their initial statements that situational variables like alcohol are not causes of violence with the frequency of occurrence within their work. Melanie spoke of the relationship between IPV and alcohol saying,

I mean, I’ve never counted how many in which alcohol is involved, but it’s shocking. And it’s really sad. That’s really sad; because that’s . . . it seems such a waste. And I know I’ve just said that it’s not about alcohol and poverty, it’s about other things, but like even the women here - they’ve lost - all the women here at the moment, have got alcohol problems. Or have had in the past. Either binge drinking or just drinking too much, and that’s terrible. And it’s shocking. And they don’t have a lot of money, and apart from the fact that they’re drinking whatever money they have, but also just the out of controlness is yeah. Is awful. I mean certainly, we would still have domestic violence and we would still have fighting if we didn’t get off our faces, but there would be less (personal communication, March 28, 2012).

This excerpt from Melanie shows evidence of a personal struggle to understand the “sad” and “shocking” use of alcohol by women who have been victims of violence. She eventually concludes that we would have less domestic violence if we had less drinking, reluctantly attributing at least a degree of responsibility in this example to women victims for using alcohol.

Georgia’s account also illustrates the struggle I felt with the advocates who deployed this discourse trying to make sense of how the relationship with IPV and situational factors is constructed. When I asked her what she thought might be causes of family violence, she responded first with,

Alcohol. Financial situations, drugs, definitely. You know of course, there’s that saying out there that alcohol is not an excuse for violence. And yes, it’s not an excuse, but it definitely is a factor. Definitely. And you know, I have known offenders that have only offended whilst intoxicated. So it’s definitely a factor (personal communication, May 17, 2012).
The statement about having personally known of offenders who only offended while drinking lends credibility to her statement, and constructs IPV as a condition of alcohol abuse in some cases. Several other participants raised this point that some men are violent only when they use alcohol, including Maria, one of the most consistently feminist accounts.

The participants’ struggle with this construction illustrates the power of individualised discourses within our wider culture. These discourses of individual responsibility may have roots in the rise of neo-liberalism in New Zealand, and are supported in the policies of the current government. It may also illustrate that the current discourses available to the advocates in this research are inadequate to explain IPV. Concepts around alcohol in particular, as a cause of violence, seemed to resonate with the advocates. This can be seen through statements such as Georgia’s above about some offenders offending only whilst drunk. This concept was also discussed as a misconception, with Georgia first acknowledging “that saying out there that alcohol is not an excuse for violence” as a sort of disclaimer for her statements that followed. When the causes of, or important factors in, IPV are constructed in these ways, it primarily allows for action in individual ways with clients. The advocate is positioned as a conduit for services to help individual women or families make changes in their own lives. If, as Melanie says, it appears that alcohol is seen increasingly in the course of work with IPV, it may become more difficult to oppose this discourse.

c. Relationship

The construction of IPV as caused by relationship problems was seen in four accounts. This construction was typified by equally shared responsibility between victim and perpetrator of IPV and issues between a couple leading to the occurrence of IPV. Jen said, “It’s so hard to say that there’s one cause of why men and women are violent towards each other (personal communication, March 5, 2012)”, thus accessing a construction of IPV as an interpersonal issue within a couple relationship. Suzanne spoke of communication issues and unmet needs as a cause of IPV. She said, “I think it’s definitely relationship issues that get out of hand. One can maybe say communication - poor communication skills. From both parties really. And needs that are not being met, ongoing needs that aren’t being met (personal communication, November 16, 2011).” These statements construct the causes of IPV as a lack of skills to negotiate a relationship where responsibility for IPV is also attributed to victims for failing to meet the needs of their partners.

Georgia spoke first of women’s choices frequently being limited by abusive partners and being forced onto benefits. She then said about women being on benefits:

> It’s not giving them that secure feeling of hey, we’ve got to make this relationship work for financial reasons, and for you know, just being a proper family. It’s too easy now for a woman on a benefit to be able to . . . oh, how can I put it? So easy for both parties not to work on the relationship, not to talk about the relationship (personal communication, May 17, 2012).
These statements construct IPV as exacerbated by external pressures, such as financial stress, and places equal, if not more, responsibility on women for failing to work on the issues in the relationship.

