record, on the information available to me, the Victorian police are not alone. WA and SA are similarly troubled; Tasmania has a (limited) well-justified inquiry on at the moment; and Queensland and NSW, while still much better than before their Royal Commissions, are showing signs of backsliding.

How good it would be if governments could accept the reality of police corruption, stop trying to pretend it doesn't exist, and work with whistleblowers and the rest of the community on the best and most practical ways of minimising the inevitable.

Jean Lennane, Sept, 2000

The Hon. Rob Hulls, Attorney-General, 55 St Andrews Pl, Melbourne 3002. Fax 03 9651 0556
Dear Mr Hulls,
re: publications by Raymond Hoser, Victoria Police Corruption 1 and 2
I refer to your letter of 8 March 2000 on the above. (Copy attached.)
I am in the process of writing an article for Whistleblowers Australia's journal 'The Whistle' on this matter. Could you please confirm that the letter still accurately represents your position? If I do not hear from you to the contrary by 18th August, I will assume that it does. Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely, Jean Lennane (Dr), President WBA. 9/8/2000

Mr E.J.Butler, Acting Victorian Government Solicitor, 55 St Andrews Place, Melbourne 3002. Fax 03 9651 0449
Dear Mr Butler,
re: Publications by Raymond Hoser - Victoria Police Corruption 1 and 2

I refer to your letter on the above, undated in my copy. (Copy attached.) I am in the process of writing an article for Whistleblowers Australia's journal 'The Whistle' on this matter. Could you please confirm that the letter still accurately represents your position? If I do not hear from you to the contrary by 18th August, I will assume that it does. Thank you for your attention. Yours sincerely, Jean Lennane (Dr), President WBA, 9/8/2000

Mort Bay complex

The Editor: Glebe and Inner Western Weekly, Fax 9564 1743
Dear Sir,
There's no paradox in those opposed to the building of the Mort Bay complex, now opposing its sale. (Letters, 9.6.00) The main grounds for opposing it then - that it was and is a gross over-development - still apply. Whoever owns them, the buildings will remain as ugly and intrusive as ever, and what guarantee do we have that once they

are privately owned, the developer won't use their height and bulk as a precedent for other developments in foreshore scenic protection areas?
The Government's justification for ramming the development through then was the same as their justification now - 'to provide sorely needed public housing'. But most of the site then never became public housing, and some $40 million of taxpayers' money was wasted in the process of creating what the Department now admits was a mistake. How do we know this is not another one? Where are the figures to justify selling the whole block to a developer, rather than having the Department make that profit? The Department has told us the money won't in fact be used for new housing, but to make up some of their $700 million maintenance deficit - a massive shortfall caused at least partly by the demands of the 'it's all paid for, apart from the odd $140 million' Olympics.
Surely that's enough for most taxpayers to want to know a lot more before the sale goes ahead. If it's not, try and get hold of the contamination report done in 1994 that stopped the sale of Site C. Why are we not allowed to see it? What did it say about Site B?
Yours etc, Jean Lennane   9/8/2000

Getting help to deal with workplace bullying.

This is an augmented version of a review published in *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Volume 13, Number 4, 2000, pp. 401-408. Brian Martin, *Science, Technology & Society, University of Wollongong, Australia*

You are about to enter a nightmare. You are a conscientious and productive worker. Your boss, who previously was supportive, starts making carping criticisms of your work and gives no praise. Then, out of the blue, you are carpeted and subjected to screaming abuse.
Previously you were invited to planning meetings, but now you are left off the list - but your subordinate is included. Petty obstacles are put in your way, such as difficulties in getting materials or cooperation. You are losing prime assignments. As the problems

compound, you lose confidence and perform below your best. After one small oversight, you are criticised in front of your co-workers without a chance to reply. You begin to dread coming to work, never knowing when the boss will sink another barb into your weakened ego.
The boss's attacks are only the beginning. Co-workers get in on the act. Friends who used to fill you in on gossip now stay away and hardly look you in the face. Rumours abound that you are becoming incompetent. Before you worked well in a team, but now everything you do is undermined. You have nothing to do except for occasional assignments that are set up for failure. The stress at work is taking its toll on your home life. When you confide this to a friend, word gets back to the boss and the rumors and pressure get worse. Co-workers seem to be pitying you or

