

sister hoods

NOVEMBER 25 IS THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. THIS YEAR, WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE FOCUS ON WOMEN-ON-WOMEN STREET VIOLENCE.

Rachel Hunter's view of Aussie women must be very tainted. The uber model and former handbag of ageing rocker Rod Stewart was minding her own business at a Melbourne hotel a few weeks back (in town for the Melbourne Cup) when she was attacked – by a woman.

The lass ran up behind Hunter and kicked her in the back for, well, kicks. Hunter was knocked to the ground, before the girl sprinted off and was then tackled by a staff member.

Unfortunately, this isn't the only case of women-on-women violence of late. Closer to home, Wollongong's Krystle Kelley, 20, was on the dance floor at the Glasshouse Tavern when another female patron allegedly rammed a glass in her face, according to the *Daily Telegraph*. The reason? Bumping into each other while dancing. Krystle's now blind in one eye.

Krystle has spoken out about the spate of recent "glassings" across the state and has called for polities to support the police's push for Sydney pubs and clubs to switch from glass to toughened plastic cups after dark.

Many Sydney partygoers have near-miss tales. Jamie, 29, a marketing manager from Balmain, is one of them: "I was on the dance floor at a popular city nightclub, just having fun with my girlfriend, when this girl I didn't even know began bumping into me with her backside. I think she thought we were impinging on her space! I thought it was ridiculous, so I just gave her a look and walked away.



TIPS ON DEFENDING YOURSELF

Adori Bubble, from female-led self defence school Fight Like A Girl, says "prevention is always better than cure". But, here's her tip for when things escalate...

- * Maintain a physical distance. Pop your hands up in a passive gesture, so if your attacker throws something, you can stop it, or you could also strike if you have to.
 - * Put obstacles between each of you, such as a table, or use objects you already have, such as your bag, to shield yourself.
 - * Give your attacker a good, hard shove on top of the chest and bark a loud, strong 'Back off' to slow them in their tracks.
- For more, visit www.fightlikeagirl.com.au

After hearing about Krystle, I'm glad I did."

Alcohol-fuelled violence in Sydney's club and pub scene has been a hot topic of late. Nightclub baron Justin Hemmes' \$150 million bar and hotel complex, The Ivy, almost wasn't granted a liquor license because the police

argued the new nightspot could generate similar problems to those seen at the Establishment, another Hemmes' joint on George St. (The Ivy project has since been granted approval.)

Extensive studies have been carried out on male violence – particularly concerning alcohol. But research into female violent crime is scarce.

A small study was carried about by the Victorian police force in 1999 after a 29-year-old mother of four young children robbed a woman at gunpoint. "I've never been good at words when it comes to speaking about how I feel," said 'Anne'. "I tend to use my fists."

At the time, Victorian police crime figures revealed a rise in female violent crime, while male numbers dropped. In 1996-1997, women committed around 2600 crimes, compared with 2390 in the previous year.

And with the recent violent physical attacks in Sydney, it seems the numbers are likely to rise.

However, there have been some steps to make our streets safer, including secure taxi ranks in the CBD, staffed by security guards. But, in the case of

Krystle, the measures don't seem to go far enough. November 25 is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which usually focuses on violent crimes by men. This year, we're also hoping to bring back the Spice Girls' special brand of girl power and put an end to women-on-women violence.

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