When the causes of IPV are constructed as issues within a relationship, responding to IPV becomes an issue addressing the deficiencies within the relationship which may be equally shared between men and women. Within this construction, it may be possible, or even most appropriate to work with both halves of the couple. When the causes of IPV are constructed with an interpersonal lens, appropriate responses come from a counselling or treatment approach, and systemic work is irrelevant. This discourse does not provide a challenge to any structural issues underpinning violence, and would be supported from a number of places in contemporary New Zealand for example, those who do not see violence as a gendered issue and who explain its occurrence through relationship difficulties.

d. Intergenerational/cycle of violence

Two participants deployed this construction of the causes of IPV as learned behaviour repeated in families over generations. These behaviours may be chosen by individuals to use against partners or children, but the choice is limited by their experiences. Melanie spoke of IPV as a learned behaviour: “I would say it’s learned, so that’s what people have seen, and see as acceptable. So some people haven’t seen that and don’t see that as acceptable, and other people that’s all they’ve seen and it’s ok (personal communication, March 28, 2012).” Corrine spoke about some people spending their entire lives surrounded by violence. “Sometimes it’s their upbringing, it’s like they’ve been surrounded with it all their lives. Since they were born (personal communication, September 10, 2012).” Corinne also spoke about this history of violence creating lasting damage for men, with lives troubled by demons and insecurities. She said, “There’s always a void or something within themselves. But yeah, it’s a lot of . . . . You’ve got to really dig deep with these men and families to really understand. Why and what they’re going through (personal communication, September 10, 2012).” These accounts construct IPV as the product of history and learning. This history not only damages the women and children currently being abused, it has damaged men who use abuse and who know only abuse. This cycle of violence discourse constructs a phenomenon where everyone in the family is actually a victim of violence.

This construction of the causes of IPV leads to responses which aim to break the cycle of violence so that it will not be repeated by the children of the current relationship. It becomes the task of the advocate to assist women to know a different life, and the potential is available for working with the family if appropriate. This response would be focused on healing historical hurt, and learning new ways to be in a family. Breaking the cycle for families requires intensive individual work with each part of the family and while it may encourage accountability, its foundation is empathy and understanding rather than a socio-political framework. The idea of IPV as an intergenerational issue is a publicly popular one (DeKeserdy & Schwartz, 2011), and again places the responsibility for IPV on troubled individual family units. This approach can arguably be seen in contemporary New Zealand with the recently published “White Paper on Vulnerable Children”.

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e. Summary of discourse analysis constructions
The four different constructions of IPV found within the participant accounts are present within the sector responding to IPV, and particularly with situational, relationship, and intergenerational constructions, within wider social discourses in contemporary New Zealand. I believe it is noteworthy that only four accounts involved a construction of the causes of IPV within a feminist macro construction, allowing the role of advocate to include work for systemic social change. Many advocates mentioned it was difficult for them to attribute causes to IPV, suggesting that perhaps discussions about the causes of IPV are not commonplace within contemporary organisational settings. The potential implications of the discourses deployed within participants’ accounts will be discussed in the following section.
7. Discussion

This chapter will discuss the research findings identified through IPA and discourse analysis. Potential implications of the four overarching themes from the IPA and the four discursive constructions will be considered before concluding with recommendations to explore further the issues raised in this research.

a. Interpretative phenomenological analysis findings

i. Feminism - Alive in experiences

The presence of a feminist legacy in advocate’s accounts was quite strong, even when advocates positioned themselves deliberately outside a feminist movement to end violence toward women. Honouring the stories of women and privileging their experiences as they see them are hallmarks of a feminist approach to advocacy (Hammons, 2004; Hyde, 2000; McMillan, 2007). This role would be quite important to women who are unsure of what they have experienced, and who may not otherwise identify what they have experienced as abuse. A woman led practice is also consistent with a feminist approach which has worked to counter structural inequality and inequality in relationships. This sub-theme was very strong in each of the ten advocates, forming a central tenet of each advocate’s practice.

The sub-theme related to the feminist movement on violence against women is more difficult to make sense of. I made a research decision to not ask specifically how participants saw themselves in relation to a feminist movement to allow participants to guide the conversation in directions which were meaningful to them. If a movement or feminism was brought up, I explored this further. Three participants positioned themselves deliberately outside of a movement. For two participants, Corinne and Melanie, the reason centred around a belief that working with men/families is incompatible with historical feminism. Both Corrine and Melanie also said that they felt the divisions between their position and feminist positions less clearly than today as a result of the decreased activism of the women’s movement. Melanie also gave several examples of engaging men to repair the historical impression that refuge women were anti-men. The issue of working with families will be explored later in this section.

Participants did not explicitly discuss the idea of their work being one piece of wider work to end violence against women, though they spoke with great passion of their advocacy work with women. It has been suggested that feminists have focussed on service delivery rather than activism because of a perceived hostility toward feminism in the public sphere (Arnold, 2009). A related suggestion has been made in the New Zealand context that negative perceptions of feminism could lead advocates away from an agenda for social change (Coombes, et al., 2009).

