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National Conference on DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Edited by Suzanne E. Hatty

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

PROCEEDINGS

VOLUME 1

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EDITED BY

Suzanne E. Hatty

Australian Institute of Criminology
Canberra ACT

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FOREWORD

This two volume publication constitutes the proceedings of the largest and most demanding seminar ever conducted by the Institute. It was held at the request of the Attorney-General in Canberra over the period 11-15 November 1985, and was attended by over three hundred participants.

The planning, organisation and conduct of this seminar placed enormous strains on the resources of the Institute. I would like to record my personal appreciation to the Institute's Principal Programs Officer, Ms Jane Mugford, who carried most of the organisational burden, and also to Dr Suzanne Hatty who accepted responsibility for editing proceedings and assisted Ms Mugford in planning the substantive content.

The Institute expresses the hope that the publication and dissemination of these proceedings will make a positive contribution to the amelioration of the widespread problem of domestic violence in our community.

R.W. Harding
Director
Australian Institute of Criminology

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To Robert Graves, in memorium

(1895-1985)

Natura il fece, e poi ruppe la stampa

(Nature made him, and then broke the mould)

Ariosto (1474-1533) in
Orlando Furioso, X.84

THE DESTROYER

Swordsman of the narrow hips,
Narrow hips and murderous mind

Robert Graves

PREFACE

In an area characterised by a multiplicity of often-conflicting perspectives, it is important to indicate as clearly as possible the parameters within which one works. Consequently, in this introductory section, I shall attempt to delineate the ideological principles informing the process of program construction. I shall then briefly enumerate the explicit objectives of the conference.

Firstly, the phenomenon of woman battering* was defined as encompassing both physical assault and the various forms of psychological violation which usually precede or accompany this violence.

Secondly, the program was constructed on the premise that woman battering, despite being enacted between individuals, is both shaped and legitimised by the gender-based structural inequalities within society. It was acknowledged that this violence is differentially distributed so that the experience of 'victimisation' is almost exclusively confined to women. Moreover, latent within this position was the assertion that it is men's behaviour which is problematic and not women's response to that behaviour. The necessity of adopting a feminist perspective when addressing the issue of male violence was considered fundamental to the planning of this conference.

Despite the original title of the conference, which was set down at the biennial conference of the Australian Labor Party, 1984, there was an attempt to undermine the public/private distinction through the introduction into the program of diverse expressions of male violence against women, for example, pornography. This was not to imply a simple causal relationship between woman battering and pornography, but to reflect something of the totality of women's exposure to male violence.

Finally, as statistical data frequently distort or obscure the reality of woman battering, the immediate personal was incorporated as an important dimension of the conference program. It was clearly recognised that an examination of individual lives possessed the potential to clarify, and indeed, politicise the nature of women's experience.

A broad cross-section of the community was represented at the conference itself. The composition of the audience was thus structured to minimise the opportunity for an artificially-

---

* A word on terminology: woman/wife battering, female partner assault and domestic violence are used synonymously in these proceedings to denote male violence (physical or psychological) against a female sexual partner.

produced consensus; instead, it guaranteed divergence, conflict and confrontation. Consequently, those who attended the conference were largely responsible for the eventual shape assumed by the proceedings.

The possibilities introduced into this oft-hostile and persistently emotive environment included the potential for the affirmation of personal experience, the validation of political approach, the exchange of knowledge and the generation of fresh alternatives and solutions.

Given that the primary objective of the conference was to foster positive action, that is, to increase momentum culminating in change on a societal and individual level, the conference program embraced both theoretical accounts of the etiology and maintenance of woman battering as well as pragmatic analyses of the legal and social response mechanisms. The resolutions and recommendations emanating from the conference derive from these dual concerns: as such, they hinge upon women's empowerment and the accountability of both the practitioner and the system.

Integral to the conduct of the conference was the allocation of significant time to involvement in small-group activity. Much of the work undertaken within these sessions was of a personal nature; thus, implicit within the conference program was the idea that change, whether individual or societal, can only be achieved through a commitment to attitudinal realignment.

The development of the comprehensive series of resolutions and recommendations at the close of the conference perhaps testifies to the success of this approach. The energy with which delegates pursue the enactment of these recommendations may either vindicate or condemn this strategy. However, the translation of the recommendations into reality is ultimately dependent upon the resolve of bureaucrats and politicians.

The Organisation of the Papers Within these Volumes

The papers presented to the conference have been regrouped around several disparate themes. The order of the papers thus departs significantly from the formal conference program. The gathering of papers under particular thematic headings signifies perceived similarities in approach or content amongst these papers. However, various aspects of the papers may intersect, so that relevant material may be discovered elsewhere in the collection.

Each group of papers is preceded by an editor's commentary. This is intended to serve as a kind of cognitive map of what follows - directing the reader to some of the most interesting features of the papers within each section, and providing shorthand versions of their substantive characteristics.

No attempt has been made to capture the ambience of the conference or to render an account of the discussion during the sessions. As other recorders-of-events have noted (Reid and Gunew, 1984, p. 1): 'Besides, most of the interstitial areas unacknowledged by the official program - the casual exchanges, the nuances of tone and gesture - are beyond recovery. And there lies this record's generic shape'.

Acknowledgements

Numerous organisations and individuals have assisted throughout the various stages of this conference from its inception onwards. It is not possible to identify them all in this section. However, I will attempt to name some of the major contributors.

Firstly, a debt of gratitude is extended to the many feminists around Australia who gave so generously of their time and expertise in lobbying for this conference, and, subsequently, in planning and participating in it.

Secondly, the Australian Labor Party should be congratulated for providing political support for the conference, and Professor Richard Harding, Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology, should be complimented for accepting the challenge to convene it.

Thirdly, the efforts of the staff of the many divisions of the Institute, most of whom contributed substantively to the differing aspects of the conference, should be acknowledged. In particular, the efforts of Jan Dawes should be applauded.

Finally, without the co-operation, tolerance and energy of these organisations and individuals, this conference would not have been possible.

Suzanne E. Hatty
January, 1986.

I

OPENING ADDRESSES

Richard Harding
Australian Institute of Criminology
Canberra

We are about to embark upon the most comprehensive and most representative conference on domestic violence that has ever taken place in Australia. The program bristles with challenge and perhaps conflict; the delegates come from a range of committed groups wide enough to meet that challange and resolve any such conflict. The next five days will be unforgettable; and our hope is that governments will not forget their impact.

Let me quickly remind you all of the origins of this conference. At the July, 1984 ALP National conference in Canberra, a resolution was passed calling upon the Federal Government to develop a national approach to violence in the home. The then Attorney-General, Senator Gareth Evans, considered that this could best be done from a plateau of comprehensive information about current approaches, grass-roots concern, administrative and law enforcement practices, and so on. Accordingly, he asked the Australian Institute of Criminology - which already had a proven track record in the field - to plan and convene a national conference. The expectation was that it would be an action conference, not merely an informational one - so that issues would be identified, priorities for allocation of funds and services agreed, resolutions in furtherance of these matters passed. Senator Evans said in the Senate on 5 October, 1984:

> 'Of course, the government will listen very closely to whatever recommendations come forth from that Conference.'

The Institute's first thought in planning was that a single conference should be held embracing the two aspects of violence in the family - spouse abuse and child abuse. This seemed attractive for two main reasons. First, an outstandingly successful conference convened by the Institute, and in particular Dr Jocelynne Scutt, in November, 1979 had taken that form. Second, it was our impression that, nevertheless, workers in these two areas were now not communicating very effectively with each other and that a unified conference might do something to break down barriers.

However, as planning progressed and as we continued to consult widely with concerned groups, it became apparent that both official and grass-roots workers believe that the range and complexity of problems to be tackled in each area is still so substantial that a full week's deliberations are necessary for each. So the conference was split. The Child Abuse component will be held in the week beginning 3 February, 1986. This first part of the dual conference is immensely important. But I want to put

it on the record, Mr Deputy Prime Minister, that we have two immensely important problems, or rather two aspects of the single problem of violence in the family, which are qualitatively on a par. The Child Abuse conference will likewise be organised so as to attain a new informational plateau, identify issues and priorities and bring forth recommendations. At the completion of the two conferences, the government will have received comprehensive advice and information to enable it to develop criminal justice and social welfare policies and criteria for resource allocation which are finely attuned to present and future needs.

In opening my remarks, I referred to the comprehensive scope and representative nature of this conference. Let me elaborate a little upon these points. First, as to the scope of the program. Naturally, its main emphasis is on the absolutely fundamental issues - the extent and nature of domestic violence, repressive structures, legal and therapeutic modes of intervention. That is as it should be. But there are three items, normally treated as peripheral or inaccessible, which I am particularly glad that we shall be discussing. They are: the position of ethnic women; the position of Aboriginal women; and the stresses upon the needs of service-providers.

As to the first two, Australia as it approaches its Bicentennial is irreversibly multicultural. Yet as a nation we have in some ways failed to foster our investment in our human resources. A symbol of this failure is a reluctance to lift the carpet to see what lies underneath it - perhaps from guilt or indifference. Certainly, whatever the motive, we simply do not know as much about domestic violence in relation to ethnic groups and Aborigines as we do in relation to the remainder of the population. It is good that this conference will start to change that.

As for service-providers, there is plenty of evidence that even comparatively well paid, unionised service-providers are suffering from 'burn-out' in our over-complex society - nurses, for example. How about service-providers in this industry - mostly badly paid or purely voluntary and certainly non-unionised? It is time to address that problem, and the conference will do so.

The conference is also notably representative of the interest groups involved. The Institute is still collating details of registrations, but a sample of the first 142 showed that no less than 32 distinct groups would be represented. Predominant are workers in women's refuges. Other prominent groups were State and Commonwealth Departments, police, community health workers, counselling centre personnel and workers in migrant resource centres, as well as some victims.

This conference demonstrably will not be one of those where experts who are not personally touched by a problem dominate discussion. This is one of its strengths. In this regard, I particularly draw attention to the prominence in the program of perspectives developed in the refuges and shelters, and also to the very practical workshop sessions which will be taking place.

Of course, any social problem benefits from the perspectives of the best experts. I believe that perusal of the program - in which 39 of the 45 speakers in plenary session will be women, and 42 of the speakers Australian residents or nationals - will show that we have brought together the top experts. Four have come from overseas, bringing us all the benefit of their unique achievements and skills, and on your behalf I welcome them. We have an Australian problem - but it is also a world-wide problem.

In this regard, I would like to refer to the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the treatment of Offenders, which was held recently in Milan. The Deputy Prime Minister led the Australian delegation. At that Congress, there was passed by consensus a Resolution relating to Domestic Violence. Australia was a co-sponsor of that Resolution. Its thrust was to put in the forefront of the international crime prevention agenda the whole question of women as victims of domestic crime. The Resolution will be implemented by data collection efforts, by international analysis of trends and, probably, by inclusion of the topic of Domestic Violence on the agenda of the 1990 Congress. This might, in turn, lead to the adoption of a convention, though obviously that remains to be seen.

The United Nations has requested that the Institute collaborate in carrying out this work. Last week I received a telex requesting that as a first step all papers, resolutions, etc. of this conference be sent to the Crime Prevention Branch in Vienna. It is pleasing that a conference called to address Australian problems may do its small part to advance the solution of the problem in other parts of the world.

However, the main concern of delegates will be that immediate impact be made upon our own Australian problems. In that context, it is reassuring and gratifying that the Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney-General, the Honourable Lionel Bowen, has agreed to open the conference. The Government, one can say, has an important ear cocked to listen to our deliberations. I would thank you, sir, for finding the time to come here today, particularly as your attendance involves leaving a Cabinet meeting, and have great pleasure now in asking you to open the National Conference on Domestic Violence.

The Honourable Lionel Bowen M.P.
Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney-General
Canberra

I am pleased to have been asked by the Australian Institute of Criminology to officially open this most important national conference.

As you are all no doubt aware the origins of this conference lie in discussions that took place at the National Conference of the Australian Labor Party in July, 1984. Arising out of those discussions, a resolution was passed calling for a summit meeting on the problem of domestic violence, so that a national approach to legislative and social reforms could be developed. After consultations with my predecessor, the Australian Institute of Criminology offered to host a national conference on all aspects of domestic violence: against adults and children, sexual and non-sexual. This offer was accepted as it seemed obvious that the Australian Institute of Criminology was the appropriate body to organise such a conference in light of its role in research in this area, and in light of the fact that it had previously held a national conference in November, 1979 to deal with the entire spectrum of domestic violence. In conducting that conference, as in planning for this present conference, the Institute first sought to assemble persons from around Australia who were researching into various aspects of domestic violence, and put them in touch with each other. In this way, the extent of violence uncovered by research, the myths of domestic violence, and the attitudes of the community towards the issues could be disclosed. Second, the aim was to look carefully at programs designed to deal with domestic violence, both as to institutional or bureaucratic initiatives, and initiatives taken at grass roots levels, to attempt to evaluate the various programs, to determine what improvements might be made to them, and to formulate plans for future programs with an aim to reducing - and finally eradicating - violence in the home.

The 1979 conference acted as a catalyst for action in this area, but that action appears to have been fragmented. Every jurisdiction has acknowledged that the problem exists, and that solutions have to be found. They all seem to have tried to find those solutions. Legal reforms have been formulated, and in most jurisdictions enacted, and inquiry after inquiry has been held into spouse abuse, child abuse, and all aspects of domestic violence. So the overall picture is one of a lot of good work being done, but in a piecemeal and fragmented way. It seems obvious to all who are concerned with this problem that it is an area that could greatly benefit from a national overview: hence the present conference. If there are to be decisions made at a federal level for the allocation of special resources to deal with the problem, no-one can expect such resources to be handed

out unless there is a co-ordinated plan of action with common goals and common means of achieving those goals. Thus in planning this conference the Institute has developed a format which will permit not only a comprehensive national survey of the situation with regard to domestic violence in Australia, but also the development of a program for future action and research.

When the Institute began to plan this conference in detail it was decided that a more comprehensive survey of the overall problem of domestic violence in this country would be achieved if there was a break-up of the subject matter into the two main topics: inter-spousal violence and child abuse. For this reason the Institute will conduct a related conference on all aspects of child abuse (including those children who are caught up in violent spouse relationships) in February next year. I would just like to add that as it is contemplated that, arising from these conferences, there will be sets of recommendations to the Government for future planning and action, the whole question of any allocation of resources must await the conclusion of the second conference. This present conference cannot be dealt with in isolation; both conferences are essentially concerned with the same problem, so the ways and means devised of dealing with that problem must be both co-ordinated and cohesive.

The Institute is the appropriate body to conduct a national conference on this topic, and it has established itself over the past few years as an important source of research on the problem. Both the Institute and its Board of Management have accorded high priority to research on this matter, and the topic has been given prominence in the Institute's research program.

Turning now to a more general discussion of the subject matter of the conference, increasing areas of private rights progressively are coming under Commonwealth regulation. Some level of Commonwealth regulation exists to provide protection for the victims of domestic violence.

Commonwealth regulation is limited on two bases. First, the Commonwealth's legislative power under the Constitution is somewhat circumscribed, but power exists to take special measures to prevent domestic violence and protect the marital relationship. People living in de facto relationships are, however, in this area outside Commonwealth power. Second, the Commonwealth to date has limited its domestic violence remedies to those available under the Family Law Act, administered by the Family Court of Australia and other courts exercising jurisdiction under that act.

This second basis severely limits effective Commonwealth regulation in this area. It is generally acknowledged that in at least certain circumstances the prosecution of perpetrators of domestic violence as criminal offenders must proceed. But to do

so within a framework which at best seeks to achieve reconciliation of husbands and wives, and at worst seeks to promote a level of dispute conciliation between spouses, is recognised in many areas as inappropriate. This has left battered wives having to pursue civil remedies by personally seeking injunctive relief, and prosecuting breaches of injunctive relief that they themselves have obtained. Hence the common plea: 'Family Court injunctions are not worth the paper they are written on'.

A Joint Select Committee of the Parliament, on which I served, recognised this limitation several years ago. A recommendation was made to strengthen the protective procedures available to spouses under the Family Law Act by enabling a power of arrest to be attached to personal protection injunctions made to stop domestic violence. However, the recommendation, implemented by 1983 amendments to the Family Law Act on a vote in both Parliamentary Houses, was essentially a compromise. A spouse who breaches a personal protection injunction accompanied by a power of arrest can only be held, or incarcerated, by the police for twnety-four hours. At the end of the twenty-four hour period the spouse is released unless proceedings for breach of the personal protection injunction have been commenced by the victim. All here present will recognise such a procedure as having been the result of steering a middle course. All here present will not be surprised to know that the power of arrest procedure is one seldom used where effective state domestic violence legislative procedures exist, and is infrequently used in Victoria, the Northern Territory, and the Australian Capital Territory where such procedures do not exist.

Commonwealth policy in this area has its better aspects. 'Lawyers law' has been included in the Family Law Act to ensure that the generally more effective state domestic violence remedies are specifically reserved in relation to parties to a marriage. I understand that in South Australia, only the occasional application is lodged in the federal sphere in relation to domestic violence when state police assistance and criminal offence provisions are available through specialist domestic violence provisions under the South Australian Justices Act. I anticipate that we will soon see the results of the implementation of reforms presently under consideration in the Northern Territory and Victoria. This will result in effective protections against domestic violence being available to all Australian households.

In relation specifically to the Australian Capital Territory, in May 1984, my predecessor referred the particular problem of domestic violence in the territory to the Australian Law Reform Commission for investigation and recommendations. The Commission produced a discussion paper which was issued and circulated for comment in October, 1984. Following the receipt of comment on the

discussion paper, and the holding of public consultations in the territory, the Commission has now produced a draft report. The Commission sought and obtained permission from me to circulate to this conference a paper detailing the draft recommendations that will be contained in its final report to the Government. There are a couple of specific matters dealt with in these draft recommendations that I think need to be stressed, one dealing with the non-legal side of the issue, and the other with the question of enforcement. The first is the recommendation that there be established in the territory a domestic violence unit to operate as a nerve centre to which both the victim and the perpetrator can be referred for support, advice, and counselling. It is recommended that the unit work in close liaison with all concerned agencies, and especially with the police, and that it be responsible for publicity and public education which should be intensive and widespread. The tasks that the Commission propose for the unit are difficult and numerous, but it is viewed as playing an absolutely vital role in curbing the problem of domestic violence. The Commission is of the opinion that if each case is 'managed effectively and sensitively with appropriate counselling support and referral, the burden that is cast on the law to effect a cure will be considerably lightened'. Since the law by itself is not effective in many cases, the Commission hopes that a combination of legal sanctions and intense welfare support would go far in preventing further violence.

The other matter that needs to be stressed in any discussion of the methods of achieving effective results in this area, is that a great deal depends on the police response to the problem. Both in making the criminal law work, or in effecting the alternative of the protection orders recommended by the Commission, the police play a vital role. What seems to be required as a starting point is a change in police attitudes to incidents of domestic violence. The police must realise that it is not a sign of failure on their part if a prosecution does not proceed for any number of the complex reasons, that this happens in this area, and they must not see their taking action as a waste of time if the sentence handed down is not draconian. Police attitudes must change, and they must come to view domestic violence as a crime that can never be justified. If the police were to come down hard on the problem then this would lead to an eventual change in general community attitudes.

I do not propose to detain you from your discussions any longer, but in conclusion I would like to express the thanks of the Government to the Australian Institute of Criminology for the efforts they have expended to ensure that this conference is given every chance of achieving effective results, and to wish you all success in your endeavours.

II

VIOLENCE AS EXPERIENCE: COMMENTARIES ON INDIVIDUAL AND STRUCTURAL ISSUES

'I told her I was going to give her the kicking of her life. But I had pre-planned that. At work I said to three or four blokes I'm going to go home and I'm going to give it [sic] the biggest kicking of it's [sic] life because I've had a gut's full. And I must have had a look of a crazy man because she was like ... a rabbit ready to run. And I said 'You move and I'll drive it right through your heart and you'll know every second you die'.

Anonymous male batterer
interviewed on Open File,
Australian Broadcasting
Commission, 1985.

'There was so much trouble between us now, the first bad trouble.

'You'll have to get rid of it', Andrew said.

In the last month of my pregnancy, Andrew hit me for the first time.

I think the very fact that I bled and bore children frightened and disgusted him.

'You stupid woman', said Andrew. 'What would you know? I don't get infections. I'm not rotten. You're the one who's rotten on the inside.'

excerpts from Eva, Robyn Friend, 1985, pp. 57, 62, 89, 149.

'I began to feel like a human being again'

The papers of Kerryn and Rowan present two sides, respectively, of life within refuges. Kerryn tells of the despair of her existence with a violent husband, and describes the invaluable service provided to her by the refuge movement. She speaks of the opportunity to communicate with other women, of the overturning of the power of the abuser and of the vital practical assistance she received during her stay at the refuge. Kerryn also describes the difficulties she subsequently encountered in attempting to locate appropriate accommodation.

Rowan, based upon her experience as a refuge worker, describes the typical behaviour and reactions of both the female victim of violence and the male perpetrator. She catalogues the various types of abuse inflicted upon women, and outlines the sequence of events involved in a woman's decision to seek refuge elsewhere. Her paper is a salute to the courage and tenacity of such women.

Violence as Experience: the Ethnic Perspective

Whilst it is important, according to Moo, to eradicate the myth that the violence perpetrated by migrant men is quantitatively and qualitatively different from that perpetrated by other men, it is necessary to recognise that the migrant woman's experience of violence is markedly different from her English-speaking Anglo sister (see Moo, Maglizza, Norman and Ciurak). Migrant women are thus seriously constrained in their response to the violent male partner. Norman states: 'The crisis for non-English-speaking women is compounded by isolation, economic dependence, confusion about their legal rights, limited access to support services and language difficulties'. Furthermore, extrication from the violent situation may not be a viable option; Maglizza notes: 'In cultures where lineage, family integrity and the strict adherence to role obligation are highly valued, the risk of losing face or bringing disgrace upon herself and family is no small matter. It can be the mark of grave personal failure for many migrant women'. Consequently, Moo and Norman call for the increased development of specialised services for these women. In addition those who develop these services, according to Moo and Norman, must be cognisant of both the variety and intensity of factors influencing migrant women's experiences.

Violence as Experience: the Black Perspective

'[Young people] have come to accept domestic violence as a part of Aboriginal culture'

Ridgeway, in her paper 'Domestic Violence: Aboriginal Women's Viewpoint', attempts to locate the violence perpetrated by Aboriginal men within an historical context. She asserts that

the alterations to social circumstances accompanying colonisation, particularly the collapse of the highly structured and largely invariant gender roles, severely disturbed the equilibrium between the sexes. The radical devaluation of women's status, the recasting of the female as sexual commodity, occurred in conjunction with the loss of a legitimate male role. The disintegration of the traditional community is thus implicated, according to Ridgeway, in the commission of violence against women. Furthermore, she claims that the contemporary resolution of this historical problem lies within the sphere of Aboriginal solidarity. Ridgeway eschews the feminist response to such violence; thereby, questions relating to the identification between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men, and the apparent similarities in their deployment of power, remain unasked. In addition, there is silence on the issue of the function of social control within traditional Aboriginal society; Ridgeway states: 'Severe punishment was handed out to those who failed to perform at the accepted level', indicating, nevertheless, the central significance of conformity through coercion.

Violence as Experience: the Family

Carnahan's paper derives from an interview conducted several years ago with a married couple. She utilises this material to point to several issues she sees as vital to the continuation of violence within relationships, and its inter-generational transmission: the distribution of power between the sexes, and the modelling of violent behaviour within the family. In predicting the probable future of this particular relationship, Carnahan believes that the female partner would seek recourse to stereotypic feminine behaviour; this would possibly encompass nagging. (See Johnson's paper. It attempts, in part, to deal with this problem of social control from below.)

Violence as Experience: the Church

Gledhill, in her paper presented on behalf of the Commission on the Status of Women, Australian Council of Churches, argues convincingly for acknowledgement of the consistency between the conception of women integral to both social discourse and church doctrine. Thus, she states 'theology is not God-given but man-constructed'. Furthermore, Gledhill claims that the ideology of the church may facilitate the victimisation of women within relationships: 'the pattern of authority in the church, reinforced by language and other symbols which exclude women, all conspire to create a situation in which women can become victims of violence'. The role of female ministers is seen to be vital to the alleviation of the violent oppression of women. Gledhill enumerates other changes in the church's response which could contribute toward the minimisation of women's suffering. Most importantly, Gledhill and her colleagues are attempting to disrupt contemporary Christian doctrine on violence within relationships.

LIFE AFTER THE REFUGE

A Personal Account

Kerryn
Maroondah Half Way House
Ringwood Victoria

I

The bus braked with a jerk and woke me up. I had only just closed my eyes in the last half hour after struggling with my two daughters all night. They were not used to travelling and I suppose they could sense my own feeling of insecurity and decided to cry for most of the trip. Within a few minutes of reaching our destination the bus driver had bundled us off the bus, set down the two large suitcases and left the girls crying once again by my side. The bus doors closed abruptly and it drove off into the shadowy mist which was accompanying the dawn.

Well that was it ... I felt very alone, lost and cold but had to move on ... it was too late to turn back. I was 600 kilomtres from home in a state I had not visited before and where I knew no-one. My shaking hands reached into my pocket to grasp the crumpled piece of paper which listed the phone number I was to ring. Fortunately a phone box was situated at the bus stop and within five minutes the taxi had arrived, the phone call had been made and I was on my way to the refuge. The voice on the other end of the line had sounded confused at first ... 'No she was not sure if I was expected but she was a resident and the workers may have known more and she had just woken to the sound of the telephone ringing ... but come over anyway'.

Everything appeared to work out so much easier than I had expected it would. I had been worried that there would be no phone nearby and that I would not be able to find a taxi and I could see myself, all six stone nine pounds of me trying to lug the suitcases and carry the girls at the same time. However none of these predicaments occurred.

The trip to the refuge was brief so before long I had been welcomed with a hot cup of tea and the girls were crunching into a warm bowl of corn flakes and were looking a little more cheerful. I began to relax and welcomed the warmth, understanding and friendship that was being offered to me. I remember experiencing such companionship a few months prior when I stayed at a women's refuge in my home town after leaving my husband for the first time.

I only lived at the first refuge for a short period because my husband began promising faithfully he would change his behaviour. He admitted for the first time to other people that he had been physically abusing us and I thought he might be able to control his temper this time. So after many promises had been made I went home after only one week at the refuge. Despite this, within the first week at home I was to find out that he was even worse than before and he vowed to gain revenge for my leaving him and he did. Therefore the first chance I received I left him, knowing this time I would not ever return. So here I was once again in a refuge feeling very frightened but also realising I was not so alone now.

When I arrived at the first refuge I thought I was the only person experiencing a violent relationship but I realised this was not so after meeting the other residents and finding they all had similar tales to tell. At both refuges it was apparent that many others had been inflicted with both physical and mental pain also and I was aware that my situation was not unique. Upon discovering this I began to feel less guilty. Until then I thought that somehow I was entirely at fault for my husband's behaviour. Thus, I belive women's refuges are vital because they provide and create an environment where women and children share and discuss their past experiences and in turn this assists them to cope better with their existing problems and the new ones which emerge with their change of life style.

The refuges not only offered understanding and friendship, but were also expedient in applications for pensions, medical cover, legal aid and housing. I remember I had little knowledge of the benefits we were entitled to, I was not familiar with the area, I lacked confidence and was in a distressed state of mind so the help I received in making the initial applications in these areas was very beneficial to me. Another valuable aspect about the refuges was they helped revive a sense of freedom which I had lost in my marriage. Although there were a set of rules needed in the running of the communal environment, we were fairly free from the restraint I had been accustomed to. This liberty allowed me to contribute in group discussions and I was able to express an opinion without fear of being physically abused. I began to feel like a human being again, I felt my life was of some value once more. After a few months of this new life style I had gained confidence and my health improved. I felt less fearful of my husband and was ready to come back to my home state.

II

... The train drew into the station twenty minutes late and as it stopped it seemed to let out an exhausted sigh of relief. I sympathised with it - it was a relief to be home again, but at the same time I was feeling apprehensive because I was not sure what lay ahead. The confidence I had gained at the refuge was daunted a little, now I was on my own, but I knew I could not

stay at the refuge for ever and I knew I must take the opportunity to become more independent - after all this was what I had learnt in these last few months. However I felt it would be reassuring to stay in contact with the refuge - not so as they could hold my hand but more to restore the confidence I needed to help me survive. Therefore I found myself many times in the years to come, thinking back to the time I spent in the refuges, remembering I was not the only one having problems and thus I used this as a source of strength.

The period that followed my return was full of many changes. I moved seven times in the first four years. Housing and finance were major problems. It was extremely difficult for me as a single parent receiving a single income to obtain adequate and comfortable accommodation whilst at the same time being able to buy enough food and clothing for us. I found it was to be either one way or the other - there was no happy medium. For instance I found it was possible to have plenty of food if I was prepared to put up with houses which were literally crumbling down, rat infested, easily accessible to intruders and occupied by unreliable and sometimes lunatic flatmates. On the other hand we could live in a beautiful brand new, two storey, town house (after convincing the agents I had a reliable well paid job) if I was prepared to exist with an empty fridge and cupboards and no money for clothing etc. Therefore we changed addresses often in the search for adequate accommodation.

During this time I had been so busy trying to cope with the housing and financial problems that I had failed to see how lonely I had become. I had become very isolated due to the combination of moving house so often and because of the stigma attached to single parents. That is, many people tend to avoid them because they do not want to become involved with their problems. I tried my best to remain strong, calm and retain a positive outlook on life. However at one stage after a broken relationship and the lack of friends to talk to I was induced to have my daughters looked after by a foster family for a few weeks so as to relieve the strain of being in a constant isolated and financially poor state. This short break helped me to acquire more strength but did not solve the long term financial difficulties.

I tried to relieve the financial burden by looking for full time employment, but owing to my being out of the work force for several years without skills and qualifications, I soon realised it would be difficult to find a job. In fact it was a long time before I found full time work and when employed I realised what a vicious circle I was moving in. The Social Security Department appeared to discourage people from receiving pensions as is indicated by the ridiculously low rate of pay issued to its beneficiaries, but when I tried to improve my financial situation

by working I lost the concessions and health benefits, whilst having to pay for child care and travelling. The single wage I was receiving was not able to encompass these extra costs. So with the assistance of the local member of parliament I submitted a letter to the Social Security Minister detailing my dilemma and asked what action could be taken to assist myself and other single parents, but the minister was unable to offer support. I knew my single plea for help would probably be pointless but I did not want to be accused of doing little to improve my circumstances. Thus after being subtly ignored by the minister I came to the conclusion that unless living at home with parents where babysitting and accommodation costs might be reduced greatly, the single parent would be better to stay on a pension and accept that he/she will have limited opportunities to improve their financial position.

After the fourth year existing as a single parent family I eventually was unable to pay the rent and was unable to finance yet another move. I felt the only alternative left was to place my daughters into an institution until I could financially support them. I made an appointment to place them in care and was asked to bring a member of my family with me. I asked my mother to attend and she finally realised the severity of my situation and offered immediate financial assistance. She aided us in moving, purchased furniture, electrical appliances, food and clothing. We had been redeemed at the last moment!

From this period in time our socio-economic position improved. We escaped from the hardship merely by good fortune. I was lucky that my mother was in a position to support us at that particular time. Shortly after, I was re-married and am now enjoying a happy and stable relationship, I successfully completed full-time Higher School Certificate and am currently doing a Bachelor of Arts Degree at University part-time, I was until recently a Policewoman and am currently employed as a social welfare worker in the women's refuge where I first turned to for help.

I wonder what might have occurred if our luck had not changed and I think about the other families in similar circumstances who are not so fortunate. I hope now I am working in the refuge I can utilise my position and my experiences to offer support and understanding if needed.

APPENDIX

I believe the following services should be considered:

- Follow-up support service after leaving the refuge.
- Central source and referral service specifically for women and children who have lived in refuges.
- On-going contact between ex-residents, refuge volunteers and refuge workers; e.g., Post Refuge Centre.
- A realistic inquiry into living costs and subsequent review of Social Security payments and benefits in relation to single parents with dependent children. An integral awareness needs to be developed when making recommendations.

THE SYNDROME OF BATTERED WOMEN

Dawn Rowan
Christies Beach Women's Shelter

Introduction

Criminal assault of women in their homes (euphemistically labelled domestic violence) occurs in up to one-third of Australian homes*. You are statistically more likely to get hurt inside the home than out. In our community, 80 per cent of all murders are likely to be committed within the family, or by close acquaintances (friends), according to police statistics.

The abuse experienced by women consists of severe and prolonged physical, sexual, psychological, social and financial abuse which results in almost total destruction of the women's self-esteem. A victim of such abuse is brainwashed by the man into believing that she is crazy, inadequate and responsible for the violence perpetrated on her.

The community at large, including the health, media, education, legal, welfare and housing systems, believes a great many myths about domestic violence which further escalates the victim's difficulties in securing proper services from these systems. The service providers are usually seriously ill-informed about the realities of domestic violence and often believe wrongly that victims are 'naggers' who deserve what they get, or provoke it to feed their adrenalin habit, or are crazy.

This paper will examine the myths and realities of domestic violence and present the 'syndrome of battered women'.

Background

My experience of working in Women's Shelters in South Australia and the United Kingdom has enabled me to deal personally with approximately 2000 women and 5000 children victims of criminal assault in the home over the past 9 years.

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* Editor's note: There is currently no national statistical data base upon which such an estimate may be made. Such estimates are, at best, educated guesses.

This intense contact in a residential, non-institutionalised setting provides a unique opportunity for shelter workers to gather full and clear details of the lives and experiences of victims which are simply not available to any other workers who deal with criminal assault in the home.

Shelter workers do not see just the legal issues - the failure of the police, lawyers, judges, laws and the legal system on the whole to treat violent crimes against women as crimes; shelter workers do not see just the emotional trauma and devastating breakdown of family relationships and the aftermath; shelter workers do not see just the agony of leaving the house into which the victim has put years of physical, emotional, and financial energy; shelter workers do not see just the chronic and acute health difficulties suffered both mentally and physically by the women and children; shelter workers do not see just see the further degradation of the victims financially as they attempt valiantly to live on a pension 40 per cent below the poverty line; shelter workers do not see just the complete rejection of the victim by previously supportive friends, and community or church, and the 'Blame the victim' mentality which quickly and easily develops.

Shelter workers see all of this, and much more, in a 24 hour residential setting with hundreds of families each year who stay in contact with the workers for weeks, and in most cases, months and years. This unique environment provides us with unique information on every aspect of the past, present and future lives of the victims of criminal asault in the home. Most women coming to women's Shelters for help begin by saying to us, 'I have never told anyone this before', and indeed it is my experience that the information we receive is not known to other professionals working in this area, and the great frustration for many shelter workers is that they are often not believed when the present this accurate and unique information or they are discounted as exaggerating or over-emotional.

I therefore urge policy makers and service providers in the health, education, legal, welfare, media and housing arenas to begin close liaison and ongoing communication with the Women's Shelters in their areas, so that established and proper responses, which prevent rather than escalate the occurrence of spouse abuse, can be developed.

The Syndrome of Battered Women

After only a few months of working with battered women a clear pattern of the abuse became apparent to me, which I have identified and documented as a syndrome.

The abuse has been steadily and continually escalating in frequency and intensity over the years - women do not leave after

the first assault, and it is common for them to stay for many years, for a number of very valid reasons outlined below. The abuse experienced by women consists of any or all of the following:

1. Severe physical abuse: this includes the bruises, cuts, broken bones and burns. The threat of violence terrorises the women at all times even though actual assault may or may not occur intermittently.

2. Sexual Violence: refers to rape, bondage and general degradation of the women sexually, often occurring immediately after a physical beating.

3. Psychological Abuse: this is perhaps the most effective means of annihilating the woman's self-esteem. Psychological abuse is conducted along the lines of standard brain-washing tactics in that the victim is isolated from physical and emotional, social and intellectual support, and she is told the same thing over and over again many times each day. She is told, 'You're incompetent, stupid, insane; I'll have you committed; you're a hopeless mother; you can't cook' you're fat, ugly; all my problems are your fault; and if you weren't so incompetent I wouldn't have to bash you'.

   And like any brain-washing situation the woman <u>believes</u> all of this. She quite wrongly blames herself and believes that she has provoked her husband by her incompetence as a woman and if she was a better woman she would not be abused.

4. Social Abuse: involves any of the above psychological abuse being said in front of friends and family which further degrades the victim and assists in the annihilation of her self-esteem.

5. Financial Abuse: occurs when the woman is given no money at all, or the man demands that the woman pay all the bills and buy the food with completely inadequate funds. When she fails she is blamed and abused for her incompetence with money. Working women usually have all their earnings removed by the man.

This 'package' of abuse is accompanied by daily threats to the woman of, 'If you leave me you won't get a cent; you'll be out in the gutter; you'll lose the kids; you'll lose the house and the furniture; and I'll find you and kill you!' These threats are also part of the brain-washing process and the victim believes all of this as well.

In my view the most fundamental process involved in keeping a woman in a violent relationship is to create in her a belief that she is the cause of the violence, that she has provoked it and

that she deserves to be treated abusively. Using the psycholgocial abuse described above these beliefs become well established. But it gets even worse.

From the women in our client group*, 80 per cent of men who beat their wives are charming to everyone else, and are not identifiable outside the family as violent or criminal. This puts 80 per cent of battered women at greater psychological risk because when they describe to family, friends, police, counsellors, psychiatrists, what they are experiencing, the response is, 'He's charming, what's wrong with you?' Also, the clear fact that the man does only abuse her actively demonstrates she must be the problem.

Further, the double standards passionately believed by our society generally have convinced women that harmony and happiness within the family is the responsibility of the women to maintain. We judge women as successful human beings for their achievements as wives and mothers - for what they achieve inside the family. Men are judges as successful human beings for what they achieve outside the family and not for their achievements as husbands and fathers. Thus, if the family relationships are failing the whole society leaps in to blame the woman.

Therefore, the victim of criminal assault in the home wrongly accepts responsibility for the abuse perpetrated on her, blames herself for failing as a woman, wife, mother, hides her terror and injuries from everyone (says she fell down the stairs), and tries harder to please the man and be a better woman.

Regardless of her efforts, and the fact that she has highly developed skills as a mother, cook, budgeter, home manager, and peace-keeper, the violence and abuse continues to escalate steadily.

Finally when everything possible has been done by the woman to please her partner, but the abuse continues to become more dangerous, the woman fears for her life or for her children's lives and she leaves, usually in a severe state of crisis.

It amazes me, given the horrendous and debilitating experiences of beaten women, that any are able to leave the relationship at all and I greatly admire the strength and courage of these women who act in spite of their terror and devastated self-esteem.

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* Editor's Note: Rowan is here discussing the specific refuge population. It is not possible to generalise these statements to other women.

Having left the violent man, against all odds, she then has to face a mountainous set of problems. Firstly, she faces her own guilt because she believes she has failed as a wife and mother. Secondly, she has genuine fear of being alone in a society which tells her that women cannot and should not survive alone. And thirdly, she has the expressed attitude from her family, and friends that she has demonstrably failed as a wife and mother bceause the family have indeed split up. They also believe she has no right to take the children away from their 'charming' father.

If all this is not bad enough, the battered woman's problems get still worse. Within 24 hours of her leaving home her husband collapses into 'buy-back' and 'helpless' behaviour and he is on the phone to her or her family crying, promises never to do it again, pleads with her to return, says he'll kill himself, he's having a heart attack, says he loves her, he can't live without her, and sends her flowers, chocolates, poetry, birthday presents. When access to the children is arranged, usually within two weeks, he emotionally and materially blackmails the children. He said, 'I did hit Mum, but I'll never do it again; I'm sick, lonely, and I want you all to come back to your own room and toys, school and friends; and if your mother won't let you come home, it's because she's a cruel woman who doesn't care about you or me. The children serve this up to mum when they return from visits to father.

At this stage the woman is faced with the perfect husband and father. She wants to believe he has changed and that this unbelievable display of love and romance will last. She feels needed (and indeed, he is clearly unable to cope without her - the washing machine has shrunk his best jumper!) and valued and wanted at last. She can't bear to feel the guilt which he manipulates her to feel, she has pressure from the children, the poverty of the Supporting Parent's Benefit, difficulty with housing, terror of physical, emotional and social isolation and the community rejection of her as a 'deserting' wife. Not surprisingly, she goes home.

When she goes home, the community leaps in again, without taking a moment of time to analyse why she has behaved in this way, and 'Blames the Victim' with myths like - once a battered woman, always a battered woman and there's no point in trying to do anything to help her; or, battered women are crazy and enjoy the abuse - it gives them some excitement in their dull lives and they need the adrenalin hit, or, that they provoke the abuse to create romance and affection in their relationships, or, she was imagining or lying about the abuse.

Of course when she goes home the abuse begins again usually with greater severity because the partner feels he has demeaned himself pleading with her to return. She responds as before by

accepting responsbility for the violence and tries harder still. The abuse continues to escalate, she leaves, the 'buy-back' and 'helplessness' escalates and she is manipulated to return home again. This cycle will continue for many years until one or both receive a proper intervention which will break the cycle.

In the Western World 97 per cent of criminal assault in the home is perpetrated by men on women, and these victims syndromatically blame themselves and hide their shame and injuries.

This means that there must be a carefully co-ordinated response from the health, legal, welfare, education, media, and housing systems which together play a fundamental role in illuminating criminal assault in the home, and the great suffering resulting from it.

Clearly we must begin to treat the perpretrators in order to effectively resolve this extensive social problem.

This is not a 'women's issue'.

MARGINALISATION AND MIGRANT WOMEN IN REFUGES

Anna Moo
Department of the Premier and Cabinet
Melbourne

I am speaking today as an ex-refuge worker and as the ex co-ordinator of the Refuge Ethnic Workers' Program, a program implemented in Victoria in 1984 to meet the needs of migrant women in refuges.

It would be presumptuous on my part, when speaking of migrant women, if I were to generalise and draw conclusions. All migrant women are different. Social mores vary to an extraordinary degree; exposure to and insulation from Australian culture colour to some extent the experience of migrants. My discussion will be therefore somewhat tentative. I will attempt to compare and contrast how specific services in refuges (i.e. migrant women's refuges - ethnic workers within refuges) and mainstream services (i.e. general programs across refuges for migrant women) meet the needs of migrant women and how effective they are in overcoming and reducing alienation or marginalisation.

Before I compare and contrast mainstream versus ethnospecific services, I would like to challenge the assumption which states that domestic violence among migrant communities is much more prevalent than among the general community. Statistical evidence in Victoria does not support this view. In fact one third of the women and children accommodated in Victorian refuges in the past three years were of ethnic backgrounds, a percentage which correlates with the representation of migrants in Australia.

Similarly, it is commonly believed that some national groups are more likely to perpetrate crimes of domestic violence than others. Again our experience does not support this view. The number of women and children accommodated in refuges and their national composition reflect Australia's migration policies and intakes. Domestic violence among the migrant communities is as widespread as it is across all communities and it knows no social, racial or political barriers.

It is further believed that migrant women are more submissive, more accepting of the hierarchical family structures, of the subordination and oppression of women, than women from the general community. In reality the number of women who come into refuges against the barriers that language and an insensitive support system impose, belies this assumption. While it is agreed

that migrant women tend to endure an intolerable domestic situation over a longer period than women in general, important factors such as the migration experience, the lack of family supports, the tendency of migrant women, whenever possible, to rely on informal networks, the scarcity of information are ignored.

The position of migrant women in situations of domestic violence is no different from that of other women. Like other women, migrant women are confronted by issues related to adequate income, decent living standards, employment and training opportunities. Their position is determined by the same economic and social factors that oppress women and keep them in a subordinate and dependent position. But migrant women are further disadvantaged by language factors and by the unfamiliarity of the existing systems. Consequently migrant women are discriminated against by a legal system which does not cater for their needs, by a police force which is too busy to care, by a social security system which does not provide for the needs of a multicultural society.

While then, migrant women who are victims of domestic violence are in a similar position to that of women in the general community, they have specific needs which need to be addressed. It is, however, generally presumed, that since women are all the same, that migrant women will adapt within a feminist ideological framework. This framework does not take into consideration the migration experience, economic factors, and differing points of view. Within a purist ideological perspective, there is little room for negotiation or understanding. Consequently migrant women who are seen not to adhere to the accepted ideological framework are dismissed and relegated to an inferior status.

I will now discuss ethnospecific and mainstream services and how effective they are in meeting the needs of migrant women. The migrant women's refuge which was opened in Victoria several years ago fulfils an instrumental role. It advocated for migrant women, it raises issues of concern, it provides a comfortable and accepting environment and an empathic culturally-relevant approach to migrant women who are victims of domestic violence.

While the migrant women's refuge fulfils a very important role, its effectiveness is constrained by the following factors:

- It is impossible to meet the needs of all migrant women seeking refuge by special services since the demand for accommodation is unpredictable and subject to peak periods.

- By placing migrant women in specific refuges, women are isolated and separated from mainstream society.

- By providing specific services, the situation is created whereby mainstream services abdicate their responsibilities into the hands of secondary services.

- On a broader level, there is an inherent difficulty on the part of specific services to influence and challenge mainstream structures. By providing specific services, the situation is created whereby the needs of migrant women are addressed from the bottom up without a corresponding effort at the mainstream level.

While then migrant women's refuges are essential, these need to be complemented by a general program which addresses the wider implications of migrant women's experiences. The refuge ethnic workers' program in Victoria was conceived in an attempt to meet the needs of migrant women across the whole spectrum of the refuge program. Starting from the perspective that migrant women's issues are a concern for all refuges, the ethnic issues are addressed by all refuges with the support and collaboration of the refuge ethnic worker's program. Instead of addressing the issues relevant to migrant women from the bottom up, these are now approached from a horizontal level in a collective and co-operative effort.

But much more importantly, the provision of a general program, coupled with specific programs, promotes cultural awareness, consciousness-raising, greater understanding and tolerance. Instead of segregating women, it allows residents and workers to discuss issues, confront prejudice and bias and develop strategies to oppose them. Instead of placing the responsibility for social change upon the worker or the experts, migrant women themselves are empowered to participate in the processes or changes.

When we examine the Victorian situation and attempt to analyse how these complementary models of service delivery have effectively reduced the alienation of migrant women in refuges, it appears that some success has been achieved. There is indeed, greater debate on migrant women's issues, migrant issues are prevalent on refuges' agendas, migrant women appear to stay longer in refuges and individual refuges are developing policies to employ bi-lingual bicultural workers. But a geat deal more needs to be achieved before the issues of equity, access and participation for migrant women are adequately addressed.

In conclusion, I believe that the marginalisation of migrant women in refuges can be overcome by the provision of specific programs coupled with a general program across refuges. Only by addressing the issues from a broader perspective across all levels of service development and provision can the marginalisation of migrant women be overcome and the structures that keep migrant women oppressed be challenged.

MIGRANT WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE DILEMMA OF WHETHER TO STAY OR LEAVE

Eloise Maglizza
Women's Health Care House
West Perth

Domestic violence is an urgent issue which spans all cultures. Only through recognition of the differences in cultures, can we, as providers of services to the victims of domestic violence, meet the needs of the multi-cultural women who seek our assistance. Although women from certain cultural backgrounds may not have been obviously seeking help in the past, they are in the community at large.

It's difficult to know how high the incidence of abuse towards women is in the migrant communities, because no accurate statistics currently exist as there is under-reporting of family violence cases. Those cases which do come to the attention of shelters and social workers are often among the most severe. The woman may have suffered years of extreme abuse before seeking outside help - and even then only after suffering repeated and escalating abuse will she seek help out of desperation.

Like other women subjected to physical violence, a migrant woman may remain in a battering situation for a variety of complex reasons. She feels she must live up to the traditional role of women as wives and mothers. Most migrant women have grown up with this tradition put into songs, poems, stories and community beliefs that to be a good mother is to totally disregard her own needs for those of her husband and children. She is the pivot of the family, so no matter whether she is subjected to physical or verbal violence, the responsibility to safeguard her family is totally accepted by her.

I have found when counselling migrant women that their family will not support them in most cases, even when they have been put into hospital due to their husband's violence against them. Remarks like 'We all have a cross to bear', 'You will just have to make sure you don't upset him', 'A bad father is better than no father at all', and a tremendous responsibility is put on a woman to give her children the standard of living that a father can provide. So she is faced with the dilemma of deciding whether she has a right to leave or should stay. She may feel extremely isolated from outside support systems; she may be financially dependent on her abuser; she has developed a sense of low self-esteem and may even blame herself for his violent behaviour; or she may hold onto that glimmer of hope that he may change.

However, because of deeply ingrained cultural values, or her unfamiliarity with the English language, these issues are often magnified many times over for the migrant woman.

For example, her isolation and feeling of hopelessness will be exacerbated if she cannot speak English, is not familiar with the law or her legal rights in this country (in some parts of the world if a woman leaves her husband he can get the police to bring her back home), and if she is unaware of the community services which could assist her. These migrant women often see their husbands - no matter how abusive towards them - as their sole means of support, emotional and financial, in a culture whose language, ways and values she does not yet understand.

Fear is another major reason why many women stay in a violent marriage. The constant threat of losing her own or her children's life is enough for any woman not to contemplate leaving her husband.

As a counsellor, I cannot in all honesty reassure any woman that her husband will not kill her or her children, for statistics show that far too often that does happen. The law does not or cannot protect those women and children. So often, the battered migrant woman may perceive the risk of talking about her abuse as outweighing the advantages. If she reveals that she has been beaten to the social worker, her minister or an outside family member, the woman runs the risk of bringing a great deal of shame upon herself, her husband and her family. In cultures where lineage, family integrity and the strict adherence to role obligation are highly valued, the risk of losing face or bringing disgrace upon herself and family is no small matter. It can be the mark of grave personal failure for many migrant women. Thus, the issue of leaving her abuser is often not even a consideration. Religious objections to divorce - for many of the women are Catholics - means that those women find it very difficult to contemplate leaving the home and breaking up the relationship.

These specific issues need to be acknowledged by the community and the helping professions and addressed realistically in order to help those people most in need.

PROBLEMS FACING MIGRANT WOMEN IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Irene Ciurak
Woodville Migrant Resource Centre
South Australia

After many consultations with welfare workers from mainstream and ethnic specific organisations it can be concluded that large numbers of women from non-English speaking backgrounds do not use shelters or other mainstream welfare or health services. Why? There are many reasons, but predominantly it is because of a lack of knowledge, information and understanding. Migrant women living in violent situations experience desperation through lack of knowledge about options. Welfare workers lack knowledge and understanding of the language and differing cultural needs of migrant women.

Domestic violence is the same for all women. Cultural differences and differing traditions are to be taken into account when working with women from non-English speaking backgrounds. Their culture is not a cause of domestic violence. Migrant women, many of whom come from rural backgrounds, have had only limited education. Frequently, they are also illiterate in their own language. An inability to read, combined with language and cultural differences reinforce the barriers to their access to information. Generally the information needs of these women are met by their husbands who, through contact made at work and in the community, tend to be better informed. Little information exists in community languages and if it does it rarely reaches the women or their community. As a consequence of this, many women remain unaware that emergency accommodation and crisis intervention services do exist. On the other hand, there are women who are aware that shelters exist but harbour misconceptions about their role and about their users. Leaving their home and their familiar environment, even if it is violent, and entering a situation which is alien in terms of language and social conduct is very threatening to migrant women. Shelters are often perceived by the women as being the 'point of no return' as a refuge following irretrievable breakdown of marriage, rather than a resource for assistance in marital crisis. With the exception of a few bi-cultural/bi-lingual workers and volunteers, little cross-cultural expertise or assistance is available to the management of refuges and other accommodation services. Proportionately small numbers of bi-lingual/bi-cultural workers are employed in the area of domestic violence and crisis intervention services let alone in mainstream welfare services. Probably the greater obstacle for the mono-lingual/mono-cultural workers to overcome in these areas is the ability to recognise

and acknowledge that immigrant women have differing cultural backgrounds and consequently often different needs.

Many migrant women are financially dependent upon their husbands. They are unaware that if they leave the matrimonial home, they may be entitled to financial assistance from the State or Federal Governments. In addition, there have been numerous reports indicating that migrant women experience a real fear of losing custody of children and all assets if they make the decision to leave their husbands. This indicates that women from a non-English speaking background are unaware of the Australian legal system, and in particular Family Law, which may protect their rights as parents in their role within the family.

The mechanism by which migrant women traditionally receive support and solve their problems is the immediate and extended family. In the case of domestic violence, going outside the family for assistance, thereby making the problem a public one, is rarely deemed appropriate. The integrity and social status of the individual is totally limited to that of the family. Very often the woman will have no extended family support in Australia or if she does the extended family, for example, mother, brother, sister, will not allow the woman to leave home and will pressure her to stay and keep the family together. Consequently, many women refuse to report incidences of physical abuse, because by doing so, they may discredit the family. Their decision to take the matter outside the traditional support network would be criticised. If she were to take the matter to someone in her community, her priest for example, she would more than likely experience a hostile response and a suggestion that she should try harder to make the marriage work.

In spite of the many problems discussed, some migrant women, through referral services, do go to shelters. Many of these women experience intense feelings of isolation and alienation in the shelter. One reason for this is language problems. Often, basic communication becomes impossible in shelters for migrant women who cannot speak English. Their access to correct information and counselling is hampered by the language barriers between themselves and staff. Often the women cannot even avail themselves of the support which results from the contact with other residents. The burden of interpreting is often placed upon ex-residents or children who may be unable to fulfill this role effectively because they lack the skills and/or maturity of interpreting under such circumstances.

An inability to communicate and a strong feeling of alienation influences a migrant woman's decision to leave the shelter. Early feelings of alienation and non-acceptance in the shelter are caused by cultural differences usually manifested by:

- the type of food purchased and consumed
- traditional parent/child relationship and child rearing practices
- ways of spending leisure time and outward appearances.

Yet another cultural difference is exhibited in the migrant's perception of the Australian welfare system. Many migrant communities perceive welfare services as charities. In contrast, Anglo-Australians are familiar with the concept and regard them as a right. This has varied implications for migrant women using shelters. Many welfare workers have reported that their clients who are residents in shelters feel an obligation to repay them for the services they have provided. This is done by doing more than their fair share of work within the shelter, assuming additional burden of taking care of other resident's children, permitting other residents to consume foodstuffs purchased for themselves. These factors would be sufficient in themselves to drive migrant women back to a violent situation without having had any of their problems tackled.

Let us look at the profile of a migrant woman. A migrant woman has left her country of origin usually because of marriage. The husband makes the decision to migrate for various reasons - political or economic - yet the woman migrates to be with her husband, as traditionally 'marriages are forever'. She undergoes the migration process of leaving her country and coming to Australia. The process takes many years to adapt to if she ever adapts at all. Once she is here she has very few things that are hers. For most immigrant women the family unit is paramount as opposed to her individual needs. The family unit is often a reference of identity, of support. A significant sense of loss and grief for families in the country of origin is acute in the early years of migration. A domestic crisis in the home often highlights the unresolved grief of migration.

For women, the traditional role is as being the 'avoider of shame' as opposed to the man's role of 'bringer of pride'. The migrant woman has religious commitment: divorce or annulment is not as readily known or granted in her country of origin. Migrant mothers need to think of children first - 'broken marriages hurt children and shame them' - 'who would want to marry my son or daughter if they're from a broken home'.

When we look at her profile it is clear that children, work, church, husband, her extended family network, her ethnic community and material security are what she bases her life on. In her eyes, influenced by her community's pressure and its social values, once she leaves home she loses all of these. Her one gain is the cessation of domestic violence.

Intervention is normally not sought until the domestic crisis is intolerable. If she seeks support, welfare or health services like Department of Social Security, Department of Child Welfare, lawyer, doctor, housing trust, what are the chances that her first point or any point of contact will be with any other language but English? What choices does she have? Clearly she has few options if any at all.

Once a woman has left her home her survival is foremost. She is toted around by welfare worker or refuge worker from courts, to housing officers, to health services. Through her mind one thought is: 'How will I get through the day?'. When she starts looking towards her own self development, what is she offered - English classes? Some TAFE classes are available in other languages but these are limited. There are a few ethnospecific agencies which offer programs or ongoing support structures but these such programs are usually developed by individual workers in agencies and when that worker leaves the programs finish. When she has gone through all the steps and made her decisions as best she can, she is alone - she faces isolation and there is no longer anything to divert her attention or occupy her time. She is all that is left. The woman then has to look at herself and what is left for her. Most of her life she has spent looking after others and when she is alone she sees failure and loneliness. She lacks that ability to communicate and she is not likely to have a network of anyone outside her family for support. The likelihood of her being confident with the ability to go out into the broader community is minimal. The pain she experiences through isolation is greater than the pain she remembers from her marriage.

What are the positives for migrant women:

- Women's services recognising the needs of migrant women.

- The woman herself knowing she has the strength to leave and survive her intolerable situation.

- Breaking the cycle for her daughters. Showing the way and breaking the difficult traditional patterns - enabling her children to break the cultural pressures that are, in too many instances, inextricably attached to migrant women.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE : ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S VIEWPOINT

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South Australian Health Commission
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The information contained within this paper comes from Aboriginal women with whom I have consulted. These women are the survivors of domestic violence today but also the survivors of white oppression and domination.

To gain an understanding of domestic violence within the Aboriginal community today it is important to obtain some background information on:

- the historical role of Aboriginal women within traditional society;
- a perspective on aspects which brought about changes;
- the current status of Aboriginal women within the community;
- domestic violence.

Historical

Historically Aboriginal women's role within Aboriginal society has been that of food gatherer and child bearer having major responsibility for young Aboriginal males up until the performance of intitiation.

The role of food gatherer was quite independent of the male support but of great importance in providing the bulk of food supplies to the family group.

Aboriginal women whilst excluded from male rituals and ceremonies performed important ceremonies of their own. They had an important secondary role in relation to religious ceremonies. Contrary to popular belief Aboriginal women maintained a quite independent and important function within communities and were supported by the other women.

Their role of child bearers brought with it status and recognition not available to Aboriginal men. However, this status was brought to a position of equalibrium through male rituals producing blood as visible signs of equality.

The role of Aboriginal men and women was very clearly defined and accepted. Severe punishment was handed out to those who failed to perform at the accepted level. Aboriginal women were not, as is frequently assumed, submissive but conditioned from a very early age to accept an important role and function within the community.

Changes

Contact with non-Aboriginal society brought with it a break-down of a well developed and clearly defined role and status for both Aboriginal men and women.

Women became valuable commodities for non-Aboriginals and their skills and abilities as servants were frequently exploited. Not only were Aboriginal women slaves to non-Aboriginal families but frequently they were subjected to rape by their bosses: regrettably with the knowledge of the non-Aboriginal spouses. Prostitution of black women became a frequent occurrence. Children were removed and placed in homes and institutions (a practice which is still evident today).

