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Battered Wives: Help for the Secret Victim Next Door

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Illustration Credits: "Gazette" Stamps By Jeanne Grundberg; 15—Kenneth Spencer; 17—the Bettmann Archive; 19—Elaine Grove; 24—Ralph Merlino- 27—Courtesy U.S. Olympic Committee And Wide World (special Thanks To Cappy Productions, Creators Of The Film "Women Gold Medalists"); 30—Marilynn K. Yee of the Los Angeles "Times"; 33—Gwen Phillips; 34, 37, 38—Jaqueline Bernard; 47—Illustration By Walter Gurbo; 51, 54—UPI; 60, 61, 62, 99, 100—Daria and Eugene Mihaesco; 72—Type Design By Keith Sheridan.

Cover/Photograph by Pat Field; Makeup by Joe Cranzano

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Ms./51

Most American Violence Happens in the Home: “One Of These Days-Pow! Right
In The Kisser”^{*}
By Judith Gingold

Victim stated the first argument started over a pack of cigarettes. Victim stated accused (her husband) held her against the bathroom wall by the hair and continued to beat victim with his right hand. Victim is six months pregnant at this time. Victim stated accused kept telling victim, "Bitch, you are going to lose that baby," and then accused would beat victim in the stomach again. After the assault in the bathroom, accused told victim to cook dinner. Victim stated the accused picked up a butcher knife and put it to the victim's throat and told victim, "I am going to kill you and you know I can do it too, don't you?" Victim answered, "Yes," and accused laid the butcher knife down on the table and turned around and hit the victim on the face with his fist and knocked victim to the floor. . . . Victim stated she blacked out. . . .Victim stated when she regained consciousness, the accused was still beating her.

4.1 Assaults, Felonious, File #41, Complaint #13626. July, 1974. Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Reports like this are atrocious, inhuman, and all too easy to dismiss. Surely beating wives, like burning witches, is an archaic aberration, a cruelty only the deranged could commit or endure.

In fact, wife beating is among the most commonplace of crimes. For many women, even arguments over such minor items as misplaced cigarettes, unmade beds, or delayed dinners may end in blood and bruises. Complaints like #13626 routinely fill the files of city precincts and rural police stations.

Nevertheless, the plight of the abused wife has generally been ignored in our society. Assaulted wives have been convinced their ordeal is freakish and shameful—or their own fault. Increasingly, however, these women are beginning to realize that they are not singularly cursed but victims of a crime more prevalent than rape—and just as misunderstood. (For example, there were 4,764 reported rapes in New York State in 1973, according to the FBI. About 14,000 wife-abuse complaints reached the Family Courts during a comparable period.)

* from “The Honeymooners”

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**A Spaniel, A Woman and A Walnut Tree, The More They're Beaten The Better They Be -
Old English Proverb**

In our culture, the attitudes toward abused wives and rape victims are strikingly similar. Just as the rape victim is supposedly a seductive temptress who asked for what she got, the abused wife has provoked her husband into beating her. Secretly, the woman is supposed to enjoy being beaten, just as the rape victim is accused of relishing violent sex. A woman who attempts to charge a man with either crime is assumed to be vindictive; skeptical police and prosecutors must be convinced that she is indeed a “worthy” victim. Though the penalties for assault are less severe than those prescribed for rape, judges are reluctant to impose them when the assailant is married to his victim. "In seven years of practice," reports Ann Arbor attorney David Goldstein, "I've never once seen a husband put in jail. Never once."

Wife abuse has been incorrectly considered a lower-class phenomenon. In fact, it is a crime that cuts across class lines, although middle-class women may be especially reluctant to call the police. A special task force in Montgomery County, Maryland, one of the nation's wealthiest areas, reported an estimated 650 incidents of assault by husbands in a one-year period. And Philadelphia social worker Jennifer Fleming, of Women in Transition, Inc., who counsels 300 battered wives each year, finds that her clients are as likely to be from the suburbs as from the inner city. "One man beat his wife with a golf club," she declares. "What could be more middle-class than that?"

Marital violence sometimes ends in divorce, sometimes in murder, but for many women it is a way of life that goes on and on. Often the beatings are a daily, weekly, or monthly ritual instituted early in the marriage and increasing in frequency and brutality over the years. Michigan lawyers Susan Eisenberg and Patricia Micklow conducted extensive interviews with 20 abused wives who had been punched, slapped, kicked, thrown across rooms and down stairs, struck with brooms, brushes, and belts, threatened with knives and guns—frequently after verbal disputes over trifles. "His bad mood precipitated the fights," one of the victims declared. "He got mad over little things, like dinner not being ready when he came home from work or that I don't think before I speak." Two of the women were attacked while they slept.