The use of terminology and models associated with feminist work, for example ‘power and control’ and ‘the power and control wheel’, originated from the feminist Duluth Abuse Intervention Project and have been used as shorthand to indicate a feminist position (Lehrner & Allen, 2009). Lehrner & Allen (2009) found this phrase was given different
meaning by advocates, which also seems to be the case with the participants in this research.

The sub-theme related to acting as a voice for women in systems, and among other organisations in collaborative relationships, indicates that the advocates in this research differentiated their approach from others such as police or CYFS. Their experience, knowledge and role as advocates for women recovering from abuse were points of difference in systems where others may not prioritise the woman and her needs. The primary characterisation of this difference from other organisations was their understanding of the dynamics of IPV, and their ability to give voice to the hidden nature of IPV to name it as abuse, an important hallmark of a feminist conception of advocacy work.

This theme indicates that even though feminism was infrequently mentioned by the participants in this research, and at times mentioned as an oppositional position, feminist work to end VAW has had enduring influence on the advocates in this research. The way the advocacy relationship is formed with women, the role of the advocate in systems as a voice for women’s needs, and the work to empower women are all consistent with a feminist socio-political movement analysis of violence against women. This theme does however raise some potential issues with a lack of clarity amongst advocates about concepts frequently used in the work, such as the meaning of ‘power and control’, and the structural as well as interrelationship power to which it refers.

ii. Advocacy's complicated relationship with feminism

This theme was characterised by experiences of advocacy where the presence of a feminist legacy is complicated, or where departure from a feminist socio-political form of advocacy is indicated.

Prior to beginning interviews, I had expected to find choice of terminology about IPV to be an important one for participants, and was surprised to learn that for most women in this study terminology was not important. Researchers have argued that choice of terminology about violence has been and continues to be important to indicate what forms of violence are being discussed, and whether the speaker understands violence as a gendered phenomenon (Dragiewicz & Dekeseredy, 2012; Pence & Dasgupta, 2006). Participants primarily adopted the terminology which was used in their places of work, which supports the important role organisations play in setting norms of practice for advocates.

The lack of organisational resourcing many participants described for providing comprehensive orientation may pose problems for the transmission of organisational philosophy and feminist organisational culture. Additionally, a number of participants had previously worked at other organisations with an IPV focus which seemed to reduce the need for training at their current organisations (Jo’s current workplace was an exception where she was participating in an in depth training programme). These women come to their work with important skills for working with women recovering from IPV, however what seemed to be an accompanying assumption that their philosophy aligns with that of their new organisation may not be true. This is demonstrated by the different ways that ‘power and control’ were deployed by participants. I did not explore deeply how orientation processes worked, and indeed organisational culture is communicated over time in many
different ways. I believe this finding suggests a possible opportunity to strengthen formal processes to institutionalise feminist work practices which will be discussed further in the recommendations.

Participants in this study found it difficult to pinpoint the causes of IPV. Their struggle to discuss causes of violence toward women can be seen in the context of the expanding range of feminist scholarship’s increasingly complex understanding of VAW over the past 20 years. There is a growing consensus that to understand, respond to, and prevent violence against women, a range of ideas and approaches are necessary drawing on structural, community, and individual levels (DeKeserdy & Schwartz, 2011; DeKeseredy, 2011; DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007; J. L. Fanslow, 2005; Krug, et al., 2002). It is also possible that this academic debate and evolution of theory is not readily accessed and participated in by advocates. There is scope for greater connection between research and advocacy, potentially increasing the contributions of both.

iii. Motivation
This theme detailed the varied reasons why the participants in this study were involved in this field of work. There were some similarities, such as a love of working with women, and also a number of differences. The common ground for participants was a love and passion for their work, and the impression that the role of advocate is much more than just a job. It is also worth noting that for the participants in this research, participation in a feminist movement to end VAW was not a frequently stated motivation for advocacy work.

iv. Emerging issues
A number of advocates mentioned the increasing workload in their organisations, less resourcing for staff, and also decreased assistance for women from statutory organisations such as WINZ and Housing New Zealand. These could be seen as the consequences of global recession. It is also worth considering that they are policy decisions of a conservative government. It has been argued that the period of the Howard government in Australia, also characterised as a neo-liberal socially conservative government, was responsible for undoing much of the reforms made by feminists in terms of VAW (Phillips, 2006). This period was also characterised by silencing the activism of women’s organisations, decreased funding for VAW, and increasing influences of an individualistic focus for feminist analysis rather than a structural focus (McDonald, 2005; Phillips, 2006). Similar trends are beginning to be seen here in New Zealand, such as the closing of services for victims of sexual violence (Collins, 2012; Levy, 2012) and a number of policy choices by government which impact negatively on women, detailed in the literature review, such as the recent amendment to the Crimes Act (195a) (“Crimes Amendment Act,” 2011) which imposes penalties for failing to protect a child from abuse. This amendment does not consider the context of VAW, and that a woman may be unable to protect her child when she is the victim of abuse herself. It is worth considering what can be learned from Australia for preserving gains under a conservative government.

