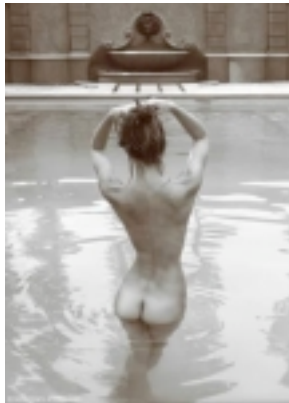


## **Sex, torment, violence**

The inadequacy of the law to deal with human emotions.

In the city where I live every now and then there will be a murder. It will receive more than average press because it will come out that the person had a VRO (Violence restraining order) against the murderer. "How can this be, as there was a restraining order against the murderer". "There needs to be larger penalties against those who break restraining orders", will be the outcry.

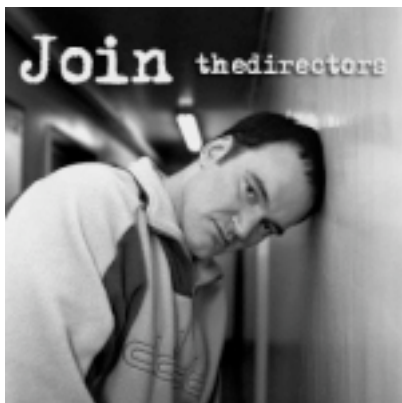


### Sex

There is one awfully big assumption here. That people will somehow magically follow an order from the courts. That because there is a court order then people will follow it and that if we just make larger penalties for breaking it then people will follow it more. Sorry it does not work that way!

A VRO is an order by the courts to stop one person from contacting another person. They are sought because one person usually is continually contacting the other person when it is not wanted. They were most likely in 'love' at some point and have a relationship that has broken down.

Please put up your hand if you have ever been in a relationship and got dumped, had your heart broken or been the jilted lover. Now everybody who has just read this has just put up their hand. Remember what that felt like?. Well magnify what that felt like 10 times and you will know how some people feel.



### Torment

Lets get real here people. To expect that a restraining order made in court of law will have the power to stop a person contacting another person when the emotions of intense attachment, love, anger, jealousy, despair and so forth are there is naive at best and downright stupid at worst. The restraining order will have the power of a pop gun and the emotions have the power of a nuclear arsenal. You don't need three guesses to work out which one is going to win that battle?

So when a person breaks a VRO lets not be so stunned and aghast. It must be seen as only one part of an overall approach to keeping one person at a distance from another. I work with many people who are involved in some way with a VRO. They are broken all the time. Not uncommonly it is the person who took out the VRO that makes the first contact. Remember we have two people here who 'love' each other or have some sort of bond. That does not go away easily or quickly.



### Violence

Also you can understand why the police become frustrated and ambivalent about domestic disputes and VROs. Not uncommonly they have been called to the same house a dozen times and they may have even taken the woman away to a refuge and gotten her set up with a VRO. A week later she is back in the home with him because she loves him and he said he wont do it again. You can understand why the police start to give up a bit.

Tony White  
Monday, 26 March 2007