The women suffered injuries ranging from bruises, lacerations, swellings and soreness, to fractured jaws, concussions, and miscarriages. "I would cover my head with my arms and crouch in the corner," said one woman. "I was too afraid to fight back." Those who did retaliate agreed that they were more severely beaten as a result. Humiliated by their husbands, they dreaded the further humiliation of others finding out.

Why do women endure years of such terror and degradation? In large part it's because they feel they have no other choice. Their economic dependence on the men who abuse them usually keeps them in their place. Even the many women who are employed outside the home are keenly aware of their limited earning power. In a country where the courts are notoriously unable to extract child-support payments from unwilling husbands and where female household heads and their children constitute more than 80 percent of all welfare recipients, many women don't see divorce as a possible solution.

Psychological pressures add to the economic constraints to leaving. "Women have been raised and socialized to believe they must make their husbands happy," argues Marjory Fields, an attorney with the South Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation. "So, they not only take the beatings; they tend to feel responsible for them. Their guilt feelings prevent them from getting out." Nevertheless, many abused wives do eventually seek separations or divorces. But they do so after years of waiting for kids to get bigger, or husbands to change, and years of struggling with a sense of shame. [For services for battered wives, see the Ms. "Gazette," pages 95 to 98.]

The literature on child abuse presents strong evidence that the abused child grows up to become the abusive parent, and the few studies that have been made of marital violence suggest that it, too, is transmitted from one generation to another. Not surprisingly, men who abuse their wives may also abuse their children, and women who are beaten by their husbands sometimes end up expressing their rage at their children—the only people in the family less powerful than themselves.

Marital violence may be kept secret from the neighbors, but chances are that the children know. One mother grimly admits that her six-year-old tried to overrule her attempts to put him to bed by threatening to "call Daddy to hit you."

(continued)

How I Stopped Beating My Wife

Bill M. was a self-confessed "woman beater" from his teens into his late twenties. Now 41, he recently became a part-time social worker counseling newly released prisoners as well as victims of family violence. Because he claims he never caused any serious injury, he has trouble identifying with more violent cases in the headlines and, typically, blames his culture-and especially drink-for his past behavior. Hearing one man's view of the motivations at work in such situations, however revealing, should not obscure the fact that studies show that batterers come from all classes, and alcohol, though often a component of family violence, is seldom the cause.

"It was as though I were somebody else. I'd strike out blindly and then later not believe I'd done it. The closest I'd come to being jailed for hitting was when she called the police one night. She didn't press charges, and the cops didn't take me in. They just walked me around the block and the next day I was back on her sofa thinking, Jesus, here we go again. I finally did leave, but the process was gradual. It took me a long time.

"I was born in Brooklyn, the middle one of nine kids. My father used to beat my mother at home, in front of us. We kids would intervene so she wouldn't get hurt. You grow up thinking you ought to protect a woman, but still you've seen the beatings. I got confused signals.

"Between fourteen and twenty I took up with the gangs, and in order to be one of them, to feel accepted, I went along with their way of doing things. That meant giving a girl a slap once in a while, asserting your manhood and your position, nothing serious. The guy was supposed to be the all-powerful one and if you couldn't get the point across verbally you tried to physically.

"Once I got out in the world as an adult, the frustrations really began. You're forced to make something of yourself and you've got kids in the house and your wife can't maintain herself as well any more because there aren't any funds, and a guy can't dress the way he'd like to because he's got to pay the bills. So one day you find yourself looking at another woman and you feel trapped just thinking about how you're going to get out of it all.

"I had married for the first time at eighteen, three weeks before I got sent to prison for robbery. In jail I had no concept of paying rent because the state took care of that. Immediately on getting out and finding a job, I was the target for every charge plate in the world. I had no sense of responsibility, so I ended up in debt. I'd got my high school equivalency certificate, but the only two jobs I'd ever held for any length of time were as a shipping clerk and machinery maintenance man. I felt I could do better.

"A guy starts out blaming the world and in a month he's blaming his wife, maybe without even realizing it. Naturally he'll take the easy way out, which is turning on someone weaker—or at least he figures women are the weaker sex. He doesn't deal with the question that he needs some mental help. He's lying in bed thinking, What can I do and where can I go? and not knowing any of the answers.

"There isn't any particular thing that would set me off. Drinking had a lot to do with it. The alcohol justifies any action. After you've slapped a woman around a few times it's no big deal. The woman may be desperate, and the guy doesn't understand that. I'd wonder why a woman would provoke me when she knew what was bound to happen. 'This woman must be crazy,' I'd say. 'She wants me to knock her down.' And I know women who are really aggressive, who throw hot water or stab a guy.

"My second wife and I got into the habit from the beginning of the marriage. It always happened in the bedroom and it usually ended up with us making love. I wanted to own her; she was a gorgeous woman. I wanted the personal satisfaction of coming back after we'd fought and she had thrown me out. I had to wake up to that to be able to leave, and it's hard because it's a continuing thing.