Another emerging issue is the issue of violence and gender. I was surprised to hear only four participants speak explicitly about violence as a gendered phenomenon. Though participants did use ‘she’ when talking about victims for the most part, it is difficult to say whether this is a reflection of analysis of gendered violence or due to participants’ work being with women. It is important to consider what impact research purporting gender symmetry (D. Fergusson, et al., 2008; D. M. Fergusson, et al., 2005), as well as the
father’s rights movement advocacy active in western nations (Crowley, 2009; Flood, 2010), may have had in the New Zealand context and potentially on the participants in this research.

b. Discourse analysis findings
Four constructions of the causes of IPV were identified in participants’ transcripts: both micro and macro feminist constructions, situational, relationship, and intergenerational constructions were deployed. Participants struggled with determining causes of violence, possibly speaking to the complexity of the problem, but also perhaps to the discourses available within the contemporary context. Six participants engaged micro feminist constructions of the causes of IPV, and four of these accounts also engaged macro feminist constructions which involved placing the everyday abuse of women by their male partners within wider cultural and structural frameworks. The most frequently accessed discourse was situational, attributing at least part of the cause for IPV to situational factors such as alcohol use. Four participants engaged with discourses which attribute the causes of IPV to relationship issues, the same number that engaged with a macro feminist discourse. Two participants deployed constructions of IPV as an intergenerational phenomenon which moves from one generation to the next in families.

It could be considered that the range of discourses employed in participants’ accounts speaks to the complexity of IPV, and the growing acknowledgement in contemporary feminism that the causes of VAW are found simultaneously on structural, community, interpersonal, and individual levels (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007; J. L. Fanslow, 2005; Garcia-Moreno, et al., 2005; Krug, et al., 2002; United Nations General Assembly, 2006). It is also worth considering that feminist discourses, particularly macro feminist discourses which focus on structural inequality, are less available to contemporary advocates. I would argue that the current political environment is not favourable to feminism, and possibly not to women. It is certainly a time of increased risk to organisations as funding is decreasing (Ministry of Social Development, 2012), and some feminist services are already in funding crises (Collins, 2012; Levy, 2012).

Participants struggle to discuss the causes of IPV, and many participants’ attempts to resist situational discourses, through statements about alcohol not being a cause of violence for example, suggests they may be seeking other discourses of violence. There may be opportunities for engagement with accessible theory so that advocates can participate in contemporary debates, and enrich the debate with their knowledge of women’s everyday lived experiences.

c. Implications of findings
Though the findings from this research are particular to the women who participated in this study, they do illustrate wider issues facing the feminist movement to end VAW in New Zealand. These findings indicate that while advocates continue to engage daily in important work to increase women’s safety and empowerment, there are signs of an erosion of the feminist socio-political perspective of IPV which focuses on the structural causes of VAW. This research lends support to the argument that the wearing away of
feminist socio-political conceptions of VAW previously noted internationally (Hammons, 2004; Lehrner & Allen, 2008, 2009; McDonald, 2005) can also be seen in the New Zealand context.

Suggested reasons behind this erosion noted elsewhere, which are also present in the contemporary New Zealand context, have included the rise of neoliberalism, increasing dominance of business concepts of ‘outcomes’ within the social services sector, and the greater reliance on government contracts among organisations providing services in the IPV sector (McDonald, 2005; Phillips, 2006). It has also been suggested that the complicated interplay of organisational adaptation over time to meet external demands, failure to adequately socialise staff at IPV organisations into a feminist socio-political theoretical framework, and the resulting influence of less politicised advocates on the greater movement, form a pattern of increased disconnection from feminist movement goals for social change. The lost feminist knowledge over time may further increase disconnection between contemporary advocates and feminist socio-political movement narratives of VAW (Bartle & Halaas, 2008; McMillan, 2007).

This erosion of a feminist socio-political movement perspective is not merely a theoretical issue. The feminist movement to end VAW has been the greatest vehicle for change around the world (Htun & Weldon, 2012). High rates of IPV in New Zealand (J. L. Fanslow & Robinson, 2004) demonstrate the need for continued change. The current unfavourable political climate in New Zealand indicates progress for women is backsliding. Concerted effort will be necessary to avoid further retrenchment of feminist movement progress to end VAW.

The advocates in this research largely did not access a clear narrative about the phenomenon of IPV. The narratives of advocates are vital and have the potential to rewrite the wider movement perspective (Lehrner & Allen, 2008).