The status of Aboriginal women was reduced to that of a sex-object, the stigma which we still wear today.

Despite the perpetration of violence upon Aboriginal women by non-Aboriginals, women survived - establishing for themselves a role within non-Aboriginal society.

Aboriginal men were not so fortunate - they lost their families, role as hunters and ceremonial rights. They were reduced to mere shadows of their ancestors.

The following characterises the contemporary Aboriginal lifestyle: An infant mortality rate three or four times greater than that for all Australians; life expectancy about 20 years less than that of all Australians; a median family income slightly more than half of that of other Australians; an employment rate that has tripled since 1971 to be four times that of other Australians. A disproportionate number uneducated, undereducated and impoverished.

Young people are directly effected by the act of domestic violence. They have come to accept domestic violence as part of Aboriginal culture. Young women choose not to establish relationships with Aboriginal men, thus threatening the continuation of the Aboriginal race. They are permanently psychologically and emotionally scared, choosing frequently to live as single parents.

Current Status

The role Aboriginal women have undertaken in developing the current position within Aboriginal Affairs is important. They have been a major force behind the changes and continue to fight for survival. Whilst you have had an opportunity to meet a handful of women at this conference who have succeeded in obtaining various levels of personal achievement, the majority of Aboriginal women remain oppressed within a society which denies us equal rights as citizens of this country. The greatest percentage of us live below the poverty line, in substandard housing with no hope of change.

Our health is that of people within a third world country with diseases and sicknesses of epidemic proportion dominating. Our children also are denied equal rights creating another generation of Aboriginal people who are denied education and employment opportunities.

Removal to urban situations has reduced the level of support available to Aboriginal women and exposed us to a way of life which has brought with it additional difficulties and problems. Isolation, poverty and sickness dominate. Non-Aboriginal views and attitudes are perpetrated on Aboriginal women daily. The legal system of this country continues to discriminate against us and provides no justice. The police are perpetrators of crimes against Aboriginals and rape of Aboriginal women by police continues to be an issue.

Domestic Violence

Whilst the evidence of domestic violence within the Aboriginal community appears, on the surface, to resemble that within the non-Aboriginal community, one cannot consider the formulation of policies and establishment of services to meet the need of the Aboriginal community without taking into account issues effecting the functioning of both Aboriginal men and women within the community.

Domestic violence does exist at all levels within the community and is present in all forms. Being an issue which traditionally did not exist we can only assume it is another destructive element perpetrated on us by the non-Aboriginal community.

Why do a people who are traditionally non-violent need to act out a behaviour so destructive to their own families?

Control may be and frequently is the obtained result, but the factors which precipitate the behaviour stem from issues effecting the role and status of Aboriginal men in society today.

Aboriginal men have lost much:

- they are denied their rights traditionally;
- urbanised males have lost rights to the ritual of circumcision and the support that was provided by older men through this system;
- in an attempt to gain an equality within the non-Aboriginal community they have patterned much of their behaviour on poor non-Aboriginal models;
- women's role regarding child bearing is reinforced within the non-Aboriginal system, however it has reduced Aboriginal male responsibility creating a situation where Aboriginal children are denied the love and care of their fathers;
- financially Aboriginal women are not dependent on their males for survival;
- there is a low level of achievement, self esteem and self-worth - job opportunity is minimal - equality is non-existent.

As Aboriginal women the loss that our men have experienced has also been our loss. You have removed the pride and control we had over our lives and our families. We will continue to support and love our men - our brothers, sons and fathers. We will not be divided - women against men, we must remain united to survive. We ask you to stop infecting our system with your values, attitudes and beliefs.

Support us in our attempt to reduce domestic violence within our communities in a manner which is appropriate to us.

REPRESSIVE STRUCTURES AND THE PRODUCTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE FAMILY

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This paper is based on separate interviews conducted in 1979 with a man and his wife who had experienced domestic violence in their marriage. I'll call them Jack and Joan.

Both were 31 at the time of the interview, both Australian born, and they had been married ten years. They had two children, aged five and seven. Jack was employed in the Public Service and had a take-home pay of $300 per week, a reasonable rate of pay in 1979. He was also completing a degree in business administration.

Joan had been solely a housewife for most of the time of their marriage and had just begun casual employment at a department store a couple of days a week.

Jack no longer bashed his wife as he had in the early part of their marriage because, he said, on the last occasion she had hit him back and it had caused him to re-think what he was doing.

To quote Jack:

'I'm coming to accept (my wife) more as a person because ... she's fought back and showed that she's a person; in other words, she's gained my respect. Probably I wouldn't respect her if she didn't fight back and that's where I think the role comes in - the husband bashes the wife and she becomes submissive; he doesn't respect her and that probably makes him bash her more.'

Although Jack and Joan still hit the children as a means of discipline, they no longer use physical violence in their own relationship. What they have instead is verbal conflict.

Interview Excerpt

WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU AND YOUR WIFE ARGUE MUCH?

Jack: I think we argue a lot. But now it's at the level where it's quite incidental - its not heavy. In the past it used to get really heavy and aggressive - now it's more verbal battling, we argue and then it's almost good fun to make up. It's verbal dominance rather than any physical violence.

WHEN YOU SAY QUITE A LOT, WOULD YOU SAY ONCE A DAY, A COUPLE OF TIMES A DAY?

Jack: It's probably got down to once every couple of days, once a week - it's hard to say, and even then compared with past events it's so insignificant, but it's interesting too we're doing this together, we're doing this therapeutic massage, and that's what I was saying to her today, I feel really guilty when she was massaging my chest and I was saying she wasn't doing it right and then we'd have an argument - and I'd feel bloody terrible, there's this other person there, we shouldn't be bloody arguing like that in front of other people, they must get embarrassed by it all or something. That's the sort of level, it wasn't significant but it sounds bloody stupid and silly that she should push me this way or that way, and when you analyse it, it's a lot of crap to argue about it. But again I suppose it's one person trying to get the other person to do what they want - it's up to that level now where it's purely verbal and it's very short lived. Although even in the past when we were violently opposed to each other, the arguments didn't last long, cause I'm one of these persons that can't bear to not have a good relationship with my wife. Like I'd fight and I'd even belt her about and I'd go up to her and say I'm sorry and that's what used to shit me cause I would always make up in the end, I'd be the violent one and then I'd make to to her.

HOW WOULD SHE REACT WHEN YOU MADE UP?

Jack: Usually very good, she was good in that sense. First she'd reject it and even then it was good to the point where you'd make up and have sex - one minute I've belted her one and really being nasty to her and five minutes later, what would you call that, sexual dominance, I don't know. She would accept you very quickly, she doesn't hold a grudge - she's not a person that would go away and sulk and not talk to you for days. So our arguments would throw up and then be over again - but they were still very heavy.

WHAT WOULD BE THE CHIEF TOPIC OF YOUR ARGUMENTS - IS THERE ANYTHING YOU ARGUE ABOUT MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE?

Jack: It would be that I'd be pushing her to do something - you know I'd want her to go to work or help me in the garden, those sort of things and niggle her and that'd cause an argument - or that she'd be running around like a blue-arsed fly chasing the kids or cleaning up cause she's one of these terribly house proud girls, especially that's where I think I'd be really stupid to push her into full time work because that's where an argument will start say in the morning, and she happens to be getting full-time work say at the department store when she's working

from nine o'clock to five, and I'd still be expecting my breakfast and she'd be trying to get my breakfast and cut my lunch, get the kids ready for school, and she would say 'why don't you bloody help me', and I'd use some excuse like 'I've got to pick up John in five minutes. I'd better go now'. I know I'm guilty and that would start an argument cause she'd say you always walk out when the kids won't eat their breakfast and they still haven't got their pyjamas off - the place looks like a pigsty. That would be a real problem unless we sorted out role playing and who should do what.

But the other things were silly things like who should watch what programme on the T.V. Cause again I do my traditional thing and I almost do it as a stir now when I think about it. She'll be watching what I consider some bloody trashy show like Prisoner which to me has no depth in it and I'd turn it over to Nationwide. I'd just turn it over and not even ask her. I know it'll cause a stir but I do it - why do it - why at least can't I say 'can I watch Nationwide' no arrogant bastard, he just turns it over - so that'll cause a stir.

DO YOU ESPECIALLY FEEL THAT YOU NEED TO BE DOMINANT IN THIS WAY?

Jack: Yes - I'm not kidding myself. But I know that I'm a survivor I know that ethnically, morally it's wrong - she's an individual she's a person, disregarding that she's my mate, female or what, that she should have as much right as I do. But subconsciously I want to dominate her.

DO YOU KNOW WHY?

Jack: No - I suspect it could come down to whether you're frustrated because you haven't got any power in any other field, because in the work environment I have no authority - in effect I'm in an area where I haven't any people under me.

IF YOU DID LOOK AT IT, WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU HAD POWER IN ANY OTHER FIELD?

Jack: No, that's why I feel a guy's home is his kingdom or something like that. That's why I want to be dominant in that area and yet I know it's crap. It should be a shared thing and all that and it ultimately comes to that but I'll do things that are not rational in that direction, I'll do things that allow me to feel dominant - like these other things I do again to stir her - I'll be sitting there watching T.V. and she'll be watching T.V. or reading a book and I'll say 'how about getting some supper love' and it's beautiful the reaction (laughs) because probably five times out of ten she'll whip up and get me supper and other times she'll say 'shit, get your own supper', and I enjoy that and sometimes it works, (laughs) and I don't say anything about

it, I'll eat my supper and say 'thanks love'. It's really good. I probably sometimes dominate her, and it's easier too cause I don't have to get it myself. But other times that's where I haven't got her beaten and she'll say get your own bloody supper.

DOES SHE GET TO DOMINATE ANYBODY?

Jack: The kids maybe - I don't know. I never feel threatened that she's trying to dominate me. It's a one way thing for sure. I haven't stopped to look at it from a very egocentric point of view. I don't really analyse whether she's trying to dominate anyone else cause I feel she's not dominating me - I might be kidding myself.

DO YOU ARGUE ABOUT THE CHILDREN?

Jack: Yes - you see I'm a quick-tempered bugger and I thump them too hard sometimes and again feel guilty for it and she will argue that I shouldn't treat them like that. So that sort of argument. Not whether they should be disciplined but the way I've gone about disciplining them - I've been cruel in effect. I hit the kids in temper that's when you can hurt - and I realise that's a prelude to child bashing. Because I believe you should be in complete control when you discipline them - if you believe in smacking, you should be doing it from a purely controlled approach - whereas I've hit them and hurt them and felt terrible about it later. That's the sort of thing we'll argue over - but she will smack them but she never smacks them to the point where you could have hurt them. She has usually got control.

The Future for Jack and Joan

According to R. Gelles, (The Violent Home, Sage, Bevelley Hills, 1972, p. 171), children who are frequently hit are more likely to engage in violence as adults with their spouses than those who have not. 'Not only does the family expose individuals to violence and techniques of violence', Gelles says in the book The Violent Home, 'the family teaches approval for use of violence.'

According to Jack, he was disciplined 'fairly heavily' as a child. 'I'd get a clout aroung the ears if I did something wrong', he said.

This violence was perpetuated in his early relationship with his wife, and now in the disciplining of his own children.

Although Jack may be punishing more forcefully than most, what he is doing is not abnormal. Almost all of the people I asked in the interviews were disciplining their children in the same manner i.e., physically.

In the interview Jack talked of his lack of power at work as a possible explanation for his need to dominate at home, but he also had a second explanation which was in relation to his expectations of marriage:

'I probably accepted that that's how marriages should be, (referring to his parent's marriage) that wives should be submissive, and I tried to play that out. I was brought up with a mother who looked after me very well, breakfast in bed and shoes cleaned, so I married for security - sexual gratification. I think I was brought up a very selfish kid.'

Joan's father, similarly, was the dominant force in her parent's marriage. 'He expects it on the table when he wants it there - his whole family relationship is around him.'

Both Jack and Joan consider that they're happily married and neither would have wanted to marry anyone else. As Jack said, 'I'm sure if I saw the chance of it breaking up, I probably would have adjusted earlier - I dread the thought of her walking out on me or something like that.'

He made several comments to this effect. 'I'm a survivor', he said. 'I wouldn't want to see our relationship go down the drain after all this time because I was too lazy to get off my arse and do the vacuum cleaning, but it wouldn't mean I wouldn't fight the issue. A token fight.'

But this doesn't mean that a genuine equality will ever be achieved within Jack and Joan's marriage. They will probably follow the example of thousands of other Australian couples with Joan eventually going into full-time employment and receiving a token amount of help in the house after a great deal of nagging, but still making major concessions so as to avoid as much conflict as possible, and Jack continuing to believe that he ought to treat his wife as an equal individual but not doing so because (a) it makes his life easier, and (b) there is nothing he is going change unless forced by circumstances.

There could be a note of hope for the future because of Jack's comments - 'I think I would adjust.' However, the future is represented by Jack and Joan's two little girls, and they have not only the role model of a traditional marriage relationship to follow as their example, they are already being taught submission by a sometimes violent and always dominant man.

BREAKING THE SILENCE OF THE CHURCH ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Jean Gledhill
Australian Council of Churches
Epping New South Wales

We are pleased to be able to participate in this conference symposium addressing repressive structures and the production of domestic violence. It is most appropriate that the church has been included for consideration as one of the social institutions which help to perpetuate the present situation, not only because the church exists as an institution today, but also because of the influence of the Judeo-Christian tradition in helping to shape other institutions such as the family and the law.

We have already been reminded of the Tasmanian woman who was brutally killed by her husband before he cut her body into pieces to dispose of it*. What was not said was that this woman who had been subject to constant violent abuse at the hands of her husband had gone to church people for help. Apparently they listened to her and could do nothing.

This is but one illustration of the silence of the church on domestic violence, and because of its silence the church is part of a system which encourages and maintains violence against women.

Our contribution to this symposium is rather in the nature of a report of work in progress. I'd like to start by saying a little about who we are and how we embarked on our project on domestic violence.

We are members of one of the task groups of the Commission on the Status of Women of the Australian Council of Churches. While this Commission is relatively new as a national body of the Australian Council of Churches, our association with one another has a much longer history. Many of us in the domestic violence task group have worked together over twelve years in other groups related to the Australian Council of Churches on activities concerned with encouraging the full participation of women in church and society. As well, a number of us have worked and continue to work together in a collective which produces the Christian feminist magazine Magdalene which comes out four times a year.

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* Editor's Note: This is a reference to Rowan's paper.

We have many and varied backgrounds, both personally and in terms of our work and other life experiences. We come from different church traditions. Some of us still sit uneasily in the church because, as women, there have been times when we have experienced rejection by the church and we have often felt alienated by the language and other symbols of the church which exclude women. We have often been silenced by the weight of authority of the church and we have sometimes maintained the silence even though we have wanted to speak out. But on many occasions we have spoken out. While we are a relatively small group we have been very productive and can point to a large number of publications and other activities in which we have addressed some of the major issues affecting the status of women in church and society*. Even though we say it ourselves we have been bold and successful in putting many issues affecting women on the agenda of churches. We have often found ourselves being critical of the instititional church and this has not always been easy for us or for the church. Our work on domestic violence is essentially an extension of our earlier work on issues that are particularly important to women.

Domestic violence was one of the issues affecting women that the Commission was asked to examine, and one which, by and large, the church had not addressed. So we formed our domestic violence task group earlier this year, meeting in Sydney with corresponding members in other parts of Australia, and set about finding ways in which we could make church people aware of the extent of domestic violence in our society and the causes of it, and thus suggest what might be appropriate responses for the church to make.

This involved us in some research for we felt that we had to understand the causes of domestic violence ourselves before coming to grips with what might be an appropriate response for the church. If one takes the view that domestic violence arises largely from a problem located in individuals, as some theorists suggest, then education or treatment of those individuals may be an appropriate response. If, on the other hand, the view is taken that domestic violence is a structural problem, one that the Report of New South Wales Task Force on Domestic Violence suggests is 'perpetuated by our beliefs, traditions and institutions' (Report of the New South Wales Task Force on Domestic Violence, 1981, p. 33), then it becomes important to look at the institutions in society and the belief systems on which they are founded.

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* Information on these publications and activities can be obtained by writing to the Administrative Officer, Commission on the Status of Women, Australian Council of Churches, PO Box C199 Clarence Street, Sydney, 2000.

We chose the latter perspective. Thus we became concerned with looking at domestic violence as a structural problem and seeking solutions which call for radical changes in structures which oppress women and which are inextricably linked with the beliefs and traditions of the church. This of course takes us over some of the ground we've covered before, but at least it gives us another specific reason for doing so.

I think it would be true to say that most people in the church who are aware of the statistics on the incidence of domestic violence in general, would be concerned about domestic violence as a problem occurring 'out there'. When we indicated in a preliminary report on our work that domestic violence, in Jocelynne Scutt's terms, happens 'even in the best of homes' (Scutt, 1983) and suggested this includes church homes, we were asked for the evidence to support our view especially as we took a further step in suggesting that the myth of ownership/property institutionalised by the church in its theology, structures and language helps to perpetuate the problem. We believe that there is a power relationship embodied in the theology structures, language and other symbols of the church which is the same as the power relationship expressed in domestic violence. Let me elaborate on this point.

The church, in its structures, has readily adopted a hierarchical pattern of authority which puts women in a subordinate position. In most churches it is men who have positions of power and who make the decisions, it is women who are relegated to other lesser positions.

The church has used sayings like

> Wives be subject to your husband, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church.
>
> (Ephesians 5: 22-23)

to promote a set of relationships in the family in which husband rules his wife (and through her the children). All this is done in love, of course. Now many people in the church would reject this literal view today, but when we think about it, this is really what the church has been preaching and it has had a tremendous influence not only in the church, but in society at large.

Such views have restricted the roles of both men and women. Men have been cast in the role of provider-protector while women have been cast in the role of child-rearer and nurturer. This kind of role differentiation has served to place women in a position of dependency on men, and it has given men power over women.

The subordinate position of women is further reinforced by the practices of the church in worship where hymns, prayers, creeds use language and imagery which excludes women. We are constantly confronted with the image of a male god variously named as Father, Lord, King and Master who cares for mankind! So we are saying that the pattern of authority in the church, reinforced by language and other symbols which exclude women, all conspire to create a situation in which women can become the victims of violence.

The focus of our work has therefore been on finding ways in which we can challenge the church to see how its theology, structures, language and other symbols in fact validate violence against women. We believe that if the church is to break its silence on domestic violence it has to be able to deal with all structures which reinforce the subordination of women and which therefore create an environment which allows domestic violence to occur.

We are becoming aware of many situations in which women have experienced violence at the hands of church men. Some of these women have turned to their ministers for help. One woman described a situation where a clergyman told her that her husband meant no harm, that he was just confused and felt insecure. She was encouraged to be more tolerant and understanding. Comments like this are meant to suggest that it is the victim of violence who is the problem. The victim is expected to be the model of the 'suffering servant' which the church exhorts Christians to follow. Women in such a position are enforced to internalise this and then of course experience guilt for not being perfect.

It is hardly surprising that it is women ministers who are beginning to break the silence of the church on domestic violence, for it is they who are now being sought and who are able to really hear what the victims of domestic violence are saying. And yet some churches still refuse to ordain women for the ministry.

The patriarchal bias of the traditional theology of the church weighs heavily on all churches, even those that do ordain women. As women in the church, we have discovered that theology is not god-given but man-constructed. Selected biblical quotations such as 'Do not permit women to teach, nor to have dominion over man, but to be in quietness.' (1 Timothy 2: 12) have been used by the church over the centuries to exclude women as creators and exponents of theology. The influence of patriarchal theology in the church is summarised by Rosemary Ruether, feminist theologian, who says 'starting with the basic assumption that the male is the normative human person and therefore, also the normative image of God, all symbols, from God-language ... to church and ministry are shaped by the pervasive pattern of the male as centre, the female as subordinate and auxiliary' (Ruether, 1985, p. 57).

We have taken the position that all structures which divide people by sex or race or class, and place one group in a subordinate position are potentially violent. As far as women are concerned the church, in supporting the notion that 'the head of the church is the man', has reinforced a hierarchy which denotes property/ownership - the ownership of a wife by her husband. So, we believe, the seeds of violece against women are embedded in the theology and teachings of the church.

This conference is also looking at the family as another of the social institutions which help to perpetuate domestic violence. One of the problems is that the church has so sanctified the institution of the family, that it is placed almost above and beyond criticism in church circles. A number of women in the church who have complained of violence at the hands of their husbands have been made to feel that the church believes protection of the family unit is more important than the welfare of any individual in it. Such a belief serves to protect those who perpetuate acts of violence against women and prevents those women from receiving the support they need.

We have become aware that it is women's refuges that provide most support for women and children caught up in violent family relationships. And yet quite often the church has attacked these institutions on the grounds that they are likely to break up the family. In terms of what the church professes about caring for people it is ironic that it is the refuges and not the churches that offer a place of shelter and support for women.

When our project on domestic violence is completed in the middle of next year we will have assembled a resource package for use with church groups. A major component will be a slide-tape presentation using visual images and sound to focus on the issues that have been raised in this paper. The package will also contain case studies of domestic violence, theological material which has been re-interpreted by the experiences of women, and a check list to help people in the church make observations on the ways church structures so often exclude or place women in a subordinate position. Our ongoing work will involve working through the resource package with church groups.

In conclusion I'd like to summarise what it is we are trying to say to the church - that if the church is to cease being one of the oppressive institutions which helps to perpetuate the problem of domestic violence it has to do a number of things:

1. It has to recognise domestic violence for what it really is - that is, criminal assault on women in the home and it has to acknowledge that it is happening in church homes.

2. It has to understand domestic violence as a structural and not an individual problem, and cease suggesting that the fault lies in the women who are the victims of domestic violence.

3. It has to come to recognise how the structures, language and theology of the church, in fact, validate violence against women.

4. It has to eradicate from its teaching all notions of the ownership of women by men.

5. It has to re-examine the institution of the nuclear family which has been so sanctified in the church and has often served to oppress women and hide the problem of violence against them.

6. It has to acknowledge and support the work of women's refuges which have allowed women to survive domestic violence.

Finally, unless the institutional church can see itself as part of the problem it cannot contribute in any way in overcoming the problem of domestic violence in our society.

We hope that our work will help to break the silence of the church on domestic violence.

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III

THEORETICAL ACCOUNTS: THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PHENOMENON

'Enough with your voracious female animalistic desires', he said. 'You should all be locked in cages.'

'I like you down . . . . flat on your back.' He rolled over on top of her and started biting her neck. 'I'm uncontrollable', he said. 'I'm an animal in the dark . . .'

'Pretend I just came through the window. Pretend you're being raped.'

excerpts from Bodily Harm,
Margaret Atwood, 1982,
pp. 70, 107.

Eventually he switches into a track that deals aggressively with his wife's physical and mental shortcomings. The most important shortcoming is that her breasts are too small. "If I only had a woman with large breasts I think everything would be alright." A heavy silence followed.

After a while I asked: "How do you mean everything would be alright?" [He said], pensively "Maybe it wouldn't have made such a great difference, but then I could sleep between those breasts maybe (sounds intense, sweet, dreamy)."

This sequence occurred during a period encompassing just over a year during which [the patient] was constantly dealing with material concerning his mother, his wife and other women. The transference was characterized mainly by an intense maternal transference that oscillated violently between positive and negative conditions.

The material about [the patient] himself was dominated by memories, fantasies and dreams that were connected to his female identity.

Rage and grief over the fact that I in different senses lacked breasts, that I denied him physical closeness and that I didn't take care of him was expressed in more and more explicit and violent images accompanied by strong emotional expressions. Projection and introjection alternated rapidly. I was often seen as a mean, satanic and torturing tormentor; old, repressed, painful fantasies about torturing the mother and wishing her dead surfaced. Later even fantasies of killing her were uncovered.

excerpt from 'The Killing of the Mother: Key Subject with a Male Analysand', Bengt Herulf, 1984, P.194.

'A Woman is a Foreign Land': Fear and Exclusion

Lee sets out to indicate that women, like other oppressed groups, may be conceptualised as a 'societal outgroup'. Utilising Allport's framework, Lee defines the necessary and sufficient conditions for outgroup (victim) status, describes the treatment of these outgroups, the attitudinal stance accompanying this treatment, and the subsequent effects upon the outgroups themselves.

In articulating the similarities of everyday experience between these outgroups, Lee specifically illuminates the consistencies in behaviour and personality amongst the members of each group. For example, she demonstrates that outgroups are subjected to a particular set of punitive activities; these range from antilocution at one extreme to physical extermination at the other. The effects of these activities, dependent upon their occurrence in the context of submission or protest, include denial of membership of one's group, passivity, self-hate, within-group aggression and prejudice against other outgroups. Lee indicates the source of the need to construct such outgroups: the potent, unconscious catalyst of fear.

Patriarchal Motherhood and Violence

In referring to the primacy of the women's movement in the struggle against female partner assault, Johnson rejects the 'spurious neutrality' of terminology such as 'domestic violence'. She prefers to use the term 'wife bashing': it is both gender-specific and accurate.

Johnson asserts that the refuge movement has typically believed that the solution to 'wife bashing' lies in the arena of pragmatics. It has thus often been assumed that the provision of adequate material resources was central to the reduction of such violence. However, as Johnson acknowledges, this account of wife bashing neglects to address the origins of the violence.

Johnson's paper is thus an attempt to provide a theoretical analysis of wife bashing. Working within the framework of orthodox psychoanalysis, Johnson views the successful resolution of the Oedipus complex as important. Furthermore, according to Johnson, debasement of the female sexual partner acts as a defence against incestuous anxiety. Patriarchal marriage, because it awakens incestuous anxiety, contains 'a permanent potential for violence'. 'Nagging', which Johnson conceptualises as an act of 'covert insubordination', is pivotal to the commission of violence within relationships. However, Johnson concedes that men also nag, an activity apparently transmitted from mother to son. Men may beat their wives, according to Johnson, when the repression of infantile memory fails; that is, they may re-enact the sadistic phase. She states: 'The nagging wife and the evil mother are one'.

Johnson includes a transcript which was omitted from her book The Last Resort (1981). She claims that this occurred because the material challenged the simple feminist views of wife bashing as pathological, unprovoked violence. On the basis of the transcript, Johnson contends that women's relationship with their mother may be implicated in the enactment of abuse within marriage.

Pornography, Romance and Violence

Scutt begins by quoting excerpts from selected popular 'romantic' stories in the Mills and Boon genre. This voluminous literature, according to Scutt, carries messages similar to those explicitly played out in contemporary television soap operas. (This material is implicitly defined as pornographic by Scutt.)

Scutt then alludes briefly to the classic psychoanalytic proposition of catharsis; that is, that men receive sexual release through viewing pornographic material, and that this protects women from the full force of the aggressive male sexual appetite. However, Scutt poses an intriguing question: If this is so, why has the escalation in pornography not been accompanied by a decrease in violence against women?

Scutt claims that many of the realities of violence against women within relationships are inverted in 'romantic' stories and television drama. This has important social implications: these false images are reproduced within the criminal justice and welfare systems. Scutt calls for the rejection of pornographic material, and, in particular, for the reworking of the definition of pornography.

The Reciprocity of Ideologies: the History of Woman Battering

Allen's paper demonstrates that, in Australia, the fight for the rights of battered women began in the nineteenth century. Thus, she succeeds in shifting the emphasis from the view that woman battering is an issue of only recent historicity, and asserts, instead, that violent male behaviour was defined as problematic by the feminists of last century.

Allen claims that the responses to woman battering have altered significantly since the nineteenth century. These changes have encompassed a recourse to solutions other than the criminal prosecution of male offenders. Co-habitation with a violent male partner was, according to Allen, often terminated by other means, for example, the seeking of maintenance orders or divorce. Also, the meaning of male behaviour was increasingly interpreted within the framework of psychopathology, a perspective which frequently implicated the woman in the genesis and continuance of the violence. More recently, woman battering has been conceptualised as abusive behaviour of significant proportions, inadequately addressed by current options.

Of relevance to these changes are several social developments directly affecting women, for example, the declining female fertility rate, variations in the ideology of marriage, and increased female participation in paid employment. Allen skilfully introduces these themes into her unfolding argument, thus placing the differing responses to woman battering in a wider social context.

However, she also asserts that the construction of the phenomenon of woman battering should be understood as a manifestation of a political process, reflecting an allegiance to either feminism or masculinism.

THE FOREIGNER WITHIN THE WALLS

Alicia Lee,
Macquarie University,
Sydney

> A woman is a foreign land,
> Of which, though there he settle young,
> A man will ne'er quite understand,
> The customs, politics and tongue.
>
> Coventry Patmore, 1862.

> The whole person of woman is different from that of man. It is a difference of nature.
>
> Catholic Church Spokesman, 1971.

Introduction

I am going to show that women are in all important respects similar to other oppressed social groups. Oppressed groups may be collectively defined by race, language, religion, education, politics, culture, or any attribute you like (Abel, 1951, 151), and I am going to use the term 'societal outgroup' (or just 'outgroup') to cover them all.

The comparison between women and American Blacks has often been made by American feminists, in both this and the last century (see Stanton, in Daly, 1973, 69; Sachs and Wilson, 1978, passim; Rubin, 1969). Their analogy is inadequate, however, for two reasons. First, it reflects an unfortunate cultural narrowness in failing to recognise women's similarity to other societal outgroups; second (and more serious), the analogy is drawn purely in terms of the two groups' circumstantial similarities, with no recognition of these circumstances' effects on personality and behaviour.

I want to show that there is nothing special in the woman/Black analogy, that there are broad similarities between all oppressed groups, which we share, and that recognition of this similarity throws light on many aspects of our past and present siuation, including aspects of our personality and behaviour which are otherwise harder to understand. Further, I want to show that recognition of this similarity has implications for political action.

I am going to start with a bit of history which I think has continuing significance till today. In our own recent past, the legal position of married women has been one of slavery. I mean

this literally, as you can see if you consider the four main conditions defining slavery. These have been listed (Elkins, 1963) as: term of servitude, marriage and family arrangements, police and disciplinary arrangements over the slave, and property and civil rights. Our foremothers qualified as slaves under all four of these conditions. The married woman's term of servitude was for the term of her natural life, as was a slave's. A small few very rich women could occasionally procure divorce (and only for adultery), but the only thing that released the ordinary women from her servitude was her master's death. As mother, she was no more than caretaker of her offspring; she had no guardianship rights, and on her husband's death the children's guardianship passed to whomever her husband willed. A husband's disciplinary powers over an errant wife were enormous. He was permitted to assault her in the name of 'chastisement' within very broad limits (it is good to know that knocking her down with an iron bar was considered as going too far), and courts were then, as now, of little avail to women seeking protection from battering husbands.

Few people today are aware of the degree of personal power a man had over his wife, amounting to actual ownership of her person. If a wife ran away from home, her husband was entitled to pursue and capture her, bring her home and lock her up. We can read of many court cases in which husbands applied for writs of habeas corpus to return their wives to them, in which they were usually successful. Not until 1891, when a Mrs Jackson refused to obey a decree for the restitution of conjugal rights, did the court hold that her husband

> ... had no right to seize her by force and confine her in order to compel her to render him conjugal rights.
>
> The return of his writ ... (continued the judge) raises a question of law. Has or has not a husband the right to capture and confine his wife until she consent to render him conjugal rights? ... The right set up does not exist by the law of England (English and Empire Digest, 1952, 86-7).

Like slaves, married women were chattels, property. The only difference between a married and an unmarried woman was that one belonged to a man and the other did not, since legally no woman, wedded or single, was even a person. For sixty years women went to the law demanding rights statutorily accorded to 'all persons' only to be told they did not qualify, not being persons. One judge opined that giving the vote to women made as much sense as giving it to a dog, a horse, a dead man <u>or an inanimate object</u> (Sachs and Wilson, 1978, 24, 27). Englishwomen did not become persons until 1929, nor Americans till 1971! (Sachs and Wilson, 1978, 39, 22).

These are particular examples, and I want to show that they were not freak circumstances by giving a systematic account of what constitutes outgroup status. The model I shall use for this purpose is drawn from G.W. Allport's (1979) classic work, The Nature of Prejudice, still the most exhaustive compendium available of empirical data on group victimisation. I have grouped his many statements under four headings, and will show their application to women. My four headings are: (1) necessary or defining conditions of victim group status, (2) their overt behavioural treatment, (3) psychological or attitudinal concomitants, and (4) resultant effects on outgroups. Let us take these in order.

The first necessary condition of being an outgroup is (obviously) identifiability. Groups may be microdiacritic (80 per cent or more recognisable), or pandiacritic (every member recognisable) (Keith, quoted by Allport, 1979, 132-3). (Jews, Allport suggests, are mesodiacritic). Thus, many outgroup individuals can 'pass' as members of the ingroup. Disregarding the miniscule numbers of transvestites and transsexuals, we can say that women are pandiacritic - ie maximally recognisable. Women cannot 'pass'.

An important aspect of identifiability is population density, both in the sense of absolute numbers and in the sense of group members' clustering or being evenly distributed throughout the population. Demographic sex imbalance may indeed be important; recent work (Cuttentag and Secord, 1983) has shown that aspects of women's status may be systematically related to whether there is a numerical preponderance of males or females. I do not know of any systematic study of clustering of women, but certainly we can see a wide divergence between the sexual apartheid of Islamic countries, or the gynaeceum of classical Greece, and the fairly even distribution of the sexes in typical industrialised countries, with degrees in between. These arrangements certainly are empirically related to other aspects of women's oppression, though cause and effect are difficult to sort out. Allport suggests (and I tend to agree) that segregation would initially reflect prejudice, and then, once institutionalised,would tend to perpetuate, and no doubt even aggravate, it.

My second heading is overt behavioural treatment of victim groups, of which Allport distinguishes five grades. In ascending order of severity, these are antilocution, avoidance, discrimination, physical attack and extermination.

We are certainly subject to antilocution. Insulting statements originating from ingroup moral authorities are the norm rather than the exception in all societies since the dawn of time, ranging from mild derision to violent hatred. I shall cite just a few from my collection (Lee, 1983) from widely differing cultures and periods.

> When a woman thinks ... she thinks evil. - Seneca
>
> the five worst infirmities that afflict the female are indocility, discontent, slander, jealousy, and silliness ... Such is the stupidity of women's character, that it is incumbent upon her, in every particular, to distrust herself and to obey her husband. - Confucian Marriage Manual
>
> Most women have no characters at all. - Pope
>
> Regard the society of women as a necessary unpleasantness of social life, and avoid it as much as possible. - Leo Tolstoy
>
> Women are usually more patient in working at unexciting, repetitive tasks ... Women on the average have more passivity in the inborn core of their personality ... when women are encouraged to be competitive too many of them become disagreeable. - Benjamin Spock.

Spock's 1956 publication the Common Sense Book of Baby and Child, has been Holy Writ to at least one generation of parents, and I wonder how much these misogynist attitudes have influenced modern feminine character.

Allport cites as examples of antilocution the number of special and mostly derogatory terms used to express prejudice - nigger, wop, kike, and so on. We can similarly remark the large number of special, and in differing degrees insulting, words for women - bird, skirt, broad, sheilah, crumpet, chick. There are no such words for men. Perhaps we should invent some.

Far more words exist for referring to men than for women, and more of them are favourable in tone. In spite of the smaller number of words for women, there are 220 words for a sexually promiscuous woman and only 20 for a promiscuous man (Spender, 1981, 15). There are also several words for a bad-tempered woman, and none for such a man (Roget's Thesaurus, 1964).

It is also remarkably common for women to be compared to animals. I have quite a collection of these (Lee, 1983), and shall give one example here. Mr Philip Opas, the Chairman of the Victorian Planning Appeals Board, is quoted as having said: I'm an animal lover. Horses, dogs and women in that order'.

Pornography, written or pictorial, 'hard' - or 'soft-core', is a form of antilocution unique to women. It is an explicit expression of anti-woman ideology, and unique in being openly and ubiquitously propagated.

Allport's second grade of prejudiced behaviour is avoidance, and obviously this applies to women, even in an apparently non-clustered society such as ours. Men-only clubs and associations have been common, and their exclusiveness has been guarded so effectively as to require legislation to compel their opening up to women. It still seems obvious to many that boys and girls should be educated separately.

The third grade of prejudiced behaviour is discriminationn, and we need no argument to show that this applies to women. The facts of legislation being passed against it, of suits being led under it, and of affirmative action programs being set up, are proof enough of its reality.

The fourth grade of severity is physical attack, and this deserves special attention in the case of women. It is a particularly significant indicator of women's outgroup status inasmuch as certain forms of assault are regarded differently from others. If a woman is attacked and beaten about the head by a man who is a stranger to her, public attitudes to her, and law enforcement procedures in respect of the man, will be the same as for an attack between any other two persons. Women complaining of assault by husbands, however, or of rape, are treated quite differently.

The reason is that both these forms of attack relate to women's 'special' relationship with men, and in such case their differential treatment embodies traditional stereotypic values about women and their relations to men. I do not need to argue for the reality of the former in this company, though I shall just comment that much of the inadequate response to wife battering shows women as still being to some degree the chattels of their husbands as they were in the last century.

The crime of rape especially shows women's outgroup status. It has always been seen as a crime against chastity, and thus an offence against the property rights of men, rather than as an act of violence against the person. I have always seen rape, especially pack rape, as exactly analogous to the lynching of Blacks. Let me quote Allport (1979, 62) on lynching. He says:

> ... lynching is interpreted as a reaffirmation of existing barriers between Negro and white, a reminder that the Negro must be obedient, well-behaved, docile, and live in dreadful respect of his white superiors... Mob lynchings are generally marked by ferocity and bestiality. when many lynchers gather, each one wishing to 'take a lick' at the accused, the resultant torture of the victim ... (is) excessive and revolting.

The parallel is striking. Many other assaults are instrumental acts which observe (say) robbery, but there is no ulterior motive for rape. Women-lynching serves no other end than itself. It is how the dominant ingroup expresses its hatred and contempt for the subordinate outgroup.

Allport's last grade in severity is extermination, the most obvious case being this century's genocide of Jews. Many will baulk at the proposition that women have been subject to genocide, yet if by 'genocide' we mean selective and systematic killing, then indeed we have. A gentleman called Hilarion wrote to his wife Alis in the year 1 B.C.: 'If, as may well happen, you give birth to a child, if it is a boy let it live; if it is a girl, expose it' (deMause, 1976, 120). He was not atypical. Most societies have seen children as property, and it was merely rational economy to put down unwanted off-spring just as you would put down other unwanted livestock.

There is a considerable literature on infanticide (see Guttentag and Secord, 1983; deMause, 1976), and a summary statement (Guttentag and Secord, 1983, 49) reads:

> Female infantcide and the neglect of female infants are... ubiquitous phenomena - not only in some preliterate societies, but also in Ancient Greece and Rome, in medieval times, and currently in a great many countries throughout the world.

It is not always outright killing. Many societies allocate food unequally, with resulting unequal survival rates. During the Biafran civil war, girls were undernourished while boys were well provided with the food donated by international aid agencies. Whole families of Biafran girls were reported suffering from the deficiency disease kwashiorkor while the sons were fit and well (Oakley, 1972). Discriminatory allocation of food in India has resulted in the proportion of women per thousand men falling from 972 in 1902 to 930 in 1971. In drough-affected areas the ratio of women to men can be as low as one in four (Ram, 1981).

Some of these events can be seen as sins of omission, but we have been actively slaughtered too. The middle ages in Europe saw a slaughter of women parallelled only by the slaughter of Jews in this and other countries. The official book which gave the ideological justification for this mass destruction, Kramer and Sprenger's Malleus Maleficarum, I see as the exact equivalent of Hitler's Mein Kampf. It seems that Jews and women share the dubious distinction of being the only groups in European - perhaps world - history to be subjected to mass destruction.

My third heading is the psychological or attitudinal concomitants of victimisation. One sign of outgroup status is to be described by use of special words - group labels with such powerful

connotatios that they override perception of individual qualities. For example, 'the category Chinese comes to signify not only ethnic membership but also reticence, impassivity, poverty, treachery' (Allport, 1979, 179-80).

The word 'woman' is such a label. You can insult a man by calling him a woman, or by attributing feminine qualities to him (eg ... 'Nervous Nelly'). Speaking of South Africa, one writer (Bernstein, in Shelston, 1981, 12-13) has observed:

> Once you begin to use the language of apartheid you have already accepted something of the premise. In the special language of apartheid, blacks are not ordinary human beings.

In exactly the same way, we have a special language for women. Not only do we have insulting words to describe us; there are certain sorts of language - even including special grammatical forms - which are used in statements about women which are not used in statements about men, and which express the idea that women are not quite real humans in the way men are.

Alien groups are also often seen as being rather mysterious and as having a special 'essence' - the 'soul of the Oriental', 'Negro blood', etc. (Allport, 1979, 174). Women are also perpetually talked about (by men) in this way; romantic heroes go looking for the 'eternal feminine' or the 'ideal woman'. (They never find her, of course, and they consider this very tragic). An advertisement keeps appearing in a newspaper (The National Times, various dates) which tells us that a Picasso print captures 'the enigmatic quality of the feminine mystique'. Of course nobody would talk about an enigmatic masculine mystique.

Essence is, by nature, indefinable. However, many descriptive statements are made about outgroup members, and the statements tend to be rather similar, regardless of which group it is. Typically outgroup members are portrayed as incompetent, impulsive and uncontrolled, and sexually immoral. They are often musical and fond of dancing, and are essentially somewhat childish and irresponsible. (You can see this in the recent rash of Irish jokes, as well as in 'Sambo' jokes about American Blacks). Though outgroups are lacking in social power, they are also very dangerous and need to be kept under strict control.

My fourth heading is resultant effects on outgroups. These fall into two categories, depending on whether we are talking about a stable period in which the group accepts its subordination, or a period of insurrection. Throughout history, you find regular swings from one to the other.

In periods of what he calls 'frozen heterogeneity', Allport (1979, 11) describes how

> ... a modus vivendi has been worked out between white and coloured people. A ritual of relations is established, and most people abide unthinkingly by the realities of social structure. Since they merely follow the folkways they deny that they are prejudiced. The Negro simply knows his place, and white people know theirs.

During these periods you can find certain constellations of personality characteristics in outgroups*. They are:

> denial of membership in one's own group
> withdrawal and passivity
> clowning
> self-hate
> within-group aggression
> symbolic status striving
> neuroticism
> slyness and cunning
> prejudice against other outgroups
> (Allport, 1979, 144-58).

All of these fit women very well. Some deserve comment. These are innumerable tales in many cultures of outgroup members' slyness and cunning. (Plato said the female sex was 'predisposed .. to undue secrecy and craft' - The Laws, quoted in O'Faolain and Martines, 1973, 26). There is obvious survival value for powerless people in being able to pick up and interpret the Master's moods and wants, and this is the explanation for 'women's intuition' and their skill in manipulation. One of the cues they pick up is that the masters do not like underlings being too smart, and clowning is represented in women's well known dissimulation of intelligence. But not only women learn this. Myrdal (1944, 775) notes in in Blacks.

> (The Negroes) 'dumbness' has been developed as an accommodation to caste .. there is a good deal of pretended ignorance on the part of the Negro .. to volunteer information is often a sure way of being regarded as 'uppity'.

This recalls Hina Foch's (in Bingham, 1969, 1356) amusing remark:

> .. time and time again I've seen women pulling in their brains when a man appeared, afraid the poor thing might scratch his ego on the exposed edges.

One often hears the smart comment: 'Women are their own worst enemies', as though dissension within the ranks were unique to women. It is not. Myrdal (1944, 775) remarks on the 'rivalry, the

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* My treatment here diverges slightly from Allport's.

envy, and the disunity in the Negro community', and another writer (Loewenstein, 1951, 144) describes

> ... the question of Jewish anti-Semitism - outcome of the continual social and psychological pressures of their situation as a permanent minority group. The inevitable consequence of this situation has been what Anna Freud has called 'identification with the aggressor'.

Self-hate was described in a well known paper by Lewin (1941), and another writer (Loewenstein, 1951, 174) explains that Jews renounced aggression after the diaspora, and that, as a result

> Jewish aggression, deflected from its normal channels, has found outlet in psychological and social channels. The higher incidence of neurosis among Jews is undoubtedly an outcome of this process. It is responsible for personality disturbances such as lack of dignity and self respect, and for character traits that are built up on that part of aggressiveness which seeks satisfaction through possessions.

We can take this as a comment on how women's suppression of their anger has led to their self-denigration, their reported higher incidence of neurosis, and their overcompensatory striving for symbolic power through possessions, so neatly described by Hill (1970, 238).

> Hence also women's passion for personal beauty, and dress and display; and all the evils that flow from it, in the way of mischievous luxury and social immorality.

All the above are characteristics of outgroups during stable periods of conforming to ingroup expectations. During periods of insurrection, on the other hand, outgroup members will show another set of traits which are:

> obsessive concern and suspicion
> strengthening of within-group ties
> aggression and revolt
> enhancing striving
> sympathy with all victims
>
> (Allport, 1979, 144-58).

By the first (rather unpleasantly named) trait is meant heightened sensitivity to class-based insult. Awareness of affront certainly characterises feminists of today who agitate against demeaning language or advertisements, and against pornography. The others need no comment.

Now I come to a further point. Beyond all these characteristics listed so far, an essential feature of outgroup status is that its members are scapegoated - blamed for all sorts of personal and societal evils when these accusations cannot be factually justified. Thus, Jews have been accused of sorcery, cannibalism (Pulzer, 1964, 68), sexual perversion (Hitler, 1939, 273), ritual murder, attempting to destroy Christianity, seeking world domination (Loewenstein, 1951, 44, 72, 90, 51, 62) and plenty more, as the need arises. Women have been accused of bringing death and sin into the world, teaching men to fight (Briffault, 1959, 287) and causing war (Otway, 1680, in Bingham, 1969, 44-5); of creating chaos and disorder (Mernissi, 1975, 14, 62); of attempting to destroy Christianity, eating babies, being ungovernably lustful and making men impotent (Kramer and Sprenger, 1971, passim). They are responsible for famine and thunderstorms (Kramer and Sprenger, 1971), bellyaches (Lennane and Lennane, 1973, 289), and youth unemployment (Cox, 1978); for schizophrenia, ulcerative colitis, coeliac disease, ulcers and autistic psychoses (Lederer, 1968, 6-7); they impair men's spirituality(Gornick, 1976, 77) and give them heart attacks (Daily Telgraph, 10 September 1974, 3). We can all be very proud of this.

So, women share all the features of other recognised outgroups. Much of what is called 'feminine' character or behaviour is not peculiarly feminine at all. Here are two interesting examples. Women are said to lack mechanical ability. So are Blacks (Myrdal, 1944, 106, 208). Jews, in artistic life, are often said to have a genius which is interpretive and critical rather than creative (Pulzer, 1964, 3). So are women. There are few these days who would argue for genetic differences between Blacks and Whites, and certainly not between Jews and Gentiles, yet we still hear such arguments about women. The one thing these groups have in common is their lack of social power, and that is probably where the explanation lies.

I have read, and heard, complex psychoanalytic explanations for why women have not revolted against male domination (though in fact they have), relating their usual submission to notions of female masochism. Yet we do not hear complex psychoanalytic reasons for why Blacks did not revolt in America or South Africa, why Indians did not revolt against the British, why Jews did not revolt against the Nazis, and so on. We do not need special complicated reasons for only one lot of people - women. In every case, all you need to look at are the realities of bald power and the hopelessness and apathy it breeds in its victims. (A nice illustration is the slaves of the Spanish South American states. They had legal and civil rights which made them very like free citizens, and they revolted several times, sometimes fairly successfully. Interestingly, also, they were not seen as childish, happy-go-lucky, irresponsible - the 'Sambo' stereotype of northern slaves, and of women - Elkins, 1963).

While they share all defining features of outgroups, women have two extra characteristics setting them apart. One of these is that women are, in a sense, stateless. Allport (1979, 51) claims that Jews are unique among outgroups in that (until recently) they have had no homeland, so that populations among whom they lived could see them as parasites.* Yet there is no country in the world where women have ever had social dominance, and it is only recently, in a small number of states, that we have even been accorded full formal status as citizens. Whatever one may think of the political philosophy of Zionism, it is easy to see the appeal to a universal outgroup of knowing that there is one little spot in the world where their sort is the ingroup. I suspect that the consciousness, however dim, that nowhere on earth is there a place where your group is seen as the norm, as setting the values and standards for your society, may have a profound effect on one's personality.

Another special feature of women's condition is that they are the only outgroup, so far as I know, who are told how greatly they are respected and held dear by the ingroup, while at the same time being treated with the most profound contempt. In the second century B.C., for example, the elder Cato declared his wife to one of the most holy and sacred things in the world (Bingham, 1969, 277). He also said a women was a violent and uncontrollable animal who had to be kept on a tight rein (O'Faolain and Martines, 1973, 57). Two thousand years later, it was the respect - indeed, the reverence - they felt for women which impelled nineteenth-century judges to exclude women from public office and from such demeaning occupations as medicine and the law (Sachs and Wilson, 1978, 53 ff). These same judges showed their respect for women by comparing them to horses, dogs, dead men or lumps of wood. Undoubtedly there have been many individual men who have loved and respected individual women. Therefore, while many women saw through the 'respect' ideology, the individual experience of respect and love, while observing the oppression of others, would have engendered a powerful ambivalence which could only have dulled women's perception of their class oppression and inhibited their willingness to resist it.

These are differences of kind. More, there is a difference of degree: women are more <u>out</u> in many respects than other outgroups. It is sobering to consider various comparisons between us and other groups in our own and similar histories. The kidnapping of errant slaves was made illegal in England over a century earlier than the kidnapping of wives; Britain's Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 followed the Race Relations Acts of a decade earlier, and was modelled on them; in 1873, the full bench of the Scottish

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* He could have mentioned Gypsies.

Court of Sessions held that Roman Catholics, Jews, Indians or negroes could attend Edinburgh University, but not women; in 1912 the South African Appeal Court declared that black men, pagans, Jews, heretics and blind persons were permitted to be attorneys, but not women (Sachs and Wilson, 1978, 136, 203, 14-16, 122, 38). American women were given the vote sixty five years after its being granted to people of any race, and in 1963 women were granted equal pay by accident, as the result of a joke: certain Congressmen, fighting Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, believed that adding an amendment prohibiting discrimination on the ground of sex would make the proposition so ridiculous as to ensure its defeat - but it was passed (Schulder, 1970, 142, 145). Radicals organising the National Conference for New Politics held in the U.S.A. in 1967 excluded women's issues from the agenda (Thorne, 1975, 193). The Australian Human Rights Commission has recently published proposals for outlawing racial insult gross enough to be considered incitement (Human Rights Commission, 1983). All the seven items under its heading 'What Behaviour Should be Unlawful?' (#vi) have application to women, but their protection from such insult is not proposed. Especially interesting is item 7, relating to some racial groups' being compared to animals. Women are regularly compared to animals, as I illustrated earlier, but we are not offered protection from this. I made a submission to the Commission along the lines of this argument, advocating that women be included in any legislation protecting ethnic groups, but my proposal was disregarded. The Australian news media, which these days are fairly scrupulous in avoiding gratuitous reference to (other) ethnic membership still use a form of ethnic reference to women in their stories. I made a detailed submission to the A.B.C. in 1982 urging them to give up this form of discrimination, but it continues as before. There is an utter reluctance to see oppression of women as being exactly analogous to that of other oppressed groups, or its relief as equally urgent. Violence against women is still seen, typically, as an individual problem, rather than as class-based warfare. If Australian Blacks are provoked or attacked, there is (rightly) a public outcry. In the last three months, in the Sydney area alone, the Sydney Rape Crisis Centre had reports of fifteen pack rapes - more than one a week (personal communication, 4 November 1985). There was no outcry. The paradox is that we have the right nationality, are the right colour, speak the right language, likely have the right religion, live in the right places, yet are still alien*, even within the same walls as our superiors.

** There is an interesting scholastic point that the Latin word prolotarius means a member of that class which is worthless except insofar as it produces children (Skeat, 1901). This would make women the prototypic proletariat.

Why should our outgroup status be so consistent, and so unacknowledged? The answer is that prejudice has functional significance. That is, some cases of groundless prejudice are not a simple matter of intellectual error, which can be corrected by information. Extreme prejudice can never be overcome by evidence and argument, because it has powerful, unconscious, self-gratifying defensive function in the prejudiced individual's personality organisation. It is needed to maintain personal equilibrium.

The wilder sorts of accusations against outgroups always have two central themes: their members are aggressive and dangerous, and possessed of excessive sexuality. This is true of women. (The notion that women are passive and asexual is a modern aberration, dating in Western Europe only from the end of the eighteenth century - Taylor, 1958). This typical outgroup ideation about women is seen in its most marked form in the Malleus Maleficarum, which I described earlier as the medievel Mein Kampf. Its authors (Kramer and Sprenger, 1971, 117 ff) says:

> ... (woman) is more carnal than man, as is clear from her many carnal abominations .. No might of the flames or of the swollen winds, no deadly weapon, is so much to be feared as the lust and hatred of a women who has been divorced from the marriage bed .. We find that nearly all the kingdoms of the world have been overthrown by women. Troy ... was for the rape of one woman, Helen, destroyed, and many thousands of Greeks slain. Therefore it is no wonder if the world now suffers though the malice of women ... A woman is beautiful to look upon, contaminating to the touch, and deadly to keep ... For as she is a liar by nature, so in her speech she stings while she delights us.

The clue to all this was the monks' cri de coeur:

> ... the power of the devil lies in the privy parts of men. For of all struggles those are the hardest where the fight is continuous and victory rare.

That is, they found their own sexual and aggressive urges impossible to control, and blamed this on women.

Down through history, men have continued to fear women, for the same reason, and with the same intensity. In some societies like our own, formal emancipation has taken place by slow degrees, yet we are still confronting (short of extermination) the most brutal and unashamed face of oppression - that of physical violence against the person which has been tacitly permitted by the state. The kidnapping of wives and children, which still occurs, shows women as chattels yet, while the physical confrontations provoked by wives escaping from violent husbands, and the invasions and

sieges of refuges, show that women have been forced to adopt essentially revolutionary action by the manner in which the law (as typically) has lagged behind social reality. The record of the law in acknowledging women as human beings with human rights has been, one must say, lamentable until now.

The most cogent argument for its coming up to date in this regard is that women are the perennial, the universal, the last and still the most out of outgroups, white men feeling a closer affinity with black men than with white women. Governments, therefore, which espouse ideals of equality and fairness must accept the implications of these premisses for all groups. We cannot assume that they will. Cato the Elder who said that a women was a wild animal, also said (Bingham, 1969, 91):

> Suffer women once to arrive at an equality with you, and they will from that moment become your masters.

Another politican said:

> I do not mind having women in politics as long as there are more men than women. But once women get the upper hand, we will be in trouble (Des Frawley, National Party member for Caboolture, Queensland Parliament, speaking on matter of public importance, August 1982, The National Times, 24-30/10/1982.

That was three years ago, in this country. The forces against us are ancient, deep, and powerful.

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LOVE WILL TEAR US APART*
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUALITY

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Introduction

As the academics and state functionaries move in to occupy the terrain carved out by the refuges, it is worth remembering that the contemporary debate about domestic violence was initiated by the propagandising efforts of the women's refuge movement. Those efforts for a time even achieved the substitution of the dramatic terminology of 'wife bashing' for the ultimately spurious neutrality of 'domestic violence'. Not only are women the overwhelming majority of victims of violence in the home. Such 'officialese' also achieves that convenient distancing of the subject which is all too familiar when dealing with a social taboo. Workers in the expanding field of domestic violence research have in more substantive respects also been at pains to allay everyone's initial fears that they might be implicated in these deplorable lapses from the ideal of harmonious marriage. They have pointed to anomalies in violent marriages like poverty, alcoholism, madness, unemployment, which - while undoubtedly far more prevalent in our society than we care to admit - are still not co-extensive with wife abuse.

The source of domestic violence, as a number of feminist researchers have very lucidly explained is the power of men over women in this society (cf O'Donnell and Saville, 1980). Violence in their accounts is simply an illegitimate exertion of the control otherwise exercised through more subtle means over women's lives without incurring social censure. For example:

> 'People may say: Men are provoked by women who subconsciously want to be bashed.
>
> In fact: This is not only the most twisted of myths, it is also unjust. If a woman is bashed in the street it is not assumed that she wished to be hurt. Tensions between people living together and rearing children can provoke strong emotions, but family problems cannot be resolved by beating one's partner into submission. To then suggest that the victim wanted or enjoyed the bashing is a convenient excuse.'
> (Women's Co-ordination Unit, 1983, p. 7)

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* Joy Division, Closer

There is a more sophisticated formulation of this same idea called the collusion theory. According to this theory, violent marriages are sado-masochistic collusions:

> 'The balance of a relationship where periods of violent behaviour by the husband served to release him momentarily from his anxiety about his effectiveness as a man and at the same time satisfying his wife's masochistic needs and helping to deal with the guilt arising from her intense hostility to her husband.'
> (Snell, et al., p. 11)

In other words, women provoke the violence and also derive some perverse gratification from it. This theory, operating through the preconceptions of social workers about clients, has functioned as an oppressive ideology obstructing women's attempts to free themselves from intolerable relationships. The refuges' answer to it was simply that the women had no choice but to endure their violent situations because society gives women, with dependent children and without independent resources, no viable alternative to such cohabitation - no suitable housing, no child care if she could get a job, and so on. Why introduce a mysterious ability to derive gratification from experiences of pain and humiliation to explain the obvious? Women stayed on enduring the misery of violent attachments not because they were masochists but because they literally had nowhere else to go.

I assume that most of you are familiar with this argument and, like the writers of the NSW government pamphlet I quoted, regard the instatement of the refuges' ideas as the triumph of truth over some dangerous and oppressive falsehoods. At the time, I argued as much myself. But in retrospect, I'm not so sure. While not disputing the refuges' argument as an account of why the women they saw had remained where they were, it seems to me that the extremity of these women's plight as presented in the refuges' propaganda, while it succeeded in placing the victims of wife bashing beyond the reach of accusations of having 'asked for it' or 'enjoyed it', also served to create the public image which wife bashing now has of sustained and pathological abuse. For the media responded predictably to the sensationalism of the refuges' publicity and eagerly disseminated the myth of the psychopathic wife basher. The pamphlet from which I quoted earlier perpetuates the same attitude:

> 'Quarrels, arguments, shouting sessions between fathers and mothers, sisters, brothers - these are all part and parcel of childhood memories, taken for granted by many people as part of family life and the growing-up process. It is a rare person indeed who grows up without experiencing some tension and conflict in their family.'

