



THE SHORT SYNOPSIS

'Facing the Demons' is the story of a journey to bring the family and friends of a murdered boy together in one room with those convicted of his killing.

On one fateful night in 1994, a murder opened up a huge well of unresolved pain, guilt, anger, confusion and frustration. The murdered boy, it soon became clear, was not the only victim of this crime.

In this heart rending story we meet a cast of wonderful characters. On the victim's side are the mother and the father, as well as friends and co-workers. On the other are two of the four convicted of the murder.

And in the middle, the man determined to bring them altogether is Senior Sergeant Terry O'Connell of the New South Wales Police Service.

The confrontation between them offers an opportunity for all those traumatised by the event to hear, for the first time ever, the other's side of the story. Talking directly to each other they have a chance to vent built up emotions, to find answers to unresolved questions and perhaps find a way to move ahead in lives which have been indelibly affected by a horrific and senseless crime.



SYNOPSIS

In 1994 four young men attempted an armed hold-up in a suburban Sydney Pizza Hut. But it ended in disaster. While trying to warn his colleagues about the robbery, an 18 year old university student, a part-time pizza delivery boy, Michael Marslew, was shot in the back of the head at point blank range.

Six months later four young men were arrested and convicted of his murder. They have already served nearly five years of sentences ranging from 8 to 18 years.

The events of that one fateful night have left countless lives in tatters. For all those associated with the murder, life took a turn for the worse – a path from which none could ever turn. With the pulling of the trigger of a sawn-off shotgun, a huge well of unresolved pain, guilt, anger, confusion and frustration was opened up. The murdered boy, it soon became clear, was not the only victim in this crime.

Over a six week period we document first hand the process of creating an extraordinary event. For the first time anywhere in the world, those responsible and convicted of a murder are brought together in one room to face the toughest jury they ever have to meet: the family and friends of their victim.

At the centre of our story are four main characters: an ordinary Australian cop, Senior Sergeant Terry O'Connell of the NSW Police Service, the instigator and facilitator of the conference; the murdered boy's father, Ken Marslew; the murdered boy's mother, Joan Griffiths and Karl Kramer, one of the four convicted of the murder. It is the intersection of their stories, revolving around the conference, which give the film extraordinary drama.

The journey for Terry O'Connell to make the conference happen is full of unforeseen hurdles. Although he is well versed in pulling such conferences together, brokering this one proves more challenging than any he has attempted before.

Ken Marslew, a self-styled advocate for victims of crime, is constantly bringing his son's murder into the public consciousness, with his privately run anti-violence organisation called 'Enough is Enough'. It is Marslew's high profile which creates problems for O'Connell as he tries to navigate the highly charged emotions surrounding this particular case.

Marslew's profile also creates problems for his ex-wife Joan, mother of the murdered boy. As Ken Marslew took ownership of Michael's murder in the media and his mind, Joan feels she has been ignored as the mother.



BACKGROUND TO THE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONFERENCE PROCESS

The 'conference' process was developed by Senior Sergeant Terry O'Connell ten years ago in the NSW country town of Wagga Wagga.

Confronted by an ever growing number of juvenile offenders, O'Connell sought an alternative to courts and incarceration. By adopting the idea of a 'shaming ceremony' as used historically in indigenous cultures, O'Connell hit on what he believes is the creation of an effective alternative – the creation of a 'safe' environment in which offenders can be directly confronted with the harm they have caused to the victims.

Bringing victims and offenders together in a forum which allows them to express their emotions, validates the victim's feelings and encourages offenders to accept responsibility for their actions. Ultimately, it aims to repair some of the harm, and return balance and hope to lives shattered by serious crime.

O'Connell's devotees are spread far and wide: The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Department of Justice, the Anoka Police force in Minnesota, USA, and Chief Constable Charles Pollard of the Thames Valley Police Service in the UK.

Within the NSW Police Service, his attempts to affect behavioural change starts within his own very entrenched Police culture, which tends to view him as a troublemaker.



WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE? – Quotes from the academics

"My experience is that the offender more fully recognises and understands exactly what they have done, and generally their victims are happier because they have had their chance to have their say, and play their part in the justice system."

Professor John Braithwaite – ANU Social Sciences

"Conferencing is about re-creating community. One that is critical to assist us make sense of a world that has experienced significant social change over the past 40 years. They have the potential to contribute significantly – towards minimizing the harm experienced in our formal criminal justice systems..."

Snr Sgt Terry O'Connell

"Conference participants are connected at a common level of humanity because emotions are a shared human experience."