If one understands the goal of a social movement as in part to contest received interpretations of social phenomena and to offer competing analyses, then the importance of shared narratives in constructing the phenomenon of interest and in shaping a response must be seen as central. (Lehrner & Allen, 2008, p. 221)

A fractured narrative of IPV does not lead to a purposeful movement with clear direction for change. This is not to deny the importance of different perspectives within the contemporary movement, but rather the importance of engaging meaningfully with these differences.

The erosion of feminist socio-political movement perspectives indicated in this research demonstrates the need for organisations identifying with a feminist movement perspective to regroup to avoid further backsliding of progress for ending VAW. During a time of scarce organisational resources, the sharing of collective knowledge is vital. There is scope for joint ventures where resources are pooled. Space must be made for organisations identifying with a feminist movement perspective to come together to progress shared goals for social change.
d. Recommendations
The research findings identified here have led me to make recommendations I believe might nurture a socio-political analysis of VAW and strengthen the connections between advocates and the wider movement to end VAW. These recommendations are not meant to imply a return to the feminist VAW movement as it began over 30 years ago, but rather a revitalisation considering the current New Zealand context. First a recommendation to consider a new feminist model of practice is explored, and then possibilities for strengthening the feminist VAW movement are considered. These recommendations are written for those organisations which do identify with a feminist perspective and for the feminist movement to end VAW in New Zealand. They are only a starting place to consider how the feminist movement might be further strengthened to progress its agenda of ending VAW.

i. Integrative Feminist Model
The research findings here indicate that while many principles of feminist theory of advocacy endure in the current practice of the advocates in this research, their explicit connections to feminism are less secure. Indeed, a number of advocates deliberately positioned themselves outside a feminist perspective. As I listened to the participants’ experiences of struggling with causes of IPV and articulated frustration with the speed of change, as well as the reasons Melanie and Corrine gave for sitting outside a feminist movement, I began to wonder if perhaps the current models of feminist theory available to advocates might be inadequate to sustain and build upon a feminist socio-political analysis of VAW.

![Integrative Feminist Model](image_url)

*Figure 6. Integrative Feminist Model (McPhail, et al., 2007 p. 825)*

After undertaking research with participants from the IPV field who were invited to come to a discussion after reading a critique of a feminist approach, McPhail et al., (2007) propose a new integrative feminist model as participants wanted to “retain useful elements of the
model (i.e., the empowerment of women, addressing gender inequalities), while exploring new avenues for theory and practice” (p. 823). The Integrative Feminist Model (IFM) is centred around a structural analysis of IPV focused on violence as an issue of gendered oppression. It attempts to incorporate evolutions of feminist theory with other theories which deepen understanding of the phenomenon of IPV. Other theories are only incorporated into the model through a proposed assessment where other theories are considered in light of what they contribute to the understanding of IPV from a feminist perspective (Worell & Remer, 2003, as cited in McPhail, et al., 2007 p. 834).

I believe there may be potential in exploring this model in the New Zealand context where the effects of other forms of oppression in addition to patriarchy -- colonisation in particular -- are important for understanding IPV. McPhail, et al. (2007) suggest that this model may lead to new ideas for responding to and preventing IPV while preserving a feminist socio-political analysis. There is scope within this model to consider how approaches to working with abusive male partners or families might enhance the feminist socio-political movement to end VAW. It may also be possible that exploring this model in New Zealand could provide unexplored possibilities for building coalition around the prevention of VAW.

ii. Strengthening the violence against women movement

At a time when the continued relevance of feminism is in doubt, it may be more necessary than ever. Evan Stark argues that rather than decreasing, men’s abuse of women has shifted in scope. As women gain more independence in the public sphere, some men become increasingly controlling as a means to assert patriarchal dominance (Stark, 2007). If there is truth in this position, challenging gendered violence is more important than ever.

At the same time, the findings from this research indicate that feminist discourses may be less available to advocates, and connections between advocacy and wider work for social change need nurturing. A strengthened feminist movement in New Zealand could work to address both of these issues.

The findings here indicate that while advocates are no doubt daily increasing the safety of, and providing essential emotional and practical support to women recovering from abuse, the connection between advocacy and the wider social movement to end VAW may not be as strong as it once was. Demanding workloads, counter positions to feminism, and lack of resources for in depth orientations may go some way to explain what appears to be decreasing socialisation into feminist theory of practice.

Organisations are doing more with less in the current climate, and likely the resources for this type of training will become even scarcer. There is scope for standardised training packages, with opportunities for ongoing access to professional development which reinforces evolving feminist theories of change. The implications from this research indicate that training for advocates in the feminist socio-political perspective is more important than ever to avoid continued erosion of progress to prevent VAW.