> But this booklet is about something worse than this - when family tensions erupt into bullying, beatings and bashings - physical violence that no one would tolerate in a pub, street or workplace. It is called domestic violence and takes place behind the closed doors of many family homes.'
>
> (Women's Co-ordination Unit, 1983, p. 7)

The turn which the domestic violence debate has taken separates out the extreme cases of physical abuse and treats them as an isolated phenomenon, aberrations explicable in terms of the intervention of factors external to marriage itself. I don't believe that the brutality of some wife bashing is really qualitatively distinct from normal marital squabbling. Though I worked for over three years at a women's refuge, nothing I learned there gave me reason to doubt the insight which was the original inspiration of the refuge movement in this country: that wife bashing was an indictment of marriage itself. Not a dysfunction of an otherwise viable institution i.e. a social 'problem'. The problem was in marriage itself, not this or that marriage whose anomalous violence can be explained away as pathological. In this paper, I shall explore the possibility that the violence whose souces we seek is endemic in the very relationship of men and women in marriage.

This is, of course, in a sense no more than researchers like Saville and O'Donnell have already indicated in their analyses. But such feminist perspectives do not, I believe, effectively rival the concreteness of the anomalies approach. Power remains abstract - in spite, or even because of Foucault. The feminist account has nothing substantial to offer if people want to spell out that - now glaringly obvious - power differential. The psychopathology of marriage indicated in this paper does provide a possible content for this explanatory vacuum in the feminist account of domestic violence. Psychoanalytic theories of marriage as a sexual relationship afford us insights which cannot be reduced to simply 'blaming the victims'. I object in any case to representations of women which deny historical agency through their insistence on the role of helpless victim.

The refuges' accommodation argument against the collusion theory does not supply an adequate explanation of what really stands in need of explanation here: not the women's inability to detach themselves from violent relationships, but why these relationships were violent in the first place. To answer that question we may need to examine more honestly the very real problems of heterosexual intimacy in a society based on men's dominance over women (and other men of course, but let's keep this specific). We may have to confront the uncomfortable possibility that under such circumstances men and women can only really reach out to each other in a physical sense in the modes of sadism and masochism. We may be forced to acknowledge the

coercise nature of male sexuality in our culture. In these explorations of the patriarchal psyche, Freud is a valuable guide.

The Potential for Violence

> 'It is not possible to do violence without projecting evil onto the person, group, or other object of violence (even the surgeon must conceptualise the infection, tumour or other operative target as evil in order to make his incision). This does not mean that there is no reality in the complaint. It does mean the maintenance of an unbalanced, idealized view of oneself and one's position and an unbalanced, denigrated view of the object and its position.'
>
> (Pinderhughes)

At first sight, we need go no further than this statement of the conditions of the possibility of doing violence to understand the sources of wife bashing. Men's inflated self-concepts and corresponding devaluation of women do of course exemplify Pinderhughes' requirements to perfection. But the real lesson here is that violence is what philosphers call an intentional behaviour - it is directed to an object and involves a conception of that object in terms of which the action is intelligible. The whole paradox of domestic violence is that it involves hurting the thing one supposedly loves. Freud resolves the paradox by deciphering love as a neurosis, uncovering the unconscious imagery of patriarchal sexuality. The really striking thing about Pinderhughes' observation in this context is its convergence with Freud's account of the conditions of the possibility of a man's sexual intimacy with his wife under the terms of patriarchal marriage.

In Contributions to the Psychology of Love II: 'On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the the Sphere of Love', Freud gives the following account of a condition of impaired sexuality occurring in both men and women to which he gives the name 'psychic impotence':

> 'The sexual activity of such people shows the clearest signs however, that it has not the whole psychical driving force of the instinct behind it. It is capricious, easily disturbed, often not properly carried out, and not accompanied by much pleasure. But above all, it is forced to avoid the affectionate current.'
>
> (Freud, p. 182)

Since it is men's behaviour towards their sexual objects in marriage which we are attempting to explain, I shall focus on Freud's account of the male condition. Psychical impotence in men

is attributed by Freud to a 'developmental inhibition' determined by the frustration of strong childhood fixations due to the intervention of the incest barrier. As strong childhood fixations and frustration by the incest taboo are 'common to all civilised human beings', he concludes that this inhibition is no individual disorder but a widespead if not universal affliction. Or rather, the patriarchal personality can escape psychical impotence only by adopting compensatory attitudes towards his sexual objects. These attitudes are, Freud claims, clearly recognisable as reactions to the same oedipal fixations which uncompensated give rise to psychical impotence. To avoid being reminded of the exalted object of their lingering incestuous attachment to their mothers, men adopt a compensatory attitude of debasement towards their sexual objects. It's basically just the old Whore and Madonna stereotypes, but from this formulation of the dichotomy can be extracted the insight that as a sexual relationship marriage is tailor-made for violence.

In Freud's analysis, men are inducted into manhood in this culture through abandonment of their primary love object (their mother) as an object of sexual desire. The inducement is the expectation that they will one day inherit their father's position with a 'missus' of their own. The patriarchal wife is, in other words, a mother-substitute. Psychical impotence makes its appearance whenever a sexual object chosen with the aim of avoiding incest recalls the prohibited object. And who better meets this condition of avoidance and recall than the patriarchal wife? Compensatory debasement of the wife is therefore in Freud's account a prerequisite for a satisfactory sexual relationship within mariage for the man. Patriarchal marriage accordingly contains a permanent potential for violence.

But there is something not entirely satisfactory about the Madonna/Whore dichotomy in terms of which Freud's exposition of this condition is framed. The oppressiveness of these stereotypes for women has preoccupied the Women's Movement to the exclusion of the obvious implication of the predominance of breast (i.e. maternal) imagery in the sexual obsessions of men in patriarchal society. The perceived asexuality of the pregnant body is perfectly consistent with the persistence of the mother as a sexual object in the patriarchal unconscious. My suggestion is that the 'debased' object which is the condition of both the possibility of men's violence towards their wives in Pinderhughes' account and of their being able to make love to them in Freud's may not be a way of avoiding the mother as a sexual object at all. Domestic violence in my analysis is intimately bound up with the maternal role of the patriarchal wife.

> '... in this type of relationship, the husband characteristically gave a good deal of concern and time to trying to please and pacify his wife, who

> often tended to be querulous and demanding. The offence was an explosion which occurred after a period of trying behaviour by the victim. There was often a precipitating act by the victim.'
>
> (Faulk, 1974, p. 181)

In putting forward the thesis of the continuity of wife bashing with everyday domestic squabbling, one is never entirely free of the stumbling block of inviting charges of victim provocation. So as an experiment, let us dispense with the evasionary strategies usually employed to respond to such accusations. Resistance is not the less real for having been defeated. Why not take this dilemma by the horns?:

> 'There is no use trying to deny that women nag their husbands, which is why it is so important that we appreciate the significance, this time from the women's viewpoint, of this stereotypical "feminine" activity. The crucial thing to understand about nagging is that it is an expression of <u>serious</u> grievances. A woman's role in marriage involves among other things personal valet service to her husband. If we stop seeing nagging from the husband's point of view as an irritating preoccupation with mindless trivia, and come to recognise it as an expression of the nagger's chronic revulsion to the duties society imposes on her in the role of (house) wife, the issue of provocation assumes a quite different aspect. Nagging comes to be seen as an ineffectual form of protest directed at the husband's socially conditioned expectation that she will do his shitwork for him, a rebellious insistence on matters he expects her to concern herself with but considers beneath his own interest. It is, in other words, an act of covert <u>insubordination</u> against the privileges of the husband role in the patriarchal institution of marriage.'
>
> (Johnson, 1975)

One of the most curious claims to have emerged from recent academic interest in domestic violence occurs in Dr John Gayford's pathfinding study of one hundred severely battered women from Chiswick Women's Aid (Gayford, 1975). To his astonishment, Dr Gayford found that the commonest factor amongst the men who turned into violent bullying husbands was not fathers who beat their mothers, but a childhood in which, by their wives' accounts, they had been spoiled by their mothers. In reporting this finding, I realise that I run a serious risk of misinterpretation. More than one reader of earlier drafts of this analysis has accused me of simply shifting the female scapegoat, which was so offensive to feminists in the orthodox collusion model, from one generation to another. Although it might at first appear that over-indulgent mothers are being blamed for their

son's brutalities, the opinion of the Chiswick women is less significant as an assertion about their mothers-in-law than as a comment about their husbands' excessively high expectations of them in the maternal role of the patriarchal wife:

> 'Ever known anyone to vacuum a lounge room three times a day? He did. He'd walk in the front door and you just won't get one thing done through the day and all hell lets loose. He was a cleanliness fanatic. Up until we were married, we were living at his mother's place and I was still working and his mother was virtually running everything and I didn't have to do any work - just wash up and that. So everything was okay, Mum was still doing for us. I was only fifteen, so I didn't realise what was happening. Then we did move out, and everything was supposed to be like Mummy does. Mum does nothing but sit at home and wash the floors and do all the rest of the stuff because she's just got no other interest. If I can't get more out of life than that then I don't want to be here.'
>
> (From an unpublished transcript among the material gathered for Johnson, 1981)

The narrator's explanatory comments support the ideas advanced in the foregoing analysis of nagging - that men are socialised in patriarchal society to expect their wives to take over from their mothers in providing for all their physical needs, and that domestic violence is bound up with women's attempts to resist this oppressive role. However, this interpretation of nagging in feminist terms as a protest against the tyranny of the woman's nurturant function within the patriarchal institution of marriage does not go far enough if it obstructs our recognition of an important implication of this description of the excessively fastidious husband. Nagging may be stereotypical 'feminine' activity, but it is not confined to women. Men also nag their wives.

Nagging on the part of men cannot be explained as a resistance strategy of the powerless. The explanation lies rather I believe in the consideration that it is at our <u>mother's</u> hands - in her performance of her assigned function under patriarchy of initial rudimentary socialisation of the child - that we all encounter our first painful experiences of nagging as an infuriating preoccupation with irrelevancies. It is the <u>mother</u> who supplies the prototype of nagging behaviour. We can make sense of the vehemence of marital hostilities over apparently trivial aspects of the wife's nurturant function in terms of the idea that sexual energies are invested in this and other aspects of the wife's maternal role within the patriarchal institution of marriage.

Evil Mothers and the Nagging Husband

In his 1933 lectures on 'Femininity', Freud ventured a rare comment directly about the adult relationship of marriage which further illuminates the maternal connection I have been trying to indicate in this analysis:

> 'The determinants of a woman's choice of an object are often made unrecognisable by social conditions. Where the choice is able to show itself freely, it is often made in accordance with the narcissistic ideal of the man whom the girl had wished to become. If the girl has remained in her attachment to her father that is, in the Oedipus complex - her choice is made according to the paternal type.
>
> Since, when she turned from her mother to her father, the hostility of her ambivalent relation remained with her mother, a choice of this kind should guarantee a happy marriage. But very often the outcome is of a kind that presents a general threat to such a settlement of the conflict due to ambivalence. The hostility that has been left behind follows in the train of the positive attachment and spreads over on to the new object.
>
> The woman's husband, who to begin with inherited from her father, becomes after a time the mother's heir as well. So it may easily happen that the second half of a woman's life may be filled by the struggle against her husband, just as the shorter first half was filled by her rebellion against her mother. When this reaction has been lived through, a second marriage may easily turn out very much more satisfying.
>
> (Freud, 1933, p. 133)

II

> '"Go back to your mother, you love your mother better than anybody else" he kept saying. "When are you going to get out?" - all this sort of business. He used to say if I hated her as much as I thought I did, why did I go down to her place all the time, and I'd say "well it's the only way I could see Lucy" - I used to go down there to visit her. But I wouldn't stay long. He wouldn't have me spending any time with Mum at all, or speaking with her or anything like that. I can understand now, at this point in time, why he felt like that ...

She hates my husband. She didn't want me to marry anybody. She didn't want me to move away. I'm the eldest girl - you know how mothers get very clingy with that? We just haven't been able to break free. Before the wedding, I was very strongly tied down by my daughter. I kept trying to put off the marriage because I wanted to take her with me. In the beginning, Mark really hated her, what she represented - my first child, you know. At the time, there wasn't any thought but that it was somebody else's child. I was 17, halfway through sixth form, and I went to a party and a fellow put something in my drink - we had a pre-trial in the solicitor's office and they sat down and talked about what the charges were going to be and the solicitor was sure that it was LSD: I was hallucinating, felt I had things crawling out of my arms - but there was nothing between him and I, Mark and I had intercourse for the first time a little after that - it was only about ten days after the party. Later I was getting sick and I went to the doctor and I was four and a half months pregnant - it was too late to do anything about it. I was firmly convinced it was this other man until I had my third child and the resemblance between them was so strong that Mark talked me into it. He's convinced himself now - see she was twenty days overdue from the date when it should have been. I don't think he really cares whose it is, he just hates the thought that Mum's got her and I agree with him really - it would have been better to send her anywhere, have her adopted with someone I'd never seen, rather than have her there.

No one knew I had a baby. She sent me away to a home. She said "Think about your sisters" - they were really little girls then - "You know what Catholic schools are like, the nuns would expel you - the nuns expel their sister - everyone would laugh at them". So I said "Oh all right mum, I'll go away". She put me in a home run by the C of E from the time I was five months. I didn't show, even up till the time I was eight and a half months. The family thought I was staying with a girlfriend so I could study for the HSC. Nobody knew. You know those shirt dresses - they were in then and I wore one of them so nobody knew. Mum used to say things like "Oh boy, you're going to have to stop pigging yourself on chocolate cakes at your friend's place" - but nobody else knew. Even my grandmother, who's such an eagle-eyed old thing never caught on. They all thought I was such a goody two shoes. "Yes Mum", "No Mum" - I never disobeyed. All my sisters just tell her to go to hell - I wish

I'd had such courage. Even now I can't get over it. No one knew about it. No one noticed I was pregnant. When I finished the HSC Mum just put out the word I was going on a three week holiday.

She was so sneaky to hit me with it when I was so low. She had this swiftie lined up I think, right from the beginning. I really think she did. She had a baby a couple of days before Lucy was born and in a couple of days - four or five days - he died. But the doctors had told her from the beginning of her pregnancy that she wouldn't carry a live baby. She just came into the hospital and said "Here are the clothes, bring the baby home". I thought it was a really generous action of hers, and I didn't believe her at first, but when I look back, I think she had it all planned. She let me go on through that agony, thinking I'd never see the child, and then when I was desperate and feeling low and bad, she held out this glimmer of light and said "You can bring her home as long as you sign these papers". She said they were guardianship papers, that this made the baby secure financially, that she'd take care of her until I could support her after teachers college or whatever, and when things got better for me I could just take care of her myself. The solicitor who put it through discussed it with me beforehand. She said "Your mother wants to adopt your daughter". I said "Oh no, there's no adoption. Mum and I are too different, we don't agree on how children should be brought up". And she said "Oh well, you wouldn't let the adoption go through". The only reason I found out was my brother found the keys to the mail box and he said "I know Lucy is adopted" and I denied it and he pulled these things out and says "There, take a look at that" and they were adoption papers. At this stage everyone still thought Lucy was Mum's. He just threw them down and says "There, the kid's adopted".

It must have taken a while to go through - I can't remember exactly how old she was. I think she must have been about ten months - all I remember is he showed these to me and then I remember looking at her and she was propped up on a pillow. She'll be seven next month. My mother's living with a bloke named Michael and they make Lucy call him daddy. And I said to her - we were talking and she said daddy did such and such - and I said "Who?" and she said "You know - Michael. Mummy said he's not my daddy, but I have to call him daddy". Poor little kid. When she finds out the man she calls daddy is not her father, he's not even her mother's husband, he's her mother's lover, and the woman she calls mummy isn't her mother, she's

her grandmother, and that the girl who's supposed to be her sister ... Unless someone's told her, and she hasn't said anything to me about it. I was thinking about telling her, but she was always so little. I just took her out and I'd say "You're my little girl aren't you" - you know, like have a secret. I wouldn't like to tell her because that's hurting her. She needs some security.

But she's convinced herself that Lucy's her baby now. When we went away I said "Look mum, things aren't going too well between you and dad, you're pretty het up, we can take Lucy". She needs to have little kids her own age and my little boy is only three years younger. She needs to be in a family atmosphere, not just mum living in a flat with fellers coming and going. And she said "What do you mean, you can take Lucy?" And I said "You know, she's not your daughter", and she just looked at me as if I were - you know - really weird. And I thought "Oh no, she really believes it".

I wouldn't mind so much if she was still with dad, but she had no intentions of staying with him, even after she took the baby. After she'd left him, I said to dad "It must be a terrible shock to you coming so suddenly". He said "She's been telling me for four years she was going to leave". And I said "Well why didn't she instead of just saying she was going to leave?" and he said "She told me she was going to leave when you were married". And she did, she left the very night I was married! We had the reception at home, and my mother started having some sort of blue with dad, and everyone started hurling names at each other - and she just got up and walked out. She had it all set up to leave, she planned to go that night, but she left in such a way that we'd think dad forced her out. You know - she started a big family fight, and everyone was thinking "That's a terrible thing to say" (my brother had called her a slut). She said to dad "Don't you let him talk to me like that. If you talk to me like that I'm going to leave", and dad said to my brother "Well I didn't hear you say it, but if you did say it, you shouldn't talk to your mother like that", (even though she is) - so she walked out. But it was all set up.

She's bad to everybody. Dad was in hospital really ill - he had a hernia and a duodenal ulcer, he was very sick - and he's lying there believing she's taking care of the kids, and she's out cruising around. My husband was only my boyfriend then and we used to

follow her, watch her, drive up behind her and toot and carry on - because she told us she was going to visit sick relatives and all this bull. We pulled up behind her at a set of stop lights and this little fellow jumps out and starts waving a gun around and says "If you tell Kathy's husband where she's been I'll shoot you". He only lived four houses away from Mark, and a month later we were driving home and the wheels fell off the car. We heard this banging and banging and banging and we stopped just about straight away, and the wheels just fell clear. He must have loosened them, because it's just not possible for two of them, two wheels, all the nuts and bolts to come loose at the same time. She's a very wicked woman.

She might have been different when I was little, but I can't ever remember anything nice. I can't remember a cuddle. All I can remember is looking after all those little kids, cleaning the house, and being frightened that the last shred of dad's self-respect would be taken from him. She said "If you don't give me every penny out of your pay, I'll burn it". She burnt his pay. This was when there were six kids and things were pretty tight. She burnt it on the floor. I raced across the park and told him "She burnt your money dad". If he did something she didn't like, she tore up his suit, cut the legs off with scissors. I really hate talking about it, because the deeper I go, the more I get churned up and think, "Pig...".

I didn't really have any close friends. The girls at school thought I was a snob. I get that here too. A lady had a go at me the other day because she said I get around like a little god and treat everyone like a peasant. It really shook me up. I thought "Oh no, I really don't want people to think that sort of thing of me". It really knocked me around - it was just mum yelling at me again.

I was allowed out on Wednesday nights until ten o'clock and Saturday nights. I remember once getting a belting for being out until twelve o'clock on Saturday night. I was supposed to be home by tea time - I was 18, 19. She's a really big woman, and she leapt over the lounge and got me in the hall and ripped out a chunk of hair about this round. Just ripped it out and dropped it on the floor, and my sister grabbed it and hid it in her bedroom, all taped up, so she could say to her "Look, you did that". And when we were away, shopping or something, we came home and it was gone. I obeyed her after that, because if I didn't she'd either get me or otherwise lock the baby in her room.

Or we'd be sitting at the tea table and mum would lean across and slap Lucy and I'd say, "Don't do that, she isn't doing anything wrong". She'd just sneer and say "I'll do exactly as I like with Lucy, you've got no more say in what I should do than Margaret has". She'd taunt me, look across at me and say "She's my child, I'll do as I like with her". And she'd encourage the little girls to join in the chorus, and they'd say "You shut up, you can't give mum orders", and all this sort of stuff. Dad was the same, he was completely dominated by her. She'd say to him I'd done something wrong that day and not to let me see the baby that night. She must have been about eighteen months, old enough to call for me, and she's calling and calling and calling, and dad went and locked himself in the room with the baby. He wasn't doing anything to pacify her. He might have been hitting her, I don't know, but she cried for ages and ages and ages.

She'd lie with a cigarette in her bedroom while the kids did all the housework and the cooking and the shopping. She used to divide us up and we'd have a whole list of things to do, we had to total up every penny. Sunday I used to spend the whole day cooking cakes and things, because she's a real guts, she loves eating, and I'd think, If I do all this for her, then she won't be cranky. And I think now, when I look back on it, I carried a bit of that into marriage too. My husband didn't understand - I'd have the house and the kids and everything real good, I'd be feeling good, you know, and he's say all I did was run round and clean up. Well I can see it now, but at the time, I thought, If everything looks real good, the way it ought to when we were kids - you know, if the house was tidy, everything, mum was nice. So I used to run around and clean up the house, and I didn't have much time to sit and talk to him. All I wanted to do was to make him happy.

Anyway, after all this was over and done with, we didn't see anything of mum and we were getting on pretty well - we had a lot of trouble with his work, but between us things were pretty good. We went and lived in a unit, and I made a friend of the girl who lived downstairs, a really close friend. Straight away we struck it up and we used to sit down and gasbag and go out and mind each other's kids and everything. It felt really good to have a friend, because my sisters - there was too much of a gap between us when we were little. But she ended up having an affair with my husband. I don't think I want any more girlfriends. It went on for three nights, which I don't suppose is so

terrible, but the fact that she was my friend, the only person I ever told about Lucy. She'd come up in the morning and say "Look, Elizabeth's pretty naughty this morning and I'm tired, can you mind her?" And I'd mind her. Was it any wonder she was tired, she was out with my husband the night before!

When he told me what was going on, I didn't believe him. Then I went down and knocked on her door and - crowned her with a bottle of grog - I can't even remember doing it, but she said I did it and he said I did it ... I remember thinking I'd like to do it - being so barefaced. I told him "I'll kill you, you bastard". Anyway, he just jumped up and raced out of the unit and spent the night with her again. I couldn't get over that. That's the day I left. I went down and spent some time with mum. I was three days there, then I rang her de facto husband and told him they were having a fling and planning on moving into a house together. I thought, I'm not going to run away, because I've done nothing wrong: he came straight back and we went to the units together. He kept saying "I'm going to kill him, I'm going to kill him" and all this sort of business and I said "Now calm down, violence won't get us anywhere. We've got to talk it out and see what they want, the two of them want". Because she had said to me she couldn't stand Mark, he was a real bastard and I should have left him ages ago, and he's said to me that he didn't like her, and yet here they are telling each other they love each other - there's got to be something wrong there. I just walked in and I said "Right, we've got to get the truth in the open. You've told me you hate her, you can't stand a bar of her, is that true?" And he said "Yes, it's true". And I said "You said the same thing about him - now say it in front of him". And she said "Yes, it's true". He said I was wrong doing that, that I acted like a German storm trooper, that I should have let things go and let it die its own peaceful death - while I waited round twiddling my thumbs, wondering. I said "No, I deserve better than that, waiting round for you to have a fling and then take you back again". I moved back in with my husband. He wouldn't say what he wanted and what he didn't. We both knew we should have let it go at that.

He came home in more and more aggressive moods, and they became more frequent. He used to go off his head say once every fortnight, then it became a couple of times a week, and then once or twice a day. He'd go off about all my boyfriends and lovers, and how I had strings of men waiting for me. He had whole spiral

notebooks of numbers of cars that had parked along the block - it was right in the main shopping centre - and if anyone mentioned someone's name, down it would go too in this little book. I laughed about it in the beginning, but if I laughed he'd get really aggressive and violent. Before (when I was seven months pregnant and couldn't go with him) he'd gone away to Queensland looking for work. He wrote me all these letters saying what he was doing up there, all these girls he was going out with, and how he wanted me to go out with fellers down here because he was doing it up there. I just laughed and tore them up, but I used to say things about them to him because I thought it was really weird saying he wanted me to go out with fellers - I was really pregnant - he didn't care if I did, he said he wasn't coming back. Anyway, he said he wanted those letters he'd written two years before. I said I'd burnt them, thrown them out. And he said "Don't you lie to me, you let your mother read all those letters, and you tell her every word I say to you, and what I do". I said "Are you going to institute divorce proceedings against me, there's no fault or cause thing, it's just twelve months separation". He came over and he got me by the throat and he said "If I haven't got those letters in fifteen minutes I'm going to kill you". I just looked at him and laughed and said "You'll frighten the kids, don't be stupid", and they started screaming even though nothing had happened. I was just nervous. He pulled me off the lounge and dragged me across the floor, and I was laughing because I didn't want them to get upset and saying "Oh you silly thing, don't be stupid". And he said "I'm not being stupid. I'm going to kill you. You've still got them, you show them to everyone and everyone's laughing at me". He sat down on the lounge and he was going Twelve, Eleven, and all this. I said "Oh stop being stupid, I'm going next door to ring up", and I just sort of breezed out and took the baby and raced next door. I waited till later when he'd gone off to the pub and got my things together and just left. I wasn't going to stay around and be hit the first time, because so far as I'm concerned, if a man thinks he can hit me the first time and get away with it, then there's just no stopping him, the floodgates are open.

When I moved back with Mark, mum kept telling me what a fool I was and how I was better off without him. She fronted him one day and got him in the back room and was talking to him for about three quarters of an hour. And later he came in and said "You're a fine bitch, you're just the biggest slut". And I said

"Why?" and he said "She's said you told her everything I say and you've shown her all my letters and you and she just sit around and laugh about me together". Yeah, he believed her. He believes anybody at all, except me, and he doesn't believe a word I say. Even if I tell him something cost $2, he'll say "Bullshit, I bet it only cost $1. You're always lying to me". She doesn't want us together. She knew that Mark is insanely jealous, really a bit cracked up in that direction, so she told him all these things. She even said to him - he said "You shouldn't have taken Lucy, it's a wet thing to do", and she said - "You needn't get yourself all hot and bothered, I'd take those other two kids too, they're not yours, either. Do you think Sammy looks at all like you? look how fair he is and how dark you are. It's only a fluke the other one looks like you because his father was a wog". That's what sent him off. She doesn't care whether I'm happy or not, as long as I'm away from him.

She's driven him mad. I really think he needs a psychiatrist now. One night he came home and he had this 32 twin rifle and he had .303 bullets which wouldn't fit down the bridge. And he sat there with a pin, very calm, and he scratched at it with the end of the pin and he said "That's for you kid". He shoved it down the bridge of the gun and it wouldn't fit and he kept trying to make it go down and he said "Come over here and see if it will go off". I said "You're a nut case. I'm not even going to talk to you if you're going to be that stupid". And he sat there very calmly scratching the shell. I very calmly went down and rang the police and said "My husband's going to kill me". I know, as soon as I step back in that place, if I'd shown any sign of panic or fright, he would have. And they said "Well now Mrs. There's nothing we can do at this very moment". I rang Lifeline and they just said "Oh, talk to him". So I went back up and he said "Did you ring the police?" I said "Yes". He said "If they had come, I'd have just been sitting here calmly cleaning my gun, and it would have been you looking stupid. He would have said "Don't be crazy, she's just off her top". He had me convinced I was. He says "Until the day I die, I'll never believe a word you say. and I'll always believe you've had a lover. But I love you". I said "You can't say that in one breath and say you don't trust me in another". And he said "Oh yes I can. I love you, and because I love you I know all your faults and I know you can't help yourself".

I think now that I've had time on my own, I should have realised right from the beginning that he was

really too jealous. When I was fourteen he wanted us to get married and when I was sixteen he used to hang around every night. Mum wouldn't let him in in the beginning, and he used to just sit out the front and watch, watch the house. And if ever I went out with someone else, he used to follow me, first on his push bike and later on his motor bike. No kidding. There were public toilets across the road from our place in the park, and he'd sit there for hours in winter, freezing cold, watching the house. I knew he was out there, and I'd sort of flick the lights on, and wave to him. I didn't realise how serious he was then. Too jealous to take it that far - I don't talk to fellers any more ...

In the end, he used to sit around sharpening knives and saying "You might wake up dead one morning" - really serious calm. What frightened me was he was calm, not ranting and raving, he'd just sit there and look at me and say "You could be dead tomorrow". So I rang the solicitor and she said "Get out of there, don't stay any longer. I'll write him a letter and tell him why you're leaving". So she wrote him a letter and he got it a couple of days after and went right off his head. He just gave up his job and sat in the house day and night. Any time I'd go round there, he'd be sitting on the floor. Sold all his furniture, everything in the house. Anything he didn't sell he broke up and burnt. He'd never come out of the house except to get more grog in and finally he just rang up and got it delivered. He hasn't worked since I left him seven months ago.

He says now he's been so long on his own that he won't consider going back and living in my family group again. He just likes to be on his own. He hates all women. Because of me he says, even though he carries on, perving and whistling and all this, he hates them, and I think he really does hate them. But then I feel really guilty, when I sit and think about it, because I married him, and I didn't love him. I didn't. I married him because he was always around and he was really good to me and he stuck by me when I was pregnant - you know, he kept telling me all the time he loved me. He was a good fellow. He reminded me of dad, a really nice guy, sincere and honest and all this sort of thing. I thought, he loves me so much, and he's so sure I'll make him happy - well, you know, we'll get married. He said the other night "Our problem was that you didn't love me when we were married, and you tried too hard to make me believe you did - went round doing all the housework and

> everything". And it's true. It's never been brought out in the open before. It's just a pity that I didn't - not that I've done anything deliberately outright destructive to hurt him. It's just that he should have met someone who really could have loved him. I care a lot about him now. I think when you're with a person for a long while there's sort of - a bond between you. No matter what happens you always care about them and worry about them.
>
> Even her. She's really stupid, because they all hate her, really hate her, they'll drop her like a hot potato as soon as they can get out. She knows I'm the only one who'd look after her if anything happened. I know when she's old, I don't think I'd have it in me just to say "Get lost" or ... you know, I don't feel as hard as the other girls. It's stupid when I sit around thinking about it now. Lucy - that's the only hold she's got over me now. I don't know - we all seem like lapdogs, somebody pats up on the head and we sit up and beg.'
>
> (Johnson, 1981)

This remarkable contribution to the mother/daughter dialogue within contemporary feminism was deleted from the section "All the Sins of the Family" of The Last Resort in the final edit. This was partly for reasons of space, but mostly because the Penguin staff editor who read the manuscript originally submitted for publication found its inclusion unintelligible. It did not fit into her uncomplicated idea of domestic violence as physical abuse of a blameless woman who had the misfortune of depending on her assailant for support. The narrator's reflections on her relationship with her husband and how she might have contributed to their difficulties have no place in this conception. But in terms of the central themes of the analysis I have been developing, we can make sense of its disclosures with respect to the issue of domestic violence.

In a bizarre variant of my nagging scenario, the woman's relationship with her husband does come in many respects to mirror that with her mother. The narrative also evidences the emerging consciousness to which Freud refers of the role played in her marital difficulties by the ambivalence of her feelings towards her mother. But why her mother, why not his? We have reached the crux of the Penguin reader's difficulties. I could say that though Freud was speaking of the woman, the notion of the return of the repressed and the re-emergence in adult sexual relationships of the malevolent mother figure left behind in the incomplete resolution of oedipal conflict can be extended also to the man. In the essentially infantile behaviour of wife bashing, the man reaches back beyond the incest barrier to recover a regressive distortion of his forbidden love for his mother.

According to Freud, when the sexual organisaton is blocked, for example by taboo, it can revert to the more primitive anal sadistic phase in which these incestuous aims, taking the form of physical aggression, were not proscribed to the same degree. The nagging wife and the evil mother are one.

However, I prefer to leave the woman also in the picture. For unless we are prepared to examine women's role in these matters as well as men's we are denying ourselves any power to effect the outcome of our relationships with men. The risks involved in laying the wife basher identification on our own male intimates are real. Under the influence of the very structures we criticise, they may be just as likely to act out to the full as to fall in with our aspirations to break the spell that binds us both. Which is why we cannot afford to deny either our own complicity or its corollary: our power to effect a different outcome. And amongst our weapons of resistance will be the rapier of wit:

> 'Soon they will have just a big nipple up on the marquee and maybe that's why you want to have FOR ADULTS ONLY because you're ashamed to tell your kids that you're selling and exploiting and making an erotic thing out of your mother's breast that gave you life.'
>
> Lenny Bruce

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'STILL THE SAME OLD STORY...': PORNOGRAPHY AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Jocelynne Scutt
Victorian Law Reform Commission
Melbourne

> 'She jumped at the proximity of the deep voice. It came from out on the verandah, but the person who spoke was clothed in darkness.
>
> "Who's that?" Her voice was sharp with sudden fear. "You make it sound as if I'm an intruder." The voice was low and mocking, and as the speaker moved, Julie could just make out a tall, broad shouldered figure, with loose, narrow limbs and a mane of thick hair. Involuntarily, she took a step backwards.
>
> The man finally stepped into the light cast by the room. He chuckled softly and took a final drag on his cigarette before flicking the amber cylinder over the railing and into the bushes ...
>
> Julie found herself looking up into eyes at least as blue as Vinnie's, if not bluer. But where Vinnie's eyes were wider and soft, this man's glinted cold and hard, reflecting ice rather than the warmth of Vinnie's laughing face. And they were hooded by remarkably dark, thick brows, which knit into a brooding line beneath the black cascade of hair over his forehead. The only thing that kept the man from being incredibly handsome, given his lean frame, which was clothed with impeccable taste, was his mouth, which was set in a tight, thin line against his strong jaw.
>
> "You have had the advantage of me", she said. She was aware that he had noticed her involuntary step backwards, and that he was smiling an unfriendly smile. She made an effort to smile easily as she extended her hand, which she knew was shaking.
>
> "Please call me Julie", she said.'
>
> (Moore, 1982)

This - a typical scene from any one of a mountain of Mills and Boon or Circle of Love stories. And, several pages along:

> 'Suddenly she was in his arms. She didn't know if it was fear or panic which sent her there ... but she

> knew that despite all instinct to run, her fingers seemed permanently locked in his mane of black hair, her lips permanently wedded to his. He held her so tightly that she could barely breathe. Her black satin dress crackled under the pressure of his embrace ...'
> (Moore, 1982, p. 86)

The essence of the tale is summed up on the back cover, under the dual heading: 'Circle of Love', and 'Mardi Gras Madness'

> 'Riverboats on the Mississipi, the scent of magnolias on the soft night air, the thrill of Carnival ... Julie Converse was enthralled ... Transported ... it was a long way from Chicago - from her work with inner-city kids to the elegant world of the Tremaines - but Julie soon discovered that she loved New Orleans ... and playing the role of a Southern belle! Only the cynical ice-blue gaze of Richard Tremaine kept jolting her back to reality. Caught in his searing embrace, surrendering to his hungry kisses, she felt like an enchanted princess ... a princess who must remember that Mardi Gras would soon end ... that the spell would soon be broken ... that the love she had found might soon be lost to her - forever!'

This is a reading diet upon which, the statisticians and marketing agents tell us, millions of women feast daily. And the numbers are reputedly growing. Yet the messages - of stern faced, steely eyed, tight lipped MEN, 'grabbing (the heroine's) arm in a vice like grip' (MacLeod, 1975, p. 37) or men committed to giving orders. As for example in Moore, 1982, p. 120:

> 'Get into your room,' he said, propelling her quickly in that direction. 'I want you to stay in there and don't come out until morning - no matter what - do you hear me, Julie?' He spun her round so that she was facing him, both shoulders held tight.
>
> 'But why? What's happened?'
>
> 'Just listen to me and get in there, damn it!'
>
> His fury was barely controlled and he nearly flung her into the room.

are not limited to the eyes of the book reading public. Every evening television sets are tuned into the antics of Dallas and Dynasty, where the cruel expressions of masculine achievement in the financial world are matched by aggressive 'love making', not infrequently involving 'vice like' grips, a bodily dragging to the feet, and eyes glaring piercingly into a wretched, trembling ... though breathlessly desirous - woman's face.

Background

For years debate raged about the influence or effect - or lack of influence or effect - of pornography on men who are violent towards women. A predominant clinical view has been that depicting violence against women on the screen - and particularly violent sexual acts - is a means of preventing violence against women. The argument has run that unless women are displayed as victims of sexual aggression in film or pictures, then women in the real world will become victims of male sexual aggression: male sexual aggression must be played out against women, it is said, unless those men who would be sexually violent can dissipate their aggression by seeing other men act it out against women on the screen, or in books. Women thus appear to be in a bind; the underlying threat appears to be:

> 'Allow - applaud - encourage - your sisters to suffer exploitation and degradation in pornographic depictions, and allow other women's bodies to be paraded vicariously on screen in agonies of sexual display, pretending they like it - or else you will suffer the indignities, exploitation and degradation on your own bodies.'

This is the argument also used in favour of prostitution: unless women are available as prostitutes, runs the traditional argument, then 'good' women will be sexually attacked.

Yet if the arguments are true, we are faced with considerable difficulty in determining why rape and other forms of violence against women continue unabated, despite the ready availability of women working as prostitutes and the even more ready availability of films and videos depicting women in sexually exploitative and aggressively-victimised poses and roles.

The 'feed the man pornography' approach seems to contain an inherent contradiction. Logically, too much of a particular thing makes one more rather than less so. But this aside, the concentration upon the most exaggerated aspect of the problem serves to eliminate any need for looking at the 'normal', everyday picture of women's and men's lives and relationships. It also ignores the exaggerated perspective fed to women which conveys to women ideas and ideals about male-female relationships and romanticises sexual violence against women.

Myths of Criminal Assault at Home

Although sociological studies show criminal assault at home is a reasonably frequent event in a relatively large proportion of Australian households, criminal assault at home is rarely depicted on ordinary, everyday television screens. Any film dealing with family violence is specially billed - as with the

incest film, Amelia, or I Don't Want to Kill My Child, covering child abuse (by the mother, of course) - and television critics write discourses on its value and quality. Thus violence in families is concealed: the paradigm of the happy family continues to rule the world, through the popular media. At the same time, when violence in television or moving picture families is shown, it is romanticised in the Mills and Boon style: she needs a good hit to see she really loves him; he needs to give her a good shake to bring her to her senses (which means, again, to the realisation that she loves him - madly).

A second finding from sociological studies is that women are far more likely than men to be bashed and abused by a spouse. Yet the fictional scenes often contain another distortion of reality: most often, it is the woman who attacks the man. Due to his superior strength, toughness and calm, he grabs her wrists and prevents her nails from scoring his cheeks, or at least reduces whatever damage she might conceivably have done to him. She rails against him, but eventually is subdued in the realisation that - yes, it is, it's love. Yet again, the popular picture, displayed in the films and videos generally, is that if men hit, they do so with love, or for love.

Picture the scene. A woman on horseback spurs away from the man whom we know, unerringly, to be the man of her dreams. Astride his snorting black stallion, he bounds up beside her, snatching her from the saddle of her pale, gentle mare. They are dislodged, together, and fall to the gound. She is hurt. His face angry, then suddenly concerned. The camera captures him with his arms about her, her with the dawning realisation of true love in her eyes.

In less agile scenes, she is angry at him, he grabs at her arms or angrily pulls her to him - then the light of love frames both faces, and she sinks into his arms. Or she runs away, believing the man's advances to be detrimental to her wellbeing - or acting as if she does. He races after in hot pursuit and it ends with:

> 'Phillip was beside her, his breathing hardly slower but much heavier than her own, his expression so violent that she wouldn't have been surprised at anything he might do. In fact, he took her shoulders and shook her. But somehow the punishment misfired, and he was holding her instead.
>
> "Are you hurt?" he was saying in thick, unfamiliar tones. "Why did you defy me like that? You know I wouldn't stand for it."'
>
> (Blair, 1976, p. 178)

Women are depicted as childish, or childlike. Men invariably play the role of father figure or mentor:

> 'Ruth bit her lip. He was treating her like an immature child, someone who had never been far away from the safety of her own home and parental guidance before.
>
> "I'm old enough to know what I'm doing. Otherwise, I don't think my father would have sent me", she informed him stiffly.'
>
> (MacLeod, 1975, p. 39)

Rape is particularly susceptible to populist distortion. Two of the most memorable scenes are probably those of Scarlet and Rhett, in Gone with the Wind and Soames and Irene in The Forsyte Saga:

> 'The morning after a certain night on which Soames at last asserted his rights and acted like a man, he breakfasted alone ... The incident was really of no great moment, women made a fuss about it in books, but in the cool judgment of right thinking men, of men of the world, he had but done his best to sustain the sanctity of marriage, to prevent her from abandoning her duty.'
>
> (Galsworthy)

In the television series of the saga, the episode was played out with Irene acting almost as the naughty child, Soames asserting his conjugal rights rather in the manner of the patriarch delivering a few firm hits with the hairbrush to the bottom of an errant son or daughter. In the Rhett and Scarlet interaction Rhett, almost speechless with apparent anger at Scarlet, picks her up, protesting, sweeps her up the staircases - and at that point, the mogul involved in the making of the picture, in accordance with Hollywood good taste of the day, demanded a cut. Cut then, to the new scene - next morning - Scarlet sitting up in bed, a lazy smile on her reddened lips, kittenish, the cat that licked the cream - the woman who simply needed a good rape - to love him again.

And the more contemporary version - Visions of Bliss, a Circle of Love reader by author Lee Sherry:

> Richard shook his head sadly and pushed her away. 'I was a fool enough to be taken in by you.'
>
> Courtney rubbed her bruised arms and refused to look at his hurt and anger. 'Richard , please ...' she began weakly but he wouldn't let her finish.
>
> 'I feel cheated, Courtney, cheated of the only thing - that meant anything to me.' He crushed her to him, making it impossible for her to move. 'How do you

> feel, Courtney? How does it feel to be bought and paid for?' His words were like a slap in the face but he wouldn't relent. 'Do you feel like a common prostitute?'
>
> Courtney struggled in his arms, unable to break his grasp. The loosely tied sash of his robe came undone and her full breats pressed hard into his burning chest. He laughed unpleasantly.
>
> 'I've never had a woman that I had to pay for, but ...' he said with an evil gleam in his eye, 'there's a first time for everything.'
>
> With that, he grasped her wrist cruelly and dragged her clumsily up the stairs.
>
> 'Richard, stop!' Courtney shrieked amidst Opal's (the dog) excited barking and jumping.
>
> Richard merely threw open the door and then kicked it closed noisily. He threw her body roughly upon the bed and savagely stripped off her robe.
>
> Quickly removing his own, he fell on her writhing form, forcing his lips to hers. She began to cry. He had become a total stranger. Though she tried to fight him and her tears, she wasn't successful and started to sob.
>
> (Sherry, 1982, pp. 128-9)

I need go on no longer. Courtney and Richard end, as all Mills and Boon or Circle of Love major characters, well and truly wed, sailing off into the blissful sunset some sixty or so pages later. Well, let's read it:

> 'My love', he began, 'we belong to each other now. I'm going to spend the rest of my life proving it to you. Come, let me show you how much I love you.'
>
> Richard held out his hand and Courtney readily placed her small one into it. Pulling her urgently into their room, he started them both on a trip to the unending ecstasy of love.
>
> (Sherry, 1982, p. 191)

Fiction into Fact

Does all this matter? Are women concerned about the portrayal of women in the media generally as stereotypes (and such oddly dithering, submissive, boring ones at that) guilty of concentrating on trivia, when the time might better be spent on

matters of substance? The problem is that the false depictions in novel and film representations foster and bolster popular images of women, men and wife beating. Those images are replicated at all levels of the criminal justice system and welfare system supposedly designed to deal with criminal assault at home.

A training film used by one police force in Australia and considered by the force to be the 'best' training film ever produced illustrates clearly the issue.(When this paper was delivered at the conference, the writer had occasion to speak to one of the police officers from the force using this film. He stated that the force is now using the film to show how it should not be done; this change of approach is to be applauded.) The video depicts a domestic crisis where police have intervened. Scared angry woman confronts the police, measuredly asking that they take her husband into custody, because he has attacked her. Police accept that he has attacked her, but commence to 'calm her down'. This is done by saying to her:

> 'Now then, now then. No need for shouting.'

(She hasn't shouted at this point.)

> 'Calm down.'

(She appears as calm as is possible under the circumstances - she had just been criminally assaulted by her husband.)

> 'Look', she demands, her voice rising. 'I want him taken into custody. Take him away. I'll take out a complaint against him, Just take him down to the station and take me down too, to do it.'
>
> 'Now, now, calm down. You don't want him taken away, now, do you.'

(This, not a question, but a statement.)

> 'Now why did you spend all his money on clothes. You've got enough clothes. You don't need any more clothes.'

The discussion proceeds. The man is not taken to the station, nor charged. The police eventually leave, having, in their sights, calmed down the scene - until the next time, of course. Assuming the woman may continue to believe that the police are the appropriate line of help where she is bashed and abused by her husband.

Throughout the altercation, the woman is treated as a childlike creature, without any independent mind. The money is all his. She's spending his money on trivialities. The clothes are

unnecessary. (And even if they were, what relevance has this to a police investigation and police action into a criminal assault at home?) She is pushed into the role of being truly in love with her husband, deep down, certainly not so hateful as to want to turn him in. Her childishness is emphasised in the way the police talk to her - and assert that she does not know what material goods she requires; that they, rather than she, know what clothing she needs. (And when I say 'her childishness', I mean the police projection of her temperament. Throughout she has played the role of a reasonably assertive person, firmly and calmly requesting that action be taken - until the intransigence of the police and the shock of the attack overwhelm her, and she does begin shouting, so can be rightly classed as hysterical and 'in need of calming down'.

At the welfare level, it continues to be believed by some social workers that the so called working classes articulate love through violence (see, for example, Pizzey, 1984; Scutt, 1983, Chapters 4 and 7; St Kilda Legal Centre, 1985):

> 'It's only his way of expressing his love for her.'
>
> 'We know she really likes it. It's her way of seeking attention.'

Or cultural background forms the basis for inaction and comfortable belief that it's alright - he can do what he likes with her (Scutt, 1983; St Kilda Legal Service, 1985):

> 'We don't have the right to step in; in their culture men act aggressively and the women love it.'
>
> 'You have to take into account class, cultural and social differences. The men are patriarchs in that culture, and the women just have to obey. That's the way they want to live their lives and we have no right to try to change it.'

In this debate 'culture' is seen in stereotypical terms, or as male defined only. What the female culture of the particular country might demand if it had a real voice and a real opportunity to develop, is of no consequence: 'women love it', says the dominant ideology.

Lawyers succumb to the popular notion of violence at home as a trivial or fleeting event all too often, changeable by women simply making the effort to live up to the perfect (male defined) picture of womanhood:

> 'Jane Robbins was bashed by her husband over about five years. He brutally attacked her with a broken chair on an Easter weekend, and she finally went to a

> lawyer for assistance. She requested that the lawyer have her husband charged, as she had had him charged four times before and hoped on this occasion the law might have some effect. When the case was scheduled to come on as she sat waiting in the witnesses' room, the barrister employed to act for her talked to her, telling her she should go home, lose some weight and put on some makeup, go back to her husband and he would still love her or start to love her again. He forcefully persuaded her to confer with her husband, brought Des Robbins into the room, then negotiated a "reconciliation" between them. Jane Robbins dropped the charges. Her husband did not, however, cease beating her. His attacks grew worse.'
>
> (Scutt, 1983, pp. 247-8)

If the case had gone to court, would the problem have been dealt with as serious? It is not fanciful to suppose that the magistrate might well have called upon the husband and wife to 'kiss and make up', subscribing also to the view that violence in the home is inconsequential, or simply a step in a continuing relationship: this approach is reinforced where women voluntarily return to their husbands. (Yet the voluntary nature of a return where women confront real economic and social barriers to embarking on the ex-married life, and where women have been socialised into accepting that life as the lesser half of a couple is the only possibility dreamed of is hardly realistic.)

In court, judges reinforce stereotypical views of masculine 'love'. A not unusual news story appeared in the Sydney papers in December, 1981. Under the banner headline of 'Man Who Killed The Wife He Loved' and 'tragic court story' was related of a Sydney man 'who loved his wife so much he killed her':

> 'The judge who sentenced him yesterday to three years jail, but with a six-month non-parole period, said: "My sympathy is clearly in your favour". John Clarke, 37, of Penrith, stabbed his wife in the heart when she said she was leaving him ... the court was told he drove his wife to hospital after he stabbed her and then surrendered to the police. His wife's threat to leave him had been the ultimate blow, and he had struck out in despair and frustration.'
>
> (Daily Mirror, 1 December, 1981, pp. 1-2; Scutt, Chapter 7, p. 174 ff.)

The judge went on to say that gaol was likely to punish not only the offender, but also his three children who had lost their mother.

Conclusion

In having regard to these aspects of the representation of male and female interaction and male and female sexuality and sexual relations, the aim is not to ignore the detrimental nature of exploitation of women in other ways - through, for example, those films or video that most people are generally agreed are pornographic (if there is any common agreement on this issue) - although some believe them to be entitled to be shown, whilst others consider they should be banned completely or subject to viewer limitations. On the contrary, it is clear that at least in the making of some of these films, criminal assault of a domestic as well as a public nature has taken place. Viewers are watching rape on film. Thus passages from Linda Marchiano's book Ordeal, written some time after she 'starred' as Linda Lovelace in Deepthroat are vital to the debate:

> 'Often I am asked why I didn't escape (earlier). Behind that question here's an attitude, a presumption. I can see it in the face asking the question. The questioner always has the sure knowledge that this could never happen to him or to her. They would have been strong enough and smart enough and resourceful enough to have gotten away ... Once, during a grand jury hearing in California, I was asked the question point-blank:
>
> "How come you never got away?"
>
> And I answered point-blank: "Because it's kind of hard to get away when there's a gun pointed at your head."
>
> There was always a gun pointed at my head. Even when no gun could be seen, there was a gun pointed at my head. I can understand why some people have such trouble accepting this as the truth. When I was younger, when I heard about a woman being raped, my secret feeling was that that could never happen to me. I would never permit it to happen. Now I realised that can be about as meaningful as saying I won't allow an earthquake or I won't permit an avalanche...
>
> At first I was certain that God would help me escape but in time my faith was shaken. I became more and more frightened, scared of everything. The very thought of trying to escape was terrifying. I had been degraded every possible way, stripped of all dignity, reduced to an animal and then to a vegetable. Whatever strength I had began to disappear. Simple survival took everything; making it all the way to tomorrow was victory.'
>
> (Lovelace and McGrady, 1980, pp. 69-70)

When Linda Marchiano spoke of her years of being coerced into performing for pornographic productions, the crimes she cited involved rape, bashing, beating - by her own husband, in her own home. The final outcome was that she was forced to make a pornographic film that has gained notoriety both inside and outside her own country.

Measures can be taken to fight against this form of pornographic exploitation of women, in conjunction with existing measures, properly used, to act against the physical abuse that is its preliminary, or which is disassociated from this form of exploitation. One method is to speak out clearly in a debate which is too often seen as 'right' versus 'left', or forces of darkness against the civil libertarians, so called protectors of our freedoms. The problem is, the forces of so called light have eyes only for light in those parts of the world uninhabited by women (their world is peopled by men and cardboard cut outs they project upon real women). The so called fighters for freedom are concerned about their own freedom, but not about the freedom of women to comport ourselves as we choose, without fear of attack or fear of limitations being set upon our humanity through distortion in film or video or populism. But one of the major problems for those fighting against the exploitation of women through violent sexual portrayals and/or stereotyping in soapies and other television films and screen films, or sexist advertising, is that the concept of pornography as currently defined is unhelpful, or downright dangerous. The word conjures up tired old legal definitions having little or nothing to do with the real issue - the exploitation of women's bodies like:

> '... whether the tendency of the matter said to be obscene is to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences and into whose hands a publication of this sort may fall'
> (R v Hicklin [1968] L.R.3 QB, 360)

Or:

> 'Appealing to prurient interest'
> (Roth v United States 354 U.S. 476, at 487 per Justice Brennan [1957]; see also for commentary Feinberg, 1983)

That is, as titilating, sexually provocative, tempting. Certainly those angry about material depicting women as bound, gagged, bleeding, wounded, open to sexual display and smiling as if we liked it do not see it as appealing, titilating, sexually provocative or tempting (see Scutt, 1984; Scutt, 1985).

The devising of measures to oppose media exploitation of women and the support through popular messages of criminal assault at home as trivial or 'between "friends"' are the more difficult

because of the limitations imposed by a word which has already been given a meaning by a culture unconcerned about women's rights not to be exploited, stereotyped or beaten and raped whether by family members, friends or others. If measures are to be introduced to create a new debate about pictorial exploitation of women, or to recast the old, it is essential to clarify the nature of the ill being fought against and to devise measures amenable to ensuring that equal resources exist on the feminist side of the argument to measure up an equal response to those supporting the stereotyping and sexual exploitation of women, and the rape, bashing and abuse of women by the men they have married.

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DESPERATELY SEEKING SOLUTIONS: CHANGING BATTERED WOMEN'S OPTIONS SINCE 1880

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Introduction

The plight of battered women was a central preoccupation of late nineteenth century Australian feminists. Whether they worked in philanthropy, temperance, women's suffrage or other social reform movements, feminist activists devoted considerable attention to domestic violence, as part of their more general critique of marriage. In the eighty years between Louisa Lawson's first article denouncing the limited options facing battered wives in 1888, and the opening of refuges for battered women by members of the Women's Liberation Movement, significant changes can be detected in responses to domestic violence in Australia.

The study of New South Wales historical records reveals three key alterations bearing on the experience of battered women. In the first place, there was increased resort to remedies other than criminal prosecution of violent men. Principally, co-habitation was ended in various ways, often by use of support from the woman's parents, by battered women taking paid employments or by women's support through civil maintenance orders served on the batterer. Divorce became more common as an outcome. Secondly, 'the problem' of men's domestic violence received increasing psychologistic interpretations which implicated the woman involved in the production and maintenance of habitual battering. Finally, and more recently, domestic violence has tended to be reidentified, not as an aberrant but as a prevalent abuse within heterosexual cohabitation - an abuse inadequately resolved by existing options.

This paper outlines these three alterations and attempts to suggest their actual effects for battered women. A number of developments in the social history of women require elaboration in the course of this outline in order to situate the options battered women took, and the responses of their assailants, state agents and public opinion. One crucial development was married women's dramatic reduction of their fertility from an 1880 average total of seven live births each, to three by 1920, to the current average of one. Another marked change across the period was in the higher levels of publicly stated expectations of the sexual, emotional and companionate aspects of marriage and heterosexual co-habitation. A further relevant change related to

paid employment and education. There was a decided shift away from the view that marriage ought to be women's only trade in the constructing of options for young, unmarried women; and the increasing participation of married women - formally and informally - in paid work, especially since 1945.

An organising proposition of this paper is that the contest between feminism and masculinism lies at the heart of both the historical and contemporary identifications and interpretations of domestic violence and in the constructions of options available to battered women. That is to say, the entire matter was, and is intensely political. While this may initially seem too obvious to state, much work on domestic violence proceeds as if only one side of this contest, the feminist side, is political. If the historical record shows nothing else, it reveals the wily and adaptive politics of twentieth century masculinity, enshrined in state agencies, in social policy, in the relevant professions and in the conjugal unit itself. It is time is was named and rendered as such.

Retreat from Criminal Justice Solutions

In principle, the remedy available to late nineteenth century persons suffering an assault was to have the offender prosecuted. Assault was an offence with ancient origins in English common law. The establishment of state funded police forces in the early nineteenth century and the revision of the criminal code mid-century provided a number of options. Assault was defined as either 'common' or 'aggravated' in the English Offences Against the Person Act of 1861. Parliamentary debates suggest that members posed as a key criterion of graveness any marked and visible physical inequality between assailant and complainant, such as that which generally prevailed between adult and child, man and woman. The maximum penalty that could be inflicted upon conviction for either form of assault was six months imprisonment (NSW Parliamentary Debates (N.S.W.P.D.) 1983, 593). Such convictions could be the result of either a police arrest or of the complainant taking out a summons. After an initial hearing in a court of petty sessions, the case would be resolved there, dismissed, or committed to a higher court for trial by jury. The latter could take place if the demonstrated severity of the assault met the definition of an indictable offence - for instance inflicting, or assault with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm, assault with a deadly weapon, or attempted murder.

Several problems attended the use of criminal prosecution for assault as a remedy for battered wives. The original common law not only failed to allow for the possibility of wives prosecuting husbands, but actually authorised wife-beating, so long as the rob or birch employed were no thicker than a man's thumb (Ramelson, 1976, 32). The same common law encoded hanging as the

penalty for marital femicide, but burning at the stake was the penalty for women who murdered husbands, since this was described as a petit treason (Radzinowicz, 1956, 427). Liberals who revised the criminal codes in Britain in the 1860's, and in Australia in the 1870s and 1880s removed these archaic sexual anomolies. The conditions of the patriarchal marriage contract which had given them meaning however had altered but little by the late nineteenth century. Wives might now prosecute husbands for assault and see them convicted, but as Louisa Lawson argued in 1888:

> When the brute is released ... she is still the felon's helpmate and companion ... to run the gauntlet of his blows offer him another opportunity for a more surely delivered thrust ... On the horrors of a drunken housemate we will not descant. The sacredness and strength of marriage ties can never be weakened by the severance of bonds which woman's tears have already rotted, not can sanctity remain in marriage bonds which only bind to torments (The Dawn, 1 May 1888, 13).

Lawson here addressed the practical problem inherent in married women's uses of criminal assault prosecutions - their typical economic and social dependency upon their assailant, a basic factor not acknowledged at law. For feminists of her ilk, the liberal gentlemen who were satisfied that thanks to their revisions, the law now confronted modern Australian conditions, were, quite simply in error. Insofar as she claimed that half of married women were deeply unhappy through abuses of the marriage contract, the gentlemen's law was gender-blind. In its totality, it failed to provide women with the means to redress the most prevalent crimes against the person - the ones that took place inside a man's castle. The making of marriage as women's trade, with husbands as wives' employers ensured that assault prosecutions could not be a practicable solution for battered wives, unless an alternative means of livelihood and social existence had been obtained. Only this could place her even hypothetically in a one citizen to another relationship with her assailant, a citizen who could fearlessly demand public prosecution and remedy through criminal law.