Snr Sgt Terry O'Connell

"I don't want to leave the impression that this process is a magic wand. That it suddenly fixes everything. It doesn't, but it can be a pivotal step in the grieving process; in the process of letting go; in the process of moving on with life..."

Dr. Mark Umbreit, Professor of Social Work, University of Minnesota

"The people in the front line are the offenders whose behaviour has harmed; the parents who are desperate for solutions to their child's outrageous behaviour; the old folks who are frightened; the victims of crime who don't understand why it happened and wait for the next time; the siblings who don't understand the behaviour of their brother or sister ... those with the knotted stomachs who are separating; the numb babies whose world's are falling apart; the grandparents whose mantelpiece photographs bear witness to what they spent their lives hoping for, now in tatters."

Graham Chaseling, 'Conferencing', UWS Liverpool, 1997



DIRECTORS STATEMENT – 'Facing the Demons'

I've always been intrigued by stories about people who are driven; they've always interested me. In many ways it is obvious – people who are driven, who have a passion, a strong belief in something, are usually good subject-matter for films.

And that applies here. Both Terry O'Connell and Ken Marslew are driven men with their own particular barrows to push. Both want to change a criminal justice system which they believe doesn't work. O'Connell is a NSW Senior Police Sergeant, Marslew, a self-styled advocate against crime.

The story takes the form of a journey undertaken by Terry O'Connell to make a conference happen – to bring those convicted of a murder, face-to-face with the family and friends of their victim, Ken Marslew's 18 year old son, Michael.

My interest in the story was not just that there were good characters to carry us through, but because it is about something which really matters. It is a story full of emotion, heart-rending in many ways. Those who finally became involved were prepared to put their trust not only in the conference process, but also in the making of the film. Along the way we learn of the difficulties and the heartaches of those contemplating the conference process. I wanted to allow the viewer to share their visions, their passions, their pain and their anger.

As documentary filmmakers we are privileged to be given entry into the world of other people. I was delighted to have the opportunity to tell this particular story.

The film is straight-forward in its filmic style, the emphasis being on the characters and their stories. It is an emotional, strong, people-based story. It is a story of how a senseless, horrific event forever affected the lives of dozens of ordinary suburban people.

Aviva Ziegler
Director



PROJECT B ACKGROUND

Anyone who's ever produced a social issue documentary knows it is one long, intense journey involving many people. When you add to that mix the elements of a bereaved family, a murder case, an estranged father and mother, a maverick cop, and a collection of bureaucracies, some would say it's a recipe for insanity.

'Facing the Demons' was born out of sheer determination to get this story told. This determination started for me five years before, ironically around the same time of Michael Marslew's murder, when I met a senior grief counsellor at our city morgue working to form a victims support group for homicide. Through my association with these people I came to realise that victims and offenders think about one another all the time. They sometimes invade one another's lives, often harmfully and mostly negatively. There seemed to be a lot of damaged people with many misgivings about our current system of criminal justice. It was through this victims movement that I had met Ken Marslew in the making of an earlier non-broadcast documentary.

This program was a collaboration with some very generous people. It earned us all some international acclaim. I suppose I earned my stripes in making this documentary without sensationalising anyone's pain.

I had already met Ken Marslew, the social change activist, and sooner or later I suppose I was destined to meet Terry O'Connell. Together with my friend and right hand researcher, Michael Dye, we stumbled across the concept of Restorative Justice Conferencing, and once again Terry O'Connell's name appeared.

As they say, the rest is history. And there began a journey that would take us on a 12 month collision course of trying to get a film up, and attempting to persuade many bureaucracies that we had credibility and a modicum of integrity. In addition, we had to work out a way to explain the complexity of issues around the painful facts of a murder and everyone it involves.

I can say we have never lost sight of the fact that we are dealing with people's lives. As many agreements, promises, and assurances that I have had to give – I have to say I have been given trust, care, disclosure as I have never experienced ever before. The amount of human kindness and generosity, against a backdrop of acute pain, upset and hopelessness, has made this a maiden voyage I will never forget.

**Dee Cameron
Producer**



THE CAST

The Murder Victim – Michael Marslew, 18 year old, fun loving, sensitive, thoughtful university student and part-time worker at the Jannali Pizza Hut – shot in the back of the head at point blank range in an attempted armed robbery.

The Uniformed Cop – Terry O’Connell, with 28 years in the NSW Police Service, would like to change our criminal justice system which he believes doesn’t work. Senior Sergeant O’Connell heads the Restorative Justice Unit of the NSW Police Service. He is both conference instigator and facilitator in our story.

The Born Again Political Activist – Ken Marslew, father of the murder victim, driven by anger about his son’s senseless murder. With many years of selling expertise, has founded his own privately run charitable organisation ‘Enough is Enough’.