The VAW movement in New Zealand is facing a time when feminist theory is incredibly diverse. These differences can be an asset. Weldon (2006) writes that the global movement to end VAW has been so effective because it has worked to develop “norms of inclusivity” (p. 56) in the face of growing difference in the movement. These norms
“include a commitment to descriptive representation, the facilitation of separate organization for disadvantaged social groups, and a commitment to building consensus with institutionalised dissent” (p. 56). Weldon goes on to say that the developing of norms is not the only vehicle for cooperation, but “it illuminates a way of maintaining solidarity and improving policy influence without denying or sublimating the differences and conflict among activists.” She also stresses the importance of acknowledging unequal power within the social movement and says, “Attending to the context of structural inequality in which social movements operate improves our understanding of social mobilization and illuminates overlooked paths to cooperation” (p. 56). These ideas seem particularly applicable to the New Zealand context where work to end VAW must also consider decolonisation efforts.

In addition to building consensus within the feminist movement, it will also be important to look for new allies. Coalition building may provide new energy for the movement and strengthen feminist work for social change (Bonisteel & Green, 2005). New pathways for achieving feminist goals may be illuminated through considering what other social justice approaches, such as human rights, may contribute to the feminist movement (Bonisteel & Green, 2005; Finley, 2010; Morgaine, 2011).

Women’s autonomous movements are responsible for some of the greatest policy changes in nations around the world in the last 40 years. “Women’s autonomous organizing in civil society affects political change . . . Autonomous movements articulate the social perspective of marginalized groups, transform social practice, and change public opinion” (Htun & Weldon, 2012, p. 564).

e. Summary

The findings from this research indicate enduring influence from the feminist movement to end VAW on the practice and approaches of the women’s advocates in this research. At the same time, a level of disconnection with the wider socio-political movement to end VAW is apparent. Implications of the erosion of a feminist socio-political perspective are considered. Recommendations are made for building on feminist theories of IPV and strengthening the feminist movement to end VAW with the hope of increasing the progress of the feminist movement to end VAW.
8. Conclusion

This thesis has explored the experiences of ten women’s advocates who work with women who are recovering from intimate partner violence. These women each participated in two interviews, the first a structured interview with vignettes, or short stories with scenarios about abuse followed by questions, and the second a semi-structured interview focused around experiences of advocacy. The transcripts from these interviews were then analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. The transcripts were then analysed a second time using discourse analysis to consider constructions of the causes of intimate partner violence deployed. Findings from this research indicate the enduring influence of feminist theory within the practices of advocacy, particularly the honouring of women’s experiences and acting as a voice for women’s needs. Disconnections from a feminist socio-political perspective of violence against women were also indicated. Discursive constructions about the causes of intimate partner violence present in participants' accounts were both consistent and inconsistent with a feminist analysis of intimate partner violence. Implications of the erosion of a feminist socio-political perspective were considered. Recommendations were made to support evolving feminist understandings of violence against women, to increase opportunities to socialise advocates in feminist theories of change, and to strengthen the feminist movement to end violence against women.

a. Limitations of research

My thesis was designed based on a number of assumptions about a movement in New Zealand. Talking about a movement in this way risks essentialising its diversity and simplifying the complex relationships and variations of opinion and action (McMahon & Pence, 2003), of which my appreciation has grown during the course of this research. I chose not to ask participants about their political motivation for their work unless they spoke of it first to avoid presuming a movement connection. This could be viewed as a limitation, as some participants may have interests in structural change which were not discussed in this research.

The vignette structure of the first interview may be considered a limitation. My hope for this interview was to create an opportunity to discuss real world examples with participants; however a number of participants said the scenarios did not allow for the nuanced response that comes through building of rapport and back and forth interaction which happens with clients. Additionally, I felt limited during these interviews because of their structured nature. That this research involves interview data about experiences of work, rather than direct data about work practice, may also be seen as a limitation.

My inexperience as a researcher is an additional limitation. This thesis was my first experience with research, and my understanding and ideas grew as the project progressed. If I were to start the project again now, I would do a number of things differently, for example two semi-structured interviews rather than vignettes; however my learning throughout the process has been invaluable to me.
This research raises further questions about the state of the New Zealand movement to end violence against women. Future research into how advocates are socialised into feminist theories of practice, and how the New Zealand movement is attempting to navigate through differences in perspective to find points of commonality, would be important to explore.

b. Researcher reflections

Engaging in reflective bracketing during the course of the research has left me with a level of awareness of my assumptions when beginning this process. I had a fairly definite theory that advocates within intimate partner violence organisations were increasingly less political, and perhaps less aligned with feminist philosophy. I began with a fairly strong interest in deconstructing the interview content to understand the positions of advocates within the wider movement. As I began the interview process, I was aware of my position shifting, and became more interested in the experiences of the advocates and how these experiences were situated within how I understood the feminist political movement. I became increasingly uncomfortable with the idea of a full discourse analysis of the interviews, which I believe was created through meeting the participants and coming to understand the passion each woman had for her job. My discomfort grew as I imagined deconstructing what I had come to regard as experiences - it felt too personal to me. I was faced with a decision, how could I honour the experiences of the participants, and how deeply important their work is to them, and still gain some understanding of how these experiences sit within the historical context of the feminist political movement? I chose to use interpretative phenomenological analysis as a primary method of analysis for the value it places on experience, its potential for current issues to emerge from the experiences of participants, and its compatibility with discourse analysis.