The historical record suggests that few women achieved sufficient independence to prosecute their attackers. The annual returns on assault prosecutions in New South Wales did not separate cases of woman-assault from other assaults for which men were prosecuted. In the period 1880-1909 the rate of arrest was low in relation to adult men in the population of New South Wales, and the percentage of cases dismissed without conviction exceedingly high (NSW Statistical Register, 1880-1909 (N.S.W.S.R.) see also Allen, 1984, 309-17). While the lack of differentiation of types of

assault makes interpretation with regard to domestic violence uncertain, examination of the surviving courts of petty sessions charge books disclose with resounding clarity the over-representation of cases involving married couples in assault prosecutions dismissed by magistrates. Often the hearing would begin with the police having to confess that their chief witness, the victim, had not, or would not appear. If she did appear, she would often be a hostile witness in the case, denying her previous statement, attributing her injuries to domestic accidents, generally, calling herself, publicly, a malicious liar. Another variation was the woman confronting the veracity of her earlier statement, but begging the magistrate to show mercy on account of the family being in parlous financial circumstances (see, for instance, the case against Claude Clifford reported in Truth, 13 January 1901). A fine of between two and five pounds, or the loss of the breadwinnder's income for any period up to the six months allowable by statute, would be a material disaster for working class wives, battered or not. Moreover, Lawson was hardly melodramatic to claim that further more severe violence was the likely fate of battered wives whose husbands received criminal conviction and punishment. Courts of Quarter Sessions and the Supreme court presided over significant numbers of men indicted for malicious wounding, inflicting grievous bodily harm, felonious slaying, manslaughter and murder under precisely the cricumstances Lawson anticipated (see, for instance, N.S.W. Clerk of the Peace (N.S.W.C.P), 1887, Regina v William H., 14 October, 9/6758; N.S.W. Court Reporting Offence (N.S.W.C.R.O.), 1915, Rex v John F., 7 September, 6/104B). Since the question of altering the battered woman's legal, economic and social position qua the assailant husband was entirely outside the brief of criminal law, it is hardly surprising to learn that even sympathetic magistrates refused to convict, often in the genuine belief that all existing criminal remedies could only make the situation worse.

Under these circumstances police saw little mileage in arresting woman batterers. The outcome was statistically most uncertain from the record of successful convictions angle. Police handbooks advised that unless serious, life endangering assault was taking place, arrests should not be made. Instead, the woman should be urged to take out a summons (Stephen, 1905, 62-3). In 1900 these cost six shillings and sixpence in Sydney, nearly half the weekly wage of a live-in domestic servant (the largest recorded paid women's occupation). Annual statistics on summonses as distinct from apprehensions are available from 1891 returns on police courts. The private summons was overwhelmingly more significant than arrests for assault, and the court charge and summons books reveal that women were the majority of petitioners in assault summons cases (N.S.W.S.R. 1891-1909).

Most summons cases record the outcome 'No Parties' or 'Withdrawn'. The petty sessions evidence rarely provides greater detail, but the difficulties for a cohabitating woman to bring a

case against her husband without police support seem fairly obvious. In instances where magistrates took the case to be proven, but cohabitation was to continue a fine was sometimes imposed often though, the man was bound over to keep the peace, and frequently this was the only outcome the woman had sought. It seems clear that for police to be called to a domestic assault, the community disruption had to be great enough to warrant it. The summons was the more common important resort of battered wives. It was no solution.

Lawson was part of a chorus of voices clamouring for better solutions for battered wives. Some advocated more specific provisions in criminal law. In 1883 it was proposed that the penalty for men's aggravated assaults of women be increased from the maximum of six months to a years imprisonment. This was defeated because of the threat to liberty taken to be entailed in permitting magistrates to impose such lengthy sentences without jury deliberation (N.S.W.P.D., 593-4). William Sheay, member for working class Redfern tabled the Wifebeaters Punishment Bill in 1889. Its provisions remain unknown because the house was prorogued before its debate (N.S.W.P.D. 1889, 78).

The failure to seriously rectify criminal law on this matter led reformers like Sir Alfred Stephen to advocate broadening the grounds for divorce so that proven cruelty by the husband was sufficient basis for a case without proof of his adultery. In her recently published study of divorce in the nineteenth century New South Wales, Hilary Golder provides a commanding analysis of the factors delaying the reform of divorce laws to address women's marital grievances, one of which was the provision for 'constructive desertion' in the 1858 adaptation of the English Deserted Wives and Childrens Act of 1840. This provision allowed women to sue their husbands for maintenance for themselves and their children if they had found that habitual violence compelled them to flee the marital home. Such women were to be treated as deserted wives (Golder, 1985, 40). Those legislators who recognised the inadequacies of criminal law solutions for battered wives, but who opposed broader use of divorce than the adultery based variety enshrined in the 1973 NSW Matrimonial Causes Act believed that the constructive desertion provision provided the best solution for the respectable and deserving battered wife.

Annual returns on maintenance orders and maintenance non-compliance proceedings available from 1898 do not provide breakdowns of desertion by husbands, and constructive desertion by women, due to violence. This area of social litigation greatly increased during the early twentieth century, especially from the 1920-1939 period. Around 20,000 applications for orders were made in the first decade of this century, half of which were granted, half withdrawn by women or dismissed by magistrates. In the same

period, nearly 10,000 men were prosecuted for non-compliance, over half of these cases again being withdrawn or dismissed. By the 1930-1939 period, nearly 35,000 applications were made, of which 60 per cent were granted, the rest dismissed/withdrawn, while over 55,000 men were summonsed for non-compliance, 40 per cent of those cases were quashed or withdrawn (N.S.W.S.R. 1930-1939). It is likely that a large proportion of these separations and situations of non-support had woman-battering as a major causal factor.

Whatever the exact extent to which men's violence caused the marital breakdowns that civil maintenance proceedings signalled, the inadequacy of such solutions is certain on a number of grounds. Non-compliance orders against men were not policed vigorously. Nor was it viable for most working-class men to support two households or domestic bases on the kind of wages earned.

The importance of this option was its existence as a civil alternative to criminal proceedings; and one that, on paper at least, could be construed as a solution to the woman's most immediate material problems. Limited extant evidence suggests however that magistrates were not generous in orders made in women's favour (Golder, 1985, 37-40; O'Brien, 1979, 98; Tiffin, 1982, 143-4). Such orders could easily be overturned in response to the suggestion of any blemish on the woman's virtue or the slightest change in her child-care arrangements, accommodation, miscellaneous expenses, or sources of income. Estranged husbands had every reason to try out any creative range of such suggestions, either to force the woman back home, or to be relieved of the burden of financial responsibility. It does not seem, that the system of private, punitive maintenance provided for women effectively or comprehensively. This notwithstanding, it came to be seen by police as the preferable solution for battered wives.

In 1903, Louisa Lawson's daughter-in-law, Bertha Lawson, while early in her third pregnancy left Australia's greatest poet. She took her children, and moved into a boarding gouse. She tried to earn a living by writing, but her work was rejected by publishers, and as she later wrote she had no choice but to sue Henry Lawson for constructive desertion (Lawson, 1943, 77). Satisfied that his ill-treatment, alcoholism and infidelity rendered their cohabitation intolerable, the magistrate at North Sydney police court ordered him to maintain Bertha and Jim at the rate of two pounds a week (Lawson, 1943, 77). Henry Lawson refused, or was unable to comply. Bertha Lawson had to accept financial support from her friend, Sydney feminist Rose Scott, while waiting for non-compliance, then judicial separation proceedings to take effect. In this process while regularly harassed by her estranged husband she miscarried, and saw no choice but to resume cohabitation (Scott, 1903). Her situation

was not properly resolved until she obtained full-time work with a book distributor in 1909 but which time her children were more independent (Lawson, 1943, 142).

The gradual entrenchment in state policy of the constructive desertion attempted by Bertha Lawson is demonstrated by a case that took place twenty years later. A theatrical electrician with J.C. Williamson began assaulting his wife when his five-pound salary was halved in 1930, as a depression measure. One morning his assault was so prolonged and distressing for neighbours that police were called. She had lost consciousness, and had to be carried to bed. No arrest was made. Instead, police advised her to leave him, and take out a maintenance order. When she did so, the magistrate quashed her case because her husband had begun proceedings for divorce on the grounds of adultery. She resumed cohabitation, having lost jer job, and being without family assistance (N.S.W.C.R.O., 1931, Thomas A. v Mary A., 3 May, 6/1574). This case shows police reluctance to have serious domestic violence presented for criminal prosecution where there was the option of a civil or family law soultion to the breakdown of the conjugal relationship.

By the time of this case in 1930, family law in New South Wales had been altered, supposedly offering divorce as a solution for battered wives. The NSW Divorce Extension Act of 1892 provided cruelty, habitual drunkenness and desertion alone and in combination as grounds for divorce. Some supporters of this measure saw it as a welfare measure for a problem inadequately addressed by any other branch of law (Golder, 1985, 237). More cynical supporters saw this reform as the cheapest solution for state and taxpayer. Battered separated wives inevitably became a burden on charitable resources in the likely event of non-compliance on maintenance payments by their assailant husbands.

In view of the much vaunted numerical shortage of women, legislators contended it was much better to get abused women back on to the marriage market, since a better husband looked to be the best livelihood available (Golder, 1985, 225-6). Altering the matrimonial position in response to women's typical marital problems was posed as necessary and beneficial. Providing cheaper divorce seemed another important step, and some judges put considerable effort into practical procedural reforms. In relation to the previous twenty years, Golder identified a divorce boom from 1839, with women the majority of petitioners (Golder, 1985, 245).

The rates of divorce continued to decrease overall, especially in the interwar years, and a reading of divorce transcripts reveals the overwhelming importance of violence in women's accounts of marriage breakdown, whatever the formal ground petitioned (see Allen, 1982). However, divorce hardly became a prolific resort, and itself provided no solution for the largest group affected by

domestic violence in New South Wales - working class women. For battered wives, divorce did not address the man's violence. It only formalised the fact that women had found other solutions, and emerged as an outcome in the event of property and/or child custody disputes, and when either party decided to re-marry. Sometimes violent men pursued divorce to end estranged wives financial claims on them (Golder, 1985, 128). Despite the technical possibility of alimony to divorced wives, the welfarist construction of divorce by New South Wales legislators and judiciary was markedly at variance with the philosophy underpinning the original English alimony provision (Golder, 1985, 203).

If criminal prosecution, constructive desertion, maintenance, public charities, and divorce were not solutions for battered wives, what other options did they embrace from the early twentieth century? Recent feminist writing on domestic violence laments the lack of historical perspectives on battered women, often creating the impression that they were a feminist intervention of the 1960s and 1970s, brought into being by the refuge movement (Breines and Gordon, 1983). Arguably, the options remaining do not generate evidence and identify themselves as solutions of battered women: returning to the parental home or taking the children there; obtaining financual support usually from parents to set up a single parent household; taking up paid work; and finding a new breadwinner. From her survey of the intensely sex-segmented, poorly-paid, service-based work, available to adult women in the late nineteenth century, Golder reluctantly contends that a new heterosexual relationship was the best material option for separated women (Kingston 1975, 147-153). It does not seem that the workforce choices were significantly better by the interwar years, although certainly there were changes. Domestic service was declining as the largest paid occupation, while increased urbanisation was accompanied by expansions in various forms of light secondary industry, in retailing, and in white collar tertiary sector occupations. Historians are correct to conclude that these changes did not themselves greatly alter the rates of women's participation in paid work, nor the wealth and status of women's work before 1945 (for instance, N.S.W.C.R.O., 1901, Agnes F. v John F., 30 May, 6/2911). Such a conclusion addresses the overall statistical picture in a way that does not give visibility to the experience of different groups of women.

Interwar divorce transcripts provide accounts of the breakdown of the marriage that involve the women leaving her drunken, violent husband, and taking a job in a factory, a shop, an office, a hotel, sometimes under an assumed name, often with the title 'Miss' (see for example, McCreery, 1908, 264; Wollard, 1914, 699; Lind, 1916, 19; Charles and Firth, 1924, 132-6; Walker, 1968). In that pre-computer age, these women probably appeared in the

unmarried women's occupations section of the census of the period from which historians draw their evidence. The material changes of an urbanising culture in Sydney may have provided battered women desperate enough a means of survival, means that would not register as such in usual evidence. Women from the country often ran away to Sydney.

A critical factor in battered women's capacity to end co-habitation and seek alternative livelihoods was childbearing. The overall decline in average fertility of the married women of New South Wales, to three in 1920s, two by the 1930s, implies a number of developments. Fewer women than hitherto were having the really large families, while many, many more women were having no children, and many only one child during their entire reproductive period. Consequently, where battered women appear in criminal, maintenance or divorce records by leaving and attempting independence, they tend to be young and either childless, or with one child only. They were hardly the majority of battered wives.

Melancholy and Masochism

Despite the depressing picture of poor options outlined, from the interwar years their existence was increasingly used to argue that no woman had to stay in a violent relationship. A number of cultural changes further facilitated this view, and acted against the possibility of police or state action against women batterers. In the first place, the early twentieth century medical profession had to a significant extent re-defined much criminal behaviour as either biologically determined, or as the inevitable consequence of certain environments (Donzelot, 1979, 126-43; Lasch, 1962). The effect on public and state criminal justice responses to inter-personal crimes was that medical expertise increasingly intervened and sought removal of offenders, complainants, and their families to psychiatric and other kinds of counselling. Donzelot describes this cluster of non-criminological agencies as 'the psych complex', while others locate the same trends as aspects of the promotion of 'the therapeutic state' (Garton, 1984, 339-46).

Secondly, medical and psychiatric intervention into stages of the criminal justice process took place in a framework that has been called, 'the psychologisation of everyday life' (Garton, 1984, 277-95), in the interwar years. Essentially this refers to the popularising of simplified, often vulgar versions of the theories of such psychologists and alienists as Ellis, Freud and Jung. Manifestations of this ranged from the education of teachers and social workers, through to novels, films and newspapers. Women's magazines with wide distributions published many articles on child psychology, suburban neurosis, and psychoanalysis (see, for example, Rosenberg, 1975; Rosenberg, 1982, 189-206; Rolham, 1978,

179-88; Freedman, 1974; Gordon, 1971; Hale, 1971; Robinson, 1976; Smith, 1978). Third, a significant theme in this growing popularity of psychology was the question of the nature of femininity, particularly female sexuality. Women's capacities for pleasure, penis envy, masochism and hysteria received attention in both professional and mass popular literature, and scientific studies of sexual practices and responses were sponsored with new conviction. Systematic narratives and interpretations are still to be published on these developments in Australia, though Garton's thesis is an important beginning. American work on this subject for the early twentieth century is extensive (Rolham, 1978, 187-8; Rosenberg, 1982, 202-3).

To suggest that these cultural changes were directly causal in a declining focus on domestic violence in policing and criminal justice would be to over-simplify. It is rather that since women's dependence on men had always made prosecution an inadequate solution to the problem of violence in marriage, the interest in psychology and sexuality provided other ways of understanding this problem. In principle, these theories did not have to be used in ways that disadvantaged women, and some commentators have noted beneficial social effects from more open acknowledgement of female sexuality during the interwar years (Horney, 1967; Deutsch, 1947; see also Mitchell, 1976, 125-31). Freud scholars contend that the accounts of these theories most influential in the English speaking world however, were those of Karen Horney in the 1920s and 1930s, and Helen Deutsch in the 1940s, both of whom emphasised masochism and hysteria (Garton, 1984). Battered wives often endured until mental illness was the result (Grotjahn, 1964, 239, 299). Increasingly, this endurance was attributed to passivity and masochism, until, by the 1960s standard social work text-books referred to the 'sado-masochistic marriage' (Truth, 3 June 1923; N.S.W.A.G. and J. (SB) Deserted Wives and Children Act, 1909-1946, 7/211).

While maintenance and divorce were being posed officially as preferable to the criminal prosecution of violent men, the press published damning criticism of women who used these options. A campaign was mounted against constructive desertion in the 1920s, especially against the imprisonment of men who defaulted on payments. Wives were depicted as sexually abandoned parasites in articles with headlines like 'The Man Pays, While the Woman Plays' and 'Woman the Despot' (see, for example, N.S.W.C.R.O. Rex v Herbert L., 7 October 1920, 6/1078; and Rex v Patrick G., 23 April 1919, 8/7073). Masculinist public pressure succeeded, and the imprisonment of maintenance defaulters ceased. Meanwhile, in he field of salacious and titillating journalism, crime virtually was superseded by divorce case reporting, complete with photographs, graphic accounts of the woman's sexual history, and sceptical reportage of her allegations of violence.

The effects of these changes of discourse were further amplified by changes in the most public form of violence between heterosexual couples - murder. Husbands murdering wives increased in relation to married male population. The increasing capacity and willingness of women to leave habitually violent men from the interwar years had consequences reflected in patterns of femicide committed in New South Wales.

Half of the women killed in the years 1880-1909 died in the family home. Almost a quarter died from head injuries inflicted by fists or other blunt instruments. These were usually disciplinary beatings, as were a further proportion of cases in which the episode concluded by the defendant using a knife or razor. A smaller group of male femicide defendants killed estranged wives in a public place. The depositions show that forty of ninety-five of these defendants were attempting a reconciliation, or trying to force their wives to withdraw a maintenance order, or quarrelled about another man.

After 1919 and until 1939 women killed by aggravated disciplinary beatings inflicted by men within the home account for less than a quarter of the femicide cases tried in New South Wales. There was a dramatic increase in femicides involving women separated or separating from husbands, shot by them in lodgings or public places, following altercations about the same range of issues as in the 1880-1909 cases - refusal to resume cohabitation, maintenance orders, other lovers, and various combinations of these. All of these perhaps reflect women's growing independence. The killings overall became more calculated and more brutal. Nine in ten women killed outside the family home died from gun-shot wounds (N.S.W.C.R.O., Rex v John M., 7 September 1920, 6/1078). Demographic changes affected this change in the character of these femicides. Married women of the nineteenth century, with five or even six children, were hardly in a position to leave and expect either adequate maintenance payments or waged work that could pay enough to support all these dependants. Among women killed in 1880-1909, those attacked in lodgings or public places were younger, recently married, and less encumbered with children than the others who were killed in the family home. These circumstances facilitated their attempts to exist independently of their husbands. As observed above, by the interwar years more married women were in this situation of having fewer children, so that leaving seemed a real possibility earlier. By the 1930s young, and especially childless, estranged wives were most vulnerable to femicide.

If battered women found little remedy in the criminal justice system of New South Wales, the finding that they were the typical victims of femicide should excite little surprise. Wives increasingly took steps to terminate unworkable relationships from the early twentieth century and femicides became dominantly the act of men who could not accept this outcome. That is to say,

the most common form of deliberate violence leading to death committed in New South Wales came to be committed by men against women on whom they were dependent, who had rejected them. Femicide in the nineteenth century most often had exploited women's dependence on men. Half a century later it punished women for indifference to and independence of men.

Instead of fierce and grave responses to these violent husbands, the conduct of trials, and patterns of verdicts and sentences in marital femicides disclose astonishing levels of condonation. Since shooting wives in public places furnished little doubt of guilt, the defence strategy was to obtain mitigation and mercy. One could be forgiven for mistaking transcripts of these cases as belonging to rape trials. This behaviour of deceased woman in leaving him was invariably posed as unpardonable provocation to the poor defendent, usually a brave ex-serviceman, often with a good medical history of shell-shock and battle neurosis (Allen, 1984, 319-21). The woman could not answer back, when accused of infidelity, ingratitude, poor household management, or hereditary unfitness. Her having a temerity to leave a battering returned soldier and have a maintenance order served on him might be construed as cause of temporary insanity such as to extenuate his taking a revolver, waiting until she alighted the tram on the way to work, and shooting her amongst the other commuters. 'Not guilty because temporarily insane' was a common outcome. Another course was conviction for a lesser offence. Although the death penalty pertained to murder until 1955 in New South Wales, it was men who murdered strangers, or other men who were executed.

Feminism Strikes Back

The psychologisation of the batterer and the blaming of the victim extended throughout medical, paramedical and professional discourse and policy in the postwar period. The effect of this was to locate the problem as one afflicting an aberrant minority, and a minority in which both husband and wife were accomplices in perpetuating 'the problem'. This retarded social or environmental analysis of habitual woman battering by men, and undermined any case for state responsbility for provision of alternative options for battered women. Historians have yet to be allowed the access to more recent archives on the administration of social welfare policy that would reveal the extent to which battered women received state support under deserted wives and child welfare provisions. Hospital, social work, child welfare and private medical records would be necessary to evaluate the extent to which psychologistic discourse had measurable effects on battered women's agency and choices of options.

Even in the absence of such necessary evidence, it does seem clear that the entire aim of the psychologistic 'victim blaming', professional approach, depended for its explanatory legitimacy on

low rates of policing. That is to say, medical hegemony depended on the retreat of other agencies from constructing domestic violence as a prevalent social abuse for which its perpetrators could be held responsible under criminal law. It depended on women not making their situation public, or demanding social provision or redress, but rather finding their own solutions, as if their response was 'the problem'. It depended upon male behaviour and masculinity being exempted from scrutiny as 'the problem'. So long as police did not act, so long as there were few solutions for women, that might expose the scale and nature of the problem, so long as women kept quiet, women battering could be reduced to individual psychology in postwar discourse.

It may seem banal to contend that the emergence of the women's liberation movement undermined psychologistic interpretation of domestic violence, but the claim that contemporary feminism subverts this discourse can be supported on a number of grounds. First wave feminism addressed a different problematic regarding domestic violence. Assailant husbands were fairly simply presented as brutes, cowards and bullies. So clear did this practice seem as an abuse of weakness, dependency, and maternity, that further interrogation of causes seemed unnecessary. In making their case against marriage and for provision of alternative livelihoods to women neither feminists, nor their opponents developed arguments about extent and causes of domestic violence. Implicitly, charges of brutishness indicted masculinity. The definition of this violence in terms of psychological aberrance arguably challenged earlier feminist analyses of men's behaviour, and offered an alternative politically damaging to feminism, the more so for its patina of scientificity.

Contemporary feminism challenges the psychological redefinition in a number of ways. Most basically the experience of feminist politics and organisation has provided alternative knowledge of women's situations, that seriously dispute the methodology and data base upon which psychologistic explanations are mounted. The earliest feminist consciousness raising groups disclosed the prevalence of woman battering, and the many obstacles to its recognition by relevant agencies. The strong incentives to take any action were explained as women experienced them. Insofar as feminist groups processed the ethic of sisterhood, immediate action was demanded on domestic violence. Since women invariably had nowhere to go, if they made the decision that they had to leave, the importance of establishing supportive refuges was paramount for the women's Liberation Movement. Feminists have insisted that the financial maintenance of these refuges is to be a state responsibility, removing onus from individuals.

In exposing the endemic rather than aberrant character of women battering, feminists do not only undermine psychologistic interpretations. The analysis offered also extends earlier feminist work by locating male violence as an integral

possibility within the power imbalance that defines ordinary heterosexual domesticity. Contemporary feminists are less likely than their forebears to make exceptions of batterers by thinking of them as bullies. Instead, feminists propose the fact emerging from women's experience - batterers are ordinary, integrated members of the community who hold down jobs, attend church, play sport, pursue hobbies, and love their children. While extensive debate has taken place within feminism as to causes and solutions, feminists have consistently advocated options that maximise the possibilities for women's empowerment, and insisted that locating woman battering as an aspect of overall social relations between the sexes is a minimal requirement for all scholarship on this question.

The challenge of the feminist 'discovery' of domestic violence has stimulated many mainstream professional responses, often in the attempt to re-locate analysis of the problem in a gender neutral perspective without reference to the context of societal male supremacy. Another response has been yet another redefinition of the batterer in more sympathetic hues, against the barrage of feminist critique. An important parallel development of the 1970s was the move towards the no-fault divorce based on 'irreconcilable breakdown' rubric, and some feminists believed as Lawson did nearly a century before, that this might be an important way out for battered women and their children. If the feminist contribution to defining 'the family' as a dangerous place had initially favourable effects for women seeking child custody under the Family Law Act (1975) the honeymoon soon was over. While detailed work on the first ten years remain to be published, impressions abound. The negative picture of masculinity has been challenged in cultural production. A process of 'sentimentalising' the father-child bond is a striking feature of the last decade, nowhere more unctuously portrayed than in films such as Kramer versus Kramer, Ordinary People and Author, Author, and in the plots of popular television soap operas. A more chilling note has been struck more recently in organised and violent masculinist attacks on the Family Law Court and its judges and their relatives. No arrest for these bombings have yet taken place. Meanwhile, although my information is verbal, welfare workers are reporting a disquieting tendency of judges to grant custody or else extraordinarily generous access conditions to violent husbands, even to those proven to have raped daughters - since these attacks on the family court.

Conclusion

In July 1985, the ABC programs Pressure Point and Open File collaborated in a film and discussion on supposed women battering. Huw Evans' inimitable voice declared gravely that this problem afflicts one in three Australian homes. The focus of the film, in fact, was group therapy for violent men, and the attempt was the 'in-depth' analysis of why men batter. Little

attention was placed on the casualties. It was an interesting exercise in, on the other hand, appropriating feminist critiques and methodology, and on the other hand showing the human side of masculinity, as these men explained how much their wives irritated them. By the end, the viewer was placed in the position if not of sympathy for these men, then a sense of seeing the problem in a new and balanced way. But the message was familiar: the men, all a third of the population of them need help, need women's support, and violent marriages can be saved if everyone just works on it in the right spirit. The effects of this recent approach appear quite insiduous, and moves consideration away from critical scrutiny of masculinity and away from interpretation of the role of male supremacy in establishing conditions for violence.

In making these observations, the argument of this paper has been posed against the conventional progressivist interpretations which contend that the retreat from criminal intervention and the gradual medicalisation and psychologisation of social problems like family violence was a good, humane and positive development. The argument here conversely has posed these developments as disastrous for battered women seeking solutions. This is not to suggest therefore the return to the good old days of the sole options for battered wives being the local constable, the summons, or charitable relief. Nor should it be thought that psychological factors are unimportant, that women battering is somehow 'normal' in our 'violent' society. Rather it is the way in which the decline in criminal proceedings and the application of psychologistic explanations have combined to minimise the extent and obscure the causes of women battering that must become the historical memory for future policy. Any viable policy must name the problem in the light of this historical memory and seek solutions that address the real problem - masculinity.

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IV

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY: INQUIRY AND ITS TECHNIQUES

'If [we] will begin with certainties, [we] shall end in doubts; but if [we] will be content with doubts, [we] shall end in certainties.'

Francis Bacon (Amended)
The Advancement of Learning,
I, v. 8.

'The enemy in the struggle against domestic violence is not the police, it is not the judges, it is not even the violent men themselves. The enemy is our own ignorance of what we can do that will succeed in stopping the problem. Research can conquer that ignorance - it gives us the method. Now all we lack is the will to use it'.

Larry Sherman;
address to the conference.

In their paper, Sherman et al. address the issue of the relationship between research and policy. They note that this is usually interpreted in a unidirectional manner, that is, in terms of the maximisation of the effects of research upon policy. However, in the wake of the apparent impact of the Minneapolis domestic violence experiment upon police policy, the parameters of the relationship have been transformed, according to one critic, so that the dilemma may now relate to the possibility that research exerts an excessive influence upon policy. Sherman et al. examine this proposition in the context of the Minneapolis experiment, employing the comparative framework of the medical model of research and practice as an illustrative guide.

The authors provide a critique of the methodological approaches employed in the assessment of medical substances and treatments, and their subsequent translation into practice. In the light of this analysis, the criticism relating to the premature impact of the Minneapolis experiment is considered deficient in its appraisal of conceptual and pragmatic issues.

Sherman et al. assert that policy-related research should take the following factors into account: contemporary policy and practice; the extant knowledge within these domains; the prevailing political climate affecting policy and practice; and the internal and external validity of the research findings. The authors discuss these factors as they impinge upon the Minneapolis experiment, and conclude that the results are no more likely to be 'flawed' than 'the findings of a medical field trial with comparable limitations would be flawed'.

The latter section of the paper is concerned with the publicity accorded the results of the Minneapolis experiment. Sherman et al. describe the process of disseminating the research findings, and note: 'The price of publicity is simplification, for the Minneapolis experiment just as much as for medical research or even complex developments in large corporations like IBM'.

In an effort to substantiate hypotheses regarding the effect of the publicity upon the policy and practice of urban police departments, the authors sought information upon the degree of infiltration of the results amongst senior police personnel. Two extensive national telephone surveys were conducted to measure, firstly, alterations in policy and practice relating to domestic violence, secondly, the recall of the Minneapolis findings, and thirdly, the department's willingness to participate in a replication of the experiment. The second national survey, conducted after extensive exposure of the experimental findings, revealed a significant impact upon many departments, particularly in the area of policy formulation.

Sherman et al. conclude that they have essentially been engaged, in their paper, in a debate upon values: pertinent issues

include the right of free speech and the implied responsibilities of practitioners in remaining informed and, where appropriate, implementing relevant initiatives.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that the Minneapolis experiment stands as an awesome precedent for research upon legal and social interventions into aspects of criminal or quasi-criminal behaviour. There is no doubt that the Minneapolis experiment will continue to profoundly influence the conduct of applied research.

* * *

Norman's paper reports upon research into ethnic women's experience of male violence undertaken on behalf of the New South Wales Domestic Violence Committee. This research, a component of a community education program conducted in ten languages, aimed to 'identify the major needs of non-English speaking background victims of domestic violence and the resources available'. The method employed was a phone-in; this was preceded by an extensive media campaign. The results of the research indicated that the great majority of callers were women who were victims of domestic violence, aged between 20 and 39 years, with children, but without paid employment. Most were, or continued to be, battered by their husbands; the majority had endured this violence from between two and ten years. Few women had sought police intervention, and, of those who had, most described the police as 'not helpful'.

Norman includes recommendations for alleviating the special difficulties encountered by women from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

* * *

Marital rape, according to Finkelhor, is 'a crime with a name, but without a reality'. He claims that the stereotypes surrounding this activity continue to persist; this is, that marital rape is not violent, and that it does not involve the humiliation or degradation frequently attributed to stranger rape.

Accordingly, in an attempt to demystify the behaviour associated with forced sexual activity between intimates, Finkelhor reports upon interviews conducted with a number of women who were subjected to marital rape.

Finkelhor isolates several different categories of marital rape: battering rapes, force only rapes and obsessive rapes. He provides detailed case studies of rapes within each of these categories. Finkelhor argues for the recognition of the

impact of these experiences upon the female partner, and for the application of criminal sanction, where appropriate, to offenders.

* * *

The papers of Knight and Hatty, Healy, and Shatifan represent a diverse set of propositions within the field: firstly, there is an examination of the theoretical and pragmatic influences determining the research agenda (see Knight and Hatty); and, secondly, there is an enumeration of the limits and advantages of research conducted within differing sites utilising a variety of methodologies (see Healy and Shatifan).

Hatty and Knight maintain, in their paper, that the theoretical framework adopted by researchers or applied workers (whether implicit or explicit) determines the use of measurement techniques, regardless of the setting or opportunity for social action. In particular, the interface between professionals and battered women affords the scope to either recognise the phenomenon, and thereby contribute towards its measurement, or to deny its existence, thus mitigating against the compilation of evidence regarding its incidence and manifestations.

Some of the varied methodologies used in the area, with their attendant drawbacks, are outlined by Knight and Hatty. The authors conclude that the discrepancies in professional approach contribute to insufficient dialogue between researchers and applied workers, and between personnel within each division, with the result that the potential for effective social remedy is severely impaired.

Healy reports upon a follow-up survey of battered women who had, at one time, sought shelter in a refuge, but had subsequently attempted to establish a life beyond the protectiveness of this environment. Specifically, Healy was interested in how the women had managed once they had left the refuge. Secondly, she was interested in their attitudes towards the services they had been offered at the refuge.

Healy places this research in its political context, referring to the emergence of budgetary restraint and the need for program evaluation. She stresses the 'potential for conflict between financial accountability and agency independence'.

In alluding to the methodological issues involved in follow-up surveys of battered women, Healy notes that it is important to consider the problems of definition and sample bias, the complexities of measuring attitudes in a population of abused women, the risks of provoking further violence, the difficulties in locating the women, and the potential violation of confidentiality.

Shatifan's paper examines the difficulties encountered by members of the Domestic Violence Task Force, Western Australia, in the execution of their duties. Given the extensive area of Western Australia, the attempt to assess the effectiveness of legal and social responses to domestic violence was compounded by both community isolation and the fatigue of the Task Force members. Furthermore, limitations imposed upon the financial resources and the time spent in each location were added burdens.

According to Shatifan, particular difficulties were experienced in the areas of interviewer variability, the availability of particular personnel, the appropriate levels of confidentiality, and local scepticism regarding the motives of the Task Force members. Shatifan provides recommendations for the minimisation of some of these difficulties.

THE IMPACT OF RESEARCH ON POLICE PRACTICES

A Case Study of the Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment

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One of the most important questions for policy research in any field is whether it will actually influence policy, or merely gather dust on the shelf. The question is usually raised in the context of striving for greater impact of research on practice. But it can also be raised in the context of research having too much influence on practice, as Lempert (1984) recently suggested about the Minneapolis domestic violence experiment. And since this conference may wish to consider the implications of that experiment for police policy in Australia, it is appropriate to explore the question of just how much impact research in general, or that study in particular, should indeed have on practice.

Lempert suggests, in an otherwise extremely complimentary discussion about the quality of the research itself, that the results of the Minneapolis experiment (Sherman and Berk, 1984) have been 'prematurely and unduly publicised, and that police departments that have changed their arrest practices in response to this research may have adopted an innovation that does more harm than good'. Lempert goes on to raise several questions about the Minneapolis experiment and other 'relevant' studies like it. He suggests a need for a systematic canvassing of the study's influence. He argues (p. 509) that we 'need to know more about how research knowledge becomes popular learning so that researchers can intelligently influence the process' (a strong statement of the free will and responsibility of the researcher as social engineer). He suggests that legal research should take a cue from medicine, which he says (p. 510) 'painstakingly tests new drugs for safety and effectiveness before putting them into general distribution'. He concludes by arguing that widespread efforts to publicise the Minneapolis experiment and to change law enforcement practices should have awaited the results of a multi-city replication, just as medicine would do in similar circumstances.

In the spirit of Gouldner's (1970) injunction to social scientists to be 'reflexive' in their research by considering the

impact their research may have on society, this article addresses the issues Lempert raises. It does so in the context of the more basic questions about purposive research as an exogenous factor shaping the behaviour of law, the way medical research shapes the behaviour of medicine. The article begins by reviewing the actual customs of medical research, which are rather less cautious than Lempert implies. It then elaborates on the limitations of the Minneapolis experiment from the perspective of its immediate implications for policy-making. A participant's account of the process of publicising the findings is offered, followed by a systematic attempt to canvass the impact of that publicity through a two wave panel sample of police departments in cities of over 100,000 people. Several conclusions are then suggested about researcher's policy on disseminating results of research, and the immutability or malleability of the behaviour of law.

The Medical Model of Research and Practice

Lempert's (1984, p. 510) comments about medical research and practice assume a consensus in that field which does not exist, at least not in the United States. The very questions he raises of when to disseminate research and when to act on it are in fact hotly debated in medicine. If anything, Lempert suggests a higher standard of care for legal research than medical research has ever used.

Lempert seems to imply that new medical treatments are approved and widely adopted in medicine only after randomised clinical trials (RCTs) have been replicated. That, in any case, is the standard he suggests for police policy-making on domestic violence. But that is clearly not the prevailing standard in medicine. To the contrary, many doctors would find it unethical to withhold a treatment already found effective in one RCT. Although field trials on human populations are often preceded by animal experiments and non-randomised testing on humans, 'In principle, randomised trials are performed only when there is no clear evidence as to which therapy is best' (Keller, 1985, p. 22). It is not at all clear, despite the limitations of the Minneapolis experiment discussed below, that physicians would find it ethical even to proceed with replications, let alone withhold treatment until the replications are completed.

The standard medical model seems to be one large RCT which is intended to 'settle' a question, or at least a narrowly defined segment of it. Problems may develop that may limit the RCT's conclusiveness, but the ideal is <u>not</u> to have to replicate. Consider, for example, the RCT of the vaccine for hepatitis B, described as the 'finest clinical trial in the history of medicine' (Goodfield, 1984). The fifteen-year time span between the discovery of an agent and the licensing of the vaccine was reportedly the shortest ever. The RCT was preceded by tests on

chimpanzees and on 200 human volunteers from the Merck Company (which developed and manufactured the vaccine), none of whom developed any adverse effects. The investigators recruited 1,083 high risk volunteers from the Gay community in Greenwich Village, 96 per cent of whom returned for the second injection (of either vaccine or a placebo drug) and 85 per cent of whom stayed in touch with the study over the follow-up period. On the basis of its findings that the vaccine was 81 per cent effective in preventing infection, the FDA apparently licensed the vaccine for general use.

Lempert might approve of such a practice in medicine because their theoretical basis for predicting the effectiveness of a treatment is presumably stronger than comparable theoretical developments in social science. As Lempert (1984, p. 509) puts it, 'We should remember that the key to generalising in science is theory. ... If we simply assume that what has occurred in one setting will occur in another, our generalisations will rest on shaky ground whenever the settings differ in important particulars. Making policy on the basis of a single study is always dangerous in part because one study is almost never sufficient to develop a reliable theory.'.

But precisely the same point is debated in medical research. Dr Emil Freirich, a professor of medicine who claims that RCTs are widely overused in medical research, argues that the biological heterogeneity of human populations is 'enormous' (quoted in Keller, 1985), so that it may well be inappropriate to generalise to populations beyond those selected for any medical study. Despite social scientists' assumptions that human bodies are less variable in their biochemistry than cities are in their criminology, one could easily argue that a vaccine which 'works' on a Gay population in New York might not work in other settings where diet, water content, sanitation, and other factors are different. Yet, that vaccine was approved for national use after the RCT on that 'unique' population.

Moreover, RCTs are hardly used to test all new or existing treatments in medicine. Many drugs, including such disasters as DES, have been approved without RCTs on human populations. Overall, the total annual cost of non-RCT-tested treatments which may be ineffective has been estimated by the editor of the New England Journal of Medicine, Arnold Relman, to run between 10 and 15 billion dollars annually (quoted in Hanson, 1985). The impact on the patients may be incalculable. Some doctors believe that RCTs should be the standard of care for both surgical and other treatments, but many treatments grow 'like topsy' and are only later (if ever) subjected to tests to settle debates - much like criminal justice treatments and sanctions.

A good case in point is the medical response to breast cancer detected early, when the tumour is still confined to the breast -

encompassing some 60 per cent of all breast cancer patients. In the early 1960s, when many such patients refused to suffer the disfigurement of a full mastectomy, Harvard physicians developed the now famous 'lumpectomy', cutting out the tumour but leaving the breast intact, and following the surgery with radiation. Prospective follow-up of 357 women treated from 1968 to 1978 showed only 18 cases of recurrence. This evidence (and even less evidence at earlier stages) was sufficient for may physicians to recommend that their patients undergo lumpectomies, while other physicians remained adamantly opposed to anything less than radical mastectomy. Ultimately, an RCT found no difference in survival and recurrence rates for such patients.

The lumpectomy/mastectomy RCT also illustrates the division in medicine over the 'when to publicise' issue Lempert raises. The results were originally submitted for publication almost a year earlier than they finally appeared in the New England Journal of Medicine. Although the reason for the delay was not made public, it was widely speculated that upon peer reviewer recommendations, the Journal decided to ask for more time to elapse in the follow-up period to increase the statistical power of the data analysis. The delay upset many physicians who wanted the formal guidance of published results to help them to decide what course of treatment to recommend. The delay was all the more upsetting because of widespread rumours that oral presentations of the findings at medical conferences had reported no difference in treatment outcomes. Their concern illustrates the complexity of the timing issue Lempert raises.

Delaying the announcement of RCT results until the evidence is stronger is not necessarily a more cautious approach. The physicians who had to act on over 100,000 breast cancer patients during the year's delay in publication may, as it turns out, have unnecessarily disfigured many of these patients. On the other hand, had they prematurely recommended lumpectomies and later evidence showed higher rates of breast cancer recurrence, they would have increased the risk of death. These problems of Type I and Type II error have no obvious solution, but require the kind of judgment that will always be debatable.

The important point is that there are costs and controversy entailed in delay, as well as in potentially premature publicity. Decisions about medical practices, like decisions about crime control practices, cannot be postponed the way the decision to build a dam or a highway, for example, can be postponed until a careful study of environmental impact and their issues has been completed. The cost of delay for such construction projects is usually just the delay of a new benefit, rather than the positive imposition of harm or ineffectiveness at saving lives.

Moreover, in both medical and crime control practice, policies can be changed much more quickly than a dam or highway can be torn down. Medical research publication practices assume that practitioners will continue to follow new research, that science is constantly evolving, and that practice should continue to change with new knowledge. The question in medicine is never 'what is the final and ultimate truth?', but rather, 'what is the best available knowledge at this point in time?'.

Medical research has long been used as a standard of comparison with which to find social science wanting. Unlike medical research findings, which have helped to almost double the mean lifespan of Americans since the turn of the century, social science findings are usually left to gather dust on the shelf. Castigated for irrelevance by the wider society, social science has made little effort to publicise its results, or even to focus on key questions of social practice. There is no social science or criminological analogue to the New England Journal of Medicine which is an evaluation-of-practice journal much more than it is a journal of basic research. Social science funding, ability to recruit graduate students, and long term development may have all been hindered by the perceived failure of social science to be relevant. It is not without some irony, then, that a social science experiment which apparently achieves the kind of impact on practice that medical experiments often have should be questioned for having too much or premature impact.

The Minneapolis Experiment as a Guide to Policy

In order for crime control researchers to make an intelligent judgment as to what kind of policy impact they would like their findings to have, they must consider several factors: existing policy and practice, the existing knowledge base for that policy and practice, the political context of the issues, and the internal and external validity of the results. This section discusses those issues with respect to the Minneapolis experiment.

(a) Existing Policy and Practice

Here again, Lempert's (1984, p. 510) analogy to 'testing new drugs for safety and effectiveness before putting them into general distribution' breaks down. The proper analogy to the Minneapolis experiment is closer to the lumpectomy/mastectomy debate, in which several treatments were already widely used in practice, although one (mastectomy) was by far predominant.

In the case of police practice with minor domestic violence, the predominant treatment has been non-intervention. Arrest has often been avoided, despite the legal basis for using it.

As Black (1980, p. 187) observed in his analysis of the Black and Reiss (1967) systematic observations of police-citizen encounters, police in three U.S. cities in 1966 were found to be 'more conciliatory as the parties to a dispute are more imtimate, and they are more penal as the parties are more relationally distant'. Only 26 per cent of disputes between married or common law couples, for example, were handled by arrest, compared to 33 per cent of disputes among friends and neighbours (1980, p. 158), despite the fact that violence was almost twice as likely to be present among the couples (60%) than among the other (37%). In all disputes (regardless of relationship) involving violent felonies, police made arrests in only 27 per cent of the cases, and in only 17 per cent of the violent misdemeanors. Thus, while arrest was certainly not unknown it was certainly not a preferred response to minor domestic violence.

As Parnas (1972) concluded from observational data during a similar time period, the factors prompting police to make an arrest are somewhat unusual: a serious injury, possession or use of a weapon, the demand of a disputant, an offensive demeanor of a disputant, repeated calls to the same officers on the same tour of duty, and the officer's perception of a high probability of repeat violence or serious harm. Similar findings have been reported elsewhere for domestics (Berk and Loseke, 1980; Worden and Pollitz, 1984).

In the absence of an arrest, the Black (1980) and Parnas (1972) analyses suggested that police did relatively little. The most popular treatment Black found for married couples was an order for the suspect to leave, or actual removal from the premises (31 per cent), followed (after arrest at 26 per cent) by 'scolding or admonishment' (16 per cent), threat of arrest (12 per cent) and asking or advising someone to leave.

In the early 1970s, however, a new policy was marketed to police departments through federal funds for training: mediation, or 'family crisis intervention'. The treatment ideally consisted of a police officer taking the role of a clinical psychologist on-the-spot, diagnosing the underlying problems in the dispute and addressing them through discussion. The U.S. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, whose predecessor agency had financed the development of this approach (Bard, 1970), financed training of police in these skills all over the country. By 1977, a national survey of police agencies over 100 officers found that some 70 per cent of them had family crisis intervention training programs in operation (Mitre Corporation, 1977). And as we report below, a 1984 Police Foundation survey of police departments serving cities over 100,000 people found that almost 40 per cent of the respondents preferred the policy of mediation for minor domestic violence (Sherman, with Hamilton, 1984). On the other hand, 50 per cent allowed their officers total discretion in deciding which alternatives to use.

(b) The Existing Knowledge Base for Practice

As of the time the Minneapolis experiment's findings were published, the existing knowledge base for police practice was virtually non-existent. Most police officers were guided by their experience in handling such cases, which gave them an intuitive judgment about what works best. But as Sherman (1985) points out, this kind of experience suffers from highly selective feedback. Unlike craftsmen who can see the results of their finished products, big city police may never see the 'product' of their work - defined as the subsequent rates of crime after the police officer's intervention. If there is a recurrence while the officer is on the same shift and the same beat, then the feedback may occur. But otherwise, it is possible in many cities for police officers responding to a domestic call to remain unaware that the couple murdered each other the next day. Such lack of feedback is probably more common for less extreme outcomes.

This point is important because of the hyper-scientifistic tendency to criticise any and all experiential learning as a basis for policy decisions (see Lindbolm and Cohen, 1979). We do not dismiss all experience as a knowledge base for police decision-making. But given the flawed and erratic system of feedback to officers on their handling of minor domestic violence, that particular kind of experiential learning must be discounted as a reliable knowledge base for making policy decisions.

The published research literature, as of 1983, was even less help as a guide to practice. For all of the ink expended in describing, explaining or criticising police practices in minor domestic violence (Parnas, 1972; Wylie, et al, 1976; Roy, 1977; Langley and Levy, 1977; Meyer and Lorimer, 1977; Potter, 1978; Fagin, 1978; Ketterman and Kravitz, 1978; Emerson, 1979; Loving, 1980; Berk and Loseke, 1980; Black, 1980), only one study that we could find claimed to provide any systematic empirical evidence evaluating the effectiveness of any of the policy alternatives in reducing subsequent domestic violence. And that study (Bard, 1970) was arguably interpreted incorrectly.

That study exposed 18 specially selected volunteer police officers to 160 hours of training at the City College of New York, and to weekly consultation with graduate students in clinical psychology over a two-year period. The officers were assigned to a Harlem precinct where they worked as 'generalist-specialists', handling routine police calls when available but receiving all of the precinct's calls for domestic disputes. They were encouraged to negotiate the dispute at the scene in some depth, taking as much time as they needed. They were also encouraged to refer disputants to social service agencies. The evaluation report on the project (Bard, 1970) claimed its success

at, among other things, reducing the occurrence of family assaults, family homicides, and assaults on police officers.

Liebman and Schwartz's (1973) examination of the New York City study's findings, however, found that many of Bard's conclusions were unsubstantiated by the data, and some conclusions were actually contradicted. The demonstration precinct actually had a significantly higher percentage of repeat disturbance calls than the comparison precinct. The demonstration precinct also had more homicides, and more family homicides, than the comparison and suffered an increase in homicide while the comparison precinct enjoyed a decline. The same was true for assaults and family assaults. The finding that officer injuries were reduced was based on no injuries to officers in the experimental precinct and one injury in the comparison precinct. Even without these problems, the two precinct after-only comparison design suffered enormous threats to internal and external validity (Cook and Campbell, 1979). Nonetheless, the program was acclaimed as a success and widely imitated under the LEAA sponsorship of family crisis training.

When the Minneapolis experiment was undertaken, then, the existing level of knowledge about the consequences of alternative police actions was well below the level of ignorance that medical practice requires for randomised controlled trials. That is, there were not even any prospective non-randomised follow-ups of offenders or households treated with different methods. No one had any data on what happened after police left, regardless of the method police employed. The research literature had focussed on the police themselves as the object of explanation and prediction, rather than on the problem of violence. It was as if medical researchers had addressed the problem of heart disease by watching doctors in the hospital and never following up on patients.

Consequently, there was no reliable basis for choosing any policy, let alone an established basis for practice which ought not to be set aside lightly on the basis of 'merely' a one-site randomised field test. Compared to the existing state of knowledge, the Minneapolis test, with all its limitations, represented a substantial advance over what had been known before.

(c) Political Context

The political environment into which the Minneapolis findings were introduced was dominated by the efforts of women's groups to make police adopt a more punitive policy towards males who beat their women intimates. Indeed, it was only through such efforts that the experiment was possible at all. Prior to 1978, Minnesota law prohibited police from arresting anyone without a warrant for

any misdemeanour, including a simple domestic assault charge, unless police themselves had witnessed the offence. But in response to lobbying by women's groups, the Minnesota state legislature became one of many to establish a special exception to that common law rule just for domestic violence (Potter, 1978). These statutory changes followed well-publicised lawsuits against the New York City (Bruno v Codd, 1 N.Y.L.J., 7th June, 1977) and other police departments attempting to compel them to make more arrests in domestic violence cases.

Despite resistance to these demands by many individual police officers, two national organisations of police chiefs moved in the same direction in the late 1970s. In 1976, the International Association of Chiefs of Police revised its training document on domestic violence, abandoning its earlier no-arrest policy (cited in Parnas, 1972) and calling for treating spouse assaults as a law enforcement problem using criminal justice sanctions. In 1980, a spouse abuse guide published by the Police Executive Research Forum, an organisation of big-city police chiefs, proposed that the use of arrest be required in spousal violence cases involving serious injury, use of a deadly weapon, or violation of a restraining order (Loving, 1980, p. 61). The guide went on to observe that 'it would be unrealistic and unproductive to suggest that arrest should be used in every spouse abuse or wife beating case, particularly for those misdemeanor cases which are clearly victim-precipitated or involve victims who adamantly refuse to press charges ... But police policies should articulate when and in what circumstances arrest is appropriate (Loving, 1980, p. 62).

By 1983, however, the position of many women's advocates was that arrest should indeed be required in every case of domestic violence, regardless of the victim's willingness to sign a complaint. At the same time, no organised resistance to these 'get tough' recommendations was evident. While the resistance was no doubt present, few police chiefs or politicians were willing to articulate it publicly. When CBS Television News sought to interview a critic of the get-tough policy in the summer of 1984, they could find no one. As Lempert (1984, p. 509) points out, the arrest-the-wifebeaters idea was congenial to both law and order conservatives and liberals concerned with women's issues.

This political context for the Minneapolis experiment would have posed a difficult challenge for any other set of findings. Had the experiment concluded, for example, that arrest increased the risk of violence, the response of the organised interest groups would have been to challenge the methodology and design of the research. Previous examples of this 'sacred cow' response may be seen in the reaction of many police chiefs to the Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment (Kelling, et al., 1974), and the reaction of Alcoholics Anonymous to the Rand Corporation study

asserting that some reformed alcoholics could practice controlled, moderate drinking. One official closely affiliated with the concerned interest groups even told the senior author of the Minneapolis experiment, 'I'm glad your study came out the way it did. If it had said arrest didn't work, I would have attacked it'.

Remarkably, however, the political context affected only the reception of the research, and not the doing of it. The police officers involved were relatively insensitive to these issues, and the researchers did not address them systematically until after the data analysis was completed.

(d) Internal and External Validity

The Minneapolis misdemeanor (simple) assault experiment found generally, that the measured percentage of offenders who repeated an act of domestic violence against their victims over a six month follow-up period after a police intervention was half as great for offenders randomly assigned to arrest (and those arrested when other alternatives failed) as for offenders randomly assigned to non-arrest alternatives (Sherman and Berk, 1984). The experiment also found that offenders randomly assigned to arrest were significantly less likely to reoffend than others not randomly assigned to arrest - including some who were actually arrested (Berk and Sherman, 1985). That is, both the designed and delivered treatment distributions showed arrest worked best. The measurement of recidivism included both official records of 100 per cent of the sample and at least one (and up to twelve) interviews with 65 per cent of the victims. Analytic techniques included linear and logistic regression, and proportional hazard rate time-to-failure models.

As in any field experiment involving humans, a number of factors could not be controlled. A review of the internal and external validity issues is appropriate for the reader to evaluate the policy implications the researchers drew from the findings, and the policy impact they attempted to achieve.

(d)(i) Internal Validity

Randomisation. Despite substantial evidence that the officers in the Minneapolis experiment did not compromise the randomisation in any serious way (Sherman and Berk, 1984), it is at least possible that they decided to exclude certain non-arrest cases from the study after arriving at the scene. (Any unrandomised arrests were detected by independent monitoring of Police Foundation researchers.) The agreement with the Minneapolis police did not allow the experimental officers to receive all domestic calls, so it was very difficult for observers to ride with those officers and witness the rare case in which violence

had occurred and the offender was still present. Any replications of the experiment may be able to solve this problem by insisting on conducting the experiment with a 'domestic car' that can be easily monitored, so that a high proportion (or perhaps all) of the random assignment of treatment can be made by, or at least in the presence of, a research staff observer.

Differential Victim Reporting by Treatment. One rival hypothesis for the lower rate of repeat violence among arrestees is that they 'intimidated' their victims into neither calling the police in cases of future violence, nor telling the Police Foundation interviewers about it in their bi-weekly interviews. Sherman and Berk (1984) concluded that the intimidation hypothesis was unlikely, for two reasons. First, in 55 per cent of all cases in the experiment, someone other than the victim called the police. It is possible that the offender managed to intimidate all the others who might call the police as well, but that may stretch the intimidation argument to the breaking point. Moreover, if Black (1980, p. 127-8) is correct in arguing that police are called to situations in which authority and power is being contested, it seems unlikely that an offender could return from the 'defeat' of an arrest and readily assert even greater control than he had achieved before. The 'contest' was more easily resolved: the majority of the relationships broke up during the follow-up period, with no difference in breakup rate by police action.

Second, the victims' response rates to the interviewers did not vary according to the police action against their offenders. This makes intimidation seem unlikely, since it is more plausible that an intimidated woman would not show up for an interview than that she would show up and lie. That is, intimidators would probably try to discourage the contact entirely rather than to shape the content of the contact; the latter approach to intimidation appears unrealistically subtle.

Nonetheless, we cannot rule intimidation out entirely as a rival hypothesis. Any replications might address the issue by asking a sample of the victim's friends, neighbours or relatives for reports or evidence of repeat violence, as a third means of measuring outcomes that is presumably free of any possible intimidation effects.

Sample Size. The sample size and base rate of repeat violence were both large enough to detect main effects of the alternative treatments. Neither the sample size nor the distributions of sub-populations were adequate, however, for thorough testing for interaction effects. Arrest may work best in general, but we don't know whether it works best, for example, for black males with two years of college education earning $20,000 to $25,000 per year and who have been married ten years or more. As Sherman

(1985) points out, advances in personal computers would make it easy for police to process this kind of detailed information in determining what action to take. But large sample sizes are needed to produce reliable predictions on which such software would be based. Replications should aim for larger sample sizes to make such refinements possible.

Analysis. The Sherman and Berk (1984) analysis was limited to two basic methods: analysis of the prevalence (or percentage) of offenders who had at least one repeat incident, and analysis of the time to 'failure' - the length of time between police intervention and the first repeat incident. This analysis omits two other policy-relevant questions: (1) what was the difference across treatments in the incidence of offending, or average number of repeat offences per offender over the follow-up period (cf. Blumstein and Cohen, 1979), and (2) what was the difference in the seriousness of repeat offending, measured by injury and hospitalisation? If total incidents or average seriousness were lower for any of the non-arrest treatments than for the arrest group, that would have complicated the policy implications seriously. Although seriousness and incidence were both part of the original research design (Sherman, 1980), they were dropped in the final analysis, largely because of sample size. Any replications should probably examine those outcome measures as well.

Follow-up Period. Although there is no evidence that a longer follow-up period would alter the results, it is probably a good idea to extend the period in any replications. It is conceivable, at least, that the differences could change over a longer period.

Displacement. As Reiss (1984) has pointed out, it is possible that arrest of an offender merely displaces the offender's violence on to another victim, so that no net reduction in domestic violence is achieved. Alternatively victims may enter into new relationships where they become abused. Although the interviews generally probed that issue, by the three-month point, the interviews tapped less than half the sample. While the Minneapolis data showed no difference in rate or breakup, the timing was not clear; moreover, the response rate was too low to rule out the Reiss hypothesis. Any replications should therefore consider putting substantial resources into tracking both victims and offenders separately, and not just their relationship. Such tracking should, if possible, include both official records and interviews.

(d)(ii) External Validity

More troubling than the possible threats to internal validity were the clearly established threats to external validity. These were also the principal concerns of Lempert (1984) and others who

wondered whether policy decisions in other cities - or even in other countries, which is the question for this conference - should be made on the basis of the Minneapolis results.

Jail Time. As Sherman and Berk (1984a) point out, Minneapolis may be unusual in jailing most suspects arrested for domestic assault for at least one night. Thus, the treatment actually tested in Minneapolis was arrest plus immediate, but brief, jail time, rather than arrest and immediate release. The effects of arrest in cities practising immediate release might be very different, including the offender's possible return to the victim while he is still in a drunken rage, whereupon he might inflict even more violence. Any replications should test for this possibility through a within-city comparison by randomly assigning, within legal limits, the amount of time the offender is held during booking. If that is not possible, then natural variation in release time should be modelled, with other explanatory variables, to examine its effect on the likelihood of immediate repeat violence.

Mediation Quality. It has been argued that Minneapolis was not a fair test of the effects of mediation, since the participating police officers did not have special training in family crisis intervention (Reiss, 1985). All of them had the standard patrol officer's training in those skills, and there is no reason to believe their use of those skills was any different from the use made by other patrol officers in other cities. The skills of a highly trained special police unit devoting most of its time to domestic violence might be much more effective, however, perhaps producing better results than arrest. The Minneapolis findings may not generalise well to cities where such units are in operation. At least one replication should probably compare mediation by a special unit to arrest by patrol officers through random assignment.

Interaction of Interviews and Arrest. All of the arrests, as well as the other treatments, were accompanied by an intensive effort of Police Foundation interviewers to contact the victims. These efforts included up to twenty phone calls and visits, and lasted up to six months. They cannot account for any differences between treatments. But they do raise questions about how effective arrest would be in the absence of this form of 'surveillance', which may have had some deterrent effect on the offenders. As Sherman and Berk (1984a) point out, it is an open question whether the same effects would be found without the interviews. Any replications should employ large enough samples so that the victims in each treatment group can be randomly assigned to two conditions: ongoing interviews, and no interview until the conclusion of the follow-up period. The official recidivism data on both groups would allow the analysis to detect any interaction effect between the interviewers' efforts and any of the police treatments.

Absence of Theory-Black Box Problem. As Lempert (1984, p. 509) suggests and Berk and Newton (1985, p. 262) emphasise, the theoretical basis for the observed deterrent effects of arrest is poorly understood. In the language of Cook and Campbell (1979), we have observed the 'molar' relationships but not their 'micro-mediation': the links in the causal chain between police action and the likelihood of further violence. Documenting such links will probably require interviews with offenders, guided by some model of causation to focus the questions. The Minneapolis experiment attempted to interview offenders after the fact and failed to obtain more than a handful. Replications should probably attempt to interview offenders at the scene, immediately after the police disposition takes effect. More detailed interviews could be done with arrestees in the booking areas. Both of these methods have some obvious problems, such as reactivity and interviewee consent in a coercive setting. But the information they would produce is better than nothing, and could help to allay concerns about external validity if the contents of the black box appeared applicable to other settings.

