

September 2003

Pace Women's Justice Center - The Second Annual Domestic Violence Think Tank - Introductory Remarks

Victoria L. Lutz

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Recommended Citation

Victoria L. Lutz, *Pace Women's Justice Center - The Second Annual Domestic Violence Think Tank - Introductory Remarks*, 24 Pace L. Rev. 187 (2003)

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.pace.edu/plr/vol24/iss1/3>

Syndromes, Frameworks and Expert Testimony: What Jurists Need to Know

Pace Women's Justice Center The Second Annual Domestic Violence Think Tank*

Introductory Remarks

Victoria L. Lutz†

Welcome to the New York State Judicial Institute. I'm only going to speak for two minutes so forgive me if I don't say everything that I should, but I think brevity is probably the most important and least common characteristic of introductory comments. You are here to hear the panelists. I do want to thank Dean David Cohen, who unfortunately could not be here because he was called away to speak at a university commencement. I also want to thank Dean Robert Keating, who will

* The Pace Women's Justice Center Domestic Violence Think Tank is designed as an academic forum to engender peer analysis of a gender violence topic by national experts. The goal of the Think Tank is to formulate and promulgate new ideas and approaches for jurists working with victims of gender violence. This year's topic concerns syndrome evidence in its most common legal forms. We are thrilled to have a panel of distinguished judges, attorneys, professors, and medical professionals from all over the United States who will present a critique of these syndromes and their use in expert testimony.

† Victoria L. Lutz is the Executive Director of the Pace Women's Justice Center. She has worked at the Center since 1994, prior to which time she was an Associate Professor at Pace University School of Law and, before that, a Senior Assistant District Attorney. She has lectured on gender violence issues in more than half of the states and on three continents. She regularly publishes, and occasionally, still represents clients. Her passion is the Center, its ensemble staff, and its clients.

speak to you in a minute. Both of these Deans have made it possible for us to do this program and to do it here at the Judicial Institute this morning.

This is an unusual program in that it is a National Domestic Violence Think Tank. It is actually the Pace Women's Justice Center's Second National Domestic Violence Think Tank. It is designed more as an intimate meeting than as a large forum. So, we are very happy that there is a small group. We hope that the fact that this is an academic institution will encourage everyone here to "think outside the box." I encourage all to forget being politically correct and to try to be very open in looking for new answers.

One very short story will hopefully illustrate my point, and then I will conclude my comments. This story is probably from *The New Yorker*. One night a man was walking along, he's looking down, and he's obviously looking for something, and a stranger comes up from the side and says, "What's the matter?" "I lost my watch," says the first gentleman, and the stranger says, "Let me help you." So, it proceeds, and they're looking, and they're looking, and they're looking, and they keep looking all the way down the block, and, finally, the stranger says, "Where did you lose your watch?" The first gentleman looks up and says, "Over there," and the stranger says, "Then why are we looking here?" And the first gentleman responds, "Well, the light's better." I'm relating this story because I think all too often the temptation is that you go in a direction, and it seems like, you know, things are moving along logically and prospects are bright, and it's hard to realize and accept that we may need to go back to the shadows to find some of the answers. So, that's what today is about, trying to search the shadows, some familiar and some not so familiar areas to find what may be hidden answers.

Without further ado, I would like to introduce Judge and Dean Robert Keating. And I'm going to read this little write-up about Bob and I would direct your attention to the materials, in which you will find both the schedules for today and the biographical sketches of all of the participants. This program is being taped, and will become part of the *Pace Law Review* at a later date.

Dean Keating is the Dean of the New York State Judicial Institute as well as being a distinguished scholar in residence, and adjunct Professor for the Judicial Honors Extern Program at Pace Law School. Judge Keating has also been an executive and an attorney in the private sector and has had a distinguished career in public service. He served as the Administrative Judge in the Criminal Court of the City of New York and, most recently, as Administrative Judge of the Supreme Court in Brooklyn and Staten Island. Judge Keating was the New York City Coordinator of Criminal Justice for Mayor Edward Koch and has also served as the Chief Assistant District Attorney in Kings Country.