Ken sees only black or white, but presents a picture with shades of grey. Torn between his public ‘crime fighting’ persona and the grief ridden father of the murdered boy, Ken is a complex character. He causes no end of trouble for O’Connell as he tries to pull the conference together.

The Mother – Joan Griffiths, mother of the murder victim, is a warm, friendly, woman who five years down the tack, still has a huge daily struggle to deal with the death of her son. Her pain is reinforced by the public role her ex-husband has adopted. She feels, as the murdered boy’s mother, that she has been forgotten.

The Offenders – Karl Kramer, 28 years old and the armed robbery mastermind, is a huge surprise. With a gift for words and a moral bent, he doesn’t fit the stereo type of a convicted killer. Into his fifth year of a 15 year sentence, he has given plenty of thought to his crime.

The Offenders – Douglas Edwards, the driver of the getaway car. The adopted child of a respectable family who are mortified by his actions. He will be the first to be released.



MINOR CHARACTERS

The second wife – Lynette Marslew, small, quiet, determined, savvy wife and right-hand support of Ken Marslew.

The murder victim's co-workers from the Pizza Hut – Lisa, Caroline and Mikel, have never been able to get over experiencing Michael's death at such close quarters. All three talk about it like touching an open wound.

The murder victim's friends – Sara and Brendon, both grew up with Michael and still suffer greatly from the loss of their best friend.

Douglas' Edwards mother – Joanne Edwards, represents the pain suffered by the offender's families. She was desperate to apologise to Michael's parents for her son's actions.



THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Writer/Director: Aviva Ziegler

Aviva has worked in Australian television for over 25 years. She began her career with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in the trail-blazing social issues documentary program, 'Chequerboard'.

Her Willesee documentary 'Quentin', was the highest rating documentary ever seen on Australian television and won a logie for 'Best Documentary'. Her personal film 'What Is A Jew To You?' has screened broadly and won numerous prizes throughout the world.

As an independent filmmaker, Aviva has been involved in many highly acclaimed, prize-winning documentaries and series both in Australia and abroad.

Her most recent director credits were for 'Zoo Company', an eight part half hour series for the ABC and Canal Plus in France and 'Casino', a half hour documentary in the six-part Film Australia series 'The Gamblers' screened on the ABC.

Aviva continues to work as an independent director producer.





Producer: Dee Cameron

Dee Cameron is a producer in a variety of media and with a twenty year career in corporate communications, she has learned the disciplines of film-making, video, audio visual, theatrical event production and management.

She has run her own production company for ten years, has run other people's production companies from time-to-time, and has freelanced successfully in between. These days she chooses to work as an independent producer, forming project teams with other like-minded independents.

Her work includes most of the major Australian corporations who work in the corporate communication and business theatre arenas. She has worked in all major Australian capitals, and extensively throughout Hong Kong, Malaysia, China and Japan.

'Facing the Demons' is Dee's first foray into producing a documentary film for broadcast and follows a community service program made for the Homicide Victims Support Group, 'Living Beyond Murder'. 'Facing the Demons' has evolved into a labour of love, absorbing over a year of her time and resources. The driving force has always been a fascination with the principles of restorative justice conferencing, and a belief that this program may make a difference.





Director of Photography: Tony Wilson ACS

Tony has worked as a D.O.P. on documentaries and features, shooting in locations as diverse as Senegal, Surabaya and Western Samoa. He has been nominated twice for AFI Best Cinematography Awards, and has worked for a variety of networks: the ABC, SBS, Networks 7, 9 and 10, the BBC, Channel 4, HBO and Discovery Channel. He has worked on high-profile projects such as: 'Demons at Drive Time' (1995), 'Rats in the Ranks' (1994) and 'Brothers and Sisters' (1997).

Tony worked in his preferred medium of mini-DV and DVC Pro for 'Facing the Demons'.

Editor: Andrew Arestides

Andrew has been in demand as an Editor for years, working consistently for the ABC, SBS and World Vision. He has gained an enviable reputation for editing social documentaries, given his patience, sensitivity and vision.

His more recent work includes: 'Thought it was Love...' for ABC/Living Pictures (1998); 'Brothers & Sisters' for the ABC/Sonja Armstrong Productions (1997); 'You Always Hurt The Ones You Love' for the ABC/Living Pictures (1997) and Gold Mobie winner: 'Two Below Zero' for Triptych Productions (1996).