City Context. The setting itself, of course, is a major external validity issue. Minneapolis is not America, and certainly not the English speaking world nor is any city truly 'comparable' to any other. Variations in weather, ethnic composition, age structure, prevailing crime rates and general sanctioning levels (Sampson, 1985) might all affect the reactions of offenders to alternative police actions for domestic violence. Minneapolis is an extreme case on many of these dimensions. Its weather prevents men ordered out of the house from spending the night out of doors at least six months a year. It has one of the smallest minority populations of any major city, the largest Native-american population, and probably the largest proportion of white Protestants. Both its homicide rate and its imprisonment rate are among the lowest in the country. Whether arrest would work as well in Miami, San Diego or Sydney is an open question. But the only way to answer that question is to replicate the experiment in as many cities as possible, cities which represent different points on these many contextual dimensions.

Alternative Procedures. The Minneapolis conclusion that arrest works best clearly has no external validity to comparisons with other procedures not included in the research design. Different findings might result, for example, from extending the design to include offenders who had already left the scene (by randomly picking some to be tracked down). Or victim 'empowerment' officers could be randomly assigned within each treatment, with officers either paying great attention or little attention to the victims. Or the aftermath of the intervention could be randomly assigned, with police follow-up visits to some offenders and not others (see, e.g., Sherman, 1985a), or some arrested offenders being diverted to mandatory counselling but not others. All of these complexities are possible and commonplace in many cities,

and could fruitfully be examined in future replications. Moreover, the external validity of the arrest-works-best conclusion is limited to the two comparison treatments only.

(e) Conclusion: The Policy Impact Goal

The issues to be explored in replications are rich and varied, but that does not mean that the Minneapolis findings are hopelessly 'flawed' any more than the findings of a medical field trial with comparable limitations would be flawed. The jail time question was a serious limit on external validity to communities with little jail time, but Sherman and Berk (1984a) took pains to point out that fact (and other limitations).

Given the virtual vacuum of research as a basis for guiding policy, the Minneapolis experiment provided strong and clear policy implications. Even with all the cautions, Sherman and Berk (1984a) felt comfortable concluding that police 'should probably employ arrest in most cases of minor domestic violence', and that (Sherman and Berk, 1984, p. 270) 'in jurisdictions that process domestic violence in a manner similar to that employed in Minneapolis, we favour a presumption of arrest; ... We do not, however, favour requiring arrests in all misdemeanor domestic assault cases'.

The latter recommendation was made in full awareness of the political environment that would process the findings. Indeed, even the Chief of Police in Minneapolis was so impressed with the findings that his initial reaction was to support a mandatory arrest policy - a position Sherman argued against on the grounds of potentially unknown interaction effects yet to be explored in future research.

The policy impact goal the researchers decided upon was to encourage police to make more arrests for minor domestic violence. This decision was made in full awareness of the possibility that later research might show Minneapolis to have been unique. It was also made, however, without knowing that the National Institute of Justice (or anyone else) would definitely be funding replications of the experiment - so that Lempert's (1984, p. 510) proposal for delaying publicity until the replications were completed was not even a viable option at the time. The primary consideration was the absence of an existing knowledge base. We concluded that it was better to make policy on the basis of one limited randomised trial than on the basis of no research at all. For as Sherman and Berk (1984a, p. 1) pointed out, 'police officers cannot wait for further research to decide how to handle the domestic violence they face each day. They must use the best information available.'.

Publicising the Results

The research role in publicising the results of the Minneapolis experiment was an active one, in which the project director (Sherman) systematically mapped out a plan for maximising visibility of the report to the police community, and worked collegially with the N.I.J. project monitor (Garner) to pursue that plan in the face of a number of obstacles that developed. This task was approached in the same spirit as other research tasks, such as attempting to maximise the response rate or to clean the data thoroughly. But the fact that it was approached in this spirit reflects a difference in values and context between 'public policy' research (Wilson, 1983, p. 467) and other kinds of social science.

Public policy research organisatons, or 'think tanks', have different values and priorities from university departments of social science (Dickson, 1971). University based social scientists, unlike medical researchers, often scorn publicity, and rarely take any affirmative steps to publicise the results of their research - no matter how newsworthy the findings may be. To the extent that publicity efforts are made, they are blamed on third party sponsors, such as a book publisher or granting agency. Think tanks, on the other hand, often define the success of a research project on the basis of how much 'ink' it commands in the news media - that is, favourable, or at least neutral, ink. Organisations like the RAND Corporation and the Urban Institute retain full time press relations staff members, and routinely put out press releases to announce new research results. The rational basis for this practice is that the purpose of policy research is to aid and influence policy decisions, and one of the best ways to command the attention of policy makers is to reach them through the news media. Since, by contrast, the goal of purely academic social science is to aid and influence other scholars, it may also be rational for some university scholars to avoid the kinds of distortions of fine points which inevitably accompany press reports of research.

The unusual thing about the Minneapolis experiment was not that there was an attempt to publicise the results. Given standard practices in Washington, press releases are put out at the drop of a hat. The unusual thing is that the attempt to publicise succeeded.

The Police Foundation, through which the Minneapolis experiment was conducted under a grant from the National Institute of Justice, followed the publicity values and practices of other Washington think tanks. Sherman had also internalised those values and learned those practices as a university-based consultant to the Police Foundation prior to his appointment as the Foundation's research director. Thus even while the experiment was still underway in the field, Sherman arranged for

the Minneapolis public television station to film a documentary of the project. The major purpose of the television show for the project was to record live footage of the officers doing the experiment, which might then be used as a training film to be distributed all over the country to inform other police officers of the results of the experiment. The footage would also show them just how randomised, controlled trials can be done in police practice. (As it turned out, the footage from that documentary was used not only in the original show, but it was recycled on several national evening news shows and included in the N.I.J. funded public television series on crime control issues, Crime File, hosted by James Q. Wilson; the latter show is being actively marketed to police academies and undergraduate classes around the country.)

The documentary then became the driving force for the release of the preliminary results. The filming was done in July of 1982 with the plan of showing the documentary sometime during the next television season, and within the grant period for the documentary series that would expire the following spring. The experiment ended in August of 1982, and the follow-up data collection ceased the following January. All the raw data were then shipped to Santa Barbara where co-principal investigator Richard Berk worked nonstop to complete the analysis in time to keep the promise to present the results on the documentary in April. The analysis was well along by early March, when the two p.i.s. started exchanging drafts of the preliminary report.

At that point, Sherman decided it was important to stress the scientific nature of the findings, and the fact that this was the first RCT of the use of arrest in the history of the police. The most symbolically appropriate placement seemed to be the Tuesday Science section of the New York Times, where it might well make page one. Sherman called a reporter for the Science section who had interviewed him a year earlier for a general story on violent crime trends. The reporter did not remember him, but was interested in the story. He said, however, that the story would have to be legitimated by comments from other researchers. That condition was met by sending the preliminary report to two members of the project advisory committee, and to the Police Foundation's then vice-chairman, all of whom were distinguished university professors. Their favourable comments to the reporter insured that the story appeared in the Science times on the Tuesday before the Wednesday that the Minneapolis documentary was scheduled to be broadcast as a live discussion show with film clips from the field experiment.

At this point the story was picked up off the New York Times wire service by some 100 newspapers (as surveyed by the Police Foundation's national clipping service, which was routinely instructed to clip every article that mentioned the Foundation in over 300 newspapers). It was also picked up by CBS Morning News

and many radio stations. It was not, however, picked up by the major wire services, such as Associated Press, possibly because there had been no press release. The price of giving it to the Times as an exclusive story for the Science section was to limit the broader visibility of the story in many smaller cities that rely on the major wire services for such news. Nonetheless, the strategy was fairly effective as a way of reaching police officials, as the data presented below indicate. The Police Foundation also received over 500 requests for the preliminary report.

Over the course of the next year, the analysis was refined and presented at several major conferences. In April, 1984 the results were published in the American Sociological Review and in a simplified version as a Police Foundation report mailed to several thousand practitioners. Sherman proposed a new press release for the final reports, but internal conflict at the Police Foundation blocked that proposal. Garner then suggested that the National Institute of Justice might wish to put out a press release on the publication of the final reports, which it proceeded to do despite the internal conflicts at the Foundation of the research on policy. But neither the Police Foundation nor the National Institute of Justice staff concerned thought a press release was appropriate, since in their view it was old news. The substantial publicity of the year earlier, they argued, was sufficient. But Garner persevered, and the National Institute of Justice put out a press release.

The second round of publicity was even more successful at gaining 'ink' than the first. Over 300 newspapers carried the story, largely because the Associated Press and other wire services did run it. The television coverage, including the clips from the documentary, was also what we aimed for. In the ensuing nine months, the Police Foundation received over 2500 requests for the report from around the country, many of them from citizen's groups, battered women's shelters, and the like.

But how successful was the strategy at communicating a precise and scientifically sensitive version of the research results? Lempert's concern was not that the researcher achieve high visibility, but rather high control of content. That aspiration is not realistic in a country with a free press. It is simply not possible to obtain press coverage with all of the usual cautions and limitations that trained researchers know how to interpret. The lay public, including reporters, will not tolerate such complexity in news stories, nor are practitioners likely to be able to absorb it. Even if reporters were able to get such lengthy stories past their editors, they would not let the researchers edit the story (although feature writers occasionally ask researchers they interview to review key sentences for accuracy). The price of pubicity is simplification, for the Minneapolis experiment just as much as for medical research or

even complex developments in large corporations like IBM. One thing we were able to do was to influence the N.I.J. press release to insure that the two pages summarising the report were accurate and complete within those space limitations.

Viewed in that context, the researcher-initiated publicity for the Minneapolis experiment was as successful as can reasonably be expected in communicating the results accurately. The jail time issue was not well covered, but the basic message that police should make more arrests was well presented. And as indicated earlier, this is a simplified message that the principal investigators were willing to live with. Perhaps Lempert's concern is not that the message was simplified, but rather with the tragic choice the researchers made in being willing to live with that simplification.

Researcher's goals for publicising policy research should be much more modest than communicating the same depth of understanding that can be achieved in a faculty seminar. In a country where few people know the names of their local congressman or the principal cabinet members, mass communication of the research results must have limited expectations. Those expectations can start with having key audiences at least recognise the message out of the masses of information with which they are innundated every day. The expectations might then proceed to having the audiences recall the information with accuracy, and then use the information in thinking about the relevant policy issues. At the most ambitious level, we might expect the audiences to be influenced by the recommendations of the information. It is here where the depth of understanding would be most important, but does not seem likely to occur given the roughshod nature of the public decision-making process. In any case, the data presented below provide some indication of the effects of the publicity strategy just described on the recognition, accuracy of recall and policy influence on the key audience for the report: urban police departments.

The Impact of the Publicity

In anticipation of the publicity attending the publication of the final report, the project director launched a national telephone survey of police departments serving cities of over 100,000 people (Sherman, 1984). The plan for the survey was to provide the first wave of a panel study measuring the impact of the Minneapolis report before and after the second wave of publicity. It would have been better, of course, to have completed the first wave of the survey of police practices before the preliminary report was released, but the idea frankly did not occur to us that early. What the March-April 1984 telephone survey (conducted with Edwin E. Hamilton) and the June, 1985 survey (conducted with Ellen G. Cohn) provide is a two-wave panel survey, with an after-only design to assess the impact of the preliminary findings, and a before-after design to assess the impact of the final report.

(a) Methods

Both the 1984 and 1985 telephone surveys used the same universe of cities as the sampling frame, with the minor exception that the 1984 survey identified 173 cities of 100,000 while the 1985 survey identified three more cities inadvertently omitted in 1984. The 1984 survey obtained 146 responses, for a response rate of 84 per cent. The 1985 survey obtained 173 responses, for a response rate of 98 per cent. The 1985 survey also obtained 143 responses from among the 146 cities responding in 1984, for a 98 per cent response rate in Wave II of the panel of cities responding in the initial survey.

The same interview schedule was used in both surveys. The schedule began with an introduction that made no mention of the Minneapolis experiment, but did mention the organisational affiliation of the interviewer (Police Foundation in 1984 and University of Maryland in 1985). The first question was the department's current policy for dealing with minor domestic violence. Subsequent questions introduced the Minneapolis experiment, testing respondent recognition of the research and accuracy of recall of the principal findings. Other items explored the impact of the study on department policy, and closed with the department's willingness to replicate the experiment.

In both surveys the interviewer was instructed to ask for the head of the planning and research department. But since not all cities of over 100,000 have a planning and research unit, the interviewers often had to accept responses from other spokespersons. Moreover, in some 52 per cent of the cases, the 1985 respondents did not clearly identify the unit where they worked. From what we could identify, 9 per cent of the 1985 respondents were planning directors, 24 per cent were members of the planning staff, 2 per cent were members of the training division staff, 2 per cent were operations division staff members, and 10 per cent were staff members of the chief's office or other affiliated units.

The 1985 survey attempted to contact the same respondents as the 1984 survey in those 146 agencies, but transfers and attrition often meant that other people responded. As a result, some inconsistencies appear. For example, in 1984, the Houston respondent said that the department's policy had been influenced by the Minneapolis experiment. The 1985 Houston respondent said the opposite. This kind of discrepancy is symptomatic of the larger problem of attempting to determine the policies and practices of police departments through telephone survey methods. As many police chiefs can attest, it is no easy matter even for them to find out just what their officers are doing, let alone for a telephone interviewer who must accept the views of whoever the department assigns to answer the call.

The value of this method is probably more in its reliability as an indicator of substantial changes and patterns than in its validity as a precise measure of police policy and practice. Even among cities claiming to have a policy of arresting suspects in minor spouse assault cases, for example, the policy may not be understood or widely followed in the field. The field research Ferraro (1985) reports in one department that adopted such a policy illustrates the inherent problems in communication from police headquarters to police officers on patrol. But even if they reflect nothing else, the responses of headquarters personnel may reflect prevailing values and attitudes of top executives about what field personnel ought to be doing. It may be that research cannot reasonably be expected to influence more than that, at least in the short run.

(b) Results

The findings of both waves generally show great success in achieving the goals of the publicity-generating effort, at least in relation to the modest aims outlined above. Recognition of the study and accuracy of recall were high in both waves, at least by other standards of public knowledge of news events. The influence of the study on policy making was small but not negligible in the first wave, and substantial by the second wave. In general, the second wave results showed that the publicity attending the final report produced substantial improvements on the items measured compared to the 1984 findings.

TABLE 1

National Telephone Survey of Police Departments
in Cities over 100,000:
Recognition of Research; Policies and Arrest Trends

	Panel Sample				Full 1985 Sample	
	1984 %	(N=146)	%	1985 (N=143)	%	(N=173)
Recognition						
Yes	32	47	68	98	64	111
Maybe	9	13	1	1	1	2
No	59	86	31	44	35	60
Current Policies						
Arrest	10	15	31	45	27	47
Mediation	38	56	17	24	20	34
Sending Suspect Away	3	5	6	8	6	10
Officer's Discretion	49	70	46	66	47	82
Domestic Arrest Trends						
More	24	35	35	50	33	57
Same	28	41	25	36	26	45
Less	10	14	6	8	5	9
Don't Know	38	56	34	49	36	62

Recognition. As Table 1 shows, the recognition of the Minneapolis experiment was relatively high from only the preliminary findings. A year after the initial press release, one-third of the respondents were sure they had heard of the experiment. But thr second round of publicity doubled the recognition of the report. A year after the final report was publicised, two thirds of the respondents were sure they had heard of it.

Accuracy. And as Table 2 shows, not all of those claiming to have heard of the experiment were bluffing. In 1984, almost half of those respondents correctly identified the results of the experiment; most of the others admitted that they couldn't recall. The second round of publicity improved the accuracy of their memories by over 50 per cent, with 73 per cent of those claiming to have heard of it correctly recalling which police treatment the experiment found to be most effective in cases of minor domestic violence.

Influence. Among those who said they had heard of the experiment, the usual scepticism of the police world was predominant. The majority of those respondents in both waves of the panel said that the experiment had not influenced policy in their departments. But relative to the complete cold shoulder one might expect a research report to receive, even the 7 per cent of recognising departments in 1984 was an impressive figure. Even more impressive is the apparent impact of the second round of publicity, for by mid-1985 almost one-third of the recognising departments said that the research had influenced policy in their department (Table 2).

The 'influence' of the research was not always the premature rush to an arrest policy that Lempert feared. Only 24 of the 36 departments in the full 1985 sample (Table 2) that reported some 'influence' also reportedly had a policy of encouraging arrest. The changes they referred to included 'a greater emphasis on arrest when mediation fails', rather than viewing arrest as a last resort. Others referred to training, and a few said the experiment got the department to pay greater attention to the problem of domestic violence in general.

Policies. The leading policy for minor domestic violence, as reported in both surveys, was officer discretion. But the 'encouragement' of arrest tripled between the two waves of the survey, rising from third to second place, from 10 per cent of all respondents to one third (Table 1). The explanation for this rapid increase cannot lie entirely with the Minneapolis experiment, since several other relevant events occurred within the same time frame: the recommendations concerning arrest made by the Attorney-General's Task Force on Family Violence (1984), the showing of the television movie the 'Burning Bed', and a general growth in the anti-family violence movement. But the experiment was reportedly often cited by local lobbying groups meeting with police officials to request that more arrests be made.

Arrest Trends. Whatever their policies may be, the majority of respondents in both waves reported that the actual number of arrests for domestic violence had either increased or stayed about the same over the preceding year. The percentage reporting an increase rose from one-fourth in 1984 to one-third in 1985 (Table 1).

Willingness to Replicate. Given Lempert's premise that replication should precede publicity, it is interesting to note the impact of publicity on the feasibility of replication. As Table 2 shows, the willingness to replicate dropped (from 1984 to 1985) in percentage terms among those respondents who claimed to have heard of the study. But given the overall increase in the percentage of respondents who recognised the study after the

second round of publicity, the total number of respondents willing to replicate increased in the panel sample from 22 to 28. It therefore seems that publicity helps to make replication possible, and conversely, that without the publicity it may not have been possible to replicate the experiment in more than one or two cities. It is not surprising that publicity should have this effect for this particular type of research design; when a method is potentially controversial, publicity about its use in another city documents a precedent which provides a measure of protection for decision makers bold enough to replicate.

TABLE 2

Accuracy of Recall, Influence of Research, and Willingness to Replicate among Police Respondents Recognising Minneapolis Experiment

	Panel Sample				Full 1985 Sample	
	1984 %	(N=60)	%	1985 (N=99)	%	(N=113)
Accuracy						
Arrest	43	26	73	72	72	81
Mediation	7	4	4	4	5	6
Separation	4	2	5	5	4	5
Don't know	47	28	18	18	19	21
Research Influenced Policy						
Yes	7	4	31	31	32	36
No	88	53	61	60	61	69
Don't Know	5	3	8	8	7	8
Research Influenced Training						
Yes		N.A.	33	33	32	36
No		N.A.	55	54	56	63
Don't Know		N.A.	12	12	12	14
Willingness to Replicate*						
Yes	15	22	28	28	27	31
No	12	17	25	25	24	27
Maybe	47	69	45	44	46	52
Don't Know	26	38	2	2	3	3

*1984 (N=146)

Conclusions: Research, Publicity and Policy Change

(a) On Publicity

The key issues in this review of the Minneapolis experiment concern values rather than science. That is, whether we should try to publicise our research or not, whether we should make clear-cut recommendations or not, how much evidence is needed before publicity and recommendations are appropriate, and how much cost is assigned to allowing practice to proceed without any research, are all judgments that are inherently non-falsifiable. They tap fundamental domain assumptions we make about the mission and nature of the social science of legal behaviour, but these questions cannot be settled with better data. They are matters of conscience and moral philosophy rather than normal science methodology.

This article has not, however, approached these issues from a moral analytic framework. Instead, it has provided a sounder empirical basis for such analysis than Lempert (1984) set forth, both by falsifying some of his assumptions and by answering some of the questions he raises about the process and consequences of publicising the Minneapolis experiment. It has shown that even the model of medical science and practice is beset by these value debates, and that the Minneapolis case was far from violating prevailing medical standards.

The basic issue is really one of free speech. The Pentagon is currently attempting to control the circulation of scientific research results on the grounds that the information may fall into the hands of the enemy. Whatever the merits of this argument for basic research - and there is even obvious merit for cases like the Manhattan project - the argument runs counter to the tradition of open communication that has been a hallmark of science for centuries. A policy of restricting the dissemination of tax-funded criminological research findings until they have been replicated 'adequately' would be an equivalent assault on the tradition of communication. The assault is made no more palatable by asserting a distinction between communication among scientists and communication among 'lay' people or practitioners. The boundaries between these categories are too ill-defined and permeable for such a distinction to be much use, nor would the taxpayers readily condone such a scientific arrogation of power to restrict information.

The lack of prior literature on this issue may reflect the embarrassment of riches the Minneapolis experiment provides. While previous research reports in criminology may also have rapid impact on practice, that impact has not been systematically documented or demonstrated. To the contrary, the prevailing assumption has been that social science usually gets ignored, and

that the main problem is to get policy makers to pay attention to our efforts to do 'relevant' research. The danger of being taken too seriously is one that social scientists, like ministers, have rarely had to contemplate. We cannot say, as the minister said when told that his powerful sermon had led a parishoner to quit her job and devote her life to the poor, 'but I was only preaching'. We cannot say, 'but it was only research'. In the past, we have relied on others to say that. Lempert is quite right to force us to accept responsibility for the consequences of our statements.

But that is not to say the sole, or even the primary, responsibility for decisions made in response to a research report lie with the researchers. Criminal justice practitioners, like 19th century doctors, cannot escape the moral obligation to learn the consequences of their actions, and to master the scientific method - or at least the ability to read and interpret scientific research - as the principal tool for learning those consequences. If there is any restriction to be placed upon the adoption of a new policy in the wake of a new research report, it should be done by the practitioner community, and not be self-censorship of the researchers or the funding agencies.

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REPORT ON THE 1985 COMMUNITY PROGRAM ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE*

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Sydney

Background

In 1984 the New South Wales domestic violence committee recommended that information on domestic violence should be translated and published in the major community languages.

Recognising the special difficulties facing migrant women, the Premier allocated $120,000 during 1984-85 for a community education program aimed at the non-English speaking communities in New South Wales. As stated by the Premier at the campaign launch on 24 April, 1985 '... this is the first time ever that any Government has proclaimed in ten languages that wife bashing is a crime. It is a message that cannot and should not be ignored'.

Preparation of the Campaign

Ms Clarita Norman, Multicultural Program Officer from the Department of Youth and Community Services, was seconded to the Women's Co-ordination Unit (Premier's Department) to co-ordinate the program. The New South Wales Domestic Violence Committee established a Community Education Sub-Committee to work with the program co-ordinator, to make budgetary recommendations and assist in developing media material and designing training programs.

A publicity consultant with Ethnic Communications Ltd., Mr Peter Chown, was contracted specifically to research and produce material for the media component of the program.

Membership of the Community Education Sub-Committee

Helen L'Orange (Program Convenor)	Women's Co-ordination Unit N.S.W. Premier's Department

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* This is an extract from the Report of the New South Wales Domestic Violence Committee to the Hon. Neville Wran QC, M.P., Premier of New south Wales, April 1983 to June 1985.

Clarita Norman (Program Co-ordinator)	Women's Co-ordination Unit (Seconded from the Deparment of Youth and Community Services for the duration of Program)
Nada Spasojevic	Ethnic Communities Council
Nazli Munear and Vicki Tokmaki	N.S.W. Immigrant Women's Speakout Association
Barbara Kilpatrick	N.S.W. Domestic Violence Committee
Joy Cavanagh and Ricki Starr	Blacktown Domestic Violence Committee
Wanda Kolodziej and Alberto Castillo	Wollongong Committee on Domestic Violence
Helen Boyton	Women's Co-ordination Unit (Special Projects Officer)
Joyce di Mascio	Premier's Office (Ministerial Press Officer)

The Program

The domestic violence community education program in ten languages ran for six months.

The components of the program were: background research, planning and preparation of material for the media campaign, training workshops, the media campaign itself (which included distribution of material, and telephone counselling), analysis of data and preparation of this report.

The main objectives of the program were to:

1. Educate the public about legislation concerning domestic violence, legal remedies and police powers.

2. Identify the major needs of non-English speaking background victims of domestic violence and the resources available.

3. Demythologise domestic violence.

4. Create an awareness of the services and support systems that exist to assist victims of domestic violence in order to place women in a better position to use the new laws to make informed choices about their circumstances.

5. Motivate victims to take appropriate action.

6. Highlight the need to develop support networks and mechanisms for women to reduce their level of isolation and dependency.

7. Convince target groups that Government and the Community viewed domestic violence as a serious criminal offence.

8. Educate as many people as possible about their legal rights, resources, and both Government and Community-based suport services for battered women.

Target Languages

At the suggestion of the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales the Women's Co-ordination Unit recommended the nine community languages targetted would be:

- Arabic
- Croatian
- Greek
- Italian
- Macedonian
- Spanish
- Turkish
- Portuguese
- Vietnamese

The theme of the first community education program on domestic violence was 'Domestic Violence: You don't have to put up with it'. It was decided to develop the theme for the new program from this one.

The theme 'Wife-bashing is a Crime: You don't have to put up with it', was selected from seventeen alternatives because it was direct, unambiguous and could be readily and accurately translated.

The Program Co-ordinator worked with the publicity consultant to design and undertake research on attitudes to domestic violence among members of the nine non-English-speaking communities. For the program to succeed it had to cut through language barriers and cultural differences.

Method

The Program's theme was tested on women and men from non-English-speaking backgrounds. Intensive consultation was held with voluntary organisations working with non-English-speaking people; with representatives of women's organisations; with professional agencies and the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales.

Bilingual interviews were conducted with each of the nine language groups. Detailed interviews were carried out with a broad cross-section of each language group. These were open-ended and unstructured in order to allow participants to speak freely in expressing their views about domestic violence. Major cultural, religious and socio-economic differences likely to influence attitudes and behaviour were taken into account in the sampling.

Informal consultations were also held with voluntary organisations to record their views not only on the program but also to gauge the resources needed to assist bilingual workers to work effectively with victims of domestic violence.

Among those consulted were workers from ethnic based organisations, management committees, unions, educational institutions, religious based organisations, women and government departments.

A total of 97 people of whom 80 were women, were interviewed across the nine language groups. Ages ranged from adolescents through to people in their 70's and 80's. There was a mix of married and single people and about half of those interviewed were unemployed. Several of those interviewed in each language group had themselves been victims of domestic violence.

Findings

'Suffering in Silence'

The firmly held view among the language groups consulted was that domestic violence is a private matter for the family to deal with and is best kept quiet.

People were neither aware of their legal rights nor of the availability of support services. Many perceived wife bashing not as a crime but as a private matter between husband and wife. The role of a wife generally was to serve and respect her husband.

Many women felt that they should 'put up with it'. In many cases wife bashing was seen as 'the women's fault' and, in some extreme cases, women felt that they deserved to be bashed.

There is a great deal of shame and guilt attached to domestic violence, particularly for the women. This is a major reason for not speaking up or taking acton about it.

Friends and relatives are reluctant to intervene. In many cases women are advised to suffer in silence.

Another major concern for the battered woman is the fear of financial insecurity should she leave her husband - 'how would

she survive?'. This is exacerbated by isolation and lack of support services.

The welfare of the children and the preservation of the family unit are primary concerns. In many cases it was considered better to put up with domestic violence for the sake of having a father for the children, often expressed as 'better to have had a bad father than no father at all'.

The majority said that they would complain to the police only in extremely violent circumstances and only then as a last resort. In those cases where police action had been taken, it was often a relative who had intervened.

Our research identified the following significant differences between the English-speaking Anglo-Celtic communities and the non-English speaking background groups:

(a) the level of isolation of victims;

(b) the lack of accessibility and suitability of the existing resources; and

(c) the lack of knowledge about the existing laws.

Responses from bilingual workers, professionals, educators and staff of government departments highlighted the need for this program and are reflected in the objectives set out above.

Target Groups

The main target group of the Program was battered women.

The second target group was bilingual workers who have face-to-face contact with victims of domestic violence. This group included welfare personnel, leaders in the community, information and referral workers, volunteers, workers in the women's refuges, interpreters, translators and bilingual workers in government departments.

This group also included individuals who could become instrumental in supporting victims of domestic violence for example, neighbours, friends, acquaintances, adolescent members of families, employers, doctors, and other health professionals.

The third group included members of the nine non-English-speaking communities who might have contact with, or influence over, abusive men. This group included relatives, friends, neighbours, employers and teachers.

Training Program

The training program was designed to explain the laws on domestic violence and to help bilingual workers identify resources for battered women. Twenty workshops were conducted with a total of about 800 participants. Every workshop was attended by a solicitor, police officer and a worker from a women's refuge. It was intended that the training program would give participants a thorough understanding of:

- Legal remedies available to the victims of domestic violence.
- Resources available to victims of domestic violence.
- The need to develop support networks to help victims of domestic violence to use the legislation and services.

Content

The training program included the following material:

1. The Legislation

   (a) Definition of domestic violence offence.

   (b) Police involvement viz, powers of entry, telephone warrant and laying of charges.

   (c) Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders.

   (d) Compellability of spouses to give evidence; exemptions.

   (e) The Bail Act.

   (f) The Family Law Act.

2. Knowledge about the resources available

   (a) Women's refuges.

   (b) Department of Housing accommodation.

   (c) Emergency Cash.

3. Exploring the need for specific networks of support to help victims make use of the legislation

   (a) How to help victims to gain confidence and have some control of the situation.

(b) How to develop community support networks.

(c) How to disseminate information about domestic violence, myths and legislation.

Participants

Those trained include:

Employees of the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs such as bilingual welfare workers, instructors, interpreters and translators; employees of the Department of Social Security; bilingual workers from the Department of Health; Grant-In-Aid workers funded by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs; workers from the funded voluntary organisations from the Ethnic Affairs Commission and Department of Youth and Community Services; interpreters and translators from the Ethnic Affairs Commission; members from some of the language based agencies; the bilingual community liaison officers at schools from the New South Wales Department of Education; women's refuge workers; bilingual telephone counsellors and resource persons for the duration of the media campaign.

In Wollongong there was a full day workshop attended by more than 100 people and in Newcastle more than 50 people attended a half-day workshop.

The training program was so popular that it continued for the duration of the six month program without satisfying the demand for workshops. One example of an unmet request for training was for bilingual workers in Griffith, where the population of Italian migrants is among the highest in New South Wales. It is envisaged that the Domestic Violence Monitoring Committee will arrange for this to occur in the near future.

The Media Campaign

As a result of the preliminary research, the theme of the media campaign was selected on the following criteria:

- The theme/slogan should contain factual information as well as having a strong visual impact in order for the issue to maintain a high public profile.

- The theme should reflect the key concerns expressed in the research - the disruption of the family; distress to the children; emphasis on the fact that domestic violence is against the law in this country; availability of information on services and support.

- A slogan should contain a positive message and encourage people to action; clear, explicit, unambiguous messages - both visual and written.

The theme selected 'Wife Bashing is a Crime: You don't have to put up with it', met these criteria.

The eight week media campaign was launched by Neville Wran, Premier of New South Wales, on 24 April, 1985 at the Women's Co-ordination Unit and ran until 19 June, 1985.

Media exposure included:

- Newspaper advertising
- Radio and Television announcements and programs
- Billboard advertising
- Posters
- Pamphlets

Newspapers

A variation of the poster highlighting only one language at a time was devised for placement in major ethnic and suburban newspapers. The choice of 24 newspapers was based upon recognised readership patterns.

A series of articles was prepared, containing excerpts from the Domestic Violence pamphlet. These along with a press release on the campaign and the Domestic Violence pamphlet were sent to each of the newspapers for publication with the advertisement.

Some of the daily newspapers, notably The Sun, published articles about domestic violence during the campaign.

In areas such as Wollongong, Mount Druitt, Fairfield, Blacktown, Bankstown and Liverpool, regional newspapers were used as billboards were unavailable.

Radio

A series of three radio announcements were prepared in 16 languages in co-operation with the community information producer of Radio 2EA. Languages included:

- Arabic
- Cantonese
- Croatian
- English
- Greek
- Italian
- Khmer
- Laotian
- Macedonian
- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Serbian
- Spanish
- Turkish
- Vietnamese

These announcements featured dramatised dialogues between friends of victims, between victims themselves and between an assailant and a friend. The announcements highlighted important issues

concerning domestic violence and gave information concerning the law, action that can be taken and availability of services.

English versions of these announcements were also distributed to other metropolitan and country areas of New South Wales. These were:

Sydney:

2SER, 2RSR, 2SM, 2UW, 2WS and 2UE

Country:

2KO (Newcastle), 2WL (Wollongong), 2AA (Wagga), 2MCE (Bathurst), 2NCR (Lismore), 2REM (Albury), 2CA (Canberra) and 2RG (Griffith)

A resource worker from each of the selected nine non-English-speaking communities was trained to respond to media coverage. We would like to record our gratitude to the Radio 2EA Program Co-ordinators for their co-operation. Only one of the nine programmers did not participate in our campaign. We also note that Radio 2EA has agreed to continue broadcasting the community service announcements.

Overall, 2EA listeners responded favourably to the campaign.

Responses, mainly from female listeners, included comments such as 'I did not know about my rights and the resources' and 'the information has corrected widespread popular misconceptions'. Some expressed the view that they now knew the services and procedures available and saw it as possible that they might need to use this information at some time in their lives.

However, typical of the critical feedback were comments such as 'this is trying to split families', 'the campaign is unfair, one-sided', 'this is unfair to men who are often the victims' and, more commonly, 'no one has the right to interfere in domestic matters'.

The radio programs provoked much discussion in some non-English-speaking communities. Some religious leaders were invited to speak on the programs to express their views and several interviews were done during the time of the media campaign with commercial radio stations in Sydney and even one in Melbourne. There was also one 75 minute talk back program on Sydney Radio 2GB which elicited a large audience response.

Television

A 60 second television announcement taken from the domestic violence film 'Homefront' was produced with voice-overs in ten languages including English. This was placed on SBS Television

for broadcast as a community service announcement during relevant language programs.

Because of the controversial nature of domestic violence, SBS Television was apprehensive about broadcasting the announcements. The following is a breakdown of television screening in each language over a seven week period.

English 30, Greek 10, Arabic 5, Spanish 4, Italian 4, Croatian 3, Macedonian 2, Vietnamese 2, Portuguese 1 and Turkish 1.

In addition, the English version was distributed to the Sydney commercial television stations and NBN3 Newcastle.

The television spot was broadcast in New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory and included the telephone number of the domestic violence counselling service in Sydney and appropriate numbers for Melbourne and Canberra.

SBS Television has reported that its audience responded favourably and had several requests for referrals from battered women. Channel SBS also produced a current affairs program on domestic violence.

Two of Sydney's commercial television stations, Channels 7 and 10 broadcast the community service announcement and produced supporting programs while ABC Television produced a special documentary on the subject.

Posters

A poster with the slogan in ten languages 'Wife Bashing is a Crime: You don't have to put up with it', was designed by Debra Parry. The poster depicted a silhouette of a man striking a woman, with a photo of a distressed child in the foreground. Five thousand copies were printed and distributed to community agencies, welfare centres, ethnic associations and other appropriate bodies. Space was allowed on the poster for printing local information.

Billboards

The same poster artwork was used for the development of large billboard posters (6.5m x 3m). These posters were displayed at prominent sites throughout the Sydney metropolitan area and at Newcastle. Sites, including both rail and road positions, were selected on the basis of their proximity to large concentrations of ethnic groups or their visibility to road or rail traffic.

Pamphlets

The pamphlet 'Domestic Violence: You don't have to put up with it', was adapted and translated into the nine community languages suggested by the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales.

The translation process was lengthy and challenging as every effort was made to adapt the text culturally for each of the nine non-English-speaking communities.

The Women's Co-ordination Unit's Publishing Officer, Ms Pamela Clements, co-ordinated a specially formed group of nine bilingual consultants who worked on modifying the text in co-operation with translation staff from the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales. Ms Clements contributed hours of painstaking work to the project which the Committee considers achieved its objective.

There has been an enormous demand for the pamphlets - more than 300,000 have been distributed in English and over 40,000 in the nine languages. A further 45,000 English and 60,000 multi-lingual pamphlets are being published.

The main points for distribution of pamphlets were: baby health centres, neighbourhood information and referral centres, local municipal councils, community health centres, legal aid offices, family courts, hospitals, women's refuges, bilingual doctors, solicitors, ethnic based voluntary organisations and government departments such as the departments of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Social Security, Health, Youth and Community Services, Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales.

Women have reported that they are using the pamphlet as a deterrent against violent partners - 'I have it with me in my handbag and when I feel threatened I show it to my husband', 'I have the pamphlet on top of the television and point to it when he threatens to bash me'.

The Telephone Counselling Service

Researchers agree it is almost impossible to estimate the extent of spouse abuse in society. Estimates range from 28 per cent to 60 per cent of all nuclear families at all levels of occupation and education (Eggar and Crander, 1982).

One reason making it difficult to assess the prevalence is the reluctance of battered women to talk about domestic violence because of their shame, guilt, confusion or their belief that they deserved to be bashed.

Telephone counselling assists women to talk about domestic violence because it is impersonal, confidential and, in our campaign, offered help and advice in the victim's own language.

During the eight weeks duration of the media campaign a special telephone line was set up at the Women's Co-ordination Unit, staffed by nine bilingual workers.

The telephone number was advertised by the Special Broadcasting Service through Channel 0-28, Radio 2EA and other FM stations. It was also publicised by paid advertisements in 24 newspapers and on the billboards.

Schedules of four and a half hours from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm from Monday to Friday were devised to coincide with media coverage. The population of the nine ethnic groups was also taken into account. The Schedule was as follows:

TABLE 1

Telephone Counselling Staffing Schedules

Day	9.00am - 1.30 pm	1.30 pm - 6.00 pm
Monday	Greek, Arabic, Italian and Croatian	Spanish and Turkish
Tuesday	Greek, Arabic, Vietnamese and Macedonian	Portuguese, Italian and Turkish
Wednesday	Arabic, Italian and Croatian	Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese and Greek
Thursday	Greek and Portuguese	Arabic, Italian and Spanish
Friday	Turkish, Arabic Macedonian and Italian	Greek and Spanish

How Callers Learnt About the Telephone Counselling Service

The majority of non-English-speaking callers learnt of the telephone counselling service through ethnic radio station 2EA. SBS Television was markedly less effective because it ran the television spot infrequently.

Ethnic newspapers were also a highly effective source of publicity. Most English speaking callers learnt about the campaign through newspaper articles and community service advertisements.

TABLE 2

* Media Sources of Information About the Campaign	Non-English Speaking Respondents		English Speaking Respondents	
	N=70	%	N=46	%
Television	3	4.3	5	10.9
Radio	30	42.9	2	4.2
Newspapers	19	27.1	28	60.9
Billboard/Posters	6	8.6	5	10.9

* Percentages do not sum to 100 as some respondents gave more than one response or learnt of the campaign from sources other than the media.

Response to the Telephone Counselling Service

One of the disadvantages of this type of counselling service is its short life and secondly, the inability to follow-up the cases reported. At the time of writing this report, several calls have been received from battered women who saw the advertisements for the service three or even four months ago. It often takes that long for women to gather the courage to ask for help.

Although the phone-in has not produced a large sample we believe the data collected should be seen in the context of being the first time in Australia that nine non-English speaking groups were targetted to explore and expose an issue which is still a taboo subject.

Number of Calls

A total of 250 calls were received and 116 questionnaires were analysed.

The 134 calls not included in our data were:

- 42 calls from women of non-English speaking background for information about immigration, social security, employment

and legal issues. We believe this indicates a need for general information services in languages other than English.

- 35 calls from non-English-speaking respondents who phoned when the appropriate bilingual counsellor was not rostered. Many rang a second time when the counsellor was on duty.

- 25 callers hung up when the telephone was answered and we can only assume that it was difficult for them to speak freely.

- 12 calls from battered women who telephoned more than once for further information or to give feedback on their situation. It is heartening to record that ten of these women took positive steps to change their violent home situations.

- 11 English speaking callers asking for information not related to domestic violence.

- 5 calls complaining about the campaign. Critical expressions included the comments 'women are not bashed unless they deserve to be bashed', 'women have bad habits in this country, going to clubs, playing the poker machines and drinking', 'money should be spent instead on educating women that their rightful place is in the home', 'the campaign is anti-men because men only bash women if they are bad' and 'we have to bash them'.

- 4 callers wanted more information about the community education campaign or the telephone counselling service.

General Characteristics of Respondents

Of the 116 cases of domestic violence analysed, 70 callers were from non-English-speaking backgrounds. (Whilst this does not mean these callers did not speak English as a second language, they will be referred to as 'non-English-speaking respondents' in the text and tables below.)

Sex

Most of the callers (88.8%) were women, aged between 20 and 50 years; the majority (77.4%) were themselves victims of domestic violence although 21.7% of callers phoned on another's behalf. It is worth noting that one of the aims of the campaign was to encourage intervention in cases of domestic violence.

Of the male callers, two were victims of domestic violence and another ten were ringing on behalf of female victims.

Language

The breakdown of calls by language is shown in Table 3. It is important to note that even though several callers had a command of English as a second language they said that it was impossible for them to talk in English about personal problems and that they preferred to use their first language. This is highlighted by the fact that 80 per cent of non-English-speaking callers said language was a problem in seeking assistance for domestic violence.

TABLE 3

Language of the Respondent	N=116	%
Arabic	5	4.3
Croatian	3	2.6
English	46	39.7
Greek	16	13.8
Italian	14	12.1
Macedonian	2	1.7
Serbian	2	1.7
Spanish	5	4.3
Turkish	7	6.0
Vietnamese	2	1.7
Others*	14	12.1

* Others include English-speaking calls where the native language was not spoken by counsellors (e.g. Chinese and Burmese). Also included are cases where respondents spoke English to prevent offenders understanding their conversations.

Age

About 64 per cent of callers were aged between 20 and 39.

TABLE 4

	Age of Respondent*	
	N=102	%
Less than 20	3	2.9
20-29	32	31.3
30-39	34	33.3
40-50	33	32.2

* Unknown Ages excluded.

Children

Three-quarters of all the domestic violence callers had children.

TABLE 5

	Respondent's Dependant Children	
	N=107	%
Have children as dependants	81	75.7
No children as dependants	25	23.4
Dependants other than children	1	0.5

Paid Work

Table 6 shows that the greatest majority of callers were not in paid employment. High unemployment among battered women may well increase their isolation and be a factor in their staying in a violent domestic situation.

TABLE 6

	Was the Respondent in Paid Employment? N=93*	%
Yes	28	30.9
No	65	69.1

* Excluded from the table are 23 cases where employment status was unknown.

Relationship of Assailants to Battered Women

By definition, most domestic violence occurs between spouses/ partners, but our phone-in identified five cases where mothers were being assaulted by their sons and another case where a son bashed his father.

During a recent Sydney radio talk-back program on domestic violence, four of the ten callers were mothers battered by their sons.

Beside the greater problem of spouse abuse, son-mother assaults are a growing concern. The severe stigma attached to these assaults causes the mothers to suffer feelings of rejection and great humiliation.

The provisions of the Crimes (Domestic Violence) Act, 1983, relate specifically to violence and apprehended violence between married persons or parties to a de-facto relationship. The Act does not extend protection to parents, siblings or children.

TABLE 7

	Relationship with the Offender N=111*	%
Wife/Husband	93	83.8
Mother or Father/Son	7	6.3
De-facto	9	8.1
Fiance	1	0.9
Acquaintance	1	0.9

* Excluded from the table were five cases where no response was given.

Duration of Domestic Violence

The fact that many battered women remain captive in a violent relationship for a long time is borne out by our data. Nearly 50 per cent of the battered women who telephoned had endured violence for between two and ten years. Six Respondents to our phone-in put up with beatings for more than twenty years.

TABLE 8

	Duration of Violence* N=95	%
Less than 2 weeks	7	7.4
2 weeks-6 months	0	0.0
6 months-1 year	6	6.3
1 year	8	8.4
2-5 years	28	29.5
6-10 years	16	16.8
11-15 years	7	7.4
16-20 years	5	5.3
21+ years	6	6.3
'a few years'	2	2.1
'many years'	10	10.5

* In twenty-one cases data was not available.

Special Role of Friends and Family

Our pilot research showed that non-English-speaking communities in particular believed that domestic violence was a private affair to be resolved between the two people involved.

Respondents to our phone-in who appealed for help from anyone at all, tended to turn first to family and friends and secondly to police.

As indicated by Table 9 callers from a non-English-speaking background (69.2%) were more likely than those from English-speaking background (52%) to have told friends and relatives of the domestic violence.

TABLE 9

	Disclosure to Friends/Relatives			
	Non-English-speaking Respondents		English-speaking Respondents	
	N=52	%	N=25	%
Yes	36	69.2	13	52.0
No	16	30.8	12	48.0

* Unknown cases excluded from the table.

However, Table 10 shows that whilst English-speaking background callers reported in 84.6 per cent of cases that friends and relatives had been helpful, only 51.5 per cent of callers from a non-English-speaking background had received help from friends or relatives.

TABLE 10

	Were they Helpful?			
	Non-English-speaking Respondents		English-speaking Respondents	
	N=33	%	N=13	%
Yes	17	51.5	11	84.6
No	16	48.5	2	15.4

* Three cases did not respond to this question.

Purpose

More than half of the callers were current victims of domestic violence at the time of the phone-in. Many were seeking counselling but the most frequent single request (56%) was for information about legal remedies.

TABLE 11

	Purpose of the Call*	
	N=116	%
Help in current crisis	69	59.5
Referral for legal assistance	41	35.3
Referral to welfare/counselling service	29	25.0
Welfare information	24	20.7
Legal information	24	20.9
Referral to bilingual worker/agency	14	72.1

* This table does not sum to 100% because of multiple answers.

Use of Services

The thesis that many battered women 'suffer in silence' was confirmed by our findings that overall only 58.6 per cent of callers had sought any professional help and, of those, only 55.9 per cent found the service helpful.

Yet lack of information about legal rights and resources for battered migrant women cannot be attributed to their recent arrival in Australia. Table 12 shows that the majority of respondents had been resident in Australia for longer than ten years.

TABLE 12

	Length of Residence in Australia	
	Non-English-speaking Respondents N=70	%
0-5 years	7	10.0
6-9 years	9	12.9
10-15 years	14	20.0
16-25 years	14	20.0
26-37 or more	6	8.6
many years	2	2.8
don't know or not appropriate	18	25.7

Police as a Source of Help

The main source of professional help was the police who play a significant role in assisting victims of domestic violence. Unfortunately, of the fourteen non-English-speaking women who appealed for help to the police, only three found the contact useful. The police, who provide the only twenty-four hour emergency service throughout New South Wales, were contacted only as a last resort or only in cases of extreme violence. It seems that the benefits of the recent legal reforms relating to domestic violence are not reflected in the experience of the respondents to the phone-in.

It is difficult enough for English-speaking women to stop 'putting up with' domestic violence. The crisis for non-English-speaking women is compounded by isolation, economic dependence, confusion about their legal rights, limited access to support services and language difficulties. Women who are not fluent in English will be more likely to be forced back into a violent domestic situation. It is not surprising then that 80 per cent of non-English-speaking women (and 54 per cent of English-speaking women) sought no help from police when they were battered.

Police Response

A woman battered physically and emotionally finds it difficult to take legal action to protect herself from further violence. Domestic violence can also present problems for police who have little training in crisis intervention and who are just as likely as the rest of the community to still see wife-bashing as a private matter. However, a non-arrest policy can be seen by abusive men as reinforcement of violent behaviour.

Whilst the numbers are small, it is of concern that English-speaking victims of domestic violence found the police more helpful than did non-English-speaking victims, 76.8 per cent of whom described police as unhelpful (see Table 13).

TABLE 13

Respondents' Perceptions of Whether Police Were Helpful

	Non-English speaking Respondents		English-speaking Respondents	
	No	%	No	%
Helpful	3	21.4	10	40.0
Not Helpful	11	78.6	15	60.0
		100.0		100.0
Total who contacted police	14	20.0	25	54.3

Further efforts must be made in the training of police officers to counter prejudice and racism and to familiarise police with government anti-discrimination policies and practices.

Women's Refuges

Women's refuges are a specialist service providing victims of domestic violence with appropriate counselling and advice. Usually a first and last resort for many battered women, refuges were used by only a few respondents to our phone-in. Only three English-speaking and three non-English-speaking women contacted refuges. This is surprising on the one hand as the recently published Evaluation of Women's Refuges notes the numbers of battered women seeking shelter has increased steadily. Unfortunately during the multilingual campaign there were no vacancies in women's refuges in the Sydney metropolitan area.

However, it became clear during the program that women's refuges need to identify and permanently earmark additional positions for bilingual and bicultural workers, if the service provided for women of non-English-speaking background is to be adequate and accessible.

Contact With Other Professional Agencies

A battered woman has a number of legal options open to her. Legislative reform in New South Wales in 1983 established that domestic violence '... should be treated as seriously as an assault between strangers in a public place'. The small numbers of women seeking help from agencies other than the police (see Table 14) make it difficult to draw any conclusion about the effectiveness of other services. The finding that few English-speaking, and even fewer migrant women, sought any assistance is alarming, particularly as over half the callers were then living in violent domestic situations. There is a widespread myth in the English-speaking community that religious leaders, 'extended' families, and bilingual workers exist as safety nets for battered women from other ethnic communities. The reality seems different. Of the 70 non-English-speaking respondents, only four contacted bilingual workers, two told their doctors, five approached government departments and two appealed for help from religious leaders in their communities.

The effectiveness of the campaign's initial training program for agencies dealing with domestic violence suggests training should be obligatory for personnel in medical, legal, law-enforcement and other agencies. All training must address the special needs of battered women from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

TABLE 14

Assistance Sought from Agencies*

	How many contaced each agency All respondents		% of those who contacted each agency who found them helpful
	No	%	%
Religious Adviser	7	6.0	28.6
Friends/Relatives	48	41.4	58.3
Police	41	35.3	31.7
Magistrate	9	7.8	66.7
Lawyer	14	12.1	42.8
Counsellor	14	12.1	57.1
Ethnic Worker	5	4.3	80.0
Dept of Youth and Community Services	3	2.6	0.0
Doctor	16	13.8	50.0
Women's Refuge	6	51.7	66.7
Social Security	6	5.2	66.7
No help sought	15	12.9	n/a

* Does not sum to 116 because of multiple responses.

The effectiveness of the campaign's initial training program for agencies dealing with domestic violence suggests training should be obligatory for personnel in medical, legal, law-enforcement and other agencies. All training must address the special needs of battered women from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

Advocacy

The need for advocacy for battered women seeking assistance from government departments became clear during the program when even the intervention of bilingual telephone counsellors failed to secure either emergency cash or accommodation.

Conclusion

In summary, major issues that have emerged during this multilingual campaign against domestic violence include the following:

- Insensitivity and lack of knowledge among mainstream services towards non-English-speaking victims of domestic violence.

- A critical shortage of short term and medium term accommodation for women and children leaving a violent domestic situation.

- Problems with police response to complaints from non-English-speaking people in particular. The survey revealed that a majority of victims of domestic violence believed that the most effective mode of intervention was better action by the police.

- Limitations of government provision of crisis care to victims of domestic violence in the areas of accommodation, financial assistance and advice. The provision of emergency cash assistance was seen as particularly essential by many respondents.

- A lack of knowledge among non-English-speaking people about their legal and civil rights, community and Government support services, and other resources.

- A general need for information, referral and counselling services in languages other than English. Victims from non-English-speaking backgrounds rated language services as an important component of any strategies for assisting battered women.

- Recommendations arising out of the Domestic Violence Community Education Program for non-English-speaking communities are set out below.

Recommendations

The Committee recommends:

Information

5. That there be on-going dissemination of information about civil and legal rights for victims of domestic violence in languages other than English.

6. That radio 2EA and SBS Television be requested to repeat the transmission of pre-recorded community announcements.

7. That the Women's Co-ordination Unit publish the pamphlet 'Domestic Violence: You don't have to put up with it' in Polish and Chinese.

8. That the film 'Homefront' be promoted to local and language based groups. That the script of the film be translated into languages other than English.

Training

9. That the New South Wales Government undertake continuing training of bi-lingual workers on domestic violence aimed at developing expertise in bi-lingual counsellors to deal with victims of domestic violence.

10. That the New South Wales Police Department create and implement a continuous training program to facilitate the implementation and administration of the new legislation and related police procedures, particularly when dealing with victims from non-English-speaking background.

11. That the Commonwealth Department of Social Security, the New South Wales Department of Health and the New South Wales Department of Housing conduct training and develop policy guidelines on working with victims of domestic violence in general and specifically with those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

    It is noted that the New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services is the only department which earmarks positions for workers with a language other than English and has included a session about domestic violence in the intial training for District Officers.

12. That all relevant departments be requested to recruit officers who are bi-lingual and bi-cultural. These workers should be located in appropriate areas.

Services

13. That government departments, especially those dealing with victims of domestic violence such as Commonwealth Departments of Social Security, Community Services and Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, the New South Wales Departments of Youth and Community Services, Health and Housing, increase their efforts to implement the Commonwealth and State government's policy of mainstreaming.

14. That relevant departments be requested to increase resources to crisis assistance in accommodation and financial support.

15. That the Commonwealth and the State governments jointly fund an after-hours crisis centre with language assistance. It is proposed that assistance in languages other than English would be obtained by linking with interpreter services, by the employment of bi-lingual workers in women's refuges and by working in close liaison with ethnic community organisations.

Monitoring

16. That the New South Wales Domestic Violence Committee be expanded to include a member from a non-English-speaking background.

17. That the outer western area Domestic Violence Steering Committee and the Wollongong Committee on Domestic Violence continue to include one person from a non-English-speaking background.

Women's Refuges

18. That the New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services work with women's refuges to establish a policy whereby funded ethnic worker positions for particular languages are permanently placed with nominated refuges. This policy will have the effect of making these specially funded workers accessible to women referred by other refuges and bi-lingual workers in the field.

19. That women's refuges be requested to increase their liaison and contact with language-based community organisations. This will further assist making refuges accessible to victims of domestic violence from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

20. That the New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services, in conjunction with the New South Wales Domestic Violence Committee, should explore the feasibility of developing specific women's refuges for Muslims, Buddhists and other religions.

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MARITAL RAPE: THE MISUNDERSTOOD CRIME

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Marital rape is a crime with a name, but without a reality. It is an abstraction without a description. Even where it exists in our legislation, it does not exist in our imagination. Despite debates in the parliaments and in the courts, people have only the vaguest and most misleading picture of what it is. The stories of the victims of this crime - victims humiliated by their assailants, ashamed among their closest friends, deprived of the protection of the law, and ignored by the professionals - these stories have not yet touched the conscience of the community.

It was to hasten this process that my colleague Kersti Yllo and I recruited and interviewed women who had been sexually assaulted by their husbands. The women were ordinary women, most of them clients at family planning agencies who were asked as part of their regular medical history if they had ever been sexually assaulted by their partner. Many were telling their stories for the first time.

The depth of popular ignorance about the problem of marital rape runs deep. People are at a loss for imagery concerning just what it is. When we asked groups of students, for example, to invent vignettes of marital rape, one wrote, 'He wants to. She doesn't. He wins.' Can you imagine a stranger rape so described 'He wants to. She doesn't. He wins'? No. the imagery of stranger rape has knives and dark alleys and terror and violence and degradation.

So does marital rape! People are apt to think of marital rape, if they think of anything at all, as a bedroom squabble over whether to have sex tonight. She has a headache but he gets his way. No wonder they rate it, as they did in one crime survey, as being about as serious an offence as driving while drunk. There doesn't seem to be much criminal about it. But marital rape does have brutality and terror and violence and humiliation, and in many cases enough to rival the most graphic stranger rape.

For example, among these fifty ordinary women we interviewed:

- one had been raped at knifepoint by a husband who held her up against the wall and threatened to kill her.

- one was jumped in the dark by her husband and raped in the anus while slumped over a woodpile.

- one was gang raped by her husband and his friend both wielding blackjacks after they surprised her alone in a vacant apartment.

- one had her baby kidnapped by an estranged husband who compelled her to have sex as a condition for returning the child.

- one had a six centimetre gash ripped in her vagina by a husband who was trying 'to pull her vagina out'.

None of these atrocities (and there were others of equal brutality) were ever reported to the police or to a newspaper. Some were never reported to anybody.

And these were marital rapes. These were husbands brutalising wives. If other people had these images inscribed in their memories when they thought of marital rape in the same indelible way that my colleague and I do, I do not think we would hear nearly so much nonsense about this problem. Marital rape is indeed a violent crime.

However, this imagery of marital rape is not the whole reality either. Marital rape is a broad spectrum of crimes. From a survey we did of 521 women in Boston (Finkelhor and Yllo, 1985) and from one Diana Russell (Russell, 1983) did of 930 women in San Francisco, we estimate that marital rape is amazingly frequent - occurring to as many as 10 to 14 per cent of all married women. These are estimates established from random sample community surveys, asking women about sexual assaults (not using the term rape, of course, because people simply have a hard time seeing sexual assaults in marriage as 'real' rape), but nonetheless using definitions of behaviour that would qualify as rape (sex as a result of physical force or threat of physical force). One remarkable finding of these surveys is that marital rape is among the most common kind of rape, two to three times more common than the stranger rape we think about as 'real' rape. Many more women are raped by husbands than are raped by strangers. One out of eight or ten married wives experience this kind of violence. When talking about a problem of these dimensions, it is no more fair to say that marital rape is always a savage attack than it is to say that it is always a bedroom squabble. We are talking about a spectrum of which both of these are a part.

To make some sense of this spectrum, my colleague and I, after carefully analysing the cases of the women we interviewed, found that it was useful to divide them into three broad categories. We decided to call these three categories battering rapes, force only rapes and obsessive rapes.

Battering rapes were the most brutal and included most of the incidents I listed earlier.

For example, one interviewee was a twenty-four year old woman from an affluent background. Her husband was a big man, over six feet tall, compared to her 5'2". He drank heavily and often attacked her physically. The most frequent beatings occurred at night after they had had a fight and she had gone to bed. She would awaken to find him physically abusing her. Such attacks, at their worst, occurred every couple of weeks. After one incident her face was so bruised that she could not attend class for a full week.

Their sexual activities had violent aspects, too. Although they shared the initiative for sex and had no disagreements about its timing or frequency, she often felt that he was brutal in his love-making. She said, 'I would often end up crying during intercourse, but it never seemed to bother him. He probably enjoyed my pain in some ways'.

The most violent sexual episode occurred at the very end of their relationship. Things had been getting worse between them for some time. They hadn't talked to each other in two weeks. One afternoon she came home from school, changed into a housecoat and started toward the bathroom. He got up from the couch where he had been lying, grabbed her, and pushed her down on the floor. With her face pressed into a pillow and his hand clamped over her mouth, he proceeded to have anal intercourse with her. She screamed and struggled to no avail. Afterward she was hateful and furious. 'It was very violent ...', she said, '... if I had had a gun there, I would have killed him.'