"Eventually it dawned on me: 'I'm my pops all over again.' And I went back to the beginning to see what happened. I count myself lucky for that. I had to say to myself, 'Hey, you're hitting on a woman; you're acting like an animal. If you want to be a fighter, go down to the ring and put some gloves on.' Don't ask me how I got to that point. But the amount of energy expended in those violent scenes could propel you into doing a lot of constructive things if you stop to think about it. You have to deal with yourself and what you want. I'm capable of sharing now, but I had to learn to make allowances.

"Unless a man has serious mental problems, there is no personal gratification from seeing someone close to you that's black and blue, with busted lips and a knocked-out front tooth, trying to hide it with dark glasses. That man's clothes, his house, are all in a mess, too, because how do you keep things in decent order when you're fighting all the time. So many seemingly small things contribute to his anger. And more than one life is damaged in the process. The kids get knocked around and they grow up with this mental attitude too.

"What the solution should be to this I don't know, but one obvious way is to talk openly and not sweep such matters under the rug. At least the kids now have got more going for them; they are dealing less with specific male and female roles. And going to a mental health center no longer is a stigma.

"There ought to be a place to go to think things over if either party wants to leave home. Leaving is the solution, or at least owning up to the truth that this kind of life is not what you want."

-Bill M. was interviewed by Ann Geracimos, a free-lance writer based in Washington.

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A Wife May Love A Husband Who Never Beats Her, But She Does Not Respect Him- Russian Proverb

[Photo Caption] Wife of a Methodist minister, Pittsburgh , Pa.

Alcohol is often associated with wife abuse, but the nature of the connection is not at all clear. Does drinking provoke the violence or do those who are violently inclined drink? Sociologist Richard Gelles suggests that some men may drink when they feel like beating their wives. "Drinking is a disavowal technique," he says. "Husbands know they will be released from responsibility both by their wives and by the rest of society."

Pregnancy and abuse may also be related. In a study of 80 New Hampshire couples, Gelles found that in almost one-quarter of those families that were violent, the wife was attacked while pregnant. Many others dealing with the battered-wife syndrome have also observed that pregnant women are frequent victims.

You get into things like this one step at a time. It's not a big step from abandoning your preference in movies to going along with your husband's preferences emotionally. My husband knew I could beat him verbally; he had fists and economic power. When he was out of verbal ammunition, he'd hit me. I had no comparable resource. I was in psychoanalysis and group

therapy and at no time did the group take seriously what was happening to me. It was: What had I done? What had I said? The problem was my self-improvement. Twice, I called the police. They came, put their arms around his shoulder and asked him, 'What seems to be the trouble?' I said I wanted him out. They said, 'He's your husband, isn't he?' The second time, they told me I could get an order of protection in the morning. But the problem isn't the next day. Women are killed in their homes because no one takes seriously that they are in danger ... I think the men get into it because there are no checks on it-and they know it. —Ingrid, 34

The laws that can be invoked to protect women from assaultive husbands vary from state to state. In every state it is against the law to physically attack another person, but if the assailant is married to his victim the law is unlikely to be enforced. Though “domestic trouble” complaints constitute the majority of all calls

for police assistance, police policy dictates that these calls result in few arrests. The International Association of Chiefs of Police training bulletin states, for example, that most family disputes are “personal matters requiring no direct action.” The bulletin goes on to recommend that “once inside the home, the officer's sole purpose is to preserve the peace . . . attempt to soothe feelings, pacify parties . . . the power of arrest should be exercised as a last resort.” In a number of cities, including New York, Oakland, California, and New Orleans, police have been specially trained in mediation and conciliation techniques for use in family cases. While these tactics seem to reduce the number of injuries police incur while responding to domestic dispute calls, their protective value to the abused wife is debatable. “In one case that I know of, the cops asked the husband to walk around the block and cool off,” says social worker Fleming. “The husband walked around the block. When he came back, he murdered his wife.”

Although a study by the Kansas City, Missouri, police department revealed that 90 percent of the city's family homicides had been preceded by at least one “domestic disturbance” call, police generally do not treat these calls as high priority items. In Detroit, for example, a woman who calls 911 is advised to report to the station house on the next business day if her assailant is her husband and no lethal weapon is involved. Even in localities where there is no official policy of screening out “nonurgent” family offense calls, lawyers cite case after case of police avoiding arrest in situations where there would be no doubt of arrest if the people involved were not husband and wife. Some police departments have informal “stitch rules”: they will arrest a husband only if the wound he has inflicted is severe enough to require a specific—and considerable—number of stitches.