laughing at you. You are said to be on the verge of a breakdown. That might be true! The only choices seem to be to resign or go on sick leave.
This scenario is one example of a worker under attack. There are numerous variations, but typical processes include lack of support, verbal abuse, undermining of performance, isolation and humiliation. Common? Evidence suggests that it is a remarkably frequent occurrence. In essence, workplaces are emotional torture chambers for a significant minority of workers. This has significant impacts not just on the victims but on morale and productivity.
The reality is that workplace abuse has been around as long as there have been workplaces. The factories of the industrial revolution were notorious for cruel exploitation. But this was seen as a feature of class warfare, ameliorated

by the rise of workers' organisations and the introduction of legislation to stop the worst excesses. The abuse of individual workers has always existed but has not been widely discussed until recently. In the past decade, the publication of a number of insightful books signals a dramatic increase in awareness.

There are various names for these sorts of experiences, including harassment, abuse, bullying and mobbing. Harassment and abuse are useful descriptive terms. However, they often suggest particular events whereas the term bullying captures the idea of a process or ongoing interaction. Many people might like to think that adults have outgrown a childish tendency to bully or susceptibility to being bullied; "bullying at work" nicely challenges this presumption.

Bullies are normally thought of as individuals, so how can the participation of co-workers be described? A term common in Europe, mobbing, captures this collective dimension.

Mobbing is the title of a recent book on the topic, with the subtitle *Emotional Abuse in the American Workplace.* The three authors - Noa Davenport, Ruth Distler Schwartz and Gail Pursell Elliott - had personal experience of mobbing and then set out to investigate it and provide advice about surviving and overcoming it. They ably cover three important ways of approaching the phenomenon: understanding it, dealing with it as an individual and dealing with it at organisational and social level.

The first task is to understand and explain mobbing. Describing and naming an experience can be quite powerful when it crystallises for others what they had previously ignored. The next question is why it occurs. The authors of *Mobbing* present a number of psychological mechanisms that, in the context of conducive organisational structures, make mobbing possible. Study of the what and why of mobbing is fascinating; as an intellectual exercise it is likely to be of primary interest to researchers. Workers and managers are almost always more concerned with what to do about the problem. *Mobbing,* like many other treatments, analyses the phenomenon as a prelude to the urgent issue of responding to it. There are two main audiences: individuals who come under attack and managers who are concerned about the health of the organisation.

For the worker who is subject to mobbing, the essential first step is to understand what is happening. Some victims come to believe that they are responsible for everything that happens to them because of their own weaknesses and failures. The terms harassment, bullying and mobbing are valuable because they point the finger at the harassers, bullies and mobs and thereby remove guilt from the victim. By describing the likely consequences, such as confusion, anxiety, insomnia and post-traumatic stress disorder, *Mobbing* reassures victims that their experiences are "normal" responses to an intolerable situation.

Beyond this, the big challenge is come up with a programme of action for surviving and thriving in the face of mobbing. That's a tall order. Davenport, Schwartz and Elliott describe options ranging from grieving, building self-esteem, using humour and taking care in choosing professional help. They also give advice on how family and friends are affected and how they can help. All this is quite valuable, but it is clear that there is no guaranteed way of getting through a serious case of mobbing. It often may be best to leave for another job.

Finally, *Mobbing* canvasses what can be done to create an organisational culture in which mobbing is minimised. Some organisations do this on their own initiative; laws, unions and consultants can also play a role.

Mobbing is highly readable and informative. It is clearly structured, nicely laid out, well referenced and filled with examples. The authors undertook interviews with a range of victims of mobbing. Quotes from these interviews are used throughout the text, giving a personal touch and realism to the discussion. Altogether, *Mobbing* is an ideal book to give anyone subject to or concerned about abuse at work.

However good a particular book may be, it can be worthwhile looking at others. This is especially the case for victims, who can obtain insights and inspiration, and is also true for managers and researchers. Out of the crop of contributions in the 1990s, it is hard to beat what has become a classic in the field, *Bullying at Work* by Andrea Adams with contributions from Neil Crawford. Adams, a British journalist, did an investigation into the issue leading to two radio programmes broadcast in

1989 by the British Broadcasting Corporation. The programmes triggered an immense response: victims finally heard someone describing their problems. The outpouring of further stories led Adams to focus on workplace bullying. The book is one outcome. It is a superb journalistic treatment with many amazing case studies, emphasising that bullying is very serious, has enormous financial implications but has been little recognised in business or elsewhere. Many bullies are promoted or get new jobs.