Her injuries were painful and extensive. She had a torn muscle in her rectum so that for three months she had to go to the bathroom standing up. The assault left her with haemorrhoids and a susceptibility to aneurisms that took five years to heal.

In general battering rapes occurred in relationships where, in addition to the sexual abuse, there was a large amount of physical abuse. These tended to be classical cases of 'battered wives'. In fact, studies in safe-houses of battered wives generally show about half of them to have been maritally raped. Their battering husbands, like the stereotype from the safe-house populations, tend to have problems with alcohol and drugs. They have enormous reservoirs of anger which they vented on their wives and often other people in their environment. The rapes tended to take place in capricious and unpredictable circumstances, much like the other violence. They seemed to have little to do with sexual issues per se. In fact, many of these women said they made themselves sexually available whenever their husband wanted them. Rather, these men seemed to be motivated by an intense desire to punish, humiliate, degrade, and retaliate

against their wives using rape as the vehicle. (About 45 per cent of the women we interviewed suffered from battering rapes.)

The force only rapes were substantially different.

> Another interviewee, for example, was a thirty-three year old woman with a young son. Both she and her husband of ten years are college graduates and professionals. She is a teacher and he is a guidance counsellor. Their marriage, from her report, seems to be of a modern sort in most respects. There have been one or two violent episodes in their relationship, but in those instances, the violence appears to have been mutual.
>
> There is a long-standing tension in the relationship about sex. She prefers sex about three times a week, but feels under considerable pressure to have more. She says that she is afraid that if she refuses him that he will leave her or that he will force her.
>
> He did force her about two years ago. Their love-making on this occasion started out pleasantly enough, but he tried to get her to have anal intercourse with him. She refused. He persisted. She kicked and pushed him away. Still, he persisted. They ended up having vaginal intercourse. The force he used was mostly that of his weight on top of her. At 220 pounds, he weighs twice as much as she.
>
> 'It was horrible', said she. She was sick to her stomach afterwards. She cried and felt angry and disgusted. He showed little guilt. 'He felt like he'd won something.'

Force only rapes occurred in more middle class marriages where there was much less of a history of violence and abuse. The immediate precipitant of these rapes was more likely to be a specifically sexual grievance, for example, over how often to have sex or what kinds of sex. The force involved was often more restrained, enough to gain sexual access, but not enough the cause severe injury. These rapes seemed to be motivated less by anger than by a desire to assert power, establish control, teach a lesson, show who was boss. (Another 45 per cent of the rapes were of this sort.)

Finally, there was a third kind of marital rape we uncovered in about 10 per cent of the situations that we called obsessive rapes.

> In one of these cases, the interviewee was a thirty-one year old marketing analyst for a large corporation. She met her husband in high school and was attracted to his intelligence. They were married right after graduation because she was pregnant.

After the baby was born, he grew more and more demanding sexually. 'I was really just his masturbating machine', she recalls. He was very rough sexually and would hold a pillow over her face to stifle her screams. He would also tie her up and insert objects in to her vagina and take pictures which he shared with his friends.

There were also brutal 'blitz' attacks. One night, for example, they were in bed having sex when they heard a commotion outside. They went out in their bathrobes to investigate to discover it was just a cat fight. She began to head back to the house when her husband stopped her and told her to wait. She was standing in the darkness wondering what he was up to when, suddenly, he attacked her from behind. 'He grabbed my arms behind me and tied them together. He pushed me over the log pile and raped me', she said. As in similar previous assaults, he penetrated her anally.

The interviewee later discovered a file card in her husband's desk which sickened her. On the card he had written a list of dates, dates that corresponded to the forced sex episodes of the past months. Next to each date was a complicated coding system which seemed to indicate the type of sex act and a ranking of how much he enjoyed it.

In these relationships, the husbands had unusual sexual preoccupations. Most were obsessed with pornography; they wanted their wives to help them make it. Most were obsessed with their sexual problems; they were afraid of being impotent or homosexual. Often they had highly structured rituals about sex. They could only get aroused if their wives were in a certain position, or if they touched them in a certain way, or if they 'staged' a rape. There was a sense that many of these men needed violence or struggle in order to have sex. They found the humiliation very stimulating. The women felt as though they were being used as masturbatory objects. There was a definite sadistic component to some.

These three - battering, force only, and obsessive - were the types of rape we identified from our interviews with marital rape victims. There may be other types; we may need to refine our conceptions. The important point is that marital rape happens in a wide variety of contexts. We need an imagery that encompasses this variety, and we can only get it by listening to the stories of the women it happens to.

The absence of these stories from the conscience of the community results in another misunderstanding about marital rape - this one concerning its <u>impact</u>. People do not believe that marital rape

hurts. In 1979, a nationally syndicated American newspaper columnist invented some experts to bolster his own prejudices and wrote that 'many United States jurists agree that when a husband compels his wife to engage in sex relations, she suffers relatively little of the psychological trauma incurred in rape by a stranger' (Lloyd Shearer, Parade Magazine, 22 April, 1979).

(Notice how the husband only 'compels his wife' while what the stranger does is rape.)

'This isn't like he's grabbing some lady off the street', argued John Rideout's defence attorney Charles Burt. 'This is a woman he may have made love to hundreds of times before.' In other words, if he had made love to her hundreds of times before, how traumatic could one more time be?

Opinions like this betray a fundamental misunderstanding of the trauma of rape in general as well as the trauma of marital rape in particular. Rape is traumatic not because it is with someone you don't know, but because it is with someone you don't want - whether stranger, friend or husband.

Burt's idea is akin to saying that if your business partner empties your joint account and runs off to Venezuela, it shouldn't hurt, because after all, you'd written him hundreds of cheques before.

Rape is the intimate violation of a person's trust and automony. Prior intimate contact only makes the violation that much more so.

In fact the studies that have looked at this question empirically have indeed found that the victims of marital rape do suffer greater and longer term trauma than other rape victims. This finding is not surprising to those who have talked to marital rape victims and have come to recognise the three special injuries of marital rape: the betrayal, the entrapment and the isolation.

More so than victims of any other kind of rape, the victims of marital rape suffer a profound betrayal. 'When a stranger does it', said one, 'he doesn't know me. I don't know him. He's not doing it to me as a person, personally. With your husband, it becomes personal. You say, this man knows me; he knows my feelings. He knows me imtimately, and then to do this to me - it's such personal abuse. If I'd been raped by a stranger I could have dealt with it a whole lot better.'

Among the women we interviewed, the fact that someone whom they had loved and needed could violate them in such an intimate way destroyed their ability to trust others. 'I've had a very hard time trusting men ... I think Jimmy ruined it, so that it is

going to take a long time before I can hold down a relationship with a guy'. Another said: 'I thought so highly of him and he turned out to be a rapist'. The experience also sapped their confidence in themselves and their faith that they had the capacity to choose trustworthy companions. Years later, many of these women found it impossible to contemplate intimacy with a man. This sense of betrayal and its consequences on a woman's future ability to trust is a component to marital rape that has no parallel in stranger rape.

A second component that makes marital rape different and more traumatic than other forms of rape is the entrapment. To give you one extreme example, a woman we interviewed lived in terror for six months with a man who would beat her daily and routinely follow the beatings with forced sex. He threatened to kill her if she ever tried to leave him. One day during her lunch period at work, she took $800 out of their joint bank account, bought a plane ticket and flew two thousand miles to a state she had never been to before. There, under an alias, 'with not a friend in the world', she lived and worked for a year until she got up the courage to contact her parents and let them know where she was. During that whole year, she lived in a continual state of fear. Every now and then, she thought she caught sight of her boy friend's car. More than once, she turned and fled down the street.

Although not many are as brutalised as this woman was, nonetheless, the entrapment is a real part of the experience for most. Most marital rape victims are raped not just once but many times. Half of our interviewees had been sexually assaulted twenty times or more by their husbands. They lived for months, sometimes years, with ongoing violation. Many grappled with never-ending anxiety about when the next forced sex episode might occur. The insecurity became almost instinctual and lingered even when the husband was no longer physically present. Reminders of him were everywhere - in the furniture they once shared, in the friends and relatives who knew him, even in the children who shared his features and still considered him Daddy. This took its toll in the form of chronic terror, emotional numbing, involuntary panics, and repetitive nightmares that often lasted for years after the relationship had ended and the threat of rape had gone. The symptoms reported by marital-rape victims bear some resemblance to those reported by hostages and other victims of terrorism. In the sexual sphere, victims suffered from flashbacks and inability to engage in sex. The corrosive impact of marital rape could be summed up thus: when you are raped by a stranger you have to live with a frightening memory. When you are raped by your husband you have to live with your rapist.

Finally, while all rape victims suffer shame and stigma, few suffer the total isolation of marital rape. No relatives or friends commiserated with these women about the pain. No police

or court confirmed the judgment that they had been wronged. Many of our interviewees were talking about their experiences for the first time. Others, who had confided their experience had met with disastrous reactions. One woman's mother told her that sex was her duty to her husband. 'You made your bed, you've got to lie in it', she told her. Another woman's doctor told her to tolerate it. 'He's just a little oversexed', he said. Still another's minister said there was nothing to do but forgive the man. In their isolation these women usually blamed themselves, and saw themselves as inadquate and different. They imagined that few others could understand or empathise with their situation. It was a profound psychological scar that was difficult to erase. It is to erase this scar of isolation that I think we owe our first priority.

To some degree this isolation of victims is now being broken. In the United States in the last five years, we have seen approximately twenty states revise their criminal laws to give further protection to wives against sexual assault at the hands of husbands. The plight of these victims and the need to provide them with some legal recourse appears to have moved some lawmakers. In some of these states, legislators have passed statutes allowing husbands to be subject to prosecution if they rape their wives. In other states, courts have struck down the so-called 'marital exemption', on the grounds that it violated constitutional protections or that the traditional interpretation of English common law, on which it was based, was mistaken or no longer applied. All this has contributed to a rapidly developing momentum to make marital rape a crime.

These changes have not come easily. Most have resulted from intensive lobbying efforts on the part of women's rights advocates. These advocates have had to endure scorn from public officials who did not think that this problem a very serious one, and ridiculous and insulting pronouncements from others who were threatened by the issue. (Said one legislator: 'If you can't rape your wife who can you rape.') But the lively public debate about this issue has been a vehicle for raising people's awareness about the problem, and bringing it out into the open for the first time.

As the debate has gone on, there has been an interesting shift in its tone and subject matter. The opponents of marital rape law reform no longer argue that rape in marriage is a contradiction in terms, that matrimony grants consent to sex and therefore rape is impossible. Nor are they arguing so much that women have a marital duty to perform. Rather what they argue today is that criminalising marital rape won't work, that the legal system is not cut out to deal with this kind of problem. First, they say, the system will be flooded to the breaking point with cases, many of them frivolous, especially from vindictive women, simply out to get even with husbands. Secondly, they argue, the nature of

the dispute, his word against hers over whether she in fact consented to that particular sexual act, is one that the legal system will rarely be able to resolve.

Some of these concerns seem overdrawn given the resiliency of the legal system, and the various checks and protections that have been built in. But to examine whether there may be any basis for concern, we've attempted to monitor the operation of the legal system in one state, California, for the two years following the passage of a law which made marital rape a crime there.

The results were instructive. During that two year period, 1980 and 1981, we could find only 39 cases where marital rape charges were brought. By and large they were cases where major force or weapons were used, where grievous bodily harm occurred or where another crime (such as kidnapping) was being committed in conjunction with the sexual assault. Of these 39 cases, about a quarter were never prosecuted, some because wives failed to co-operate and some because prosecutors could not marshal sufficient evidence. Of those that were prosecuted 80 per cent resulted in a conviction, most commonly because the husbands themselves plead guilty. Of eleven cases that went to trial, eight resulted in guilty verdicts and three resulted in acquittal.

Our conclusions from this study of marital rape cases seemed clearly to refute most of the concerns of the opponents of legal change. First there was no flood of complaints. Thirty-nine cases over two years in a state of over twenty million is but a raindrop in a river, not a strain on the system at all. Moreover, these were not frivolous cases but ones with substantial apparent criminal content. The very limited usage of the law which makes marital rape a crime, in fact the usage of the law only in incredibly flagrant situations, reinforces the well recognised fact that rape is a difficult, not an easy, complaint for most women to make and that rape (of all sorts) is a momentously underreported crime.

Moreover, the figures appear to suggest that the criminal justice system is not having serious difficulty assimilating this new crime. Convictions were running high, suggesting that convincing evidence for these allegations (beyond the woman's testimony) was being found. But acquittals were occurring, too, suggesting that the protections of the system were still intact. The experience in California seems to show that marital rape can be treated as a crime, even though it is within the family in the same way incest or spousal assault are also crimes.

Those who have argued in favour of criminalising marital rape have done so on a variety of grounds. They have argued that it was a simple matter of equality and justice for married women. They have argued that it was an important measure to protect wives and deter future crimes. And they have argued that it allowed social retribution for a serious social violation.

But I think that the argument that is paramount for me concerns the message that the passage of such laws conveys to victims. The victims of marital rape have gone unrecognised for a long time. In their isolation, they have blamed themselves. Passage of these laws and the discussions they promote are both ways of reaching out to victims of marital rape and extending legitimacy and compassion for what they have suffered. It is society's recognition that they have been wronged.

But the laws are only one small step in this process of compassion for the victim. Many other changes must also occur, changes in areas of our society we have only begun to contemplate. Take the medical world, for example. Doctors and health care workers need to be aware, as they have not been up until now, that some women (and not just a few) are indeed compelled to have sex by their husbands. It is not a simple matter for them to avoid sex after they have been operated on, even though their recovery may urgently require it.

One of our interviewees was one of such women. Her husband had forced himself on her in disregard for her wishes over a period of twenty years. When she had some gynaecological surgery, the doctor told her to refrain from sex for six weeks. 'My husband will never stand for it', she protested, but the doctor dismissed her concerns. Three days later she had to be rushed back to the hospital, haemorrhaging from her sutures. This time, when she left the hospital, the doctor had a talk with the husband himself. How many physicians stop to consider this kind of situation.

How many physicians consider marital rape, either, when they prescribe birth control. One of our interviewees in the midst of an abusive seven year relationship returned to her birth control clinic at one point to trade her pills in for a diaphragm. Six months later she was pregnant. A diaphragm is not an appropriate contraceptive for a woman who is apt to be maritally raped. But how many clinics would inquire about it on their medical history forms.

Attorneys: here's another profession that needs to increase its sensitivity to marital rape. When women come to them seeking divorces, attorneys need to recognise and alert them to the potential for sexual violence. We must have talked to a dozen women who told us the same story. They had separated from their husbands after a bitter and abusive marriage. Late one night the husband comes to the door or calls. He wants to get some clothes or some tools from the house or he wants to discuss the divorce settlement. Once in the door, he begins to demand his marital rights. 'You're still my wife', one insisted. Another hid in the closet, until his wife had gone to bed, and there attacked her.

The period leading up to divorce is a period of high vulnerability for marital rape. Attorneys need to warn wives and husbands too. Women who were prepared and felt backed up by their attorneys would be a lot less likely to be raped. And men, warned by lawyers about the criminal nature of such acts, would be a lot less likely to do the raping.

A final group that needs much more sensitivity about marital rape is the whole counselling profession: psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and marriage counsellors. You know it is interesting that in the whole twenty-five year literature from the mental health profession on sex therapy and marital therapy, one can search in vain for any reference to the problem of marital rape, an experience that we estimate has been occurring to at least one in ten wives. Have they really been paying attention to their clients? How could they not have heard about this problem? Many of our interviewees had been in counselling at one time or another during their marriages. They were too ashamed to mention the marital rapes spontaneously, and the therapist never asked. In how many counselling situations is the unacknowledged and unmentioned grievance plaguing women, the fact that their husband sexually assaults them, and they cannot speak about it or get help.

Clearly we have a long way to go. The criminal law is only one change. There are many places in society where the problem of marital rape needs to be acknowledged, understood and taken into account.

Marital rape has been a non-problem for too long. It is unfortunate but when people suffer from non-problems they tend to become non-persons, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. Our concern about marital rape should not be so much to get the offenders out of the community, but to bring a whole lot of victims back in. The invitiation is long overdue.

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METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON 'DOMESTIC VIOLENCE'

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A methodological analysis of 'domestic violence' highlights the vital role of one's conceptualisation of this phenomenon. The way in which 'domestic violence' is comprehended largely determines its measurement and the framework within which it is investigated.

The definitions employed by researchers or applied workers in the field of 'domestic violence' inform their responses and data gathering activities. Approaches to the measurement of the variety of behaviours subsumed under the rubric of 'domestic violence' are, thus, derived from attendant conceptual frameworks.

Implications of Different Theoretical Perspectives

Within the domain of 'domestic violence', theoretical perspectives operate on two levels. Firstly, a psychological model of human functioning is implicated, for example, a social learning approach (see Gelles, 1972) or a psychodynamic approach (see Snell, Rosenwald and Robey, 1964). Secondly, a model of gender relations is implicated, for example, a feminist approach (see Dobash and Dobash, 1980). Moreover, these two levels of theoretical deliberation necessarily interact, so that attributions regarding gender are vested within psychological models of human functioning, and attributions regarding human functioning are vested within models of gender relations. Feminist scholarship could conceivably be located within a psychodynamic or a social learning framework: for example, Walker (1979, 1984) posits that violence is a learned phenomenon. However, within the literature on 'domestic violence', many of the precepts of the general psychological models of human functioning may remain implicit. These assumptions are, then, often axiomatic.

The Interrelationship Between Professional Context and Theoretical Orientation

The measurement of behaviours relevant to the phenomenon of 'domestic violence', and the generation of appropriate terminology to describe it, are also dependent upon the specific contact with the phenomenon, that is, the professional context in which it is experienced.

The conceptualisation of 'domestic violence' by such diverse groups as the police and medical personnel is determined by the guise assumed on presentation. It is common for medical personnel to encounter 'domestic violence' as a secondary phenomenon, if at all, when patients present with physical injuries. Hence, the medical profession underestimate the incidence of physical and psychological ill-health occurring as a consequence of violent assault by family members, particularly male partners (Stark, Flitcraft and Frazier, 1979; Davis and Carlson, 1981; Burris and Jaffe, 1984). Conversely, the police tend to classify a large proportion of the problematic behaviour occurring between those within close emotional, relational or physical proximity as 'domestics', (Oppenlander, 1982), including both intrafamilial violence and neighbourhood disputes. This variability in response by professional groups is thus directly related to their conceptualisation of 'domestic violence' (Borkowski, Murch and Walker, 1983), which in turn influences their propensity for social action.

The application of a particular theoretical position determines the specific approach to measurement adopted by professionals working in the field; that is, the likelihood of the recognition of 'domestic violence', and the manner in which it is measured. Within this spectrum of possibilities, there are similarities and differences in methodological approach; for example, models of human functioning affect both the extent and type of response to 'domestic violence', such as the degree to which the woman is held responsible for the violence. For example, the mobilisation of family systems theory in a therapeutic context frequently obscures the direction of the violence. Counselling may thus operate as though each partner contributes equally to the violent situation (Cook and Frantz-Cook, 1984). This approach has been harshly criticised by feminists (Avis, 1985; Goldner, 1985).

The professional roles occupied by individuals may be viewed within the context of the division between the applied approach and the approach adopted by researchers. Within each division, some professional positions deal directly with 'domestic violence', and may involve an explicit acknowledgment of the phenomenon (e.g., refuge workers). On the other hand, other positions may only deal indirectly with 'domestic violence', and allow for the possibility of either acknowledgment or neglect of the phenomenon (e.g., the medical profession). The interpretation of one's professional role may be dictated by individual or institutional considerations.

THE APPLIED FRAMEWORK

The framework of the applied approach includes both a direct and an indirect focus. The former might encompass those who are employed as refuge workers, crisis workers, and social workers, whether functioning on the premise of personal or institutional

commitment. Individuals in this category are more likely to recognise the existence of 'domestic violence' and place importance upon the measurement of its dimensions, especially its incidence. The consequence of this approach is an increased commitment to social change. However, even here, a significant variability exists between individuals and between groups.

Within the applied approach, there are those whose occupational experience only indirectly impinges upon 'domestic violence'. Among others, this group comprises health and criminal justice professionals, and employees of government departments such as housing and welfare. These personnel possess the flexibility to either recognise the phenomenon, and thereby explicitly contribute toward its measurement, or to deny the phenomenon, thus mitigating against the compilation of evidence regarding its existence. Furthermore, they may actively exacerbate the plight of the victim.

A potent illustration of the issue of 'choice' is reflected in the apparent discretion exercised by police officers in the arrest of 'domestic violence' offenders. Research upon this topic has indicated that police practices are determined by the characteristics of the situation; this may involve inclusion of variables which are arguably extraneous or irrelevant, for example, ethnicity (Berk and Loseke, 1980-81; Berk, Berk and Newton, 1984). Furthermore, the police response to 'domestics', and the decision-making behaviour integral to this response, is shaped by individual perceptions regarding the police role and attitudes towards the 'domestic' itself (Walter, 1981; Cannings, 1984). The recording of information upon incident report forms could be seriously affected by such individual factors. In addition, the measurement procedures reflect the vicissitudes of police policy regarding 'domestic violence'. Studies conducted in the area have partially vindicated the claims of female victims of spousal violence (cf. Bowker, 1982; Roberts, 1984), regarding the variability of the police response.

THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Individuals or groups who conduct research may focus specifically upon 'domestic violence' as a professional concern (see the work of Jaffe, 1984), or alternatively, they may deal with the phenomenon as a by-product of other research (Stark et. al., 1979).

Researchers who focus directly on the phenomenon of 'domestic violence' typically investigate the antecedents of the phenomenon, the various forms in which it is manifested, and the implications for gender roles in society, as is evident in the work of feminist researchers (see Dobash and Dobash, 1984; Pagelow, 1984). Other primary researchers examine 'domestic

violence' directly, within the context of violence in our society, as is evident in the work of criminological researchers (see Stuart, 1981).

The research paradigms adopted can encompass high variability. One common perspective is a sociological position in which emphasis is placed on a description of the phenomenon of 'domestic violence' within a macro model of society. Such researchers are concerned with structural relations within society, such as the unequal role of women in power relationships or in the traditional divisions of labour between men and women in the workforce (see Scutt, 1985). Within this model of gender relations, there is concern for the way in which dominance is asserted within the private domain as a reflection of roles displayed in the wider social context, and a consequent desire to restructure social relations (Dobash and Dobash, 1984).

It follows then that a sociological model adopts such measuring devices as incidence rates, relationship of 'domestic violence' to socio-economic class, and the relative prevalence of violence among women who have control over their financial earnings compared with those women who are economically dependent upon a male breadwinner (see Gelles, 1979; Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz, 1980).

In contrast, a more micro analysis of 'domestic violence' has been attempted by psychologically-oriented researchers. There is, of course, considerable overlap between the sociological and psychological paradigms and no implication of mutual exclusivity is assumed. Nonetheless, some useful distinctions remain.

The psychological tradition of research attempts to explain the phenomenon of 'domestic violence' rather than describing its incidence, although some descriptive features are inherent in any explanatory model. This micro analysis tends to focus directly upon the behaviour of the individual protagonists within the violent relationship. For instance, such research examines the sex-role orientation of female victims and violent men, suggesting a link between extreme femininity and the victim role (see Davidson, 1978; Hilberman, 1980). Furthermore, the psychological model of human functioning adopted is frequently a social-learning approach involving 'modelling effects', as is evident in the proposition that violence is generationally linked and often represents learned behaviour on the part of violent men who have witnessed their fathers enact such behaviour (see Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz, 1980). It follows then that the methodological approach taken by psychological researchers is to measure individual attributes of the victims and aggressors, including their defence mechanisms and family histories (see Ferraro, 1983; Ferraro and Johnson, 1983).

Historically, the psychological approach has been aligned with the psychiatric literature, with particular emphasis on the issue of victim provocation (see Gayford, 1979). Clearly, the inherent drawback of the psychological perspective, as it relates to 'domestic violence', is its propensity to minimise the role of the structural features of society.

In any description of research paradigms, the serendipitous discovery of 'domestic violence' cannot be ignored. Frequently, the focus of research is not upon 'domestic violence' per se, but on some other, apparently unrelated, phenomenon (e.g., psychiatric disturbance or depression among women). Yet, a careful analysis of the researcher's primary concern reveals a history of 'domestic violence' when the behaviour in question is unravelled. For instance, studies of delinquent boys have shown that the incidence of serious behaviour problems and emotional maladjustment is seventeen times higher for boys observing wife battering than boys who have not had this experience, while for girls the rate is ten times higher (Wolfe, Jaffe and Wilson, in press). Similarly, Hilberman and Munson (1977) report that half of the one hundred and twenty women referred to a North Carolina clinic for psychiatric evaluation were found to be victims of 'domestic violence'. However, until the women were interviewed specifically about the presence of marital violence, the history of assault was known in only four of the sixty cases. A further example of the unexpected discovery of 'domestic violence' is contained in Carlen's (1983) study of the histories of imprisoned women in Scotland, in which it was found that a high proportion of female inmates had been physically victimised within intimate relationships. Such indirect research explicitly contributes to the accumulation of knowledge on the topic of 'domestic violence' and provides indicators of both its incidence and manifestations, although such a contribution was perhaps not initially intended.

MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES

Data upon 'domestic violence' can be gathered within a number of theoretical and applied frameworks as argued above. As a consequence of such different paradigms, the information sources used are many and varied, and can be described in a number of ways.

The measurement of 'domestic violence' can encompass both primary and secondary analysis, so that it can be derived from other sources (e.g., court statistics - see O'Brien, 1971) or gathered by the investigators themselves (e.g., Crime Victim Surveys - see Gaquin, 1978). The data may be gathered at different sites, such as within refuges or from police records, and may cut across both applied and research divisions. However, it should be noted that in all methodologies, the focus of research has generally been on female victims of domestic violence, and there has been a corresponding dearth of research on violent men, from both a

quantitative and qualitative perspective. The only exception to this trend appears in the clinical literature, concerned with the personality profiles of violent males.

Quantitative Methods

Traditionally, quantitative data has been seen as the most valid way to measure the incidence and characteristics of 'domestic violence' within different populations. The kinds of measurement employed are random household surveys, such as used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, or the survey conducted by Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz (1980). However, such data are also typically difficult to elicit and under-represent the incidence of 'domestic violence' especially in particular populations, such as among white-collar workers. Alternatively, criminological records such as police incident report forms and court statistics have been used, with the attendant problem of probable bias in favour of lower socio-economic groups (Bowker, 1983). A standardised control group is rarely used when researching 'domestic violence', a notable exception being the work of Frieze (1979) in which she compared women who defined themselves as battered with women who were ostensibly non-battered. All of the above methods reflect a direct interface between professionals and the phenomenon of 'domestic violence'. Another frequently used strategy has been to estimate, by indirect means, the incidence of 'domestic violence' from specific populations such as marriage guidance clients, using records to elicit the frequency of reported violent episodes among couples.

The traditional quantitative method implies a structured and rigorous 'counting' process, rather than any focus upon the dynamics involved in violent relationships. Although such a positivist and empirical method is often most hallowed by researchers, who claim that this technique aids greatly in description of the phenomenon of 'domestic violence', it may not promote further understanding of violence in the private domain. In fact, it could be argued that the inductive empiricist method, rather than being objective in character is tarnished by profound biases, such as extreme androcentricism (Keller, 1982). For instance, feminist writers assert the scientific method is a product of particular social and historical processes which have equated the male perspective with the tenet of universal truth (Keller, 1983).

An intermediate position is taken by researchers who operate within the quantitative framework, but opt for more non-traditional methods such as 'victim-initiated surveys' or questionnaires given to police officers, health workers and so on (Hatty and Knight, 1985; Davis, 1984). Such an approach has the advantage of allowing the respondent to use his or her own construction of the event, but the apparent disadvantage of statistical bias, in that it is difficult to ensure that all

members of a population are adequately represented. In addition, such research is often criticised because volunteer samples are typically used. Although volunteer research has apparent statistical disadvantages, it also allows the disclosure of a phenomenon which may otherwise remain unexplored (Bowker, 1983).

Qualitative Methods

The use of qualitative methods to measure 'domestic violence' has been somewhat rare, but is increasing, with most of the work coming from feminist writers and applied workers in the field (see Scutt, 1983). Typically, case-studies have been used to describe the dynamics involved in violent relationships, with considerable emphasis on the victim's experience (Pagelow, 1980). Such a phenomenological approach, while not explicitly within a sociological framework, is reminiscent of the participant observation studies in other disciplines. Frequently, a number of case studies are used to portray the manifestations of violent relationships and to highlight the characteristic behaviour of the victim and aggressor (Walker, 1984). In some instances, a projective Hand test is even used to assess the reaction of battered women, with respect to their levels of aggression and other personality variables (Dalton and Kanter, 1983). The utility of such qualitative approaches are that they allow a rich and comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of 'domestic violence'. The difficulty with any qualitative method is its potential subjectivity and poor reliability.

The Dilemma of Conflicting Methodological Perspectives

It is clear that there is wide variability in the area of 'domestic violence' with respect to both conceptualisations of the phenomenon and the definitions employed (e.g., family systems theory versus feminist theory). Consequently, the way in which 'domestic violence' is measured may be entirely different from one professional group to another. For example, the use of the Conflict Tactics Scale, developed by Straus (1979), tends to equalise the gender effects of family violence, a finding contradicted by most of the feminist research. The consequence of diverse measurement techniques is little intersection between the positions adopted by the varied researchers and applied workers in the field. It thereby reduces the opportunity for effective communication between professionals concerned with 'domestic violence'. The attendant solutions for social action are obviously vastly discrepant.

Many researchers can be accused of investigating the phenomenon of 'domestic violence' merely for its own sake, and not for any reasons of intended social action. By so doing, they many monopolise the phenomenon, even redefine it for the victims, and place a particular construction upon 'domestic violence' for influential personnel such as policy makers, criminal justice

professionals and health workers. This paradigm may paradoxically increase the level of victimisation experienced by battered women. Similarly, many applied workers assume privileged knowledge when working with victims of 'domestic violence' (Smith, 1985). This exclusivity minimises the likelihood of social change among the relevant bureaucracies, since the latter have little opportunity to either directly observe the phenomenon, or, to be involved in discussions of effective remedies. Despite the ideological commitment to public disclosure of the dimensions and scope of 'domestic violence' of those who deal directly with this phenomenon, it is ironic that their exclusive stance undermines the probability of alleviating the victim's plight.

The resolution for both researchers and applied workers of the dilemma of different perspectives is increased dialogue on issues of the conceptualisation and measurement of 'domestic violence'. Forums need to be established in which information can be exchanged, and the particular needs of victims can be addressed. For instance, researchers should become more aware of the advantages of using alternative methodologies and of the potential political impact of their scholarship. Similarly, applied workers should avail themselves of increased access to decision-makers within bureaucracies. For both groups, there is a necessity to recognise that it is the welfare of victims which is of paramount importance, rather than perpetuating the differences between professionals in the field.

CONCLUSION

In summary, it is the thesis of this paper that any consideration of the methodological perspectives applied to 'domestic violence' must first be concerned with the issue of definition and conceptualisation of the phenomenon. The world view and theoretical framework (albeit implicit) of workers in this area directly informs their approach to, and measurement of, 'domestic violence'. There are undoubtedly a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives, of which some dimensions have been outlined above. Within each context, there rests a model of psychological human functioning and gender relations. Such models and measurement techniques are by no means mutually exclusive; they frequently intersect or overlap, and at times are interdependent.

Among the range of approaches to the measurement of 'domestic violence', it is assumed that no one method is uniquely preferable to another; each yields qualitatively different data with the potential for varying actions. The use to which such data may be put is a function of one's theoretical or applied orientation, and inevitably, of one's professional position in the workforce.

In conclusion, it is interesting to speculate on why some philosophical orientations to the phenomenon of 'domestic violence' have thrived at the expense of other less popular models. For instance, the social learning model has directed and influenced much data gathering and has served as a basis for explanation of violent behaviour. This orientation is but one example of the current popularity of the social learning model within many behavioural science disciplines. Yet, among 'domestic violence' researchers, little attention has been paid to alternative accounts of behaviour, such as physiological or psychodynamic explanations of violence, although these models enjoy some currency in other disciplines. It is suggested that alternative models are not employed by theorists in the area of 'domestic violence' as there is little which can be done to remedy such behaviour. That is, research paradigms are not only informed by implicit theories of psychological human functioning; they are as much determined by the political realities of appropriate action strategies. The approach to measurement of 'domestic violence' is no more secure in this respect than is one's prior conceptualisation of the phenomenon.

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AFTER THE REFUGE: METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN FOLLOW UP SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION

One way to assess or evaluate services is to ask the consumers. This is a particularly desirable strategy in the case of battered women who are an oppressed an powerless group whose voices are seldom heard. During the 1970s domestic violence was finally recognised as a major social problem and research consequently increased, although much of it has been criticised for being simplistic and vague about the methodology (Gelles, 1980). In this paper, I want to argue a case for consumer evaluation of needs and services, and to also make a contribution to the methodological literature in this sensitive and difficult area.

My comments are based in large part upon a follow up study of ex-residents of the seven Adelaide women's shelters, which was funded by the South Australian Department of Community Welfare (Healy, 1984a). Therefore my focus is upon a particular area of domestic violence: battered women who leave their partners and seek help from women's shelters. The intention of the survey was to ask the women how they fared after leaving the shelters: the problems they faced, sources of help, their view of the adequacy of community services, and their evaluation of the assistance that they had received from the shelters. Therefore the study combined a consumer survey of current needs, with a consumer evaluation of services and programs. A representative sample of nearly 50 women were interviewed during 1982, six months after they had left the shelters intending to start a new life for themselves and their children away from a violent partner.

BACKGROUND

Women's Refuges

Women's refuges are now a major public program. They began in Australia in the early 1970s and eleven refuges first received public funds in International Women's Year 1975, under the Whitlam government Community Health Program (Dowse, 1984, p. 149). The growth in the ten years since then has been dramatic with shelters remaining the backbone of intervention programs for battered women, despite various twists and turns in Commonwealth

and State policies and funding. In 1983-84 the Commonwealth contributed funds of $4 million to 126 women's shelters around Australia who assisted perhaps some 31,000 women and dependent children (the national numbers are uncertain): there were 40 shelters in New South Wales, 18 in Victoria, 26 in Queensland, 11 in South Australia, 18 in Western Australia, 7 in Tasmania, 3 in the Northern Territory and 3 in the Australian Capital Territory (Department of Social Security, 1984, Minister for Social Security, 1984). By early 1984, 130 refuges were assisted under the Commonwealth Women's Emergency Services Program (WESP) and another 36 under the Homeless Person's Assistance Program. In the 1984-85 Budget, the controversial joint Commonwealth/State Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) was announced: an umbrella program for three areas: women's emergency services, youth services, and general accommodation, with $7.83 allocated to women's services in that year (Commonwealth of Australia, Budget Papers 1984-85).

Accountability and Evaluation

Since the mid 1970s the Commonwealth has strengthened accountability requirements in all social service areas (social security, education, health, welfare, housing, community services) accompanied by attempts to brake back on expenditures, and to lock the States into undertaking more responsibility for a variety of social programs. Building in a requirement for the evaluation of social service programs was given impetus by the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare which characterised health and welfare as 'a system out of control' (Baume Report, 1979, p. 1). The joint Commonwealth/State SAAP program will require the women's refuges to spend time in the SAAP program consultation processes, to provide more information on the numbers and types of shelter clients/users, to account in more detail as to how the funds are spent, to engage in needs-based planning, and to take part in program evaluation. All of this puts a lot of pressure on already overloaded shelter workers and is likely to cause conflict in several areas: there is no guarantee that the effort involved will maintain or produce more resources for shelters; the SAAP administrative procedures are cumbersome and time consuming; there is a perceived threat to shelter autonomy; the shelters must maintain a momentum for social reform rather than being forced back solely to band-aid service provision; program monitoring and evaluation requires a large amount of information from service users which may conflict with a common shelter movement value stance of avoiding subjecting residents to intrusive questions and form-filling-out.

This latter argument raises questions about the ethics of conducting consumer surveys of ex-residents. However I would argue that the essential point is that consumers should have a say in program evaluation, and if possible theirs should be an

active rather than a passive voice. During the 1970s community and consumer participation in running community programs was accepted in principle by governments in the USA, UK and Australia (Marris and Rein, 1974; Sandercock, 1978), although there have been only scattered attempts in Australia to put this principle into practice in social service programs. However the women's movement, and the shelter movement generally, have always argued that the women users should be able to participate in running their own services, for example, be on the management committees on women's shelters (Johnson, 1981). Therefore the push for more consumer planning and evaluation should strike a responsive chord.

Furthermore, it seems that women's shelters generally have nothing to lose and something to gain by participating in consumer surveys. Any reviews of evaluation studies of services for battered women conclude that shelters in general provide efficient and effective services (for example, Healy, 1984b).

Therefore I would argue the following points: that the push for funding accountability and program evaluation is here to stay; consumer participation is desirable; the question is not whether shelter programs are useful but rather how best they might be used; service providers (the shelters) should be involved in defining and carrying out research; the challenge is to find a way for ex-residents to give their views, for these views to provide valid and reliable information, and to ensure that any survey does not endanger the privacy and safety of ex-shelter residents.

Researching Sensitive Topics

The general problem in the area of domestic violence has been to obtain valid and reliable information. The various surveys on the extent of domestic violence have shown that the victims, battered women, will come forward if their anonymity is preserved. The wide publicity of the last few years has helped breakdown the taboos on talking seriously about wife beating: newspaper questionnaires (for example, Sydney Daily Telegraph cited by the NSW Task Force on Domestic Violence, 1981); magazine questionnaires (conducted by the Women's Weekly in 1985 for the Institute of Criminology); and phone-ins have been conducted in most States (for example, SA Women's Information Switchboard, 1981).

However establishing the incidence and distribution of domestic violence in the community can only be done in a random household survey. Straus et al. (1980) demonstrated in their 2,000 couple random survey in the USA, that this could be done, at least in the context of asking about techniques for handling family conflict with the help of a Conflict Tactics Scale. Thus they

avoided having to directly ask 'Do you beat your wife?' or in the context of their finding of violence in more than one in six households in the previous year (ibid., 1980, p. 3), 'When did you stop beating your wife?'. Thus Gelles (1980, p. 873) points out that:

> Researchers in the seventies demonstrated that one could actually interview door-to-door and obtain reliable, if not valid, information about family violence.

It was reliable information in the sense that different surveys produced a similar figure, but perhaps not valid in the sense that most researchers think that people are reluctant to fully disclose the details and that the figure is likely to be an under-estimate (Straus et al. op. cit., p. 36).

Thus visiting people in their own homes to discuss family conflict is now more likely to be regarded as legitimate, and in the case of women ex-shelter residents they have already disclosed the fact of violence at the shelter, and indeed are usually greatly relieved to find people who acknowledge the reality of wife beating, who ask direct questions, and by so doing held lift their burden of shame and guilt. Gelles (1982, p. 18) comments that when with his background of research into domestic violence he spent a year with a family therapy clinic, his colleagues were astonished when he matter-of-factly asked about violent episodes, and even more astonished when the patients recounted their stories of being assaulted.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Confidentiality

A follow up survey can only be carried out with the co-operation of the shelters, as only they know the identitites of their residents. This raises the issue of confidentiality which has always been a major principle of the shelter movement. The shelters cannot hand over a list of names to a researcher. The identities and whereabouts of the women they help must be protected against the very real danger of violence from an aggrieved ex-partner. Furthermore as the women are encouraged to take charge of their own lives and make their own decisions they have to be given an opportunity of deciding whether they wish to take part in a follow up survey. Therefore shelters have to contact the women by phone or by visiting or send out a reply paid letter. This is a cumbersome procedure and undoubtedly lowers the interview response rate, which was 64 per cent in the Adelaide survey. Only 4 per cent refused, but the address was unknown for 17 per cent and there was no reply from 15 per cent (Healy, 1984a, p. 62). The easiest approach may be for the

shelter workers or researcher to obtain the women's permission in advance for a later follow up visit when they are leaving the shelter.

Impartiality?

The solution to the confidentiality problem is for the shelters to carry out their own evaluation. Many social service programs do carry out their own evaluation, but no-one has developed a methodology to overcome the tendency of clients/consumers to express positive opinions about the service, just in case they might need it again (Justice and McBee, 1978, p. 252; Davidson et al., 1974). This is particularly so with oppressed consumer groups who are vulnerable in power relationships, which is certainly the case with battered women. Not only do they not want to jeopardise the chance of future help, they feel that they have no right to question the help that they were given (Rees and Wallace, 1982, p. 80). This was the impression given by the Adelaide ex-shelter residents we spoke to even though we took care to explain that the research was being carried out from a university, not by the government nor the shelters. However, the women were generally reluctant to criticise the shelter and the workers who had provided their only refuge at a time of crisis (Healy, 1984, p. 37). Therefore any program evaluation must discount for this tendency, and look for strategies which put the least pressure upon the ex-residents. The impartiality problem is not as acute when the follow-up survey also involves a needs assessment and consider views on a range of other services. But there is a case for involving a researcher who will be perceived as impartial.

Sample Selection

If the research focus is upon battered women, then there is no point in interviewing all or a random sample of ex-shelter residents. Not all the women who go to shelters have been physically abused. Women seek refuge for a variety of reasons: marital breakup which did not include violence, transient women, those discharged from institutions with no place to go, women evicted from accommodation, and so on. Although the main users, certainly in terms of those who have most call on the shelter-workers' time and expertise, are probably battered women, it seems that shelters now serve a wide range of homeless women. The proportion of battered women among the residents varies between shelters and over time. Some estimates have been as low as one-half of women in New South Wales refuges (O'Donnell and Saville, 1982, p. 55), and one-third of women leaving Adelaide shelters during 1981 (Healy, 1984a, p. 9).

The selection of women who have been battered from among the other shelter residents depends upon direct questions to all the

women or a reliance upon shelter workers' knowledge, or upon the records kept by the shelters. As there is great variation between the shelters in the information kept, the adoption of a standard client record card and client statistics would greatly help later research.

What constitutes domestic violence? The most widely accepted definition is where there has been actual physical abuse, which is implied in the term I have been using: 'battered women' which is not to say that verbal abuse and other difficult behaviour cannot be psychologically very damaging, but it is harder to measure. One might make a case to include threats of physical injury, or to find out whether the physical abuse resulted in actual injury. The seriousness of the threat or assault could be usefully measured by using the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus et al. 1980) because it has been standardised, at least in the USA, and is widely used. Usually however, this amount of detail would not be known in advance, only that a woman said that she came to the shelter because she had been assaulted by her partner, how long the assaults had been going on, and an account of the worst injuries.

Characteristics

Given the characteristics and situation of the battered women who seek help from the shelters, a follow-up interview is more appropriate than a postal questionnaire. The complications and sensitivity of the women's situation really require a personal contact. The women have to be assured that their views do matter and that their opinions do count. In general these are women with low self-esteem, who feel failures personally and as wives, feel that they are somehow to blame for provoking their partner's violence, and feel stigmatised as battered wives (Martin, 1976; Hilberman and Munson, 1977-78; Healy, 1984a, p. 31).

The women should be given a short and clear explanation of the survey, perhaps be asked only if they want to opt out rather than opt in, and the interview format should be straightforward, not too abstract, not too many multichoice questions, have open ended questions, and not take much more than one hour. The reasons for these strictures, are that these are women who usually still feel tired, depressed and distracted, and have many problems on their mind, including the stresses induced by poverty (Healy, 1984a, p. 7). Furthermore the women may be less used to an interview situation where they have to marshall their thoughts. Battered women who use the shelters generally come from lower socio-economic groups. This reflects a number of factors: a higher prevalence of violence in lower socio-economic status families although it should be said that violence can occur 'even in the best of homes' or at least across the socio-economic spectrum (Gelles, 1980, p. 879); middle class women have more recourse to

lawyers than shelters (Freeman, 1979); and most urban shelters are located in poorer suburbs and so reflect their catchment areas (Johnson, 1981).

An interview is easy to arrange because the women are likely to be at home. The Adelaide ex-shelter residents were mainly in their thirties, had been married (dejure or defacto) for several years and had one or two dependent children (although it should be said that only those with children were selected into that sample). The majority of women lacked the education, employment history or skills, to enable them to enter the paid work force. At the time of the follow-up interview, the majority of the women were not in the work force, were home with the children, and receiving a Supporting Parent Benefit (Healy, 1984a, p. 7).

The final reason for an interview is that the majority of the women were isolated and desperately lonely (ibid., p. 15). They had been forced to move to a new area, most could not afford to run a car, many were socially isolated, and friends and family were providing very little help (ibid., p. 52). The women were nearly all very glad of an opportunity to talk to someone with some understanding of their problems.

Making Contact

A major worry in a follow-up survey is the risk of physical danger for the woman if her violent partner is provoked by a contact emanating from the shelter. A counter argument is that a prior arrangement to contact in, say six months, would act as a deterrent to further violence. Either way a visit is not a neutral occurrence from the research point of view, but more importantly it raises the possibility of risk to the woman, and less so to the interviewer.

I do not have any answer to this problem and in the Adelaide survey we decided against taking the risk of provoking violence and only contacted women who had left the shelter and their violent partners. The tentative estimate was that over 50 per cent of battered women were living apart from their violent partner six months after leaving the shelters (Healy, 1984a, p. 10). A British study has reported the high estimate that over 80 per cent of women had not returned to their violent partners a year after they had left the shelters (Binney et al., 1981), however their survey methodology is not very clear. It is important to try and arrive at a methodology for obtaining some estimate because it is a major outcome measure for any shelter evaluation study. The underlying assumption so far is that battered women are wise in not returning as the likelihood of violence continuing is high if cohabitation is resumed (Straus et al., 1980; Martin, 1976).

In the case of eleven women we visited, they had attempted a reconciliation with their husbands, and the majority had again been assaulted. However the goal of some of these women from their time at the shelter, had been to go back and improve their relationship with their men. For example, one woman said that although her partner still got very angry, at least he now punched the door instead of her, which although very threatening was an improvement (Healy, 1984a, p. 13). Thus an aim of any outcome evaluation study could also be to see whether the women's hopes of an improved marital relationship had worked out.

However leaving a partner does not necessarily end the threats and violence, and a follow-up survey of these women must still proceed cautiously. One-quarter of the women in the Adelaide survey who had left their partner were still being seriously harassed. Nearly one-half had asked the police to call around either as a precautionary measure when collecting their belongings or to intervene in cases of harassment, threats and assault (Healy, 1984a, p. 45).

Consumer Expectations

Most evaluations of health and welfare services report consumer satisfaction rates of between 65 and 80 per cent (Nelson, 1979). The low expectations and passivity of the most powerless groups is a strong theme in the evaluation literature: either people's past experiences dispose them to expect little, or there is a reluctance to bite the hand that fed them in case future help is needed (Rees and Wallace, 1982, p. 17). The rates of satisfaction with a range of community services seemed high with the Adelaide sample of battered wives until this sort of factor was taken into account (Healy, 1984b, p. 3).

It is also important to ask people to differentiate between the person they sought help from and the help that was actually received. Commonly a 'halo effect' operates defined as 'a general orientation of goodwill towards the service providers concerned rather than a reliable picture of people's real life, day-to-day encounters with the services' (Rees and Wallace citing Robinson, 1982, p. 83). The Adelaide survey found that this operated strongly in the case of encounters with social workers. The consensus was that the social workers were nice people who offered plenty of empathy and counselling, but very little practical help (Healy, 1984b, p. 7).

Thus an evaluation of needs and outcomes must ask people exactly what sort of help they wanted, and what they wanted to achieve as a result of that help, i.e., a definition of needs, goals and outcomes. It seems that battered women have low expectations of the help that might be available and the changes that might result. The conclusion of the Adelaide survey was that when the

women said they were satisfied it tended to be with a shrug and a comment like 'Oh well, I suppose they did what they could!' (Healy, 1984b, p. 3).

CONCLUSIONS

The advent of public funding and the research effort to find ways of preventing or intervening in domestic violence, mean that needs assessment and program evaluation is here to stay. Consumer evaluation is an important part of this approach. Battered women who seek help from the shelters are a population who offer a major opportunity to conduct some useful research, and women's shelters do control this opportunity.

In general, evaluation studies show that shelters do make a difference in women's lives, providing a viable opportunity to break away from a violent partner. A follow-up survey of these women also provides a window on the adequacy of a whole range of other community services.

The main methodological difficulties are the ever present risk of further violence, and the necessity to take into account the hesitation of these women in assessing the help that they receive, and their low expectations given their past bitter experiences and oppression.

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COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS IN COUNTRY AREAS EXPERIENCES OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TASK FORCE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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As part of its terms of reference, the Task Force was required to examine the incidence of domestic violence in Western Australia and the effectiveness of legal and social responses, with special consideration for Aboriginal, migrant and isolated communities. This paper discusses some of the difficulties encountered by the Task Force on its visits to various parts of the State.

Western Australia is a huge state, covering an area of 2,522,800 sq. kms, approximately one third of the whole of Australia. People living in remote areas suffer unique problems of isolation, as has been well-documented. These areas are characterised by the lack of access to services, transport, recreation and housing, intense climatic conditions, few extended family support systems and restricted employment opportunities for women. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that for June, 1984 approximately one-third of Western Australians lived outside the metropolitan area (501,100). A further breakdown for 1983 shows the distribution of the population.

Perth	969,080
South West	109,410
Lower Great Southern	45,740
Upper Great Southern	24,010
Midlands	50,700
South-Eastern	45,730
Central	52,620
Pilbara	48,700
Kimberley	19,470

(A.B.S. 1984)

Obtaining information on domestic violence in country towns was subject to two major sets of constraints:

(i) limitations on the Task Force in terms of time available, level of funding, availability of Task Force members to go on country visits due to prior work commitments, and skills of the members to obtain relevant information; and

(ii) willingness of the people in the towns to provide us with such information. This was dependent on factors such as people's expectations of the Task Force, their feelings

about individual members, their level of knowledge or understanding about the issue of domestic violence, the availability of relevant community workers and the local politics of the town.

Firstly, I want to consider the limitations that were placed on the Task Force. The Inquiry was initially established for a period of eight months, now extended a further six weeks. The terms of reference required that we consider a broad range of issues, which limited the time available for country visits. Inadequate funding and work commitments reduced the number of members able to undertake the visits, which increased the workload for the members who could go on the country tour. As a result of time and funding constraints, the Task Force was only able to spend a day in a select number of towns with the odd exception where two days was possible. This affected the amount of information we were able to accumulate.

The Task Force visited twenty-one towns and a number of Aboriginal communities, including a mill town, mining towns, agricultural towns and major regional centres. The visits were divided into North West, South West, Wheatbelt and Goldfields and Central regions, over a period of three months.

The selection of towns was based on distances to be travelled, costs involved and prior knowledge of the towns based on perceptions and experiences of Task Force members. The difficulty with such selection is that not all small towns are alike. As pointed out by Harold Williams, small communities are clearly influenced 'by the distinct personalities of the handful of people most active within them' (Williams, 1979, p. 12). There is also enormous variability in terms of economic base, history, type of resident, power structures and so on. Williams remarks, 'small towns are complex, not simple' (op. cit.).

Preparation for the country visits included press releases, printed advertisements and radio interviews. Letters were forwarded to the relevant agencies and organisations in each town, notifying them of our visit. Public meetings were held in each town and private interviews were conducted with community workers or individual women wishing to talk with us. A phone number was also available for anyone who wished to make a telephone submission. Very few women made use of the phone or the private interviews. The issue of anonymity is a major concern in the country towns, one that was reiterated in each community we visited. Our Phone-In and newspaper questionnaire attracted a much higher response from country women.

The country visits were very demanding and taxing. Interviews with agency workers, police and legal personnel were often organised by hasty phone calls on the morning of our arrival. The numerous interviews carried out with workers and local residents

required forming new relationships with a diverse range of people in a very short period of time, taking in massive amounts of information, evaluating and re-evaluating and trying to follow-up all the leads that we were given. Little wonder that towards the end of each visit, members felt exhausted and found that their ability to question and digest new information was inhibited.

This situation could have been eased by preliminary networking in the nominated towns, by sending a skilled worker beforehand to locate key figures in the local community and establish a series of meetings. Secondly, if more members had been available for the visits, the workload would have been alleviated.

It was difficult to ensure consistency of information, to provide comparable data for the country towns. Task Force members had different approaches to interviewing which resulted in a diverse range of information. Even though we had prepared a series of questions, those being interviewed often had their own concerns they wished to raise and so different questions had to be asked to get the interview back on the track. Responses from workers, particularly in relation to assessing other services in the town, were sometimes motivated by political objectives and some prior knowledge of the local politics in the town would have been useful in assessing the information we received.

Interviewing is both a skill and a process. The skill is being able to ask pertinent questions and evaluate the responses given, to ensure that relevant information is collected. The process is the relationship that is developed between the interviewer and the other. As Raporport and Raporport (1976, p. 31) comment, it is necessary to recognise 'the formulation of a relationship between interviewer and interviewee as an important element in achieving the quality of information ... required'. We cannot detach the personal elements of interviewing, they are integral to the information given. The interviewee is not obliged to give honest answers; in fact, there may be many good reasons why someone should not tell the truth. Domestic violence is still a very sensitive topic for many people and to protect both themselves and their community, they may refrain from giving information.

Therefore the interviewer has to continually clarify and justify the need for information and negotiate the rights and responsibilities of both parties, through a process of compromise (Georges and Jones, 1980).

A further consideration in the interview process is our use of tape recorders. As Georges and Jones point out, taping interviews 'inevitably introduces additional complexities into an already complex human situation' (Georges and Jones, 1980, p. 143). Besides threatening the anonymity of the person being interviewed and reducing the quality of the information shared, there is the

possibility of the interviewer being more concerned with the quality of the sound on the tape, than with what the other person is saying. Furthermore, there is always a concern from the beginning with results, which may affect the interviewer's ability to discern information, because of the preconceived ideas that the interviewer brings to the interview. On reflection, it seems that members of committees such as this one would greatly benefit from training workshops, firstly to provide briefing sessions on the communities to be visited, to gain an understanding of demographic, social, historical and political factors and secondly, to address some of the issues that I have mentioned above and to gain some skills in conducting interviews.

The second set of constraints on the Task Force derived from the communities themselves. Often the interviews were limited to whoever was in town at the time. Workers in country regions usually service more than one town. We regularly encountered situations where a person we hoped to meet was in the next town on the itinerary, and would have departed by the time we arrived. The high turnover of staff in some parts of the State, particularly in the North West, meant that in some cases, there was little knowledge of the community. Thus, the information we received relied on (i) who was in town on that day; (ii) how much knowledge and information they had about domestic violence in their community; and (iii) how willing they were to share their knowledge and information.

Communities are social systems that encourage a sense of cohesiveness and loyalty amongst their members. The communities develop boundaries and the members engage in boundary maintaining activities (Loomis, 1960). One of these boundaries is described as 'psychological', by which some individuals are accepted as members of the community and enjoy the psychological rewards of acceptance, whereas others are not. There is suspicion of newcomers by the old-timers. This, in turn, may arouse negative response on the part of the new arrivals, seeing the 'natives' as unfriendly or even hostile. The Task Force arrived in country towns with certain expectations that information would be available and that local people would be co-operative. However, as we know, domestic violence is till a taboo subject for public debate in many areas.

The reticence to discuss the issue of domestic violence was clearly the result of this boundary maintenance process in some towns. We were asked on more than one occasion by local residents as to why we picked their town and were assured that domestic violence was not an issue in that community.

Local politics also played a part in the imparting of particular knowledge. Local politics determined who talked at meetings and who kept silent. The hesitation to discuss the issue may also

have been due to lack of knowledge about the subject or lack of identification of women as victims of spouse abuse.

The low attendance of non-professionals at the public meetings was often explained as being through fear that their attendance would be seen as an 'admission' of being abused by their spouse. Women who had been abused commented in later private interviews that such meetings were too intimidating for them. Some workers reported that they did not perceive domestic violence as a serious concern, warranting their time at public meetings.

A further reason given for the hesitancy to discuss spouse abuse was the suspicion felt by local residents as to the consequences of the Inquiry. We were asked on several occasions about distribution of the final report and heard dissatisfaction of this process of information-gathering that demanded the time and knowledge of the local people without guaranteeing if not action, at least, some form of feedback. In the North West, we were told that up to three separate committees visit each week (in the dry season) requesting information. This dissatisfaction will affect the type of information that is given, if it is given at all. I raise the question here of what responsibility do we have to those people who give of their time, expertise and experience, to ensure their efforts are recompensed in some way? On one country visit we were told that

> 'You just can't ignore the person and say, well look, go away I'm busy, come back tomorrow, because they are there and you don't have any prior warning of their coming.'
>
> 'All the time they are asked to give information and their work is being held up by the amount of time they have got to spend with people requesting information for whatever they are writing or researching and there is never any feedback and nothing ever comes of it because the problems are so large and people are attacking the fringe and not the base-line of the problem.'
>
> 'and the end result is that you have people that don't get into giving info ... so you might get a cool reception in some areas of the community.'

Although I have highlighted some of the limitations that were placed on the Task Force as a result of budgetary and time constraints and the community response to inquiries in general, we have been fairly successful in achieving some positive outcomes.

Firstly, the country visits have enabled those of us who attended to gain a much fuller understanding of what it means to live both in the country and the more remote areas of Western Australia particularly for women in violent relationships. It is clear that

it is not possible to draw up proposals for services that can apply both to city and country. Further detailed research needs to be carried out in country areas, using local expertise and community networks to enable each community to analyse and respond to the needs of women in crisis situations.

For example, I was interested and pleased to learn of the local area committees that have been initiated in New South Wales and see these as a possible model for country areas in Western Australia.

The Task Force was able to gather a lot of information on its visits, not necessarily all related to the issue of domestic violence, but still contributing to an overall picture of country life. Where information was scarce this may reflect in some cases the lack of knowledge or awareness about domestic violence. The country visits certainly enabled the Task Force to raise awareness and inform people of the rights and entitlements of women who have been abused. The public meetings also gave the attending workers the opportunity to learn of each other's services. Heavy workloads and high staff turnovers in country towns inhibit the development of effective networking, which is an essential component in both prevention and remedial service provision in domestic violence situations.

In conclusion, the difficulties outlined in this paper are not only relevant to inquiries into domestic violence, but, I believe, apply to all committees and inquiries that travel the country seeking information about communities. Without adequate funding or support from the sponsoring body, the organisational difficulties are exacerbated. Further, it is vital to realise that people who live in country towns are concerned to protect their social environment and are interested to know how it is perceived from the outside. This should be respected in a process of information-sharing back to the community and where relevant follow-up work is initiated.