Sound Recordist: Leo Sullivan

Leo has a wealth of experience in drama including, 'Dating the Enemy' (1995), 'The Sum of Us' (1993) and 1988's 'Sweetie'. His documentary experience includes 'Bastards from the Bush' (1998), 'The Edge of the World' (1997) and 'An Imaginary Life' with David Malouf (1996).

Composer: Jan Preston

Jan has worked as a freelance composer and singer/songwriter for the past 25 years. She has composed music for eight feature films and scores of documentaries.

Two recent projects include Tom Zubrycki's 'Billal', and Don Featherstone's film on David Malouf, 'An Imaginary Life', for which she won the AGSC Award for Best Music for a documentary in 1997.

She continues to record and perform her own compositions, teaches piano and singing, and is a founding Committee member of the Australian Guild of Screen Composers.



OPENING CREDITS

AUSTRALIAN FILM FINANCE CORPORATION PRESENTS
A DEE CAMERON COMPANY PRODUCTION

CLOSING CREDITS

**In Memory of Michael Kenneth Marslew
and all those whose lives have been affected by murder**

**Written and Directed By
AVIVA ZIEGLER**

**Original Concept By
DEE CAMERON**

Director of Photography
TONY WILSON

Editor
ANDREW ARESTIDES

Sound Recordist
LEO SULLIVAN

Composer
JAN PRESTON

Produced by
DEE CAMERON

Produced in Association with the
AUSTRALIAN FILM FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED



CAST

Senior Sergeant Terry O'Connell
Ken & Lynette Marslew
Joan & Terry Griffiths
Lisa Titcume, Mikel Priest & Caroline Judd
Sarah Anderson
Brendon Dorff
Joanne & Douglas Edwards
Karl Kramer
Mularwee High School – Goulburn
Jannali Probus Club
Hamish – the dog

Associate Producer	MICHAEL DYE
Production Manager	SUE CLOTHIER
Researcher	MICHAEL DYE
Consultant	ROBYN HUGHES
Production Accountant	JANINE ALEXANDER MONEYPENNY SERVICES

Additional Camera	PRESTON CLOTHIER, PHILLP BULL, RAY HENMAN
Additional Sound Recordists	GRANT ROBERTS, ANDY POSTLE, MAX HENSER, MARTIN HARRINGTON, ANTONY KOVEOS
Camera Assistant	MICHAEL LYNCH
Stills Photography	KRISTY O'BRYAN
Sound Engineer	ALASDAIR MACFARLANE

Offline Editing	THE BONDI EDIT COMPANY
Online Editing	THE BONDI EDIT COMPANY
Grading	ROEN DAVIS – VISUALEYES

Completion Guarantee	ROB FISHER – FACB
Legals	BRETT OATEN, GABBY STEIN



Interview Transcriptions KERRIE MCGOVAN, PAT FISKE,
ROCHELLE BOGLE
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Vic Bailey – Salvation Army
Roger Blake – Junee Prison Psychologist
Inmates at Junee Prison

ARCHIVAL/LIBRARY FOOTAGE SOURCES

Channel 10 Library
Channel 7 Library
Personal Photographs from The Marslew & The Griffiths Families
Brendon Dorff & Melanie

'AMAZING GRACE'

Composed by John Newton
Performed by the family & friends at Michael Marslew's Funeral
Used by kind permission of Channel 10 Library

'IF YOU AIN'T GOT THE SWING'

Composed by Glenn Miller
Performed by The Jannali High School Band

With many thanks for their support, and guidance:

Terry O'Connell, Jim Ritchie, Paul Herring, Matt Casey & Peta Blood
Restorative Justice Group of The New South Wales Police Service
Christine Nixon – Assistant Commissioner
Sutherland Police, NSW Police Service Ballistics, Hurstville Crime Scene Unit
John Merrick – Senior Grief Counsellor NSW Forensic Medicine
Bob Debus – Corrective Services Minister, Jennifer Mason – Chief of Staff
Corrective Services Media, PR Kerry Mumford, Bob Stapleton
Michael Vita – Corrective Services Operations
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Franco Di Chiera, Patrick Power QC DPP, Chris Maxwell QC

All our family and friends who've listened so patiently for so long about our
obsession called 'Facing the Demons'



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Executive Producer, **Dasha Ross**



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**A WORLD TELEVISION FIRST
TWO CONVICTED CRIMINALS COME
FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE TOUGHEST JURY
OF ALL: THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS
OF THEIR MURDERED VICTIM**

WHY WOULD OFFENDERS TAKE PART?
WHY WOULD THE VICTIM'S FAMILY?

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ANY OF THEM?
WHAT DO THEY HAVE TO GAIN?

PRESS KIT

9 April 1999

Facing the Demons

The Dee Cameron Company

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