Police point out that the officer responding to a domestic dispute call is involved in one of the more perilous areas of law enforcement. According to the

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FBI, 149 policemen have been killed between 1965 and 1974 responding to “disturbance” calls. The officer does not know what to expect when he or she arrives—or which of the warring participants' charges and countercharges to believe. Many officers admit they are reluctant to arrest violent husbands for fear that a night in jail will only provoke them to harsher attacks upon their wives. “Women's groups have been too quick to condemn the police,” argues New York

City psychologist Morton Bard, a former policeman who is helping police forces across the country to develop family crisis intervention techniques. "These situations are fraught with dilemmas. A cop has got to have the wisdom of Solomon and still maintain order. Even if he suspects that a homicide could take place, can he deprive a man of his liberty on the basis of a prediction?"

Many lawyers insist that the failure to arrest in wife-abuse cases is frequently based on police predictions that the women plaintiffs will eventually drop the charges. "Of every hundred altercations that we get, 99 percent don't prosecute anyway," complains one Michigan official. "Arrest just makes more paperwork for us." It is true that wives often withdraw from the cases, but Jennifer Fleming, like many other feminists, points out that "the attitude of cops and prosecutors conspires to get a woman to do just that. If she doesn't drop the charges, she's made to feel she's vindictively persisting in something that doesn't belong in the courts in the first place."

At every turn, the abused wife must confront a legal system that is indifferent—if not downright hostile—to her need for protection. Women who have been assaulted are often advised to seek a restraining order or writ of protection, a document issued by a civil court which subjects the husband to contempt of court charges if he violates the order by attacking his wife again. The process of obtaining such an order can be time-consuming, expensive, and humiliating. "I had waited a long time to go to court and my bruises had healed," says Nanette, a teacher who sought an order of protection while her divorce was pending. "The probation officer pointed to a woman with bandages swathed around her head and told me not to come back and bother her unless my skull was broken."

Even after she has survived the red tape and attorney's fees involved in getting the order and having it served on her husband, a woman is likely to find that her efforts were futile when she seeks to have it enforced. If she calls the police, she may be told to call her attorney, and even if she succeeds in hauling her offending husband before a judge she is unlikely to obtain relief, for judges rarely imprison men for beating their wives. "A judge isn't going to put a guy who makes a living in jail and his wife on welfare," says Washington, D.C., attorney Carol Murray. "In terms of the respective values of our society, his earning money outweighs her possible physical injury." From the cops to the courts the criminal justice system operates to reinforce the husband's belief that he has committed no crime and to intensify the wife's feeling of helplessness. "The assaulted wife is in a Catch-22 situation," lawyers Eisenberg and Micklow conclude. "She is caught in a vacuum of nonresponse."

Official tolerance of wife beating has its roots in tradition and the law. Legal historians trace the expression "rule of thumb" to the ancient right of the husband to chastise his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb, and the hoary notion that a wife is the property of her husband is still entrenched in many areas of law affecting the rights of married women. In every state husbands are immune from prosecution for the rape of a wife.

Most feminists insist that wife beating must be treated as a crime if the practice is ever to be eliminated. But this is a dismaying prospect for people who believe that the criminal justice system is not a proper remedy for society's ills. "Historically, arrest has been used as an establishment tool against minorities," explains San Francisco lawyer Susan Jackson. "The struggle against discrimination has often taken the form of a struggle against arrest." But Jackson believes that in the area of family violence, the criminal justice system is using the failure to arrest as a tool to discriminate against victimized women. "The well-intentioned, civil-

libertarian opposition to the arrest and prosecution of wife beaters is a knee-jerk, clenched-fist, liberal reaction," she says. "Arrest is not the issue; the issue is equal protection under the law." Even the staunchest advocates of improved law enforcement are well aware that more must be done than simply punishing assaultive husbands. Increasingly, concerned community groups are turning their attention to the needs of the women trapped in violent marriages. Their most urgent requirement is simply a place to go—a refuge where they can marshal their determination to improve their lives. In England there are now about 50 shelters for women and their children. There are others in Ireland and Australia, and refuges are being developed in France and West Germany. Within the last few years a growing number of shelters have been set up in the United States.