Information gathering is not an end in itself, but the beginning of a possible process of interchange of ideas and information. The Task Force has created a momentum through community consultations in both metropolitan and country areas and in its information gathering. The media are keen to know what we have concluded. It is essential that we in Western Australia capitalise on this momentum and use the community interest as a lever for action and change.

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V

INTERVENTION: RESPONSES TO STRUCTURAL AND INDIVIDUAL ISSUES

'Cliff was looking thoughtful. According to some bloke on the telly the other night,' he said, 'twenty-five per cent of violent crime in England and Wales is husbands assaulting wives. Amazing figure that, don't you think? You'd expect it to be more like eighty per cent. Just goes to show what an easy-going lot English husbands are, only one in four of them bashing his wife. No, it doesn't mean that, does it? But it's funny about wife-battering. Nobody ever even asks what the wife had been doing or saying. She's never anything but an ordinary God-fearing woman who happens to have a battering husband.'

excerpt from Stanley and the Women, Kingsley Amis, 1984, p. 253.

'I needed every ounce of mental energy to observe and to plan strategies for survival.

I would have laughed, if I could, at the doctor who counselled me the week before I left my husband, saying to me that I must be very careful not to provoke him, since there was no way of knowing what he was capable of doing.

I spent every second of every minute of every hour, each day of my life during the last years of that marriage, in observing, calculating, preparing - in trying to predict all the things that might go wrong, so that I could be ready to prevent myself being blamed and punished.'

Lisa Isobel Bennett, (with Robyn Hopcroft), 'Emerging from the Shadow of Another's Death', 1984, p. 24.

Younger acknowledges, firstly, that the context of her paper has evolved from interactions among many women in the feminist movement; and, secondly, that she wishes to overcome the artificial distinction between those who theorise and those who practise. Her paper is, thus, based on the premise that 'Every approach to domestic violence involves a analysis of why it occurs and what should be done about it'.

Employing a feminist perspective and contrasting this with alternatives, Younger aims to promote an examination of individual value systems. She begins by outlining her contribution to the feminist collective within which she works, and, in turn, describing the effect of the work upon her own personal development. She talks of her identification with the women in crisis who seek her assistance, of her attempt to provide a supportive environment in which a range of decisions might be taken, and of the necessity to struggle for change in social attitudes towards the physical and psychological abuse of women within relationships.

Younger asks the reader to question her/his typical response to a female 'client': 'How do you see yourself in the interaction? How do you see your role?' She states that the feminist response in this situation would involve an empathic sharing of knowledge on resources and options, rather than an attempt to influence the decision-making process.

Finally, Younger claims that accounts of woman battering which hold that social or psychological pressures upon men contribute toward the production of violence within relationships are tantamount to a justification of that violence. As such, these accounts have no place in feminist ideology or practice.

The Refuges

Noesjirwan's paper, derived from an extensive evaluation of the forty women's refuges in New South Wales, provides insight into the objectives and functioning of these facilities. She states: 'Women's refuges provide an excellent service', a service based on an operating philosophy which dictates that each woman possesses the individual autonomy necessary to make her own decisions. In addition, there is a belief in the provision of a supportive environment in which the needs of children are also paramount.

Refuges further assist women, according to Noesjirwan, in a pragmatic manner through advice concerning social security benefits, accommodation and legal issues. Women who are not resident also seek assistance in a number of areas. However,

despite housing over five and a half thousand women during the course of the research undertaken by Noesjirwan, twenty-three thousand women were turned away in 1984.

It is important to recognise that women within the refuges, and their dependent children, have often suffered physical (and sexual) abuse within their families. Noesjirwan illustrates the reality of this abuse through the inclusion of one woman's story.

Noesjirwan finally issues a plea for the serious consideration of the structural inequalities, and psychological and social factors which make violence against women within relationships a possibility. It is a plea which extends beyond the presentation of her conference paper; consequently, it is also addressed to the reader.

Hegemonic Conflict

After indicating that domestic violence has become the subject of 'competing claims' amongst various ideological factions, James and McIntyre assert that 'in the contest for definitional control, the psychological appears as a powerful claimant'. They proceed to argue a case for the utility of the psychological paradigm in the area of woman battering. The authors insist that the exclusion of psychology from the arena of legitimate discourse derives from the adoption of a particularly rigid view of psychology as a discipline devoid of a social context, and furthermore, denies the psychological impact of violence upon women. James and McIntyre advocate a critical approach to the psychological whilst maintaining that it is not 'inherently oppressive to women'.

Finally, they outline several principles of therapeutic intervention. Most significantly, they state that 'the woman should not be re-victimised as a result of the counselling experience'.

The Provision of Services to Men: Preventive Approaches

Walker and Baum argue for the development of measures to prevent woman battering based upon the involvement of community health centres. A reiteration of a selection of the major theoretical accounts of woman battering leads the authors to suggest that preventive strategies need to focus upon the following: the learning of behavioural alternatives to violence; and an examination of patriarchy and sex-role stereotyping. Preventive measures may operate at either a structural or an individual level. Walker and Baum claim that work at each level is both necessary and appropriate.

Walker isolated three risk factors associated, in his experience, with the likelihood of the enactment of violence against a female partner. He lists the psychological characteristics often displayed by violent men.

Walker and Baum maintain that community health centres should engage in prevention at three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. The authors report upon an evaluation of several groups addressing the issue of male violence at the individual level. In addition, they point to the necessity of challenging the structure and function of social agencies such as community health centres.

Heath et. al. provide information on the philosophy and activities of the newly-established Domestic Violence Service of South Australia.

The mandate of the Service includes the development of several programs: counselling women and men; community work of a diverse nature; and work culminating in social change. This is complemented by research undertaken within the action research framework.

On the issue of men's services, the authors contend 'It is obviously an area that needs careful evaluation in order to determine the validity of such endeavours'.

The Provision of Services to Men: Remedial Approaches

Wehner presents a claim for the development of services for violent men in terms of their supposed benefits to women; he asserts that the majority of women remain within or return to abusive relationships. Even if this is not the case, 'the [violent] men are still free to go out and establish new relationships, and other women will become their victims'.

Despite an apparent sensitivity to the possible incompatibility between legal and clinical intervention in woman battering, Wehner proceeds to note that men who do not view their violent behaviour as problematic are 'not suitable for counselling and the full resources of the law should be utilised in curtailing their behaviour'.

Hatty's paper attempts to provide a systematic evaluation of the conceptual frameworks of the various clinical strategies developed to minimise or eradicate male violence against a partner. Specifically, the concordance between the precepts embedded within academic accounts and those evident within therapeutic programs is examined. This exercise indicates that the therapies under review contain beliefs about the etiology and maintenance of the violence which are consistent with those expressed within the academic literature.

Moreover, these beliefs, like many of their academic counterparts, are explicitly misogynist in character. They relate to such issues as the perceived contribution of the woman to the violence and the notion of the male as victim. Hatty specifies many sources of theoretical criticism associated with the clinical approaches currently in use, for example, the conceptualisation and definition of violence inherent within the programs. Also, according to Hatty, the restricted criteria of access, and the failure to undertake adequate evaluation of therapeutic outcome seriously constrain the validity of these programs.

The author concludes that 'the claim that overtly misogynist discourse has been displaced by a more liberal perspective is illusory'. In addition, Hatty asserts that the introduction of these clinical strategies as a means of diversion from the Australian criminal justice system is particularly inadvisable.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: IDEOLOGY AND PRACTICE

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I would like to begin by saying that although I am up here delivering this paper as an individual, because that is the way this conference is organised, I am expressing ideas worked out among many women in the women's liberation movement. We learn and develop from discussion, sharing and analysing our experiences, and learning together to put our ideas and solutions into practice. For me this has occurred through my involvement in the Women's Liberation Halfway House Collective and the Women's Refuge Referral Service Collective, in Melbourne.

The idea for this paper came from a reaction I had against a certain way of speaking that seemed to divide the people likely to attend this conference into two groups. On the one hand, there would be people with a theoretical interest in the subject of domestic violence, and on the other hand, there would be people with an interest from practical, face-to-face experience in the area. There seemed to be an assumption that those with the theoretical interest are not involved in any practice in connection with domestic violence that might raise issues about appropriate practice. Those involved in dealing with domestic violence on a practical level were not seen as having any interest in, or stake in, any practical theory or theoretical issues.

My reaction to this was to say 'but every practice has its ideology, whether acknowledged or unacknowledged, articulated or not'. I use the word ideology to refer to a person's set of basic or general ideas, in this case ideas about domestic violence, women and men, and the patriarchal family. I originally planned to argue that certain ideologies lead to certain practices, but realised that the two are inextricably linked. I prefer, then, to talk about different 'approaches' to domestic violence, where people have certain ideas and behave in certain ways because of these ideas, or, their behaviour shows their commitment to those ideas, whether they are conscious of it or not. Every approach to domestic violence involves an analysis of why it occurs and what should be done about it. Your ideas about what causes the problem lead to ideas about appropriate solutions. Similarly, the solutions you pose for it demonstrate what you see as its causes.

I am going to outline our feminist approach to domestic violence, and contrast it with some alternatives. My aim is to get each of

you to articulate and question your own beliefs and behaviour. I also want you to locate your self in the interaction you have with those affected by domestic violence, and work out whether you are acting to change the phenomenon or sustain it.

So, I shall begin by locating myself and the feminist approach. I work in the Women's Refuge Referral Service Collective. Because the women's refuges in Victoria have secrecy of address and telephone numbers, we are the central telephone referral point for all women seeking refuge from intolerable domestic situations. We answer our phones twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. We are there to talk to women, offer support and we have information to share about resources they may be interested in. When there is room available, we put women in touch with refuges, and we know about emergency accommodation for those who cannot get into refuges, or who need short-term accommodation. We are fighting male authority and control over women and children, and see hierarchies and power over others as inherently violent. We work as a collective because of this commitment to equality, and because we see co-operative styles of working as the only way to award each individual equal worth and opportunities for growth.

I am tempted to say that I belong to this collective because of my political beliefs, and the personal growth available to me from my experience there. However, the two are inseparable. Who I am as a person has a direct influence on my work, and the interactions I have in the course of my work in turn change me. My work is part of my life. The changes in my perception of myself and the awareness of what needs to change in the world for me and the other women, and how we can act together to make changes, all find expression in my work.

The experiences of working in a feminist collective is an exciting and empowering one, learning new skills and sharing responsibilities, talking and questioning with other women. It is part of my aim of personal liberation, which is part of the struggle for the liberation of all women.

So when I answer the telephone for Refuge Referrals, I do so with an awareness of myself as a woman struggling for liberation, and eager to share that with other women with whom I identify.

I said earlier that each approach to domestic violence identifies the cause of the problem and its solution or solutions. For us, the problem lies in male power over women specifically in the patriarchal family and women's powerlessness, and consequent dependence and isolation. Most of you will be familiar with feminist analysis of the patriarchal family, which has been developed in sophisticated detail by many feminist writers, so I will just briefly remind you of the main factors relevant here.

Women are expected to play a role in the family which is not conducive to our safety, autonomy, or growth. We are defined in terms of our relationships with others, as wives, mothers, daughters and so on. We are seen as there to nurture and care for other people's needs, and put our own needs last. We also have less access to social resources, education, job opportunities, and the like. While the man is the head of the household, has economic and social power and control over decision-making, and the woman is dependent and isolated, with few options open to her, women will be abused by men at home. While the institution of the family, with different and unequal roles for men and women, continues, and is valued regardless of its effects on women and children we will be subjected to domestic violence. Because of socialisation, women come to believe that we are responsible for the health and happiness of the family, leading to guilt when things are wrong. Although men may no longer have the right to beat their wives (in Victoria they still have the right to rape them), the family power structure is still largely the same. Women are still dependent, isolated, guilty and feel helpless and hopeless about options other than staying in the home and putting up with it.

The answer lies, then, in changing patriarchal society and institutions which give men power over women. Women and men must have equal access to resources and opportunities, and co-operation must replace power-over and hierarchy. Women who have been powerless must be able to empower ourselves, not by using power <u>over</u> others on the patriarchal mode, but by growing strong within ourselves and able to take control over our own lives. Women living with domestic violence must be able to escape to places of safety to recover from their experiences, and be free to make choices about what to do next. Ideally men would have to leave and sustain the disruption their behaviour has caused.

When approached by women living with fear and abuse, then, our emphasis is on listening to them with an identification and understanding from common experience. We are women together, subject to the same social pressures and oppression. We are not there to tell the women what to do, or even give advice. Our focus is to listen and discuss issues with her and encourage her to acknowledge and validate her own needs. We may know about resources appropriate to her decision, refuges, accommodation, supportive women lawyers, self help groups and so on. The aim is that she knows of as many options as possible, and then makes her own decisions.

Similarly, feminist refuges provide safety, both physical and emotional, and support. Sharing experiences with other women can break down the feelings of isolation and guilt. Women move from their homes where they live in subjection and fear, to environments in which they can have an equal share in control. With collective styles of working, women know their contribution

of views are valued equally. Women living and working together co-operatively become more confident, stronger, and empowered to make decisions for themselves. Notice that I have not mentioned the content of any of those decisions. Women may decide to go back home, or stay away permanently, to keep their children with them, or allow the father to have custody. The emphasis with feminists is on the process of allowing women to take responsibility for our own lives, not on trying to influence any particular decision.

As well as establishing supportive environments for the women involved, feminist refuge collectives also need to work to change the social attitudes and practices which give rise to the need for refuges. The behaviour of police, doctors, psychiatrists and social workers toward women must be challenged and changed. Acceptable income levels for those on pensions, more public housing, more access to employment and educational opportunities, all need to be fought for, so that women's options are increased.

So I cannot separate our goals of breaking down male power, empowering women, and increasing our access to resources and taking control over our own lives from the approach we take when talking to the women who ring us, or from the way feminist refuges operate. Similarly, I cannot separate who I am as a woman struggling for liberation from the interactions I have with other women.

When a woman living with fear and abuse at home approaches you, or when you are thinking about domestic violence (my questions are addressed to all of you, not just the so-called service providers), how do you see yourself in the interaction? If you are a woman, do you identify with her as another member of an oppressed group, or do you see her self and her life as somehow different? If you think she is in her situation because she is somehow different from you, you are showing that you think the problem of domestic violence lies with individuals, that individual women are somehow to blame. If the problem is patriarchy then it is a problem for all women. If you are a man, are you aware of yourself as a member of an oppressor group, dealing with one of those you have power over as a group?

All of us who are approached by women in crisis, and have access to resources we may or may not choose to share with her, and whose opinion she will probably take very seriously, or who are involved in policy-making over the use of social resources, can have power over that woman. Feminists see sharing our knowledge and resources as a liberating process for all women concerned. How do you see your role? Are you there to help 'unfortunate women who cannot cope well with ordinary life'? Do you take on the role yourself of finding somewhere for her to go, negotiating with other social workers or health professionals over her

movements as though she were a parcel to be delivered correctly and efficiently? Are you biassed in favour of a woman's right to live in safety? Does this affect the options you present to women you are dealing with, or the options you support being available to women? If she asks you what she should do, as women often do when in distress and unaware of alternatives, do you take the chance to influence her life, or do you, as we feminists do, refuse to give any advice or suggestions? If you are involved in making decisions for women, then are you part of the power structure women need to be liberated from.

Who do you see yourself as being accountable to, and so where do your loyalties lie? In an autonomous feminist collective, I am accountable to the other women I work with and the women I deal with. My loyalty is to them. Who are you accountable to? Is there a boat you do not want to rock by suggesting 'outrageous' things like the overthrow of patriachy, or even, goddess forbid, the funding of enough women's services? Funding for women's services before more fighter jets are brought, more computers are installed, and I.D. card systems instituted.

Your loyalties show in the approach you take to domestic violence. If your immediate response is to try and think of ways of keeping the family together, then your loyalty is to an oppressive, patriarchial institution, and therefore her male aggressor, rather than by those who are oppressed by it. An approach that focusses on the needs of the family as a whole, counting the needs of the father and the children as important in the decision about what is to happen in a woman's life, is supporting the powerlessness and dependence of women which allows domestic violence to happen in the first place. Suggesting tranquillisers or counselling to help a woman 'cope better' is perpetuating her subjection, not to mention keeping her in danger. A suggestion that a woman stay in the situation while the male aggressor is given counselling also shows a greater commitment to his needs, and the family as an institution, than to a woman's safety and growth. Obviously if a woman expresses a desire for help in dealing with the problem while remaining in the situation, then that is a different matter. However, she is owed a conversation about other options, as full a list as possible, and her statement needs to be challenged to check that is what she really wants, rather than what she thinks she is expected to do for the sake of other people.

A focus on the individual psychology of the woman living in a violent home also reflects a lack of awareness of the oppression of women in general, and an ideology of individual rather than social responsibility. If you look at understanding and 'treating' domestic violence on an individual level, then you are saying implicitly that the power structure of the family and this society generally is quite acceptable, but that some individuals

are not quite fit for living in it*. Many women who live with fear and violence sustain emotional as well as physical damage. You need to look at the cause of this, before attempting a solution. If a woman wants to leave an abusive relationship, she must be able to go to a supportive environment, free from power-over and abuse, before any healing can happen.

If a woman moves from dependence at home to dependence on charity in hierarchical institutions, she may have found physical safety, but is not much better off in terms of being able to determine her own life. The type of institution you run, or support, or fund, shows the kind of life you want for the people who live there, and the kind of relationships you want with those people. If I went to live with people who had rules for the household that I had no share in making, then I would know that they thought I had no right to any of the resources there, but was dependent on their goodwill in letting me share them for awhile, on their terms; that is, in a dependent capacity. It would not encourage my self-esteem or strength to take control over my own life. Such institutions and relationships perpetrate inequality, and you cannot support them if you are committed to equality. Similarly, if men are involved in the heirarchy running the institution a woman is living in, that is an even more obvious perpetration of male power and control over the lives of women.

'But what about the other side of the story?' you may be thinking. 'What about the cases of domestic violence caused by pressures on men such as unemployment or inability to cope with parenting or life generally?' If you are thinking that these might be at all relevant in deciding what a woman can do, and what resources should be available to her, then you are saying that violence towards women might be justifiable in some cases. Statements about pressures on individual men might be true, but are totally irrelevant to the fact that violent behaviour is always unjustifiable, and women should never have to put up with it. Men should never be able to vent their anger and frustration on women and children at home. Why don't they bash their male workmates? Because they would not get away with it. They should not get away with doing it at home either. I have heard some policemen talk about their role as one of 'mediation'. This shows a lack of awareness of the power differences between the parties. You can mediate between equals. If someone with greater power is abusing someone with less, then a so called mediation approach

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* Editor's note: This statement is valid if a strictly individual approach is adopted; however, many psychologists acknowledge the significance of social structural factors.

supports the party with more power. If you have the power, but do not intervene to support the oppressed party, then you are on the side of the oppressor.

I ask you again to locate your self in your thinking about, and interactions with those affected by, domestic violence. What is your approach to domestic violence? What do you see as its causes, and as appropriate solutions? Do you support women taking control over our own lives, or do you have some commitment to patriarchal power over us? Whether or not you are conscious of it, the answers to these questions are influencing your thinking and behaviour now.

TEN YEARS ON: A REVIEW OF WOMEN'S REFUGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Thank you for inviting me to speak at this forum. The wisdom I bring is not my own, but what I learned from spending six months this year with the Women's Refuge Movement in New South Wales. Part of what I learned is about hope and strength - the other part is about pain and despair.

The hope and strength lies in the work of the women's refuges. During the period of the evaluation forty refuges were operating in New South Wales (several more in the Australian Capital Territory). Since then four more have begun operating. Those forty refuges accommodated over five and a half thousand women and nearly seven thousand children during the part year, or, over 173,000 bed-nights. That is more than ever before.

Women's refuges provide an excellent service. It is a service by women and for women. It is a service that takes as its starting point the right of each woman to dignity and independence in making her own life decisions. It is a service that considers her needs as a whole person. It is a service that acknowledges the needs of her children, and her need to care for her children adequately.

Women's refuges offer a wholistic service. At the practical level, they provide shelter, food, clothing, and security from attack. They provide a caring, supportive atmosphere. They provide information and new skills in areas ranging from nutrition to child-care to legal processes. Refuges do not rush women nor direct them. Each woman is given the time and space and resources to work through her own crisis and to make her own decisions. If she chooses to return home to try again, she is free to do so. If she chooses to establish an independent home then she is free to do so. The refuge assists her in obtaining social security benefits, housing, court orders, or whatever she needs to begin life again. When the woman leaves, the refuge maintains ongoing support for her for as long as she needs it and wants it.

Refuges have increasingly been called upon to provide a generalist community support service for women, particularly in country areas, but in cities as well. Women in the community call the refuge for help whether they have been resident or not. The evaluation suggests that at least as many women are assisted in this way as seek accommodation. The help they seek is diverse.

Sometimes it is asking for information or referrals to other services. Sometimes it is seeking material assistance, maybe the use of a shower or washing machine, or assistance in moving. Most often it is seeking support and advice - the strength to go on living in difficult circumstances.

There is no doubt that through the work of the Women's Refuge Movement many, many thousands of women and their children are now leading much happier, independent and productive lives than could otherwise be possible. Therein lies the hope and strength.

But why do so many women and children need refuges? Why is it that even more women are turned away - 23,000 last year - because the refuges were too full? No women flees to a refuge except as a last resort. Each family arrives in terrible circumstances. And therein lies the pain and despair.

Here are some of the statistics I found. Of the women in refuges:

- over 50 per cent had experienced physical abuse from the man with whom they lived;
- 24 per cent of the children had experienced physical abuse from this person;
- 13 per cent of the women had themselves been victims of incest;
- 31 per cent of the women had been raped.

These statistics are based on the statements made by the women.

All women and children who came to the refuge were homeless and penniless.

The statistics are pretty terrible, but they do not give the full story of the pain, the humiliation and degradation - the oppression these women have experienced. Let me sketch out a typical case study to flesh out the human dimension - there are many others in my report.

Vicki was married to an army guy. He bashed her often. The army gave him counselling but it did not change things. He would say 'You're no good for anything'. If she was quiet he would yell 'say something, I'm sick of arguing by myself'. If she answered, he would yell 'shut up you stupid bitch'. Either way it would end up with a beating. The last time, he really laid into her. One of the kids fled to a neighbour - they called the police. He took a leg off a chair and threatened 'if you say a word I'll kill you ... even if they take me and charge me, I'll come back and find you and you're dead ...'. He hid behind the door. The police were

there. 'Are you okay?' 'Yes', she said, shaking her head and frantically signalling behind the door. 'Well', said the police 'you don't sound too sure - we'll stay around for awhile'. They left. Then Vicki's husband raped her on the loungeroom floor. He seemed satisfied then and went to bed. Next day he went to work and sent flowers for her birthday. She waited until she was sure he had left then called for a truck. She packed and was gone with the kids within two hours - left his flowers sticking out of the toilet bowl.

Postscript - the taxi driver said 'you women have really got it good - you cause your man to bash you, then you've got a refuge to go to and the government gives you money and a free house'.

So that is what this conference is about, Domestic Violence. Vicki is not unusual. Women used to put up with this sort of violence in silence. We are now witnessing a revolution. Every year more and more women are seeking asylum in refuges. The numbers are increasing all the time as more women are hearing the message: 'Domestic Violence is a crime - you do not have to put up with it', not anymore. But it is still happening. We are coming to realise that domestic violence is more brutal and more widespread in our society than many of us had realised. Why?

I am an academic and this conference is hosted by an academic institution. But I have not used the language of academics, nor do I believe that this conference should be an academic exercise. The issues are too serious and too immediate. We are dealing with untold brutal violence done overwhelmingly by men - not all men, but nonetheless by men - to women and children. It must be stopped.

I urge this conference to address the important and underlying questions behind domestic violence:

> What are the underlying structural inequalities that provide men with social, economic and physical power over women in the home, particularly women with young children? How can these inequalities be removed?
>
> What are the additional inequalities imposed on aboriginal and migrant women? What are their special needs?
>
> Why are women, the survivors, blamed by society for their suffering? How can these attitudes be changed?
>
> How does domestic violence relate to men's socialisation into the myth of the macho male? Why is it that violent men are also particularly vulnerable to loss?
>
> Why is it that even when the man is clearly the aggressor and even when the law purports to enforce the right of

women and their children to live in safety, that even when the police are called to intervene they are seldom able to do so?

Why is it that even now with domestic violence legislation in place in several states it is still the women and the children that must flee, that must lose home, friends, possessions? Why is it that over and over again the aggressor remains unscathed in possession - while the battered and penniless victims must flee?

This is an intolerable and shameful position for a so-called civilised society to perpetuate. I urge this conference to address itself to the causes and to the solutions.

THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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It is a sobering and necessary preface to any discussion of the relevance of therapy to domestic violence[1] when one considers that wife-beating has been, as Davidson describes it, 'a recurring phenomenon throughout history'[2]. For centuries, it has represented an overt and unashamed statement of patriarchal authority. It has been regarded as a legitimate, appropriate, and frequently necessary activity, both in custom and in law. And in both custom and law, the basis of its legitimation has been clear - the man has the right, duty even, to chastise, discipline, punish his partner.

In recent times, that legitimation has been challenged strongly. Stimulated in large part by feminist agitation, that challenge has currently produced what might be called a 'socio-political contestation' regarding the nature and significance of wife-beating, i.e., it has become a focus of competing claims. To caricature the debate for a moment, it could be put in the following terms: is it simply a crime, denied for too long by virtue of the family's so-called right to privacy; or is it a psychological illness, an abnormality, a product of disturbed minds, requiring treatment rather than punishment; or is it, as the feminists have claimed from the start, an activity with enormous social significance, one which testifies to the ongoing subordination of women in this patriarchal society?

In this contest for definitional control, the psychological appears as a powerful claimant. In this, it has been regarded by many, and not without cause, as antithetical to the effort to expose the patriarchal core of domestic violence. From this point of view, the psychological approach merely repeats the age-old rationalisation: to the extent that the woman is seen as provoking, or participating in, 'an abusive situation', as the psychological journals are wont to describe it, the man's response continues to be granted legitimacy[3]. A phenomenon replete with socio-political significance is re-defined and constructed as a private event, requiring private solutions. As Judith Allen has written about this:

> The removal of family violence from the ambit of crime to the province of individual psychology represents a massive exercise in the de-politicising of one of the most potent social expressions of the sex and class oppression on which patriarchal capitalism is based.[4]

It is this section of the paper - psychology's traditional construction of domestic violence - that we have excised in the interest of time for discussion[5]. Basically, we intended to demonstrate that battering is protrayed in the literature as determined, as Stark et. al. put it, 'in the arena of family life, either by such individual peculiarities as alcoholism, psychopathology, and "learned helplessness", or by the tensions inherent in family interactions'[6]. The problem, of course, with this construction or interpretation of the event is not simply that it ignores a whole range of social and economic factors, together with issues of gendered relationships and familial power, but that it actively blocks the formulation of such an alternative understanding. Essentially, in this framework, the abused woman is re-interpreted so that she becomes 'therapeutically treatable'[7]. A range of interventions follow - from medication (studies consistently demonstrate that battered women are medicated about three times as frequently as non-battered women), to individual therapy aimed at helping her explore issues such as her masochistic needs for a violent partner, and more lately, to couples' therapy, aimed at helping the couple explore the way in which violence is functional for the continued existence of the relationship. The following quotation is pertinent:

> Whatever practitioners intend these therapies to accomplish, their general consequence is to cool the abused woman out, to reduce her capacity to understand, adequately respond to, or resolve her crisis by leaving the violent home or by struggling through to autonomy against the hurt inflicted by a malevolent other ... The 'cure' typically involves the re-imposition of traditional female role behaviour and more often than not, within the same male supremacist context in which she is being beaten.[8]

What is discovered in such an analysis is that there is a systematic avoidance of recognising the full extent of the battered woman's situation. We are not suggesting a conspiracy theory here; rather the analysis reveals the complicity of mental health services with other structures in the society working to maintain the patriarchal family. In other words, an uncritical psychology, and the therapies derived from it, act, as Stark et. al. describe it, 'to co-determine traditional sex and class hierarchies and contribute to the suppression of struggles to overcome these hierarchies'[9].

The reaction on the part of many to this construction of wife-beating is a complete rejection of the psychological, or the therapeutic, in this area. In this sense, the psychological is perceived as inherently oppressive to women, and particularly by virtue of its actualisation as therapeutic intervention. We believe, however, that we can still ask this question: must

therapy, of necessity, perform this oppressive function, or can it function critically, in this case, of patriarchal family structures?

There are several points we would like to make about this:

1. We believe that, as feminist and other therapists have tried to demonstrate, it is possible for therapists to recognise and conceptualise the inextricable relationship between the psychological and the social; more precisely, to recognise that psychological experience is socially constructed[10].

2. Following from this, we would argue that the recognition of a psychological content in a situation like domestic violence does not preclude its social understanding; nor does it, of necessity, act as an oppressive force.

3. It is possible, we believe, albeit difficult, to incorporate a gender-sensitive and socio-political dimension into therapeutic intervention.

In other words, we would argue that to reject the psychological/therapeutic as inherently oppressive is itself oppressive to women, including women caught up in situations of domestic violence. It denies them their psychological reactions to violent abuse; it denies the possible psychological aspects to many women's reluctance or difficulty in leaving the violent situation - factors such as low self-esteem - and even though these have often been induced by the violence itself; on a more abstract level, it denies that the mythology of the 'woman's role' so necessary to the continuation of the patriarchal family is inculcated via the psyche, that it is lived out in psychological experience. That is indeed oppressive to women; a therapeutic intervention which enables the woman to question, to challenge, that mythology, is not.

For the most part in what follows we will be referring to women and women's experiences in therapy, although we also discuss what therapy can offer to men. It is also important to note that when we talk about the therapist or counsellor we are not assuming that a professional necessarily occupies that role.

What we would like to do is to indicate some general guidelines for therapeutic intervention rather than specific practices, since other papers will focus on the latter. The most significant of those guidelines is that the woman should not be re-victimised as a result of the counselling experience.

As the first part of the paper has indicated, psychotherapy for a woman does not have to be an oppressive, blaming experience which defines her as 'sick'. Feminist therapists use a variety of orientations - psychodynamic, systems, behavioural - in their

work with women. They seek to empower women through providing a context for a focus on the psychological; and they help men to examine their behaviour and beliefs from a gender-sensitive perspective.

Given this general feminist orientation, we do not believe that there are specific procedures which must be employed for working with women or men in situations of violence. Differences in the extent of abuse, and its duration; changes over time; differences in economic or social circumstances; differences in how the woman experiences her relationship; and differences in what she wants from counselling or therapy - all of these indicate that an individual response is required. For example, some women may experience love towards their partner and express the wish to stay in the relationship despite the violence; others may have strong beliefs about their roles as wives who should keep the family together. Such perceptions and beliefs need, of course, to be explored and frequently challenged.

In a similar vein, choices about the type of intervention, whether it be individual therapy, group or couples' therapy, cannot be generally prescribed. However, we can say that individual sessions for the woman when she or they first present are crucial for obvious reasons - for example, women often cannot talk about their experiences in the presence of their husbands. In some circumstances, couples' therapy is indicated; in other circumstances, such an intervention would be counter-productive, or even dangerous. Sometimes men can be engaged in therapy, despite a range of motivations, including some spurious ones such as endeavouring to get their wives to return to them. For men, individual therapy provides a context for him to take responsibility for his behaviour and can actively challenge his beliefs about women, violence, and power. (In saying this, we are in no way suggesting that therapy substitute for legal intervention.)

The use of therapeutic groups for women and men has been widely advocated. For women, meeting with other women in similar situations provides mutual support, frequently empowering her to leave a violent relationship. Discussion of gender issues can provide an understanding of violence which helps alleviate her feelings of responsibility, shame, and worthlessness.

For male abusers, groups can provide a supportive context for mutual confrontation and help in taking responsibility for their violence. Structured groups can provide input and discussion of patriarchal beliefs, values, and behaviour. Beliefs about controlling and dominating women, and fears related to not having such control, are important issues for discussion in these groups. In the event of a permanent separation, groups can have an important role in helping the man accept the separation and deal with his reactions without recourse to violence.

Counselling couples where the man is violent can at times be an appropriate intervention. It is important that the therapist does not convey to either partner that a change in the couple's relationship or their way of interacting will stop the man's violence. To convey such a message is to implicate the woman as responsible in some way. Couples' therapy should only be considered once it is clear that the violence has ceased and the woman has had an opportunity to fully explore the option of leaving, but wishes to remain in the relationship. Therapy should then be offered to the couple with the objective of dealing with relationship issues that are problematic for either of them. Couples' therapy is therefore most useful when it follows individual or group therapy for men and women separately. It is crucial that the woman feels herself to be safe from retaliative attack. Many therapists insist that the couple separate while in therapy and eventually resume cohabitation on the trial basis which is closely monitored[11].

Working from the systems perspective, a family therapist from Adelaide, Michael White, has developed an approach which has been usefully applied by other therapists in dealing with wife abuse. This focuses on the husband's violence, and other interactions, specifically in relation to gender issues. Beliefs in property rights over wives, adherence to dominant-submissive roles, or traditional sex roles, are exposed and challenged. Many other counsellors and therapists working within feminist frameworks raise these issues with couples in their effort to free individual women from oppressive domination.

We would expect that in situations of severe and prolonged violence, the more likely outcome would, and should, be separation, in which case couples' therapy is less likely to be appropriate.

In relation to therapy with the whole family, feminist applications of family therapy could be helpful to children in dealing with their father's abuse, and their separation from him. Because relationships often become extremely stressed in situations of crisis, moving to and living in a refuge, or with family or friends, the children's anger and fears may need to be addressed, and the mother supported in helping her children to cope.

In conclusion, we would like to re-emphasise that the therapeutic is only one facet of dealing with abuse towards women, and secondary to its conceptualisation as a social event, and to interventions more appropriate to that level. In this respect, therapists must confront the limitations of their craft, if not of their theorising.

Endnotes

1. See the discussion of the 'politics of terminology' in this area in McIntyre, D., (1984), 'Domestic Violence: A Case of the Disappearing Victim?', Australian Journal of Family Therapy, 5(4), 249-58.

2. Davidson, T. (1977), 'Wifebeating: A Recurring Phenomenon Throughout History' in M. Roy (ed.) Battered Women, Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., New York.

3. See Bograd, M. (1984), 'Family Systems Approaches to Wife Battering: A Feminist Critique', American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 54(4), 558-68, and McIntyre, D., op. cit.

4. Allen, J. (1982), 'The Invention of the Pathological Family: A Historical Study of Violence in New South Wales' in C. O'Donnell and J. Craney (eds) Family Violence in Australia, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne.

5. See McIntyre, D. op. cit.

6. Stark, E., Flitcraft, A. and Frazier, W. (1979), 'Medicine and Patriarchal Violence: The Social Construction of a "Private" Event', International Journal of Health Services, 9(3), 462.

7. ibid.

8. ibid. 475.

9. ibid. 463.

10. See, for example, James, K. (1984), 'Breaking the Chains of Gender: Family Therapy's Position?', Australian Journal of Family Therapy, 5(4), 241-8.

    James, K. and McIntyre, D. (1983), 'The Reproduction of Families: The Social Role of Family Therapy?', Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 9(2), 119-29.

    McIntyre, D. (1982), 'On the Possibility of "Radical" Casework: A "Radical" Dissent', Contemporary Social Work Education, 5(3), 191-208.

11. See Bograd, M. op. cit.

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PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

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Responses to domestic violence are, quite properly, largely concerned with the provision of services to the perpetrators and, particularly, the victims of domestic violence. If, however, there is to be an effective challenge to the existence of domestic violence then preventive measures should be given some attention. Given the mandate of community health services to promote preventive health measures, these services are ideally placed in the community to provide a focus for challenges to domestic violence.

A summary of the theories relating to the causes of domestic violence shows there is no shortage of theoretical explanations of violent behaviour, and in particular domestic violence (for a summary of the theoretical approaches to explaining domestic violence see Gelles and Straus, 1979). However, the complex literature has not led to any concensus, and to date there is no adequate theory that can satisfactorily explain why spouse abuse takes place. A major problem with testing and refining any theory is that it is a difficult area to research and knowledge about the occurrence, nature and variables associated with domestic violence is scant and often based on data from which generalisations cannot be made. The main dichotomy in the causal theories of domestic violence is between those concentrating on the individual and those concerned with structural factors. The major theories are:

a. Those focusing on determinants of violence as being a reflection of the characteristics of individuals

b. Those focussing on the determinants of violence as reflecting structural factors.

THEORIES FOCUSSING ON THE INDIVIDUAL

Psychological Disorders

Theories in this group portray violent men as being mentally ill, deviant, drug and alcohol abusers and even psychopaths (See, for example, Reynolds and Siegle, 1959; Scott, 1974; Pizzey, 1974; Martin, 1976). Battered women are seen as masochistic, frigid, hostile and provocative and to derive pleasure from the violence

and to receive an adrenalin 'kick' from the violence they are exposed to (Snell, Rosenwald and Robey, 1964; Pizzey and Shapiro, 1982).

Learned Behaviour

This set of theories maintains that violent behaviour is passed on from one generation to another. The family is seen as a 'training ground for domestic violence' (Steinmetz and Straus, 1975). Typically a violent man is portrayed with low self-esteem stemming from abuse as a child and as converting feelings of hurt and fear to anger and aggression (Gelles, 1979).

THEORIES FOCUSSING ON SOCIAL STRUCTURAL FACTORS

Patriarchy

The theories that portray the patriarchical nature of modern western society as the major cause of wife abuse present a two-fold argument. They maintain that social institutions, both historically and contemporarily, have condoned men's use of violence against women. Examples are that law courts are more lenient in cases of marital murder then in other cases of murder, or that police do not treat domestic violence in the same way that they do other violent crimes. Further, this body of theories claim that the socialisation process encourages boys to grow up associating violence with masculinity. Thus aggressive male behaviour is acceptable and an important component of men's self image (For examples of these arguments see Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Stark and Flitcraft, 1983). In recent years a 'Men's Movement' has developed that has been critical of traditional definitions of masculinity and has highlighted the links between male sexuality, violent behaviour, degradation of women and fear of expressions of intimacy (Metcalf and Humphries, 1985).

The second line of argument holds that domestic violence continues because women are not in a position to challenge it. Their economic and social position makes it difficult for them to leave violent relationships. Most women are in an unequal position of power compared with their husbands. If they do leave their partner they have little choice of housing, will probably have to rely on a state pension for income and will leave the home and possessions they are likely to have invested considerable energy and money in building up (O'Donnell and Craney, 1982; Scutt, 1983).

Stress

These arguments maintain that violent behaviour in the home is a response to stress. This stress stems from many features of modern life: poor housing, financial hardship, work-related stress, unemployment (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Gelles, 1979).

Although the emphasis placed on the particular set of causes differs, most commentators would explain domestic violence by appealing to a combination of the above theories. However, much less emphasis is placed on psychological explanations than in the past and few commentators would give much credence to these as major causes. This is particularly true of those theories relating to women as victims of domestic violence. Pathological explanations of violence have given way to a view of the use of physical violence between family members as a common, if undesirable, occurrence (Gelles and Strauss, 1979).

This brief overview of the causes of violent behaviour in the home suggests that preventive strategies need to be concerned with the following issues:

- Providing the opportunity for individuals to cope with violence both in terms of learning to handle stress and reducing stress levels and in terms of learning alternatives to violent behaviour. These strategies are applicable to individuals who have been violent and those who are in what may be termed high risk categories.

- Minimising the negative effects of patriarchy and sex-role stereotyping and questioning their utility in our current society.

- Highlighting those features of our society that create and perpetuate stress.

Preventive strategies operate on two levels. They may be targeted at affecting individuals' attitudes and behaviours or at changing the social environment. It is obvious from the foregone discussion that both types of prevention are relevant to domestic violence.

The individual preventive work that will be described in this paper was not framed as a response to domestic violence in particular. Domestic violence was just one of the problems particularly related to men that was highlighted when the local health advisory committee (Southern Metropolitan Health Advisory Committee) noted and called for an investigation into the low usage of community health services for men. This investigation suggested a number of reasons to account for this; predominant among these were: lack of knowledge of the services among men, the fact that men only tend to seek help when they are in crisis, and that the services are generally geared towards the needs of women (Baum, 1984; 1985). The investigation also concluded that men certainly had a need for the type of services offered by community health centres, basing the conclusion on factors such as the need to adjust to changing sex-roles, the pressures of

modern life, and the high male morbidity rates from illness associated with stress, unhealthy diets and lack of exercise. The next initiative in the area of men's services was the development of a series of groups that were specifically designed for men.

George Walker has been the main staff member developing these services. This work has led him to identify a number of risk factors that are crucial in responding to domestic violence and preventing its occurrence.

THE RISK FACTORS

Based on four years experience in the Crisis Care Unit (Adelaide) directly intervening in domestic violence, extensive experience in marital counselling, and current experience with Noarlunga Health Services, Walker's observations are that the risk of domestic violence is high under three main conditions:

1. Where the perpetrator has a perception of powerlessness to satisfy life needs or to attain life goals.

2. Where the perpetrator has a value system which promotes, permits or condones violence as a way of responding to feelings of powerlessness.

3. Where the victim feels unable to respond assertively to a partner (or parent) acting aggressively.

It is not typical for either victims or perpetrators to attend community health facilities with domestic violence as the initial presenting issue. More commonly, the problem is reframed as a more acceptable health matter, for example the woman who presents with depression or the man who complains of stress symptoms. Another significant occurrence is the incidence of domestic violence in situations where a child is presented as 'the problem', being defined as having health developmental, or behavioural difficulties. Obviously none of these presenting problems by themselves are reliable indicators of the occurrence of domestic violence. However, the experienced worker begins to recognise clusters of issues which indicate that the possibility of domestic violence should be investigated. Th following by no means exhaustive list is drawn directly from case studies of men involved in domestic violence:

- constant expression of low self esteem
- poor sexual functioning or identity
- high stress level - high stressors
  - low stress management skills
- belief in rigid sex-role stereotypes

- belief in ownership or the family (women and children)
- belief that self esteem and a secure male identity hinges around the concepts of dominance or being in control
- rigid personality structure
- personally abused as a child
- obsessional thought patterns
- poor communication skills, especially lack of assertive skills
- inability to express feelings, especially intimacy
- poor awareness of feelings
- poor awareness of physiological psychological indicators
- intense feelings of being wronged or humiliated
- intense feelings of being 'caged in', or feelings of 'explosiveness'
- intense feelings of isolation or alienation
- anxiety states
- fear of loss of control
- lack of significant esteem and meaning giving activity
- lack of time structuring activity
- mechanisms which aid in the avoidance of facing reality (eg religious fanaticism)
- disinhibiting factors (eg alcohol/drugs).

ADDRESSING THE RISK FACTORS

Where a cluster of the above factors exist, investigation frequently leads to the discovery that physical violence is also present. Even where physical violence is not present, there is still a high incidence of abusiveness or terrorisation. Yet another group of men, although not involved in such behaviour, live in fear of losing control and becoming violent.

Because people have a tendency to reframe domestic violence into more socially acceptable presenting problems, (frequently health related) and because many of these people present to community health centres, these centres have a vital role to play in the prevention of domestic violence. This prevention ideally should occur at three levels:

- Primary intervention: that is, recognising the risk factors and addressing them so as to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence.

- Secondary Prevention: that is, detecting marginal violence (such as abusiveness), and the prevention of fully developed violence.

- Tertiary Prevention: that is, detecting actual violence, addressing it, and thereby preventing the various pathologies that stem from domestic violence.

As a preventive strategy in relation to domestic violence and a number of related problem areas, Walker has been involved in three experimental programs aimed specifically at men:

- a stress management course
  an assertiveness training course
  a support group for men with feelings of isolation. This group is based on a community development rather than a therapeutic model.

Each of these groups have been evaluated and the findings from the three are in the process of being written up. At this stage it is possible to identify some of the overall findings from the evaluation:

> While the men involved in the groups did have some specific criticisms of the groups, the majority of them reported the group as being useful and helped them to fulfil the objectives they had at the start of the group.
>
> Each of the evaluations suggested that groups for men should be aimed at a reasonably homogenous group of men in terms of the reason they have for attending the course. Too great a range of problems presented by the participants can lead to frustration for some of them.
>
> Given that most of the men found the course useful they advocated wider advertising of the course. The men attending these three groups had been attending the health centres for individual counselling or had been recruited by informal contacts made by the health workers. They recommended that future courses should be 'marketed' more widely eg in work paces and local clubs and pubs.
>
> Each course dealt with emotional issues that traditionally are regarded as problematic areas for men to tackle because of notions of male inexpress-iveness. The evaluations suggested that the participants responded well to the parts of the course dealing with these topics and that the men were keen to tackle the issues they raised. The main negative comment relating to those was that none of the courses allowed sufficient time to cover the topics in enough depth. Most of the men stated that they would have liked the courses to have been longer.
>
> A comparison of the three evaluations suggests that the third program - the community development one - was most challenging for the participants. The health workers organising it did not provide any fixed framework, but

> rather encouraged the men to develop their own. Some of the men found the group of limited usefulness for themselves, but were supportive of the aims of the exercise. For most of those involved in the group the measure of its success was that its culmination has been the establishment of a Men's Contact and Resource Centre. This Centre has the potential to play a significant role in the prevention of domestic violence.

Issues raised by the evaluation were:

- should groups be single-sex or mixed?
- should leaders of men's groups be male or female?
- what experience and characteristics should wokers working with men have?
- how should services for men be 'marketed'?

The second form of prevention which aims at changing the social environment is the most difficult to tackle. There is, of course, an overlap between the two types of prevention. The mere fact of holding courses such as 'Assertiveness Training for Men' contributes towards breaking down sex-role stereotypes. Recently there have been calls for community-based health agencies to take a more prominent role in revealing and challenging the structural causes of ill-health and other social pathologies, of which domestic violence is one. This form of prevntion has been dubbed 'radical prevention' (Furler, 1985). Inevitably the role it imposes on the health or community worker is a more controversial one than the traditional counselling or group leader role does. The question posed by Nick Crofts is relevant in this context. He commented:

> Those of us in the Community Health Program must decide once and for all whether we are the agents of social change, working for, with and through the community; or whether we will continue to support the social institutions of ill-health as agents of social control.

Challenging the structural causes of domestic violence involved working for radical social change and questioning features of our society that are often taken for granted. A suitable framework within which to do this has been provided by Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz (1983). They suggest the following five steps as an effective means of preventing domestic violence: (The point in brackets are those that we want to stress as being particularly important within each major category).

1. Eliminate the norms which legitimise and glorify violence in society and family.
   (Especially the norms that see the use of violence by husbands against their partners as legitimate and that equate violent behaviour with masculinity).

2. Reduce violence-provoking stresses created by society. (In particular the problem of high levels of unemployment in a society that disapproves of the unemployed - a situation that produces considerable stress).

3. Integrate families into a network of kin and community.
(Community development work should work toward reducing isolation and alienation produced by the strains of modern life).

4. Change the sexist character of society and the family.
(Particularly excessive sex-role stereotyping and sexist bias that is shown by institutions such as the legal system).

5. Break the cycle of violence in the family.

To that list we would like to add the following:

Undermine the myth that portrays the family as non-violent.

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THE DOMESITC VIOLENCE SERVICE: A NEW EXPERIMENT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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In the 1984/85 financial year Federal funding was made available to the South Australian Government through the Community Health Initiative Scheme to set up a Domestic Violence Service, to be administered through the South Australian Health Commission. We believe that it is the first service of its kind in Australia.

This paper will give an outline of the Domestic Violence Service (DVS) including:

1. A brief history
2. Theoretical framework/
3. Model of service delivery
4. Research/Evaluation
5. Current issues and dilemmas
6. Future Directions

The theme of this paper is the development of the Domestic Violence Service to date. Admittedly this has been a brief journey so far, but it is one on which we have had to ask ourselves many questions about the nature of domestic violence and about what we as a group can do to stop it.

The service has adopted a particular theoretical and philosophical framework which provides the foundation for its interventions. Given this theoretical framework (the reasons for choosing this approach will be briefly outlined) there are implications for practice that are incorporated into our objectives and programs. However, the practice, in turn, has brought to light new questions and dilemmas about spouse abuse. We raise them in order to share our concerns and uncertainties about present trends and future directions for this work, in the hope that the ensuing discussion will be fruitful. The pilot nature of the Domestic Violence Service makes it critical that there is an ongoing commitment to careful scrutiny and exploration of issues which will aid the future development of both organisations and activities designed to eliminate domestic violence.

HISTORY OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE

In December 1982, workers from a wide range of health and welfare agencies in Adelaide began meeting because of their concern about the issue of domestic violence. This group, which is known as the Domestic Violence Action Group (DVAG) has been meeting on a monthly basis since that time. The strength of the DVAG comes from its having representatives from services involved in counselling people in all stages of a violent relationship.

Initially the aims of the meetings were for mutual support, exchange of ideas, skill-sharing and development of techniques to work effectively with the problem of domestic violence.

Having developed a certain amount of expertise, and becoming increasingly aware of the vast extent of the problem, it was decided to run a workshop for other interested workers in Adelaide, based on approaches developed and refined by the DVAG. Since that time several other three-day workshops have been conducted in Adelaide and in various centres within the State, in Tasmania, Victoria and the Northern Territory.

However, this served to highlight for the DVAG, that there was no agency or organisation especially geared to counsel men - the main perpetrators of domestic violence - to overcome their aggression or to cope with the underlying causes. For some women who want the violence to stop, whilst not wishing to leave either their home or their partner, their partner's involvement in a counselling program may be the answer (Wehner, 1982). The DVAG is committed to the objective of making men take responsibility for the violence.

In addition, although some services were available to respond to the needs of women and children exposed to assault or the constant threat of it - if the woman chose to leave (i.e. women's shelters), a considerable percentage of women simply do not leave. They may suffer for years before they are able to seek assistance and/or leave their partner. These women remain in violent relationships because of any one or combination of the following reasons:

economic dependence
- less access to paid work
- lack of housing
- lower wages

fear of retaliation
children's needs
- lack of child care facilities

fear of inability to cope alone
lack of support
lack of knowledge
shame/guilt
socialised belief about role as wife and mother
belief that the situation will change

For these women, there were obviously very few services available.

In 1983, in response to concern regarding the dearth of services focussing solely on the issue of domestic violence, the DVAG put forward a submission to the Minister of Health in South Australia, proposing the establishment of a Domestic Violence Service. The submission was successful. The Service is intended to be a pilot program to develop methods of 'eliminating domestic violence in South Australia', with a major focus on research. In the 1984/85 financial year Federal funding was made available in the State Government through the Community Health Initiative Scheme. The Director was appointed in January 1985, and the remaining five full-time workers and part-ime contract worker (6 months) were appointed by June this year.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK/PHILOSOPHY/AIMS OF THE DVS

The Service primarily focuses on spouse abuse, which in the majority of cases, is perpetrated by men against women. We do however recognise that son/mother and father/daughter assaults have parallels with wife assault (this issue will be discussed later).

Definition

Domestic violence is physical, mental, sexual and economic abuse perpetrated by spouses (married or unmarried) against their partners causing physical and/or emotional harm.

Theoretical Framework

The critical task facing this Service is to design interventions that advance both knowledge and practice. To this end there is a need to base programs on explicit theories that can be translated into practice. A prerequisite to developing successful programs must be an understanding of current theories of domestic violence and their implications for practice.

Theories of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a generic term that incorporates on the one hand, different levels and types of violence within the family and on the other, violence between different categories of family members. The levels of abuse range from verbal abuse, physical abuse, sexual assault, economic and social abuse, while categories of members range from child abuse to abuse of elderly people. When the list of crimes occurring in the family is examined, the one characteristic that stands out is that the majority of these crimes are committed by men against women (Scutt, 1980).

Many theories have been advanced to explain why the family is a haven for different forms of assault on women. Most advance a single variable theory, and thus fail to give a comprehensive explanation for such violence. Rather, current theories offer simultaneously helpful, confusing and contradictory insights. In a 'potpourri' of propositions battering is attributed to alcohol, poor impulse control, personal, or interpersonal illness, or a multitude of sociological factors (Schechter, 1984:210). Generally, theories of domestic violence can be grouped under the following headings: individual pathology, socio-psychological and social/cultural.

1. Individual Pathology - The framework is most often based on psycho-analytic and casework theory and attributes the battering to the characteristics of those involved. This type of theory dwells on psychological causes, often regarding men who are violent as possessing individual defects or psychopathic personalities. Such individuals are seen as 'sick' or 'deviant', and quite different from the rest of society. By locating the problem within persons with a deviant personality, society is able to label abusive men or dismiss them as aberrant but rare cases. There is also a large volume of work that attempts to assign personality traits to women who were abused.

   In attempts to answer the question 'why do these women stay', concepts such as 'female masochism', 'nagging wife' and 'inadequate personality' were used, thus shifting the focus from men and apportioning blame to the 'victim' (Snell et al 1964). Much of this writing is permeated by a refusal to examine the context of violence. Psychological theories fail to explain why domestic violence is overwhelmingly violence against women and occurs on a significant scale. It shows a total ignorance of the reality of marriage, of the law, the position of women, social policy and the culture in which violence occurs. (Schechter, 1984: Klein, 1980: McIntyre, 1984 and Dobash and Dobash 1981 provide excellent critiques of 'blaming the victim' studies with an analysis of the inherent sexist logic which permeates them).

2. Socio Psychological Theory - One of the more widely known explanations put forward within this theoretical framework is the resource/frustration theory of Gelles (1974) and Steinmetz and Strauss (1974). They proposed a multi-variate explanation to the effect that violence will occur where family members have no other resources (such as money) to maintain their role in the family, or where a family member experiences frustration, for example, in the work situation. Their theory suggests firstly, that wives may be used as 'punchbags' when things go wrong for husbands and secondly, that where a husband lacks other resources to

to maintain this position as head of the household, he may use violence. The explanations put forward by these writers are superficial in their analysis and stop short of exposing the ways in which the power and structure within the family and the compulsive masculinity syndrome may promote violence. 'The causes are the deeper assumptions of husbands that they have a right to dominate and the powerlessness of wives which makes them legitimate outlets for aggression which cannot be vented on others, as sanctions and disapproval would follow' (Evason 1982:12). Research by Dobash and Dobash (1979) extends this view of 'appropriate' gender roles and indicate that abusive husbands view the woman as their 'property'.

Another explanation advanced is the social learning theory. Bandura and Walters (1959) were the original exponents. This theory contains the notion of a cycle of violence. Male children model their behaviour on their violent fathers and grow up to carry on a similar pattern. The female corollary is that girls grow up to seek, expect, or tolerate such behaviour. In essence the theory states that the child models his/her bahviour on inadequate parental models, leading to patterns of intergenerational violence. Schechter's (1984:215) response to this type of theory is to point out that while it is true that men learn to use physical force and women to be passive, they are not in most cases, 'indiscriminately learning victim and aggressor roles; they are learning about their proper place and the correct way to behave within a male dominated family and culture in which violence has become institutionalised'.

The theory of 'learned helplessness' proposed by Walker (1977-78) is often used as an explanation as to why women stay in abusive relationships. She postulates that a women in a violent relationship learns to become passive and helpless as a result of her husband's treatment of her. She therefore feels unable to act to stop the violence either within the relationship or by leaving. However by concentrating almost solely on the psycholgocial damage sustained by women, it fails to address the problem of the inequitable distribution of resources between the sexes and therefore the structural constraints such as the lack of housing, income, child care facilities etc. that severely curtail the options to women. Also it fails to address the role of social factors which tend to reinforce acceptance of violence as part of a woman's lot, reinforcing her perceieved duty to stay, frustrating her attempts to leave, and making it difficult to survive if she does. Also it can be argued that more rationally the emphasis should be on the question 'why doesn't he stop beating her?' rather than on 'why doesn't she leave?'

3. Socio-Cultural Theory - This theory concentrates on seeking explanations for violence against women located within the social/structural institutions of our particular culture. The key notion is patriarchy which, it is said, is revealed as a set of relation-ships based on power differences, between men and women (James, 1984). Patriarchy, by definition, necessitates the oppression of women. '...Structures are transmitted through the acquisition of culture, language and gender identity and the family is the site of transmission (James 1984:244). In a patriarchal culture women's worth is very dependent upon her socially assigned roles of mother and wife, and is reinforced through ties to men in intimate relationships within the family.

The family mirrors the public sphere and is hierarchically constituted with husbands as the head, and women as wives occupying a very inferior position. Similarly, sons and daughters enjoy differential status based on their gender relationship to the hierarchy. The role and position of a woman and hence her social situation, historically, has '...under patriarchy, been that of property either of her father or her husband. Her function has been mainly that of sexual object, child bearer and nurturer, and her place was within the family (Zomer, 1983:1975), rather than in society at large. Incorporated into the theory are the concepts of sexism and sex-role stereotyping, primary means by which women's position is defined and continually redefined within social/cultural structures. Within this context violence is perceived as a constant assertion of patriarchal control - that is men's control of women as partners in intimate familial relationships.

As Evason (1982:15) points out 'From a structural perspective the problem is not simply that women are assaulted but that our culture encourages assaults, limits the opportunities of escape for victims and perpetuates violence by an ambivalence to assaults when they actually occur.' Thus the structural perspective has much to commend it, although there is still much work to be done in understanding what social conditions lead to women being the consistent target of violence generation after generation.

The major criticism of this theory is that it is bereft of any notion of individual human action and choice that mutually interact with the structural determinants.

4. Violence Against Women, Theory, Practice and the Domestic Violence Service - The Domestic Violence Service subscribes strongly to a model which incorporates a cultural, historical and political perspective on domestic

violence (as a category of violence against women) rather than to more traditional models which perceive domestic violence as a family dysfunction or personality problem. Neverthe-less it is individual women and children who suffer and whose safety must be of paramount importance. The aims of the Service must take into account both the needs of individual women and the need to impact on the social/structural causes of violence. Thus the aims of the Service operate on two levels ie, programs for women are premised on the notion that as individuals they need educational input and support and to become aware of the options available for dealing with their predicament. Concomitantly, no real options can be realised unless the Service directs energies into changing the social/structural factors underlying causes of violence so that redistributive policies in the form of housing, income, child care facilities etc. are available to give women who wish to choose to leave violent relationships the resources and capacity to do so.

Similarly work with men (once the women and children's safety has been secured) must operate on two levels. Recognising that individual men are responsible for the violence and that their attitudes towards women are a contributing factor there is a need to work on the behaviour and attitudes of these men in order to provide them with new and acceptable way of establish-ing relationships with women. In addition, it should be recognised that it is not just the responsibility of shelters and women's programs to recognise the problems of battered women, but also of men's programs. Therefore the men's programs should also have an educative and political focus, highlighting the ways in which the patriarchal society they dominate acts to produce violence against women.

PHILOSOPHY

The interventions offered by the DVS are based on the following premises:

- That domestic violence is a problem stemming from structural power inequalities in society which affect the economic status, social behaviour and emotional experiences of women and men.