As I moved through the research process, I came to believe that my original research questions had a number of assumptions, and perhaps did not allow for the complexities in the New Zealand movement to end violence against women. I think my original research questions assumed a degree of tidiness to the feminist movement, and that the connections between advocacy and the movement were always tightly entwined. My appreciation of the varied and nuanced positions in feminist thought and practice has grown considerably, and I have learned much from the participants in this research.

c. Concluding thoughts

This research has involved 20 interviews with ten advocates for women recovering from abuse from their partners. These interviews focused on participants’ experiences of their work with intimate partner violence and women in crisis. I was interested in how advocates were orientated into their work, and what motivated them to remain advocates. The discursive constructions of the causes of intimate partner violence employed within the interview transcripts were considered. The transcripts were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis and discourse analysis.

The findings from this study indicate that feminism continues to influence the everyday practice of the women’s advocates in this study. Disconnections from a feminist socio-
political framework of violence against women were also indicated in the analysis. Participants deployed a number of discursive constructions when talking about the causes of intimate partner violence - feminist, situational, relationship, and intergenerational - indicating that feminist discursive constructions of IPV may be less available to participants.

The current New Zealand context for the movement to end violence against women is a difficult one. Evidence of counter movements in opposition to feminist work for change, government policy decisions which adversely affect women, a reorganisation of the social service sector, and decreased funding for crisis services supporting women make for challenging times. At the same time, there is evidence that the violence against women movement has had important impacts on culture and policy in New Zealand. This work has raised the issue of violence against women publicly, influenced law and policy changes, contributed to cultural change, and increased the safety of women experiencing partner abuse. It will require concerted effort to halt the erosion of the feminist socio-political movement perspective noted here and further the progress of the feminist movement to end violence against women.

The challenges within the contemporary context are juxtaposed with opportunities. The process in the Auckland region to consider establishing a network for organisations working to end intimate partner violence and sexual violence presents opportunities for collective work. The breadth of perspectives on intimate partner violence and violence against women seen in feminist research is also evident in this process. Feminist scholarship can shed important light on building consensus without denying difference.

It was my hope that this research will contribute knowledge to the feminist work to end violence against women in Aotearoa/ New Zealand. The experiences the participants in this research shared have humbled me; they each shared a tremendous commitment to helping women heal from abuse and acting as a voice for the women they support. I believe what we can learn from these experiences may indicate how to further strengthen the New Zealand movement to end violence against women.
9. References


Appendices

Appendix A: Information for participants

Information for participants

RESEARCH WITH CURRENT ADVOCATES

My name is Diane Woolson Neville and I am a Master of Social Practice student at Unitec. Part of the Masters of Social Practice involves a research thesis. My research involves interviews with women who work as advocates for women who have experienced violence or abuse from their partners.

What I am doing

Through the interviews with women who work as advocates, I am hoping to learn how advocates are currently working with women who have experienced violence to learn more about this field of work in Aotearoa New Zealand.

What it will mean for you

I would like to interview you two times:

- The first interview will involve four short stories which I would like you to comment on. I will be considering themes that you and other participants mention while commenting on the stories.
- The second interview will involve questions clarifying any themes from the first interview as well as questions about what you think about working within your field.

Each interview will take around 1 hour, but no more than 1 ½ hours. Interviews will be arranged at a time and place convenient for you. I will record the interviews and they will be transcribed later. All features that could identify you will be removed and the recordings used will be erased once the transcription is done. You will be sent a copy of the transcript from each interview. You will have the option of asking that small portions of the transcript be removed from the transcript.

Your organisation has consented to you participating in this research. This does not mean that you need to participate; that is your decision to make. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This does not stop you from changing your mind if you wish to withdraw from the project. However, because of my schedule, any withdrawals must be done within 2 weeks after receiving the transcript of the final interview. You can withdraw at any point before this.
Your name and information that may identify you will be kept completely confidential, as will your organisation’s name. All information collected from you will be stored on a password protected file; only my supervisor and I will have access to this information. Your organisation will not have access to this information unless you decide to share your transcripts. Your interview transcripts will not be used for anything other than this research project.