It is vitally important to combat the widespread indifference toward battered wives, and this requires an effort akin to the feminist assault on rape, which in the last few years has won better treatment for rape victims. More shelters and counseling and better law enforcement are indispensable to improve the lot of the battered wife, but they will not themselves eliminate wife beating, just as rape clinics will not eradicate rape. The battered-wife syndrome is rooted in centuries of sexual inequality and will disappear only when that inequality is rooted out. *Judith Gingold is on the staff of "Newsweek" magazine.*

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Ms. Gazette: News From All Over

Battered Wives: Help for the Victim Next Door

Police Commander James Bannon of Detroit recently called on the police, the prosecutors, and the courts to "begin to view domestic violence as a 'public issue' rather than a 'private problem.'" On the inadequacy of police response, Bannon observed:

"Those of us in law enforcement, who are the first official representatives of government to respond to violence in the home, are socialized in precisely the same manner as the citizens we are expected to protect. . . . We share society's view that domestic violence is an individual problem and not a public issue. . . . Policemen, as are most males, are taught self-reliance, 'fight your own battles' philosophy from the cradle. . . . Of all the nonathletic occupations, none is so absorbed with the use of physical coercive force as that of the police officer. Nor are any more thoroughly socialized in their masculine role images. This . . . suggests to me that traditionally trained and socialized policemen are the worst possible choice to attempt to intervene in domestic violence."

Recently, there has been some effort to train police officers to deal more effectively with domestic violence. "Crisis intervention" programs have been instituted in a number of police stations around the country, sponsored by the federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. Although criticized for emphasizing mediation rather than arrest, these programs do train officers to regard family violence as a crime. Role-playing and counseling sessions teach officers how better to respond to family violence. The term "family fight" has been replaced by "family crisis," and in keeping with this more serious status, records are kept of each dispute, and statistical profiles are being compiled. Research on family violence is being disseminated by the LEAA to all participating programs.

And some police departments, reports Del Martin in her book *Battered Wives* (Glide Publications), have had success with women on patrol. "Louis J. Sherman, psychologist at the

University of Missouri, found that women trainees were particularly competent in handling family disturbance calls,” and evaluation of female patrol officers in Washington, D.C., and New York City confirmed that they are “often better able to defuse volatile situations.”

The impetus for any real change continues, however, to come from women’s groups. Activists around the country have printed pamphlets advising women of their legal rights. In Boston, women have developed a card which lists legal alternatives and sources of help for battered women, and they’ve convinced police officers to distribute the cards to victims of family violence. In San Francisco, women are working to initiate a special response team that would include at least one woman to accompany the police to scenes of marital violence. Mary Vail of the Women’s Litigation Unit in San Francisco is working with the city’s bar association to draw up guidelines for instituting grievance procedures against the police, and women’s groups in several cities are bringing suit against the police for failure to respond to the needs of battered women.

—*Marcia Rockwood*

Many women like Judy Hartwell —trapped in marriages in which they are beaten—are embarrassed or afraid to seek help. When help is sought, it’s typically not available. Judy Hartwell had often called the police when her husband was assaulting her, but they refused to help.

One night her husband returned home drunk and threatened to forcibly perform anal intercourse on her or tie her to a bed and whip her. Hoping to scare him away and escape, Judy Hartwell grabbed a paring knife and ran for the door. He obstructed her passage and lunged at her. She panicked and stabbed him.

On March 16, 1976, a Wayne County, Michigan, jury of eight women and four men acquitted Judy Hartwell of murder charges stemming from the fatal stabbing of her husband. The case may have established an important legal precedent, for Circuit Judge Victor Baum instructed the jury that a married woman has a legal right to forcibly resist unwanted sexual advances by her husband. The law refuses to recognize that rapes can and do occur within the marital relationship. Baum’s instruction— that although a husband cannot be convicted of raping his wife, the woman has a right to refuse and resist what in fact may be a rape by him—is therefore an unexpected and significant step toward legal recognition of women’s rights to control their own bodies. —*Excerpted from an article by Marjory Cohen, published in the “Sun,” a Detroit biweekly newspaper.*

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Ms. Gazette: News

How to Tell It to the Judge

Legal remedies available to battered women vary greatly from state to state’. Not all the options listed below are available in every state, and details of remedies may differ somewhat.

Therefore, this rundown cannot serve as a guide for individual use, and in every case it is important for a woman wishing to take legal action to consult an attorney.

In addition to these immediate protective remedies, a woman should seek legal advice on how to sue for damages or to file for support, custody of children, separation, or divorce.

CIVIL AND CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS. A *criminal* prosecution is initiated by a private citizen, but the complaint itself is pursued by a district attorney who decides whether or not to prosecute. Successful prosecution of criminal charges stemming from family violence is infrequent, but can result in a more severe penalty, such as longer imprisonment, than that of a civil action. A *civil* suit is initiated and pursued throughout by a private citizen seeking either money damages or any of a variety of protective orders which may include limited imprisonment. (If a state has a special court to handle family disputes, cases of wife abuse are heard there—where civil rather than criminal procedures apply.)

CITIZEN’S ARREST. A woman choosing this recourse, the right of an individual in most states, must inform the police that she wants to make a citizen’s arrest, describe the crime, and identify her assailant. In some states the woman is required to take physical custody of her assailant, although in others a simple identification is sufficient. Anyone choosing to make a citizen’s arrest must accept responsibility for possible charges of false arrest. (The effectiveness of a citizen’s arrest depends on police cooperation, which traditionally has been minimal.)