There is little analysis in the book except for the chapters by Crawford, a psychologist. His assessment of the psychology of bullies is that they have been subject to neglect, abuse and inappropriate anger, but not loved. They are envious, pick out victims and build alliances with lackeys. He recounts some self-descriptions of bullies, including those who have gained insight into their problems.

According to Adams, victims have three main options: leave, accept the bullying, or fight back. Appeasement doesn't work, so the only option with the potential to solve the problem is fighting back.

Another British book is Tim Field's *Bully In Sight.* This is a comprehensive treatment of bullying at work and how to resist it, based on his own experiences and contact with large numbers of bullied workers. Field covers characteristics of bullies and victims, tactics of bullying, symptoms of being bullied, workplace contexts that bullies find congenial, costs, causes, how to stand up to bullies, legal options and policy issues. Especially good is a 15-step process for unmasking a bully. Field has a tendency to produce long lists of characteristics, actions and options. These lists are useful for giving ideas but make it difficult to hone in on key ideas. *Bully In Sight* reads as an angry and negative personal testament. The book could easily annoy researchers with its over-generalisations, but they should take note that Field has undoubtedly made an impact through his activism and support on bullying, with his web site (http://www.successunlimited.co.uk/) being a valuable resource.

The focus of Gary and Ruth Namie's *BullyProof Yourself at Work!* is on personal strategies for targets to

maintain their psychological balance. The authors canvass various approaches, including establishing and protecting personal boundaries, dealing with one's inner critic and handling damaging mind games, self-blame, anger and shame. They continually emphasise that targets should not blame themselves. *BullyProof Yourself at Work!* is attractively laid out, with practical exercises to develop self-insight and skills. Also worthy of note is their appealing and informative web site, http://www.bullybusters.org/.

The Namies offer only a few case studies of bullying, but they quote survey responses from 200 people who reported being bullied or witnessing bullying. Since the respondents were self-selected, the statistics can only be suggestive, but they are thought-provoking nonetheless. For example, the two most common causes of bullying cited by targets and witnesses were refusal to acquiesce to the bully and the bully's envy of the target.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from Field and the Namies is Peter Randall's *Adult Bullying: Perpetrators and Victims.* The book is a sober discussion of bullying based on more than 200 interviews with bullies and victims, describing the phenomenon in both workplace and neighbourhood, with special attention to the creation of personalities of bullies and victims. There are many case studies to illustrate points. More than other books, Randall places emphasis on creation of the victim personality, which may involve, for example, overprotection as a child or having authoritarian parents. Many anti-bullying treatments downplay the complicity of the victim for the obvious reason that this may disempower them. If victims blame themselves, it is difficult to survive and fight back. However, understanding the bully-victim dyad can contribute to developing better strategies to challenge it. Randall has less than other books on how to deal with bullies at an individual level, but includes quite a bit of material on prevention and resolution of bullying in the workplace and neighbourhood.

All the books contain horrifying stories of abuse at work, perhaps none more than Harvey A. Hornstein's *Brutal Bosses and their Prey.* Hornstein interviewed more than a thousand people about abuse by bosses. His book covers

contexts fostering abusiveness, such as massive job cuts and the boss mentality, as well as personality factors that promote abuse for its own sake. He describes how striving for profit, power and self-protection can reward abusers and penalise those abused. A unique contribution is the "brutal boss questionnaire," to rate your boss's toughness and badness.

Hornstein examines three types of strategies to deal with the problem of brutal bosses. The first is to change the victim, which can sometimes help individuals but doesn't address the boss's ongoing abuse of others. The second is to change the abusers, which again can sometimes help in individual cases but doesn't address systemic factors conducive to bullying. The third strategy is to change the system. This sounds the most promising, but Hornstein is sceptical of management rhetoric about empowerment, flattened hierarchies, worker autonomy and self-managed teams, seeing them as being, in most cases, window-dressing for a workplace reality that is little different from the traditional boss-dominated culture. Hornstein instead says that worker abuse should be made illegal, though he gives no strategy for bringing this about or convincing argument that it will actually be effective.

