

Women's Studies Seminar Series

GENDER, PLACE AND HOME: RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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University of Ballarat**

**Women's Studies International
Forum**

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In Australia, a response to domestic violence has been to assist women and children to leave their home. From the 1970s, women's refuges were established and, in the 1980s, public policy reinforced this position of attempting to provide protection by removing women and children from the place of violence. However, in doing so, women's (and their children's) lives and their relationship to this place – their home, and everything that it entails – were disrupted. Indeed, discourses about domestic violence assumed that women's lives would be disrupted. More recently, public policy reforms have allowed for the greater possibility of a woman remaining safely in her own home (and her violent partner being removed). In this paper I will explore these changes concerning domestic violence and place and consider their implications for understandings of gender.