Counselors to battered women may suggest the remedy of a citizen’s arrest, since police officers rarely make arrests in cases of family violence. The police officer won’t have an arrest warrant unless the woman has previously filed a complaint in court, and it is highly unlikely that the officer will be able to witness the crime or will decide that there is probable cause to make an arrest. (An officer unwilling to arrest for assault may agree to make an arrest on charges the officer observes, such as “disturbing the peace” or acting “drunk and disorderly.”)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT. In order for a woman to take her assailant to criminal court, she must file a criminal complaint. Prior to authorizing a complaint or prosecuting, a district attorney must have probable cause that the accused committed the crime and must also determine that the prosecution is in the “interest of justice.” Usually it is necessary to have witnesses to the incident, evidence of serious injuries, a record of previous attacks, and a police report on file before a warrant will be issued and the accused arrested. (Subsequent proceedings can range from dropped charges to reduced charges, stemming from plea bargaining. Only a small percentage of wife-battering cases result in jury decision.)

PROTECTIVE ORDERS. One type is a *restraining order*, a civil action usually issued after a divorce suit has been filed, which requires the assailant to stay away from the woman or to “cease and desist” from offensive conduct for a specified length of time. A woman and her attorney must file a petition showing that the order is necessary, and that if it is not issued, the woman will suffer irreparable damage or injury. (In an emergency, a *temporary restraining order* may be issued until a hearing can be held.) When a restraining order is violated, a woman and her attorney must petition the court for a contempt order (a misdemeanor) to ensure further compliance or to punish the violator.

Another type of protective order is a *get out* or *vacate* order, with which a judge instructs the husband to remove himself from the family home. The judge may also require the husband to post a *peace bond*, a sum of money as “security to keep the peace,” and warn that he will forfeit the money and be prosecuted if he assaults his wife again. However, many attorneys feel that peace bonds can violate the accused’s right to equal protection under the law. —*Marcia Rockwood*

Scream Quietly

Since I wrote "London: Battered Wives" (*Ms.*, June, 1974), much progress has been made in England. There are now some 50 refuges all over Great Britain, many of them operating under the banner of the National Federation of Women's Aid.

Chiswick Women's Aid, the pioneering group set up by Erin Pizzey five years ago, has grown stronger and stronger as an independent organization. In addition to maintaining the Chiswick "crisis" refuge, the group took over an empty, condemned hotel outside of London last spring as squatters. They've now been assured that the 80 women and children living there can stay until a suitable, permanent building of the same size is found.

In the past year, they have also set up 21 "second stage" homes for longer-term housing of more than 500 women and children. An anonymous donor has helped them buy and equip their own school for the "very special education," says Pizzey, that "children of violence need." They've established a workshop to train and employ some of the extremely disturbed teenage sons of battered women—an effort to break what could become an environmental chain of violent behavior. They're also about to open their first house for batterers—those men, says Pizzey, who genuinely

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want to be helped instead of put off with "a bottle of tranquilizers and twenty minutes with a psychiatrist."

In the House of Commons, a bill to give better protection to battered wives reached a stalemate this spring. But Chiswick Women's Aid did win an important legal battle to maintain their "ever open door" policy. The local council took Pizzey to court for overcrowding—100 women and children in a house designed for 30—but failed to force the crisis center to close. The council has appealed to a higher court where the case comes up in September. If Pizzey does go to jail, then the Honorable David Astor, former editor of the London *Observer*, has promised to take her place and keep the refuge open.

The group has just produced a 90-minute color film called "Chiswick Women's Aid," which tells the group's history and offers a detailed blueprint for running a refuge and after-care service for battered women. For information on how to obtain the film, contact Chiswick Women's Aid, 369 Chiswick High Road, London W4, England.

Erin Pizzey's book, *Scream, Quietly or the Neighbors Will Hear*, is still looking for a U.S. publisher, but to obtain a copy, send \$1.50 (surface mail) or \$2 (airmail) to J. Barnicoat, P.O. Box 11, Falmouth, Cornwall, England. —*Gay Search*

Lives On The Rocks: The Phoenix Solution

The first of the now-existing refuges for abused wives in the United States was Rainbow Retreat, which opened its doors in Phoenix, Arizona, on November 1, 1973. Unlike other refuges that are open to all battered women, admission to Rainbow Retreat is limited to abused or displaced families of husbands with drinking problems. According to Joanne Rhoads, executive director, alcoholism per se is not the criterion for admission, but rather alcohol involvement: "We stretch it a bit. But even when a woman denies that alcoholism is involved, we find that in nine out of ten cases drinking is still a factor."