The most unusual contribution in the recent bullying-at-work genre is *Corporate Hyenas at Work* by Susan Marais and Magriet Herman, South Africans with personal experience of bullying. The book is an engaging exposition of problems due to "corporate hyenas," namely bullies and downsizers, who Marais and Herman systematically compare to hyenas in the wild. They describe disturbed corporate ecosystems, types of corporate hyenas (from top ones to loners), various styles of attack and interaction, symptoms of hyena-positive organisations, "corporate killings" (unfair dismissals, victimisation, downsizing), how to survive and how to promote a sound corporate ecosystem. Analogies from the wild are used throughout, along with case studies and attractive graphics of hyenas and other animals.

The hyena analogy - especially salient in Africa - is remarkably fruitful and flexible, especially in highlighting different types and styles of bullies, their collective action and corporate culture.

This approach is likely to resonate more with some readers than others. Marais and Herman draw on interviews as well as their own experiences. Their final chapters on personal survival are especially good. Like a number of other authors, their response to being bullied was to become informed, investigate further and provide their insights to others.

The book *Work Abuse,* though not just about bullying, deserves mention here. The authors, Judith Wyatt and Chauncey Hare, have long experience in advising workers in toxic organisations. Their lengthy book is written specifically to help workers in such organisations to develop the psychological insights, skills and self-transformations to survive. For the individual worker, this is a more ambitious enterprise than using tactics presented in the other books.

Wyatt and Hare believe the central dynamic in toxic organisations is shaming. Workers are humiliated by others but also heap shame on themselves, whether it is for not measuring up to others or for particular failures. *Work Abuse* is a manual for understanding the shaming process and developing the capacity to stop shaming oneself, to not be affected by shaming from others and to align one's self-interests with those of others in order to survive and thrive. Since abusive dynamics are found in most organisations, leaving may not be a solution and may be impossible for some individuals for personal or financial reasons. Wyatt and Hare's programme of self-understanding and self-development is not a quick or easy path but is certainly worthy of consideration for anyone who is at risk and wants to survive and achieve one's goals over the long term.

For developing practical plans to deal with bullies, an especially valuable offering is Carol and Alvar Elbing's *Militant Managers.* The authors carried out a survey of 350 senior managers in multinational firms, asking about the characteristics of highly aggressive managers. At the top of the list of ten characteristics was being a poor listener; second was having an adversarial style against individuals, including insults and attempts to humiliate. The Elbings also document common reactions to highly aggressive

bosses. By far the most reported reaction is reduced performance. Then comes the real challenge: action to stop highly aggressive behaviour. For individuals, the Elbings recommend documenting behaviours, trying out methods of response in a graduated fashion, taking note of responses and going on to stronger measures if the lower-level ones don't work. For example, a first response to aggressive language is echo feedback: when the boss says, "Your work is pathetic," responds "Pathetic?" This may make the boss aware of the message being sent. If this doesn't help, the next step is an "I" message: "When you say my work is pathetic, I feel demoralised." The Elbings present a whole series of measures, up to desperation methods, including demanding something in exchange for doing what the boss demands, responding to aggressive methods by being unhelpful and going to the boss's boss. In each case, the boss's response should be noted and used to decide the next step. A job change may end up being the best option. The Elbings also present a parallel set of recommendations for the firm and for the superior of a highly aggressive manager.

The Elbings list numerous references from the psychological literature to back up the points they make about highly aggressive bosses. For example, *Militant Managers,* like other books, notes that top management seldom takes action against bullies. In addition, though, the Elbings explain why: people who haven't experienced a problem feel invulnerable and don't empathise; observers underestimate the pain that someone else is experiencing; and observers underestimate stressors as the cause of a victim's pain, instead attributing their reactions to their personalities. The Elbings give references for each of these points. *Militant Managers* is an impressive example of scholarship used to give support and credibility to practical insights. For most readers, practical insights are more important, but even here the Elbings make a special contribution: the experimental method. Essentially, they encourage subordinates to become applied social scientists, analysing their boss's behaviour using a personalised form of action research. This general approach is the best hope for workers when off-

the-shelf solutions don't provide the answer for a particularly difficult or complex bully.