- That in this society women are most likely to be the victims of violence because the structual and cultural values give power to men, not women.

- That the safety of women and children is a vital consideration and should be considered paramount at all times.

- That men who are violent must take responsibility for their actions. This involves changing their behaviour, values and beliefs.

- That the Service will attempt to address the particular concerns of migrant, aboriginal and disabled women.

AIM

The primary aim derives from the Service's philosophical and theoretical understanding of the issue of domestic violence. This aim centres on developing program models at the:

a. Individual and group level.
b. Community level.
c. Social action level.

MODEL OF SERVICE DELIVERY

a. Individual and Group Level -

Aims of Individual and Group Work - To pilot a specialist counselling service in the area of domestic violence and to make referrals to other agencies as appropriate.

Objectives at Indivudual and Group Level -

- to develop, run and evalue educative self-help networking services for women who are or have been abused;

- to develop, run and evaluate therapeutic programs with a change - oriented focus for men who are violent towards their partners;

- to promote the development of similar programs in a community setting by conducting training workshops for existing health and welfare workers.

Programs Include:

i) Telephone counselling (women and men)
ii) Face to face counselling (women and men separately)
iii) Group counselling for women, group counselling for men
iv) Education and Training (for workers in health and welfare organisations as well as other groups in the community).

b. Community Level
(i.e. at the level of a specific local government area)

Aims of Community Work

- To extend services (formal and informal) for women in and out of abusive situations and to make existing services more effective and responsive to women's needs.

- To minimise the difficulties women face in taking action to stop violence against themselves.

- To assist the local community to develop interest in and take more responsibility for stopping domestic violence.

- To assist women to take more power and control over their own lives.

- To publicise the issue of domestic violence and expose the myths and facts.

Objectives at Community Level

- Gain a comprehensive knowledge of, and familiarity with, the needs of the local community.

- Liaison and discussion with, and training of, local agencies in order to assist existing services to become more effective in dealing with domestic violence.

- Inform the community, i.e. local residents and workers, to encourage local interest/participation on the issue (through media, talks, pamphlet, newsletter distribution).

- To be accessible and available to migrant and aboriginal people in the community by working closely with local ethnic and Aboriginal services.

- To encourage community input through the development of groups in local communities to advise on the specific needs of that community.

- To encourage community management by being available for the local community as a resource for their self-initiated action.

- To help establish community network action groups thus building in advocacy for services, ongoing structures and responsibilities for what type of services devolve to that community.

c. Social Action Level

This area embraces the principle that domestic violence is a 'public issue', not a case of 'personal trouble'. A major factor for the continuation of domestic violence in society generally and within the family specifically, is the secrecy that surrounds the issue, and the view of family life as 'private' and altogether separate from the public domain. Lack of adequate material resources, such as income and housing, combine with this aura of secrecy to deter women from leaving violent relationships.

In addition, a woman is socialised into accepting the major responsibility for the emotional and physical well-being of her spouse and children, reinforcing her perceived duty to stay and frustrating her attempts to leave. She interprets her plight as role-failure rather than as a web of circumstances shaped largely by cultural and structural characteristics of the society.

Aims of Social Action

- To highlight the need for policies and interventions that have a 'redistributive' effect i.e. increasing women's access to, and power over, resources in society thereby giving them 'real' viable choices in terms of leaving or staying in a violent relationship. This is as opposed to policies which promote the function of social welfare as a 'residual' one. According to this concept 'the proper function of welfare is not to serve as a basic means of allocating society's resources - the family and the market are there to do that - but as a back-up service, tailored to help those whose needs are not met by the 'natural' mechanisms of the family and market' (d'Abbs 1983:237).

- Consciousness-raising activities in order to help women re-interpret the circumstances of their battery and thereby enable them to act together wth others who have similarly re-interpreted their situations. Such co-operative action has the potential for generating new demands for new resources (d'Abbs 1983:237).

Objectives at Social Action Level

- Encouraging and assisting other agencies to carry out research and policy formultion.
- Political advocacy.
- Formation of client lobby group.
- Participation in professional lobby group (Domestic Violence Action Group).
- Media awareness/Health Promotion Campaign
- Collection and dissemination of information
- Training/Education
- Insuring flow of information between field workers and policy makers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Domestic Violence Service has been established to design intervention programs for abusive spousal relationships between men and women, and to determine their effectiveness. These programs will focus on providing generic agencies with the means of intervening in abusive relationships at the:

individual and group level;
community level; and
social/structure levels.

While most of the direct services are primarily aimed at assisting people at the individual and group level, it is recognised that any positive redress can only result from these services having a direct impact on the other two levels. the process by which the objectives of the Service evolve over time is synonymous with an Action Research Model, where theory and practice interact with each other at various levels and help ensure that effort and resources are used in the most effective combination.

Research Model

The purpose of the Service's research program is to gather informaton on and extend the theoretical understanding of domestic violence for incorporation into service design.

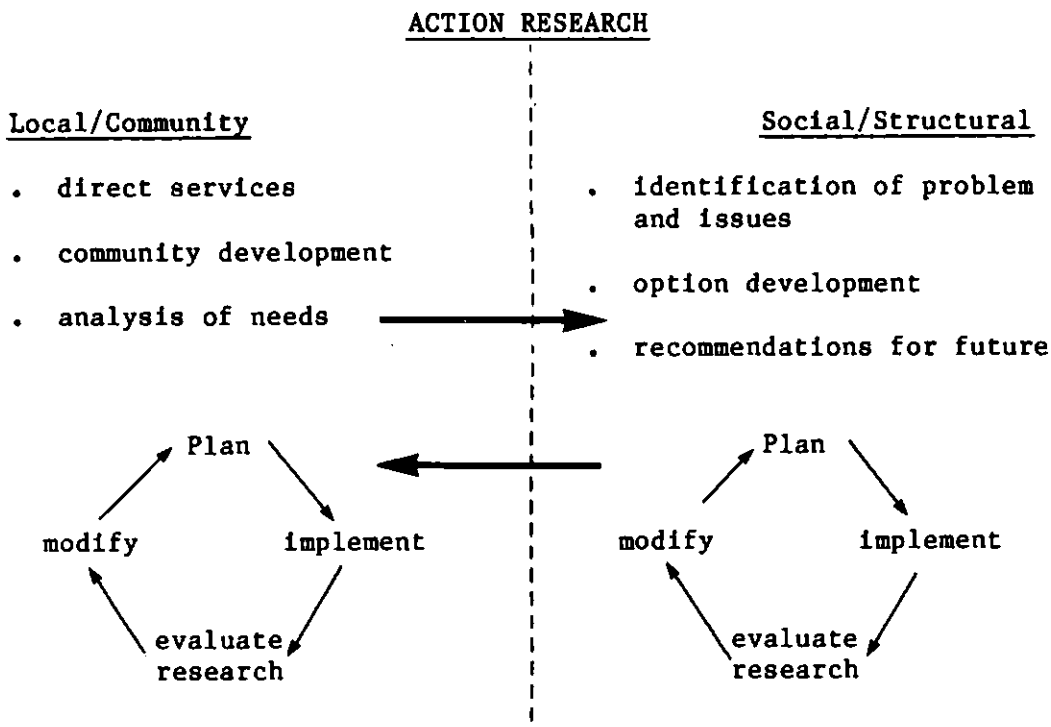
Research/evaluation is concerned with measuring the achievement of the objectives of the Service. It will do this by:

- evaluating the service components as to their effectiveness in achieving stated objectives;

- undertake research at the community and social/ structural level aimed at furthering our understanding and increasing the awareness of both service providers and policy makers about domestic violence;

- adopting an 'Action Research' model, that is, one that avoids setting up the usual dichotomy between practice and research. This allows for the services to constantly evolve as information on the effectiveness of programs is accumulated.

The Action Research model adopted by the Service can be represented in the following way:



Note that research/evaluation is conducted at two levels: the local level and social structural level.

Research/Evaluation at Individual and Group Level

The above discussion is at the theoretical level. In practice research/evaluation will proceed as follows:

Women's Programs:

Network groups for women are planned for those women who are being abused by their partners (i.e. physically, sexually, emotionally, economically and socially).

Aims of the Group:

- To look at why women stay in abusive relationships.
- To share common experiences of domestic violence.
- To assist women to stop blaming themselves for the abuse from their partners.
- To gain practical and emotional support from other women.
- To look at options and make decisions.
- To develop plans for the future; including ongoing support from other women in similar situations, with potential for expanding a social action network.

The degree to which these aims are achieved will be assessed by:

i) Collecting information on the individual context of women who are abused or have been.

ii) Monitoring any changes in the reasons and explanations given by the women for their abuse during the course of the group's activity.

iii) Collecting information of their reasons for staying.

iv) Checking the 'fit' between their stated needs for help and support and their assessment of the group's effectiveness in catering to those needs.

v) Monitoring any changes in actual circumstances e.g. they have left their partner or the violence has stopped.

Men's Program

The provision of counselling services for violent men continues to be an issue of major contention. It is obviously an area that needs careful evaluation in order to help determine the validity of such endeavours.

The program for men consists initially of therapy groups followed by a support/social action network.

Groups for men will be offered with the following aims:

- To focus on men's responsibility within a relationship, and for stopping the violence.
- To challenge men's currently held attitudes about women.
- To talk to and learn from other men who are violent towards the women they live with.
- To look at the effects on children.
- To look at options for:

  a. leaving,
  b. staying, and developing coping skills.

- To develop social and support networks.
- To build and maintain confidence and self esteem.
- To develop personal plans for the future.

Evaluation of the group's effectiveness will include:

1. The collection of background information from individual men to increase our knowledge of patern of abuse, frequency of abuse etc.
2. The assessment, though pre and post test, of changes in the behaviour of the men.
3. An attitude scale on men's roles, women's roles and domestic violence on a pre and post test basis.
4. Undertaking follow-up studies of men to see if and how noticeable changes in behaviour and attitudes to women has been maintained. Data will be collected from those who move into the next stage of the men's program and those who do not.
5. Comparative data from individually counselled men and men in groups to see if there are some men who can gain significant benefit from groups only.
6. Data from the support/social action network to see if this help men to maintain their own change and to advocate for change in other men who abuse women. This data can also point to the effect these men could have on the social/structural issues of violence.

7. Interviews with women whose partners are in the men's group to explore other possible methods of collecting data on changes in the men's attitudes and behaviour towards them.

Research at Social/Structural Action

Currently the Service is concerned with encouraging and assisting various government departments to develop their own policy relating to domestic violence. As a vital part of this activity, the need for the establishment of adequate statistical record is highlighted.

Further in the future, research and evaluation will be aimed at increasing knowledge about and awareness of domestic violence in this society at large. This could involve an examination of policy development (or lack of) by the State and its agencies on the issue of domestic violence.

An example of research in this area typically includes:

- Examining the aims of a particular policy.
- Assessing the effectiveness of programs developed as a response to the policy.
- Examining the values implicit in the policy and their effect on the directions taken by programs developed.
- Feeding back the collected information to modify the policy and the programs.
- Follow the programs over time to monitor their direction and effectiveness.

Research/Evaluation Community Development

The aims of the community development work were stated earlier.

Evaluation will consist mainly of an historical documentation of the methods used in the community work. Activities will include a needs assessment (e.g. questionnaire) of local agencies. Referral rates for various key agencies will be monitored, as will demand for services and training.

Current Research Project

This study is investigating the attitudes and responses of service providers (in the western suburbs of Adelaide) towards abused women and their abusers. The data collected will be applied to the development of training programs for workers in the mainstream community services.

Objectives

1. To determine attitudes and beliefs of agency staff (e.g. Department for Community Welfare, Hospital Emergency room staff, police, general practitioners).

2. To determine how their attitudes influence their responses to the abused woman.

3. To determine the degree of commonality of beliefs about wife assault between service providers.

4. To develop training programs to be utilised by the Service in educating workers.

CURRENT ISSUES AND DILEMMAS

The Domestic violence Service has only been in operation for a short time yet already it is having to grapple with some rather thorny issues. it may be useful to outline a number of these as an illustrated warning to those who have yet to encounter them, or to share with those who have similar concerns.

a. Self Help/Networking/Volunteerism Versus State Responsibility

At one point in our development we explored the possibilities of establishing a 'Safe Homes' project, through which abused women could seek shelter in allocated private homes in their neighbourhood.

The 'Safe Home' projects originated in America, where there is significantly less Government funding for shelters than in Australia. Based in New York, the project originally had strong input from the local clergy. However, its essence is based on the volunteerism of women.

In effect it institutionalises what now often happens within families - abused women go to the homes of relatives, who often get harassed by the perpetrators. However, the notion that families, (or more particularly the women members of families) should provide safety and protection of individuals is exploitive of women, who are equally expected to care for the sick, aged and dependent.

Shelters always have breaches of addresses, so that these 'safe-homes' pose a real threat to the safety of the women volunteers and the battered woman herself.

Dilemma: So the question remains: What happens to those women who will not go to a shelter?

b. Accommodation for Women Versus Accommodation for Men

Should it always be women and children, the victims of domestic violence who have their lives disrupted by the need to move out of the home, rather than the perpetrators? Could the men move out sometimes instead of the women and children?

There is a need here for groups of homes for men to go to in potential or actual domestic violence situations. There is also a need for supportive non-sexist men to provide such assistance. More-over the violent man would have to acknowledge both that he has a problem and that he is prepared to leave. Informal evidence suggests that the number of men in either situation are fairly small, and that leaving the home remains the battered woman's safest option.

Dilemma: If sole efforts are concentrated on housing for women victims rather than on getting the man to leave, does this reinforce the notion that women have the problem and continue to keep them in a powerless position? Women should have the right to remain on their home-ground but how does one ensure their safety?

c. Legal Versus Therapetuc Intervention

Domestic violence is criminal assault in the home, for which there are legal interventions aimed at punishment or restraint. On the other hand, therapetic intervention via individual or group counselling for men emphasises change through understanding and acceptance of responsibility. At the moment this usually occurs before legal intervention. However, in the future it may be seen as a legal alternative to punishment (that is court mandated counselling may provide a 'soft-option').

Dilemma: If we offer counselling for men are we setting up a process that will provide a 'soft option' for men? We are concerned that groups for men may come to be seen as the answer to domestic violence, whereas potentially they may provide men with more sophisticated skills with which to further abuse women.*

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* Editor's note: For an expansion of these ideas, see Hatty's paper in this volume.

Our response to this dilemma has been to set up programs which consist initially of a therapy program followed by a support/social action network. Since these are only in an embryonic stage we do not see them as a replacement for legal penalties. We believe we need to be looking at the development of preventive and therapetic interventions only on conjunction with a strong legal framework.

d. Change Through Individual (Therapy) Versus Structural Change

Domestic violence damages individual women but originates from social and structural causes. Immediate practical assistance for individual 'victims' needs to be on a one to one basis - that is, organising housing, finances and personal support. However to reduce or eliminate domestic violence as a social problem, change needs to occur at a broad, structural level.

Dilemma: Intervening on one level without the other either denies individual needs or helps to perpetuate a social problem - the unilateral 'band-aid' effect. However, the combination of both approaches within one organisation presents enormous difficulties. Both to workers and clients' individual needs always appear more pressing and tend to eclipse longer-term social and political goals. Limited resources accelerate this tendency.

e. Target Population

The title 'Domestic Violence Service' implies that we deal with family violence in general. As well as situations of spouse abuse we receive referrals requesting that we deal with situations where adult sons are violent to their mothers, and fathers are violent to their daughters. We believe a similar dynamic, based or inequality and domination, operates in all forms of violence towards women.

Dilemma: If we extend to service these forms of violence, will it 'generalise' the Service in the public's eye and take away the focus on men beating their wives as a political concept. On the other hand, by ignoring father/daughter and son/mother violence are we helping to hide or perpetuate it? With limited resources who should form high priority groups?

f. Specialist Versus Generalist Services

Specialist feminist organisations (e.g. women's shelters, Rape Crisis Centre, Migrant Women's Emergency Support Service) arose through an increasing awareness of women's practical require-ments and the need for a feminist or specifically 'women's view' analysis and treatment of victims. For rape and domestic violence issues, direct services alone are inadequate. A political focus is necessary in service delivery (so that women do not blame themselves for an 'individual' problem) and in advocacy and educational work.

Dilemma: With the current lack of funding for services, there is a danger that specialist feminist counselling services will be co-opted into generalist services where their specific impetus might be lost. A further dimension which has been an internal dilemma for this Service is the question of whether or not the same organisation should deliver the services to men and to women.

However, specialist services, generally being smaller, cannot decentralise to the same extent as generalist services. They are less accessible to the majority of clients and to generalist workers. This in turn, means that it is harder to devolve programs and encourage the development of mainstream knowledge and response. Therefore having more than limited impact at the community level is difficult. In addition, specialist services usually lack a geographical constituency and hence are potentially more vulnerable because of this lack of connection and support.

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WORKING WITH VIOLENT MEN

Issues, Programs and Training

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Why work with men?

Within Australia, virtually all attention and funding in the field of spouse abuse has been directed toward women involved in violent relationships. Since the women are experencing threatened or actual physical violence, any overall program must grant priority to securing the safety and well-being of the women and children exposed to and at risk from physical assaults. However, by failing to systematically address the actions of abusive men we, as a community, ignore the root of the problem. Failing to address the men has meant that women who stay in or return to abusive relationships (a majority of women) are not being helped, nor are their children. Even if all women who wanted to leave abusive relationships were able to do so, the problem would not be solved, for nothing has been done to change the behaviour of the men. In many instances, they will pursue and continue to harass and abuse their partners. Even if the women are able to get completely away from their tormentors the men are still free to go out and establish new relationships, and other women will become their victims. My recent research in Australia indicates that this is the case. It is the men who are more likely to gravitate from one violent relationship to another, not the women as the mythology would have us believe (Wehner, 1985a). By accepting the proposition that an important aspect of dealing with domestic violence must entail a focus on violent men, we take an active step towards shifting responsibility for violence to the men as perpetrators rather than to women as victims.

Arrest or counselling

What will stop or deter men from abusing the women with whom they live? Many believe that arresting men for the criminal assaults that they commit in their homes would go far in stemming the violent onslaughts. Indeed, there is an increasingly strong body of evidence that suggests that this is in fact the case. When Police are given specific instructions to apprehend spouse assault suspects there appears to be a reduction in the number of subsequent assaults (Brown, 1984; Burris and Jaffe, 1983; Jolin, 1983; Kennedy and Homant, 1984; and Sherman and Berk, 1984). Certainly this is one avenue which should be vigorously pursued as part of any overall attempt to reduce the level of violence in the home. However, the arrest response alone is insufficient.

While criminal assault in the home is certainly one of the most damaging forms of spouse abuse it is not the only form. There are a variety of forms of abuse which are not crimes in the legal sense. These forms include verbal abuse (i.e. regular verbal onslaughts used to demean and deprecate the women); social abuse (verbal abuse carried out in front of friends, family and others or enforced social isolation); and economic abuse (denial of adequate financial resources). All of these forms of abuse can have a devastating psychological impact upon the woman but are not in themselves acts which are criminal offences. Clearly, other responses are required. One option is the use of counselling in dealing with abusive men. It is discussed here with the view that it should be available to any man who perceives that his abuse is a problem which he would like to address. However, counselling is not being presented as an alternative to the use of criminal charges. Where there is evidence that a threatened or acual assault has occurred it is my belief that a criminal charge should be laid and pursued. If the assailant wishes to pursue counselling in order to avoid future arrests, this is a development which should not lead to a dropping of charges for past criminal offences.

Feelings and Perceptions

Much of what is known about violent men has been based upon knowledge acquired from their battered partners. Relatively few studies have been conducted where abusive men actually discussed their behaviour and its effects. Over the last three years, my work with violent men has shown that some men are deeply troubled by their abusive behaviour and are desperate for change to occur. I emphasise the word 'some' as I am speaking with reference only to those men who have actually identified their abuse as a problem and are prepared to learn to effectively deal with their anger and aggression. It is clear that another portion of the male population believes that abuse of women is not a problem of any particular importance. This segment of the population is obviously not suitable for counselling and the full resources of the law should be utilised in curtailing their behaviour. In order to effectively distribute resources there is an immediate need to determine what proportion of the abusing population is amenable to counselling and what proportion can only be dealt with through legal sanctions.

We do know however, that when services are offered, substantial numbers of men have come forward to seek help (Wehner, 1985a). For these men, fear is perhaps the most common feeling experienced - they fear for their relationship, they fear their own behaviour, and they are very much afraid of becoming involved with helping professionals who will expect them to disclose the intimate details of behaviour for which they are ashamed. They

are not proud of their behaviour and, like battered women, are unable to develop methods of stopping abuse on their own. Their thoughts are reflected in their comments.

> 'I felt like a right bastard.'

> 'I felt like a loser. I felt denigrated by my own actions, ... I resented my behaviour.'

> 'I feel weak, as if I'm being a weak person, that I can't have a decent relationship and I feel that now. I don't like ah, I don't like virtually, or I feel that I'm being called an idiot or being treated as one you know. I just sort of react, I don't know. Maybe it's because I know that I'm wrong, and it just sort of builds up and it gets to a stage where I can't I can't let anybody beat me. I've gotta win at all costs. I was like that playing sports. I've got no patience, no patience at all with anybody. Something needs to happen.' (to change [sic]).

> 'I was embarrassed. There'll be other things that have happened in the past. These things'll build up inside and I'll explode. I shove around and things and push. Actually, to be honest, I think I know exactly what I'm doing. It's not that I lose control. I explode but I know what I'm doing ... I was sorry for what I'd done afterwards but I knew what I was doing. I was embarrassed.'

> 'I'm a bit of a showperson. You know I'm all right till you get to know me, I'm a very friendly happy person, social, but the people, the people that live with me see what I'm actually like when I drop the front unfortunately. I get moody and depressed. I feel ashamed. I can't say it with words so I blow up.'

In addition to the fear, the men are inevitably affected by differing combinations of personal resource deficits. Such deficits can include: low self-esteem, poor communications skills, the inability to differentiate anger from other emotional states, an inability to relax, morbid jealousy, dependency and insecurity; all of which is underscored by sexist attitudes and beliefs about the role of women in society.

Sidetracks

Even for those men actively seeking change some aspects of their behaviour are counterproductive and before the behaviour change process can be initiated it is necessary to clarify these issues. In discussing past abuse there may be attempts to minimise or

deny the extent of abuse and the resulting fear on the part of the wife and children. Some men will insist that they lost control and many insist that their partners pushed them to the point of abuse and are therefore equally responsible if not more so. In responding to such statements the underlying themes must be personal responsibility for actions and the inappropriateness of violent or abusive behaviour in response to conflict regardless of provocation.

A further combination of counterproductive behaviours in which many men engage are what I have termed Pursuit Techniques. As a result of severe abuse many women will either leave or threaten to leave the relationship. This event places many men in a state of crisis and they will engage in a number of activities designed to keep the woman from leaving or to entice her back into the relationship if she has left. It is important to note that it is during this crisis state that many men will present, frequently looking for someone to help him get her back.

The first pursuit technique is labelled Buy-Back. The man will shower his partner with flowers, chocolates, love poems, apologies for the abuse, and promises to abjure violence in the future. The woman views this activity as a sign of remorse, an indication that he does care for her and as evidence that change will occur. She also usually feels obligated to respond to such pleasantries and will frequently remain in or return to the relationship with the belief that future such incidents will be avoided.

The second pursuit technique is labelled Helplessness. Here the man will notify his partner that he is lost without her; that he is unable to eat, that he is unable to wash his clothes, that he is unable to work, that he feels ill and has headaches, stomach aches and heart palpitations. His situation is desperate, life is awful without her and unless she returns he has no choice other than to kill himself. All this of course plays on the woman's role as nurturer. She has been socialised to take care of her partner's 'vulnerable' side and if she does not assist him at his hour of need she may in fact be responsible for his death. She ignores her own bruises and battered emotions and returns home.

The final pursuit technique is the resort to further Violence. In this instance the man becomes extremely dangerous. He will tell the woman that she will either remain in or return to the relationship or he will kill her. He may destroy property, threaten relatives and friends, or simply constantly stalk her. The woman and anyone helping her are terrorised. The end result may be that the woman chooses to live with the enemy she knows rather than the one lurking in the bushes.

All of these behaviours are manipulative and are used to achieve the immediate goal of keeping the relationship intact. It is essential to convey to the man that you are not prepared to help him regain his partner but that you are prepared to work with him on his violence. Minimisation, denial, blame and pursuit techniques must be sensitively confronted before serious progress can be made. And although these background issues are discussed prior to undertaking work with the man, the worker should be alert to the fact that they may well re-emerge during the counselling process.

What to Offer

The counselling program I believe to be most effective for work with violent men is influenced by all three of the prevailing theories concerning the causes of spouse abuse. The first theory suggests that men who abuse share certain psychological deficits (e.g. low esteem, morbid jealousy etc.) and that therapy is therefore an appropriate response (Field and Field, 1973; Gayford, 1975; Price and Armstrong, 1978 and Walker, 1979). A second interpretation suggests that spouse abuse is caused by structural factors which include economic and social stress and socialisation into a subculture of violence (Dobash and Dobash, 1974; Freeman, 1979; and Gelles, 1974). A response to these influences requires stress management techniques and teaching effective alternatives to violence in conflict situations. The third interpretation expands the first and second approaches by placing spouse abuse within an historical framework that analyses social, economic, political and personal power relationships between men and women (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; and Scutt, 1983). Therefore, spouse abuse interventions must include an examination of sex role stereotypes and how they work for and against men and women.

I consider that the most effective form of counselling intervention is group therapy. It is time efficient, allows men with similar experiences to interact in a safe environment, models an appropriate problem solving environment (as opposed to a pub), allows for the men to experiment with self-disclosure and building intimacy within a supportive structure, is the best environment for developing interpersonal skills, and serves as an excellent mechanism by which men learn to confront themselves and their peers in non-hostile constructive ways. The overall program looks like this:

PROGRAM FOR COUNSELLING VIOLENT MEN

PRELIMINARY ISSUES

1. Duration and intensity of program.

2. A focus in the man's responsibility for his behaviour and the consequences of his behaviour must be maintained.

3. A complete history of previous violent events to determine whether violence:
   - is escalating in frequency, or intensity or both.
   - has been rewarded.
   - is related to a power struggle and sex roles.

4. A complete personal history to determine:
   - whether he has ever lived alone.
   - his dependency on his partner.
   - what his personal resources are (friends, work, finances, etc.).
   - whether he sees himself as living for himself (doing what he wants) or living for others (doing what he thinks others want him to do).
   - how influenced he is by the male stereotype.

5. Motivation:

   - does he want help in getting her back or is he genuinely interested in change.

THE PROGRAM STARTS

1. Introductions

   (a) get acquainted/self disclosure exercises.
   (b) overview of program.

2. Group discussion on reasons for attendance.

3. Group discussion about what happens when angry. (the process)

4. Time-outs.

   (a) practice time-outs (1/2 hour).
   (b) real time-outs (1 hour).
   (c) time-out activities (any non-destructive activity which stops the escalation).
      - call crisis number.
      - go for a walk or a run.
      - sit quietly by self.

5. Anger build-up process.

   (a) thoughts (self-talk. The positive versus negative internal messages).
   (b) feelings.
   (c) actions.

(d) physical symptoms.
(e) establish method of identifying the build-up process for each individual and getting themselves into time-out.
- initially, he may need information from an external source (e.g. his partner or other family member).

6. Anger log.

- a scale for determining and monitoring level of anger and used as an indication of daily tension level.

(a) have client record situations where his tension level is high.
(b) describe the incident.
(c) record his thoughts and feelings and actions.
(d) record what he did with his anger (e.g. time-out).
(e) identify the benefits or 'pay-off' for that particular behaviour.
(f) identify a possible alternative action and the 'pay-off' it would have provided.

7. Self image.

- the interaction between the perceived self and thoughts, feelings and actions.

8. Relaxation training.

- teaching the men to differentiate between various states of arousal through progressive relaxation.

9. Communication skills.

(a) listening.
(b) giving and receiving constructive criticism.
(c) negotiation.

10. Assertion training.

(a) three personality types. (passive/assertive/aggressive)
(b) outline assertive rights.
(c) practice analysing situations in terms of assertive behaviour.

11. Dependency issues.

(a) outline costs of over-involvement with partner.
(b) outline activities and interests of partners in a healthy relationship (including discussion of how you define a healthy relationship).
(c) contrast with activities and interests in the current relationship.

12. Sex-role expectations and stereotypes and male sexuality.

(a) outline the types of things men expect of women and their perceptions of what women expect of men. Have them check with their partners.
(b) discussion of how attitudes toward women affect what they do or say to their partners.
(c) review movies/articles/books etc., with strong sex-role depictions and discuss the content and intended messages, and the effect these messages have on them.

Skills required for Workers

Working with violent men requires a comprehensive analysis of the problem of spouse abuse. Before one can work successfully with the men one must understand what is happening to them and their partners, and understand why each individual may be behaving in a particular manner. It is also necessary to be aware of the cultural milieu which tolerates if not encourages the use of force in conflict situations and to be aware of how this cultural pressure influences our clientele. In addition one must be aware of how social service agencies have failed to effectively address this issue.

Beyond the consideration of the social environment a personal awareness of your own attitudes and weaknesses concerning violence is necessary. I do not believe that it is possible to work with violent men if you yourself are violent or abusive in your dealings with others, if you are intimidated by individuals who have been abusive or if you view your clientele with contempt or condemnation.

At a therapeutic level a wide range of skills and knowledge are required. A basic premise is that we must be prepared to acknowledge that counselling is value laden. We are all influenced by a range of factors which affect us at both the cultural and personal levels and their influences are represented in what we do and what we say to our clientele. There is also a need to feel comfortable with directive counselling and sensitive but strong confrontation. Many abusive men are motivated to change but need clear instructions on how to overcome skill deficits and may well need to re-examine their motives from time to time. Finally, as the previously described counselling program indicates, working with abusive men requires a range of skills focussing on group process, educational counselling techniques and a commitment to long term group work.

Research and Evaluation

In reviewing the literature on domestic violence it is evident that a number of counselling programs for violent men are in

existence. However, evidence of evaluation of these programs is often missing. Where evaluation has occurred, it is usually limited to statements of positive gains as reported by the participants and therapists (Edleson, 1984; McCormick, 1978; and Sonkin and Durphy, 1982). Given the seriousness of the issues at hand, the potential for even highly trained therapists to make mistakes in their assessment of client progress, and the reticence that some men clearly display in talking about the abuse they inflict, these forms of evaluation are totally inadequate (Wehner, 1985a). Before we can say that counselling violent and abusive men is truly effective we must employ proper research designs with evaluative components that go beyond post-group interviews which ask participants and therapists whether progress was made and do the men feel better about themselves. To that end, it is necessary to establish how much abuse is occurring prior to the intervention, how much abuse is occurring at the end of intervention, and how much abuse occurs during a lengthy follow-up period. These measures are necessary in that they help establish whether behavioural changes occurred and whether those changes are sustained over time. To augment this information steps should be taken to establish whether the new coping strategies taught during the groups are actually utilised in the participant's day-to-day environment. Finally, I consider it essential to, where possible, involve the women throughout the information gathering and evaluation processes. The most important goal is the insurance of long term safety for the women. They are in the best position to determine how much progress has been made and whether they feel safer in their relationships. Women have been abused by the scientific method for centuries. It is time to alter this injustice and utilise research methods which suit the situation of women rather than personal or bureaucratic interests.

Using this type of methodology in conjunction with a program similar to the one I have outlined above, I have found evidence which suggests that 60-80% of violent men prepared to engage in group counselling can achieve very substantial reductions in their level of abuse. While this finding is certainly not conclusive it clearly indicates the potential for carefully planned and evaluated counselling interventions.

In closing I would like to stress that counselling violent men is relatively new and unproven and is but one aspect of any overall response to spouse abuse. Within Australia the response to spouse abuse has been piecemeal and unco-ordinated with some groups advocating for more law enforcement, some advocating for more counselling and some advocating for more preventive measures. In my view all three responses are necessary and must be employed as part of a carefully planned and coherent national strategy. It is my sincere belief that recommendations from this conference can serve as the starting point for achieving such a strategy.

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ON THE REPRODUCTION OF MISOGYNY: THE THERAPEUTIC MANAGEMENT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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INTRODUCTION

Misogyny, the male disavowal and abhorrence of the female sex, continues to impart strength to both the theoretical knowledges governing gender, and the social practices generated to maintain the viability of these knowledges.

Within the specific arena of the individual deployment of male violence against a female sexual partner, it is possible to identify several ideological positions embedded in the academic literature (Hatty, 1985a). As potent expressions of the vilification of the female sex, these particular positions serve to perpetuate the misogynist hegemony which frequently inhabits social science discourse[1]. They may be described as follows: a focus upon privatisation (locating the problem of the violence within the family); medicalisation (representing the violence as a manifestation of pathology); normalisation (viewing the violence as occurring along a behavioural continuum); victimisation[2] (constructing a belief in the victim as agent provocateur); and equalisation (developing the concept of shared responsibility for the violence) (op. cit.).

The recent public debate on the issue of male violence against a female partner has been accompanied by a plethora of responses from the academic, bureaucratic and practitioner communities. This reactivity may be differentially construed as consequent upon several factors, occurring either independently or conjointly: an escalation in the incidence of the behaviour; an alteration in its nature; or, perhaps, the construction of the issue as a 'social problem'[3], with the resultant flourish of activity (cf. Hazelrigg, 1985; Pfohl, 1985; Schneider, 1985; Woolgar and Pawluch, 1985)[4].

The myriad of responses generated by the 'uncovering' of this phenomena has included the provision of a 'therapeutic' intervention[5]. This strategy often involves a two-fold assertion: that the behaviour or condition is pathological, and requires therapy; and that the protagonists themselves are normal. In contradistinction to earlier academic theorising, there is generally no suggestion of individual pathology.

As this therapeutic industry is currently enjoying a rapid expansion, it is vital that a systematic critique of these therapies be attempted. Consequently, this paper will interrogate the discourse and discursive practices propelling these therapeutic interventions. As a secondary consideration, the relationship between these matters and the utilisation of clinical treatment programs as a mechanism of diversion from the criminal justice system will be explored[6]. The sagacity of this approach will be assessed in the light of the orientation and achievements of these programs.

THERAPIES: THE NEGLECT OF GENDER

Whilst it is necessary to recognise that therapy is a political process (Jacobson, 1983), there has been, until recently, a dearth of attention directed toward an acknowledgement of the significance of gender. The proliferation of feminist critiques of family therapy (Hare-Mustin, 1978; 1980; Libow, Raskin and Caust, 1982; James and McIntyre, 1983; Okun, 1983; Penfold and Walker, 1983; McIntyre, 1984; Avis, 1985; Goldner, 1985; Taggart, 1985) and behavioural marital therapy (Jacobson, 1983; Margolin, Fernandez, Talovic and Onorato, 1983; Gurman and Klein, 1984) testifies to the emergence of gender relations as a pivotal issue.

Goldner (1985, p. 33) asserts that the failure of family systems therapy to, firstly, take account of the ideological construction of gender and to, secondly, incorporate this into therapeutic discourse is 'absolutely extraordinary'. In seeking to conceptualise the family as a system characterised by an idiosyncratic, and yet arbitrary, distribution of power, family systems therapy, according to Goldner (op. cit.), encloses the family unit.

Consideration of the influence of external factors upon the definition of individual or familial identity is neglected. However, to view the 'family' as an entity, which exists independently of its historical, social or psychological context is to invite the accusation of epistemological distortion (Taggart, 1985). In disregarding the role of the sexual division of labour, with its disparate allocation of authority, and the impact of marriage, work, children and divorce upon women's emotional and economic survival, family systems therapy effectively perpetuates the existing social order.

Moreover, Goldner (1985) claims that family systems therapy reinforces misogynist attitudes by utilising the maternal figure as both the means of entry into the family system, and the central focus of its internal communication, whilst deflecting attention from her, as individual, once this access is achieved. Goldner (1985, p. 40) states: 'One could argue, in fact, that the blame [of mothers] has simply gone underground, resurfacing as a high-powered romance with Dad.'.

THERAPIES: THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF VIOLENCE

Clinicians have also, of late, addressed the issue of violence within sexual relationships. Barnhill (1980) notes that the generation of clinical assessment and treatment techniques has occurred in the wake of academic evaluation of the prevalence and severity of the problem.

Clinical responses may be divided into three approaches: the first encompasses couple-based marital therapy (Holmes, 1981; Weitzman and Dreen, 1982; Bagarozzi and Giddings, 1983; Deschner, 1984; Shapiro, 1984; Taylor, 1984); the second encompasses therapy for the violent male (Saunders, 1984; Reilly and Gruszki, 1984); and the third encompasses therapy for the female victim of the violence (Wetzel and Ross, 1983).

In addition, therapy may embrace several theoretical traditions: these include psychoanalysis, with a focus upon cathartic release (Bach and Wyden, 1968); cognitive restructuring, with a focus upon anger management (Ellis, 1976); and behavioural skills acquisition, with a focus upon the identification of pragmatic responses to anger (Margolin, 1979). Of course, as these therapies are often derived from discrete models of individual psychological development, each has generated a body of substantive criticism. Most importantly, practitioners working within a particular tradition have, in some cases, yet to provide a critical assessment of the apparent effectiveness of their activities (for example, the application of Margolin's approach to violence within relationships).

VIOLENCE WITHIN RELATIONSHIPS: DOCUMENTED CLINICAL STRATEGIES

As clinical treatment strategies developed to minimise or eliminate violence within relationships have largely evolved within a critical void, it is vital that the conceptual frameworks of these treatment strategies be examined. Specifically, the extent to which each clinical program accords with the precepts of the five ideological positions embedded within the literature (and outlined in the Introduction) should be assessed. Accordingly, there follows, below, an attempt to determine the political bases of these programs, particularly as these are interpreted within the field of gender relations.

Foci upon systems

Adopting a mechanistic model of violent behaviour, Holmes (1981, p. 599) holds that violence is a 'waste product of a grossly inefficient society'. Violence is, then, 'tossed indiscriminately from one segment of the system to another'. This attitude, indicative of an effort to normalise the violence, that is, to divest it of its gender-specific character, informs Holmes' practice at the Family Trouble Clinic, Detroit.

Furthermore, Holmes (1981) manifests a belief in the concept of victim precipitation; she cites a particular case study in which the female victim is instructed to recognise 'how she had fed [her husband's] depression' and is subsequently 'glad to learn more realistic ways to help him' (ibid., p. 595).

Another element complementing Holmes' attitudinal repertoire is the idea of 'male victimisation'; she asserts (ibid., p. 594):

> 'In general, the rapist, the robber, and the murderer are all products of a violent family.'

The male who perpetrates violence against a female partner may usually, according to Holmes adopt the label of abusee; as such, he is at least partially absolved of responsibility for his actions.

The treatment strategy developed by Weitzman and Dreen (1982, p. 259) is founded upon the premise of the 'bilateral nature of violence in battering relationships'. Consequently, it seeks to elucidate the 'transactional patterns of battering couples'.

It is assumed that as each partner enters the marital relationship with psychological deficiencies, which are exacerbated by the union, each partner is then equally responsible for the occurrence of violence. Weitzman and Dreen portray the male batterer as the product of an abusive family of origin; furthermore, it is supposed that he has suffered a serious deprivation of the liberties of childhood.

Battered women, on the other hand, are described as immature and depressed. There is no attempt to distinguish between the effects of the infliction of abuse and the manifestation of characterological factors; indeed, this is precluded by a belief in the equal apportioning of the responsibility for the violence.

Furthermore, despite the fact that the violence is equalised, there is a professed belief in the notion of victim as provocateur. With regard to assaulted wives, Weitzman and Dreen (1982, p. 261) state:

> 'Accordingly, they tend to be more verbally assaultive than clinging and withdrawn. <u>It is important to note that helplessness and withdrawal should not be associated prima facie with entirely innocuous behaviour. Passive reactions to stress can themselves be precipitants to violence</u>.' (Author's emphasis)

Whilst, it is clearly recognised, on one level, that the woman is victimised through physical assault, the experience of

victimisation is essentially denied by the assertion that the woman, even when in a state of acquiescence, may be a catalyst to further violence.

Similarly, Bagarozzi and Giddings (1983) exhibit an adherence to the conceptions implicit within the systems theory approach: the normalisation and equalisation of violence. They typify the interaction between the marital dyad as a 'mutually coercive process [which] culminiates in violence', a process also involving 'symmetrical escalations' (ibid., p. 6).

Moreover, the authors make particular reference to victim precipitation: one of the explicit objectives of the application of their techniques (cf. Margolin, 1979) involves the necessity to (ibid., p. 9):

> 'Re-cue the victim so that he/she [sic] does not continue to emit specific behaviours that repeatedly provoke a violent response from his/her spouse.' (Author's emphasis)

Indeed, the notion of female provocation appears to be a theme which resides within the core of many of the clinical treatment strategies. In discussing therapeutic practice at the Family and Marriage Clinic in Rochester, New York, Shapiro (1984, p. 120) states:

> 'In work with these couples [the violent male partner, the female partner], the family therapists learned to recognise counter transference reactions as valuable indicators of the marital dynamics. Therapists reported that they initially experienced negative feelings, such as fear, dislike, and disapproval towards the husbands, while feeling concern or pity for the wives. As the first session or two unfolded, a typical shift took place in therapists, irrespective of the therapist's gender, in that the man was perceived more sympathetically and the wife was seen more negatively. This shift coincided with an awareness of interactional behaviours in which the wife's behaviour was seen to be as hostile and damaging as that of the husband. However, the bias against the wife also proved to be one-sided. Before the evaluation was completed (usually by the third session), the therapist was able to recognise both the husband and wife as equally culpable and victimised. That is, the husband was no longer seen as a gratuitous victimiser, nor was the wife seen simply as a provocateur.' (Author's emphasis)

Bagarozzi and Giddings (1983) also demonstrate a pronounced allegiance with the violent male partner; in describing an initial therapeutic manoeuvre (ibid., pp 11-12), they lend

support to Goldner's (1985) criticism of the apparent betrayal of women in the initial stages of therapy:

> 'In order to prevent these men from prematurely and unilaterally terminating therapy, the therapist would attempt to form a positive, non-threatening relationship with the husband by being warm, empathic, effective and supportive and by not allowing the wife to be critical of him or to dominate the interviews verbally.' (Author's emphasis)

Foci upon behaviour

An examination of several alternative clinical approaches to violence against women within relationships, particularly those which specifically address the issue of behavioural skills acquisition, reveals the existence of ideological statements consistent with those incorporated within a systems theory perspective. Such statements relate to the equalisation of the violence and the role of the victim as provocateur.

Reilly and Gruszski (1984), in their clinical work with violent men, invoke the Cycle of Violence theory (Walker, 1979); of the first stage of this cycle, the supposed escalation phase, the authors comment (ibid., p. 224):

> 'The escalation phase includes increased tension in the relationship between the spouses with verbal threats and accompanying abuse.'

Implied in the above statement is the idea that both partners are centrally involved in this process.

The therapeutic approach utilised by Saunders (1984) concentrates heavily upon the presumed provocation of the violent male. In attempting cognitive restructuring with his male clients, Saunders, or one of his colleagues, enacts the following (ibid., p. 351):

> 'Because self-talk is a difficult concept to grasp, the leaders role play a provocation scene in which the person provoked, rather than responding to the provoker, stops the role play and reports his "inner monologue".' (Author's emphasis)

And, again (op. cit.):

> 'Members are given brief provocation situations and, in pairs, take turns role playing them. The person being provoked gives coping statements out loud with coaching from a leader.' (Author's emphasis)

Moveover, both Reilly and Gruszski (1984) and Saunders (1984) allude to aspects of male victimisation; these are, they claim, integral to existing social relations. Reilly and Gruszski, in one of their group sessions, promote discussion of sex-role stereotyping; however, these deliberations appear to be divorced from the larger debate concerning the function and advantages of assymetrical gender roles. Similarly, the 'consciousness-raising' practised by Saunders' male clients appears to occur in vacuo.

However, one of the most controversial components of the clinical strategy espoused by Reilly and Gruszski (1984) concerns the authors' profound indentification with the male aggressor. Thus, one of the aims of the therapy is to provide a forum wherein violent men may gain support from each other and 'become less dependent on their partners' (p. 225). In establishing a 'buddy system' amongst the male clientele and attempting to decrease psychological reliance upon one woman, Reilly and Gruszski appear to be actively furthering the masculine ideal of male solidarity.

Consensus

An examination of several of the clinical treatment strategies contained in the literature has indicated an adherence to many of the ideological positions outlined in the Introduction.

All clinicians appear to evince a belief in positions four and five: the victim as provocateur, and the equalisation of the violence. In addition, family systems therapists concur with position three, regarding the normalisation of the violence. This is compatible with the construction of the idea of the male as 'victim', a concept evident in many clinical programs, whether male-centred or couple-centred. Nevertheless, responsibility for the utilisation of violence, often attributed to the male (cf. Reilly and Gruszski, 1984), is diluted by the assertion of male victimisation.

DOCUMENTED CLINICAL STRATEGIES: THEORETICAL DEFICIENCIES

There are multiple sources of theoretical criticism associated with the clinical treatment strategies delineated above; some of these have been reviewed, and further developed, within this paper. To reiterate, these criticisms highlight the ideological and gender-related deficiencies of the various strategies.

It is possible to nominate other, particular inadequacies which detract from the validity of these programs. These include the mobilisation of anger in accounts of violence, and the oft-implicit definition of 'violence' itself. These issues will be addressed in turn.

Firstly, the use of the anger paradigm in the explication of male violence against a female partner is undoubtedly problematic. As anger is understood to be a temporary state of emotional arousal which is translated into various socially appropriate responses, it implies the following: the existence of a protagonist who commits a deed, utters words, or effects a gesture which induces the state of agitated arousal known as anger. This reaction necessitates the occurrence of a prior transaction; it assumes that the response is both rational and justified. Moreover, as it is generally believed that anger may be aroused, inflamed, or, indeed, provoked, the role of the individual who supposedly incites the anger is of paramount importance.

However, this exposition of events does not accord with reported female experience. The chronicle of women's lives, as articulated in surveys and biographies, contradicts the requisite conditions of the anger account. Women's statements affirm the unpredicability of their partner's behaviour[7]. Many of the female respondents in a recent, national survey on 'domestic violence' (Hatty, 1985c) referred to the immense difficulties of coping with their partner's emotional volatility.

They said:

(1) 'There was no main reason for the violence. Anything could trigger him off. My part-time work, or if I asked him to mind the children, money, going out, nothing in particular.'

(2) 'He would instigate an argument without any reason and then become violent.'

(3) 'We were married only a few months. He was violent for no reason. Nothing I said could placate him, so I tried no response at all. He punched me and broke my nose.'

The testimony of Eva, a victim of thirty years of violence, confirms this scenario (Friend, 1985, p. 62):

> 'In the last month of my pregnancy, Andrew hit me for the first time. I've thought about it often since - what was it I had done? - but for the life of me I can't remember - something out of order, something not quite right about the house perhaps. All I can remember is that it began with Andrew yelling at me, yelling and shouting, and I stood and stared at him in blank astonishment, wondering why.'

Again (ibid., p. 71):

> 'And what can I say but the pattern continued, the periods of calm, the suddent temper, sparked off ... I could never really tell what sparked it off.'

The researchers Dobash and Dobash claim that the use of physical violence performs a particular function within relationships. They state (1984, p. 286):

> '...the majority of men who use violence against their wives usually enter verbal confrontations with the intention of punishing, regulating and controlling their wives through various means including the use of physical force.'

Indeed, for the violent male, any circumstance or activity may be construed as provocative. If the male seeks the physical or psychological entrapment or, perhaps obliteration, of his female partner, his interpretation of events will be neither measured or impartial. His idiosyncratic frame of reference will be imposed upon events.

The utility of the anger paradigm appears to derive from two central premises: the contention that the aggressor is, within the expectations of normality, psychologically adjusted; and the stipulation that the woman is implicated in the violence, that is, she is, in the final analysis, also responsible for its occurrence.

A further serious theoretical deficiency inherent in the clinical treatment strategies concerns the definition of 'violence': this is invariably confined within the boundaries of the physical (Holmes, 1981; Weitzman and Dreen, 1982; Bagarozzi and Giddings, 1983; Reilly and Gruszski, 1984; Shapiro, 1984). Only Shapiro (1984) acknowledges the limitations of this definition; he states (ibid., p. 114): 'hostility does not necessarily require the medium of physical force to find its mark and take its toll'. And yet, statistical and anecdotal data yielded in the course of research attest to the involvement of psychological abuse. Thus, many women report that the physical attacks are preceded or accompanied by psychological abuse (Dobash and Dobash, 1984; Walker, 1984; Hatty and Knight, 1985). The results of a recent, national survey (Hatty, 1985c) indicated that the last reported incident involved both mental and physical abuse for approximately 73% of the women, whilst approximately 12% and 13% respectively, suffered either mental or physical abuse alone. The women commented:

(1) 'Nearly every day he told me I was fat, short, ugly, or how bad my clothes were.'
(2) 'I am constantly mentally harassed. He accuses me daily of affairs which he says he can "prove". (This is not true.)'

An illustration of the nexus between mental and physical abuse is provided by the following incident description:

> 'Having demanded Sunday lunch, I had it all made. Five minutes before it was served he went out, returning four hours later to see it not looking as he wanted. He then attacked me. I was pulled by the hair and thrown five feet into double glass doors. I fell onto the floor where I was repeatedly kicked on the body, and then to really "teach me", I was kicked in the face. I suffered a broken nose, concussion, hideous bruising and massive headaches.'

Consequently, it is imperative that the interdependence of the various types of abusive activity be acknowledged; to exclude a consideration of mental abuse is to distort, or possibly, even deny the evidence proffered by victims.

Lastly, the generalisability of the clinical treatment strategies outlined above, that is, their applicability to a broad population of male batterers, is seriously constrained by several factors: the adoption of stringent criteria for admission to treatment (these criteria include adequate motivation to alter behaviour [Reilly and Gruszski, 1984; Saunders, 1984]; the frequency and severity of the abuse [Taylor, 1984]; no evidence of substance abuse [Reilly and Gruszski, 1984; Saunders, 1984; Taylor, 1984]; no evidence of psychopathology [Reilly and Gruszski, 1984; Taylor, 1984]; no criminal conviction for assault of partner [Taylor, 1984]; and no evidence of child abuse [Taylor, 1984])[8]; the disclosed high attrition rate (for example, Saunders, 1984, nominates a rate of 45% from first contact); and the frequent absence of systematic long-term assessment for recidivism (for example, Bagarozzi and Giddings, 1983; Reilly and Gruszski, 1984).

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of violence against women within relationships has been subjected to a multitude of readings within differing temporal and social contexts. It is particularly important to catalogue the constituents of the contemporary, ascendent textual accounts. This paper has attempted to accomplish one facet of this task, particularly as this might relate to therapeutic intervention.

It would seem, from the explicit interpretation of the materials of this paper, that current clinical discourse is constructed, like its academic counterpart, around the ideological infrastructure outlined in the Introduction. As these theoretical positions are, arguably, misogynist in character, there is every indication that existing doctrine is intimately related to the conceptual axes of earlier readings; that is, the claim that overtly misognist discourse has been displaced by a more liberal perspective is illusory.

It must, therefore, be of some concern that these programmatic theoretical statements and the powerful social practices through which they are operationalised, for example, clinical treatment strategies, have remained largely unchallenged[9].

Indeed, it is particularly unfortunate that a more systematic analysis of the orientation and achievements of these clinical programs did not precede their introduction as a mechanism of diversion from the criminal justice system. As the literature indicates that women, in the course of violent relationships, often sustain serious psychological injury which may render them dysfunctional (Hilberman and Munson, 1977-1978; Post, Willett and Franks, 1980; Carmen, Rieker and Mills, 1984), it is imperative that resources be directed toward the provision of significantly improved clinical services to this sector[10] Additionally, the utilisation of non-criminal sanctions in cases of partner assault may signal that such activities do not warrant punishment; as such, these diversionary schemes may assist in the trivialisation of crimes against women[11]. Such a outcome, is, obviously, abhorrent.

Endnotes

1. Witness, within the following quotes from the literature, the association of violence with positive affect:

   'Thus, one way of reframing what the battering does for the couple is that it provides a way for the couple to experience closeness', (Cook and Frantz-Cook, 1984, p. 91). (Author's emphasis)

   Similarly,

   'Another reinforcing element is the sense of tension relief and renewed closeness frequently reported by both husband and wife immediately following a violent outburst', (Neidig, Friedman and Collins, 1985, p. 197). (Author's emphasis)

2. The unusual use of this word is intentional; as such, it conveys the seeds of another connotation - an allusion to the concept of the male as injured party.

3. Note, for example, Bowker's (1983, p.1) observation that 'In the days when wife-beating was not considered to be a social problem, nobody even thought to keep records of the practice'. See, also, Maidment, 1983.

4. This assertion is, of course, not to deny that the interpretive account described in this paper is not also constructed.

5. This process of 'uncovering' implies a particular reading of the situation; this may vary over time.

6. This currently occurs in certain United States' jurisdictions.

7. In this regard, it is worth noting the revival of the myth that women are unreliable witnesses, even of their own experience. Neidig, Friedman and Collins state (1985, p. 196):

   'The literature has been largely dominated by work based on interviews with abused women who, in their attempts to understand and communicate their experience, introduce a bias into the descriptions. From this perspective the violence is generally described as a sudden, unpredictable act inflicted on the female victim. Employing intervention strategies which require rescue of the wife and individual treatment or punishment for the husband frequently compounds the problem. If the "abuser" is blamed, the stage is set for the "victim" to demand punishment or retribution,

which in turn leads to additional grounds for settling the score.' (Author's emphasis)

Earlier in the paper, the authors clearly indicate that the use of violence is never justified; here they appear to be minimising the seriousness of the recourse to violent behaviour. This is consistent with the equalisation of the violence. Indeed, Neidig et. al. comment (ibid., p. 196): 'Both parties participate in abusive behaviour, although not necessarily equally'. The treatment strategy developed by Neidig et. al. is thus directed at eliciting a recognition of responsibility for the violence from both parties.

8. Indeed, Reilly and Gruszski (1984, p. 227) claim that 'This screening process, then, results in a select group of men who are most likely to complete Phase One of the program'.

9. Furthermore, there are indications that the systems theory perspective has been incorporated into police training courses (cf. Loving and Quirk, 1982).

10. It may be pertinent, here, to mention McIntyre's (1984) assertion that female victimization within intrafamial violence is frequently obscured. She call this 'the case of the disappearing victim' (ibid, p.249).

11. In this regard, it is pertinent to note that a stipendary magistrate has recently made the following comment (Terry Sydall, cited in the Reporter, 1985, Vol 6, No 5, P.2): 'Criminal courts are not properly equipped to deal with many matters of domestic violence. Marriage guidance, alcohol and drug counsellors, together with the expertise available from women's refuges, are better able to cope with domestic problems than is the criminal justice system. We cannot continue to rely on the criminal law as a means of dealing with social problems because it is wasteful, ineffective and brings the law into disrepute.' (Authors' emphasis)

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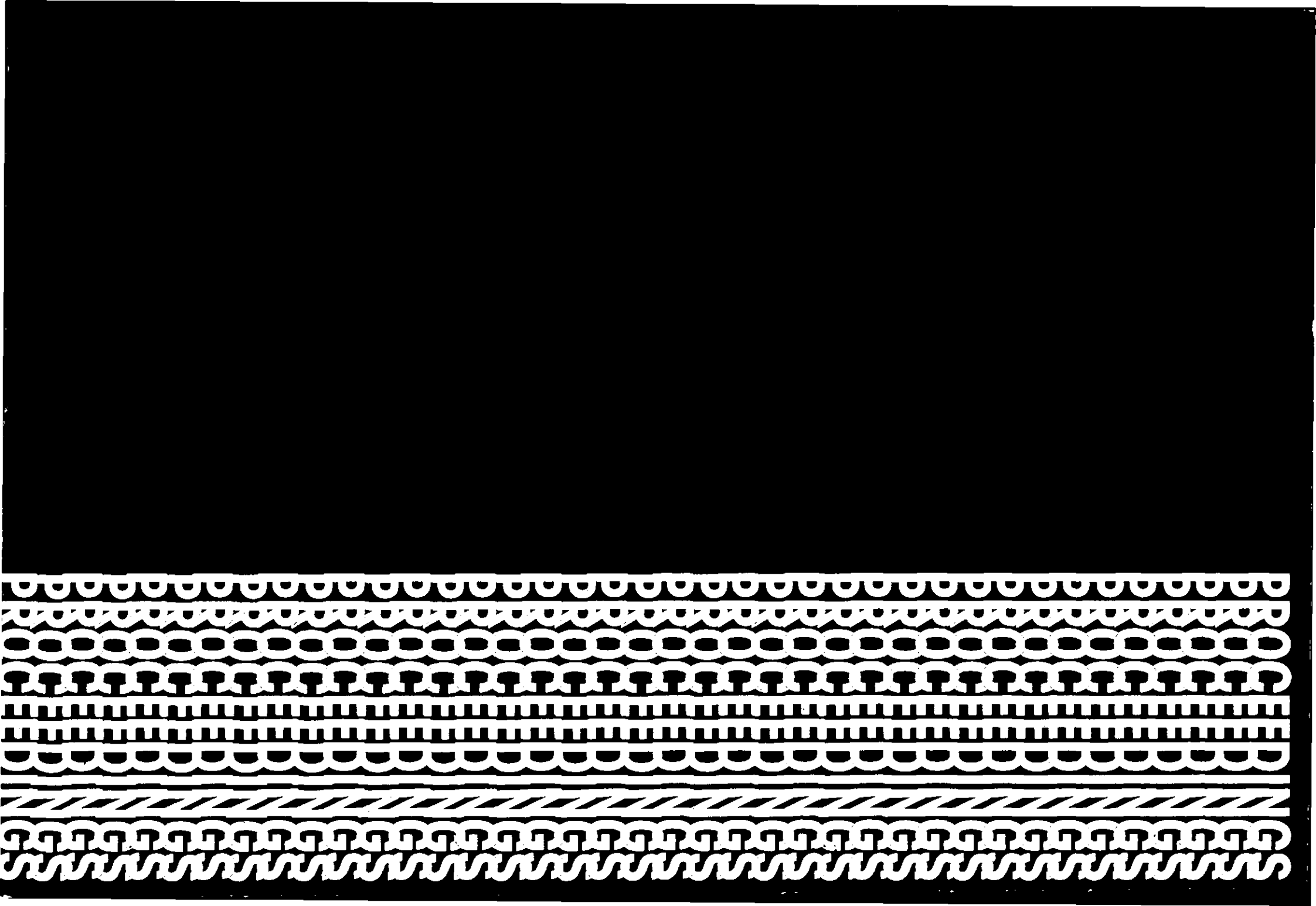
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