Please contact us if you need more information about the project. At any time if you have any concerns about the research project you can contact our supervisor:

My supervisor is Helen Gremillion, phone 815 4321 ext. 5137 or email hgremillion@unitec.ac.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2010-1118

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from 21/9/11 to 21/9/12. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix B: Participant consent form

Participant consent form

RESEARCH WITH CURRENT ADVOCATES

I have had the research project explained to me and I have read and understand the information sheet given to me.

I understand that I don’t have to be part of this project if I don’t want to and that I may withdraw at any time prior to two weeks following receipt of the transcript of my second interview.

I understand that everything I say is confidential and none of the information I give will identify me and that the only persons who will know what I have said will be the researcher and her supervisor. I also understand that all the information that I give will be stored securely on a computer at Unitec for a period of 5 years.

I understand that my discussion with the researcher will be taped and transcribed. I understand that I can see the finished research document.

I have had time to consider everything and I give my consent to be a part of this project.

Participant Name: …………………………. Date: ……………………………

Participant Signature: ………………………….. Date: ……………………………

Project Researcher: …………………………… Date: ……………………………

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2010-1118

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from 21/9/11 to 21/9/12. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix C: Vignettes

The first interview with each of the ten participants involved four vignettes. The vignettes were read to the participants and questions that follow each vignette were asked. Participants were free to comment as they like in addition to the prescribed questions.

Vignette 1

Jack phones your service and says he lives with an abusive partner Sarah. Jack says Sarah deliberately provokes him and tries to control him. He also says that Sarah has an anger problem and needs to do some anger management classes. He says he wants some advice about what to do next.

• Why do you think Jack has phoned your service?
• How do you think Jack might be feeling?
• How do you think Sarah might be feeling?
• How would you respond to Jack?

Vignette 2

Angela rings you saying she doesn’t know what to do about her relationship with her partner Tom. Angela says Tom has pushed her around when they have massive fights, but the things she finds hardest to cope with are the way Tom uses the kids against her and the way he puts her down. Angela says she finds it impossible to have discussions with Tom because he can twist things around so easily.

• Why do you think Angela phoned your service?
• How do you think Angela might be feeling?
• How would you respond to Angela?
• How might you work with Angela?

Vignette 3 & 4

A local family (or domestic-I will use their words) violence service that works with women, Police, Child Youth and Family, and a family support NGO that does food parcels and benefit advocacy are working together to address family violence in their community. They have formed a project team to work with cases of violence in a collaborative way. There have been some disagreements about how the cases of violence should be
handled. In one case the police were called to an incident of violence at a local home where the woman had rung the police. When the police arrived, the woman appeared drunk and chaotic while the man calmly explained that nothing of concern had happened, his partner had been drinking and got a little out of control. Three of the members of the project group agree that the incident requires no further action from the group while the local family violence advocate disagrees.

- Why would the family violence advocate think some action is required?
- What would you have done if you had been in this group?

The project group has been working together for some time. At the most recent meeting, the member of the police expressed frustration with a woman who has called the police after an assault at least 5 times but has not left her partner. The woman from the family support service agrees and says she knows of the family and doesn't understand why the woman has remained in the relationship. The woman's advocate from the family violence service says that it is very complicated for a woman to leave an abusive relationship and to really understand violence; you have to look beyond what happens between two people. The others in the project group are unsure what the woman's advocate means.

- Why might the woman's advocate have disagreed with the others?
- Would you have done anything differently than the woman's advocate in this group?
Appendix D: Interview Schedule

The second interviews with participants were semi-structured. Each participant was asked the following questions along with questions unique to the participant as the interviews unfolded.

- Do you know how long the refuge has been operating?

- Are you aware of how it began?

- Could you tell me about your role at ‘participant’s organisation’?

- What led you to your role here? (Previous experience in the field or other fields)

- Thinking back to when you started your work as an advocate here, do you remember how you were orientated into your work?
  - Was there training about how you would work with women? Do you remember who led you through that phase and what that was like?

- Do you remember the reason you began working in this field? What would be the reason today?

- Does your work involve close work with other organisations?
  - What are the benefits of that close work?
  - Are there any challenges?

- There are lots of different terms for ‘violence’. I notice that you say ‘participant’s chosen terminology’. How did you settle on that one?

- If you were to pick a cause for the violence you work with every day, what do you think you would say?
# Appendix E: IPA Themes Master List

## Feminism - Alive in Experiences

### Honouring Women

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### Connection with Movement

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### Truth Telling

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## Advocacy’s Complicated Relationship with Feminism

### Characteristics of IPV

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### Organisational philosophy

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### Motivation

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### Emerging Issues

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