It is understandable that authors use dramatic stories to illustrate their points, since horrific cases of abuse are more memorable and more likely to be recognised by and reported to others. My colleague Will Rifkin pointed out to me that as well as these "clinical" cases of abuse, there are less obvious "sub-clinical" cases to which numerous workers may be subject. Although for any individual the degree, impact and consequences of bullying are less in these sub-clinical cases, the overall impact on workers and the workplace may still be significant and worthy of study and action. Diagnosing low-grade harassment is difficult; however, those subject to it are likely to recognise the processes when reading about more serious cases.

As well as the more practical guides, there is a body of research on bullying. While this cannot be reviewed here, it is worth mentioning the important studies by Heinz Leymann, a Swedish expert on mobbing, whose major works appeared beginning in the 1980s. Davenport, Schwartz and Elliott's book is dedicated to his memory.

Most of the available books are far better on giving personal advice to victims of bullying than on providing policy advice to managers who concerned about the impact of bullying on their organisation. This might be explained by the fact that there are far more actual and potential victims in the book market than concerned managers. But there is something deeper involved. Many managers are themselves bullies and many others are supportive or tolerant of peers or subordinates who are bullies.

Bullying is undoubtedly damaging to organisational performance. The contribution of victims is seriously impaired and much time is spent in defensive measures by those fearful of attack. If victims fight back, workplace warfare can escalate dramatically. If official procedures are invoked or a court case launched, the drain on time and energy is enormous. Sometimes the battles enter the public eye, causing serious damage to the organisation's image. Finally, disgruntled workers sometimes undertake sabotage, occasionally with devastating effects.

The orientation of Emily Bassman's *Abuse in the Workplace* provides a strong contrast with the other books. It describes the problem relatively briefly and then places it in a wide variety of contexts, from the psychological to the organisational. It compares workplace abuse to discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse (outside of work) of women, children and elders. It describes the problems associated with obedience to authority and learning via punishment.

Bassman describes how workaholism can be a contributor to abuse, as well as policies for managed medical care and a contingent workforce. Practices that can be abusive in themselves, as well as facilitate abuse by individuals, include drug testing, truth testing (such as by polygraph) and various forms of surveillance of employees.

Bassman also surveys various corporate responses, such as ombudsmen and grievance procedures, with due attention to their limitations. She says no quick fix at the organisational level is possible and argues that managers need to understand the culture and to pay attention to values, behaviours and feedback systems. She is emphatic that blaming the workers is not a solution: deep cultural change is needed. *Abuse in the Workplace* is a valuable wide-ranging treatment, forging links between the issue of abuse and a range of other topics.

The ten books discussed here were all published in the 1990s, yet there is a much earlier book dealing with the same issues: Carroll M. Brodsky's *The Harassed Worker,* published in 1976. This comprehensive treatment covers types of harassment, case studies, harassment as a social process, impacts on those harassed, systemic aspects such as work pressure, psychological aspects, cultures of harassment, treating harassed workers, and social system implications. Unfortunately, Brodsky's pioneering examination of harassment at work did not trigger an upsurge in attention to the issue at the time. His book seems to have little direct impact on the more recent interest, given that few of the other books even cite *The Harassed Worker.*

In spite of all its negative impacts, bullying continues and indeed probably is increasing as pressures are applied

for greater performance from fewer workers. Bullying is not a rational process and is best understood as the exercise of power for psychological gratification at the expense of others. The authors are unanimous in rejecting bullying as a sensible way of improving organisational performance.

The issues of workplace bullying and sexual harassment have much in common. Sexual harassment has been recognised as an issue for much longer and there is a great deal of experience with development of policy and procedures. But in spite of this, sexual harassment continues on a wide scale. Official procedures are unlikely to deter more than a fraction of bullying. What is needed is a culture change: a corporate ecosystem that discourages and penalises hyena behaviour, to use Marais and Herman's picture. A management serious about promoting a climate free of bullying has many options, laid out in these books. One good way to start would be to give copies of these books to all employees and encourage them to propose ways to help eliminate bullying from the workplace.

