



Charles Sturt University presents a Public Lecture

## Hell, Horror and Hope in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) which killed more people than any war since World War II is officially over. Nevertheless, women and girls in the south-east of DRC continue to experience sexual assault and torture on a scale that is threatening to annihilate them, their families and communities ~ the so called negative peace!

Traditional midwives and the women and girls they serve pleaded for someone from outside DRC to spend time with them, work alongside them, listen to their stories and share what is happening with anyone/everyone who dares to listen. It was for this reason that since 2004 the speaker has travelled to Africa each year to work with women and alongside traditional midwives in DRC and Kenya.

The presentation will confront anyone who cares about another's suffering, international human rights issues and ending the strategic rape and torture of women and girls as a strategy of war. Please be warned that the information shared is very disturbing. However, the stories and slides to accompany them are essentially a message of hope.

by

**Dr Elaine Dietsch**

*Senior Lecturer in Midwifery and Nursing  
Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga Campus*

Wednesday 17 June 2009, 6.00pm

**Henry Nowik Lecture Theatre 1,  
Albury City Campus, Charles Sturt University**

*Charles Sturt University wines and cheeses will be served following the lecture.*

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**Dr Elaine Dietsch**

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Elaine's professional experience is in midwifery and women's health nursing. Prior to commencing her academic career at Charles Sturt University in 2001, she served a dual role as Clinical Nurse Consultant in Women's Health and Midwifery Consultant for *Birth International*.

Her PhD thesis, completed in 2003, was informed by women, the majority of whom had survived sexual assault and/or intimate partner violence. Women's stories of survival continue to inspire Elaine and form the base to her multiple papers, book chapters and International/National Conference presentations.

For the last five years, Elaine has chosen to attend the required midwifery practice experience working with traditional midwives and women in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya. This public lecture relates to her last visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo in May/June 2008. She will be returning to Africa in July, 2009.