Rainbow Retreat started with \$50 and 11 dedicated and determined individuals. Today they have an annual budget of \$110,000 to shelter up to 13 women and children at a time. During

its first two-and-a-half-years' operation, Rainbow Retreat housed more than 1,000 persons. Families, from as far away as New Jersey, are referred by doctors, counselors, and protective services. Some companies also pay to send wives of executives who have drinking problems in an effort to rehabilitate the family. The average woman resident is 35 and has been married 10 years; her husband's income is over \$7,000.

The first concern of the staff is to deal with the crisis that brought the woman to the shelter—the trauma of a beating or being thrown out of the house. As soon as possible, she is worked into the schedule. Residents receive one-to-one counseling and participate in group sessions.

“We try to get at the underlying problems,” Rhoads told me. “Abuse takes many forms—not just the physical.” So many wives are kept emotionally and financially dependent by their husbands that job training and placement has become another essential service provided at the retreat. “But that doesn't mean that we advocate divorce,” the director quickly added. “We have found that sixty-four percent of the husbands get treatment”—a most promising side effect of the program. —*Del Martin*

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Where To Get Help

The following list includes a sampling of people and places dedicated to meeting the specific needs of battered women, and makes note of publications and workshops being sponsored through their efforts.

National

Center for Women Policy Studies (2000 P St. N.W., Suite 508, Washington, D.C. 20007; 202-872-1770). Have applied for a grant to establish clearinghouse for victims of rape, child abuse, and wife abuse. Particular concern is legal problems of battered women.

National Organization for Women National Task Force on Battered Women (c/o Del Martin, 651 Duncan St., San Francisco, Calif. 94131; 415-928-2480; or c/o Nancy Kirk-Gormley, 7 Aloha Drive, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15239; 412-327-5077). Recently established as a result of 1975 NOW national resolution on battered women. Welcomes information from around the country. Planning national conference.

Regional

CALIFORNIA. *Haven House, Inc.* (644 S. Marengo Ave., Pasadena, Calif. 91106; 213-681-2626). Limited to families of alcoholics. Can stay three weeks.

La Casa de las Madres (1800 Market St., Box 137, San Francisco, Calif. 94102; 415-626-7859). Refuge which can accommodate up to 30 battered women and children. Hot line, counseling, advocacy program, and emergency rescue service.

Women's Transitional Living Center (c/o Susan Maples, Director, Community Development Council, 1140 S. Bristol St., Santa Anna, Calif. 92704; 714-992-1931). Provides shelter up to 45 days for women and children as well as counseling and referrals.

FLORIDA. *Joanne Richter* (Fort Lauderdale Police Dept., Victim Advocate Office, 1300 W. Broward Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, Fla. 33312; 305-761-2143). Provides crisis intervention counseling with follow-up sessions; re-referrals; child-care centers and job training available.

Citizens Dispute Settlement Center (Metro Justice Building, 1351 N.W. 12th St., Miami, Fla. 33125; 305-547-7062). Provides counseling, referrals.

Florence Morgenroth (Task Force on Battered Women, YWCA, 100 S.E. 4th St., Miami, Fla. 33168; 305-377- 8161, ext. 416). Has set up task force

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to provide shelter, to work with wide range of county agencies, and to develop local and state legislation.

Women in Distress (Jackson Memorial Hospital, 122 N.E. 24th St., Miami, Fla. 33137; 305-573-5528). Will provide food and shelter for battered women without children.

MARYLAND. *Battered Wives Task Force* (Chairperson Evelyn Bata, 5403 Queens Chapel Rd., West Hyattsville, Md. 20782; 202-WA7-5877). Fully funded shelter working with county representatives, police department, government agencies.

MASSACHUSETTS. *Women's Transition House* (c/o Jimenez, Womendez, and Foulis, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139; 617-547-5942). Twenty- four-hour hot line. Limited accommodations for women and children.

Elizabeth Stone House (128 Minden St., Jamaica Plain, Mass. 02130; 617- 522-3417).

Temporary residency and therapeutic community which can house four women and two children for up to two weeks; 24-hour paraprofessional care.

Respond, Inc. (Box 555, Somerville, Mass. 02143; 617-776-5931). Currently runs support group for battered women. Plans to establish a refuge.

MICHIGAN. *Ann Arbor County NOW Domestic Violence/Spouse Assault Task Force* (1917 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104; 313-995- 5444). Booklets entitled "How To Develop a Wife Assault Task Force"; "Counselor Training Manual"; "Handbook for Victims of Domestic Violence" are available for \$1.50, \$2, and 50 cents, respectively.

MINNESOTA. *Women's Advocates* (584 Grand Ave., St. Paul, Minn. 55102; 612-227-8284). Refuge for women and children offering collective atmosphere. Provides support, advocacy, and a 24-hour information and referral service. Their newsletter is available for a \$4 donation.