There are several lessons from these books for researchers into

organisational change. The issue of bullying and especially the collective dynamic called mobbing needs to be included in analyses of organisations. The traumatising effects of bullying and the fear of being bullied can inhibit change (or occasionally foster it), as can the desire of bullies to maintain power over victims. The severe emotional impact on victims is hard to appreciate for those who have not been through it themselves or counselled those who have. Researchers need to appreciate the strong psychological issues involved in organisations, of which emotional abuse is one crucial element.

Books reviewed:

Bullying at Work: How to Confront and Overcome It , Andrea Adams with contributions from Neil Crawford, Virago, London, 1992, ISBN: 1-8538-1542-X, pbk
Abuse in the Workplace: Management Remedies and Bottom Line Impact, Emily S. Bassman, Quorum, Westport, CT, 1992, ISBN: 0-8993-0673-X, hbk
The Harassed Worker, Carroll M. Brodsky, D. C. Heath, Lexington MA, 1976
Mobbing: Emotional Abuse in the American Workplace, Noa Davenport, Ruth Distler Schwartz and Gail Pursell Elliott, Civil Society Publishing, Ames, Iowa, 1999, ISBN: 0-9671-8030-9, pbk

Militant Managers: How to Spot ... How to Work with ... How to Manage ... Your Highly Aggressive Boss, Carol Elbing and Alvar Elbing, Irwin Professional Publishing, Burr Ridge, IL, 1994, ISBN: 1-55623-737-5, hbk
Bully in Sight: How to Predict, Resist, Challenge and Combat Workplace Bullying, Tim Field, Success Unlimited, Wantage, Oxfordshire, 1996, ISBN: 0-9529-1210-4, pbk
Brutal Bosses and their Prey: How to Identify and Overcome Abuse in the Workplace, Harvey A. Hornstein, Riverhead Books, New York, 1996, ISBN: 0-57322-586-X, pbk
Corporate Hyenas at Work: How to Spot and Outwit Them by Being Hyenawise, Susan Marais and Magriet Herman, Kagiso, Pretoria, South Africa, 1997, ISBN: 0-7986-4885-6, pbk
BullyProof Yourself at Work! Personal Strategies to Stop the Hurt from Harassment, Gary Namie and Ruth Namie, DoubleDoc Press, Benicia, CA, 1999, ISBN: 0-9668629-5-3, pbk
Adult Bullying: Perpetrators and Victims, Peter Randall, Routledge, London, 1997, ISBN: 0-4151-2673-8 pbk, 0-4151-2672-X hbk
Work Abuse: How to Recognize and Survive It, Judith Wyatt and Chauncey Hare, Schenkman Books, Rochester, VT, 1997, ISBN: 0-8704-7109-0, pbk; 0-8704-7110-4 hbk

Victoria to protect Whistleblowers who expose government and Public-sector corruption.

State to Protect Whistleblowers. Karina Barrymore, AFR 28/2/00, page 7.

The Victorian Government is planning legislation to protect "whistleblowers" who expose government and Public-sector corruption.

The laws will offer immunity from legal action and protection from reprisals for people who provide information on corruption within the Public sector.

The Victorian Attorney-General Mr Rob Hulls, said yesterday the new law had been designed to encourage people to come forward with information. During three years in opposition, he had received an average of 10 phone calls a year from public servants with

information about inappropriate activity. However, he said, in all cases the people were reluctant to come forward because of fears of reprisals such as losing their job or being demoted or transferred

"There had previously been victimisation and harassment of people exposing potential corruption in the Public sector," Mr Hulls said.

"Unlike the Kennett government, which tried to silence critics wishing to expose public-sector mismanagement, corruption and waste, this Government is committed to exposing unacceptable conduct at the earliest opportunity."

The proposed new legislation was part of the Bracks Government's election promises of improved levels of openness and follows the recent restoration of independence to the Auditor-General and greater access to Freedom of Information laws.

"The offering of legal protection send a clear message to the community that far from being branded as troublemakers, whistleblowers can play an important role In Protecting the Public interest," Mr Hulls said.

"Timely exposure will enable the Government to act quickly to protect the public interest."

Law associations told "encourage and protect solicitors who blow the whistle on the illegal conduct of their colleagues".

Watchdog's pitch to protect whistleblowers. John Breusch, AFR 3 March 2000, page 31. www.afr.com.au.

Law associations should actively encourage and protect solicitors who

blow the whistle on the illegal conduct of their colleagues, according to Australia's chief professional watchdog.