NEW YORK. *Marjory D. Fields* (South Brooklyn Legal Services, 152 Court St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201; 212- 855-8003). A divorce lawyer who considers herself a clearinghouse for material on battered women, Fields is seeking a grant for support systems.

Abused Women's Aid in Crisis (AWAIC c/o Maria Roy, P.O. Box 431, Cathedral Station, New York, N.Y. 10025; 212-473-8181; or hot line: 212-473-8182). Currently provides hot line, daytime counseling, and monthly evening outreach meetings. Plans to establish refuge.

OREGON. *Bradley Angle House* (c/o Women's Place, 1915 N.E. Everett, Portland, Oreg. 97232; 503-243-7044). Refuge where women and children can stay up to eight weeks.

PENNSYLVANIA. *Women's Center South* (2929 Brownsville Rd., Brentwood, Pa. 14227; 412-885-2888). Refuge for battered women and their children. Provides referrals, rap groups. Maximum stay six days.

Women Against Abuse (Germantown Women's Center, 5519 Wister St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19144; 215-848-7327). Published "Off the Beaten Track—A Resource List for Abused Women in Philadelphia," \$1.

WASHINGTON. *Women's Emergency Housing Project* (1012 W. 12th St., Vancouver, Wash. 98660; 206-695-0501 or 694-8366). Provides temporary housing, food, counseling, and referral for women and children who would otherwise be without shelter.

WISCONSIN. *Women's Coalition, Inc.* (Task Force on Battered Women, 2211 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee, Wis. 53211; 414-964-6117, or 414-964-7535 after 5 P.M.). Plans to establish a refuge. Currently offers daytime counseling, evening counseling by appointment. Sponsoring conference October 2 and 3 for sharing skills, information, and insights among feminists working with battered women.

CANADA. *Interval House* (596 Huron St., Toronto, Canada M5R 2R7; 416-924-1491). Will accommodate women with children for two to six weeks.

Books and Research

The Assaulted Wife: "Catch-22" Revisited, by Susan Eisenberg and Patricia Micklow, a study of wife beating in Michigan, will be published in June of 1976 in the *Women's Rights Law Reporter* (180 University Ave., Newark, N.J. 07102; \$3.50).

Battered Wives, by Del Martin (Glide Publications, San Francisco, Calif. 94102; 1976; paperback, \$6.95). An overall treatment by the co-chair of NOW's task force on battered women.

Law Enforcement Problems with Intra-Family Violence, by James Bannon (available from author at Detroit Police Department, Second Precinct, 2801 W. Vernor, Detroit, Mich. 48216; 1975; send request with a stamped, self-addressed, business-size envelope). A speech given to a conference of the American Bar Association.

Sexual Inequality, Cultural Norms, and Wife Beating, by Murray Straus (available from Betsy Warrior, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139; 1976; 50 cents). A sociological study of violence in the family.

Violence and Pregnancy, by Richard Gelles (available from author at Dept. of Sociology, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, R.I. 02881; 1975; 25 cents). Gelles has written widely on domestic violence, including *The Violent Home* (Sage Publications, 275 S. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212; 1972; paperback, \$6) and *Abused Wives: Why Do They Stay?* which will be published in November of 1976, available from the university address for 25 cents.

Violence in the Family, edited by Suzanne K. Steinmetz and Murray Straus (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.; 1974; paperback, \$6.95). A study of wife beating as a sociological phenomenon in the United States.

Working on Wife Abuse, by Betsy Warrior (available from the author at 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139; 1976; \$1). The listing includes groups and individuals in this country, some abroad, who are involved in all areas of help for battered wives, as well as publications concerned with the issue. To be listed in a possible fall supplement, write to Betsy Warrior and tell her how you want to be listed.

Conventions

The American Sociological Association (1722 N St., Washington, D.C. 20036) is sponsoring a convention to be held at the Hilton Hotel in New York City from August 30 through September 3. One workshop will be devoted to battered women. Speakers will include Rebecca Dobash, who has recently completed a pilot study on battered women, in Stirling, Scotland, and Jo Sutton of the Women's Aid project in England. Further information will be published in the ASA journal.

Battered Women—Beyond the Stereotype. An all-day seminar sponsored by Temple Israel in Miami, Florida, as part of their Evelyn Behrman Memorial Forum on Women to be held October 14. Speakers include Murray Straus of the University of New Hampshire, who has published extensive work on violence in the family (see BOOKS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS), and Dr. Frank Elliott, a neurologist from the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, who will discuss his theory that many men who beat their wives have organic disorders of the brain, which can be medically treated and corrected. (Information can be obtained from Rabbi Joseph Narot, Temple Israel, 137 N.E. 19 St., Miami, Fla. 33132; 305- 573-5900.)

—*Michele Kashimer*