

# Wife beating: a deeprooted problem

Reprinted from the Georgian  
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Abuse against women, but more explicitly, wife battering, is a deep-rooted and continuing part of our patriarchal society. While the family, along with other social, religious, educational and economic institutions is supposed to strengthen family ties, it is the family that teaches approval of the use of violence.

Richard Gelles, in his work *The Violent Home* writes that people who as children had observed their parents engaging in physical violence were more likely to engage in the same sort of activity with their own spouses than those who never saw their parents fight.

Deborah, one of the recent inhabitants of a women's refuge centre was witness to parental violence and then found herself, as a wife subjected to the same violence.

The dilemma is what to do about it, how to stop it or how to help those women and children who find themselves in this situation. Dell Brown in her study *Battered Wives* writes that contrary to popular belief, low income families were no more prone to nor more readily accepting of violence in the home than were middle or upper-income families.

Why do these women stay? Fremma Engel, a social worker at the Metro Guy Centre Locale des Services Communautaires, counsels many battered women. According to Engel, "Women who remain with abusive mates don't think they can make it on their own."

A woman stays in a violent home because she is afraid to leave, ashamed to tell anybody she has been beaten, and because she is worried about providing for her children.

Gelles and Brown also found that many of these women have married young to get out from parental control (and parental violence) but have had little education or training for a job that could buy them time and economic independence. Marriage and having children is women's role as defined by our society; having fulfilled society's expectations the women find themselves trapped in violent marriage, they have no way out.

She is not well qualified for the labour market. Even if she is, she must consider the costs-of-living and day-care. She will have to

apply and qualify for welfare - a bureaucratic nightmare at best. She will need to apply for separation certificates and custody orders from the courts. As well, as a result of abuse and criticism she may have little confidence and there are the children to consider - will they suffer even more with no father and a welfare mother?

Another basic reason she stays is fear. Fearing that if she leaves he will scour the neighborhood and contact friends and relatives.

As Erin Pizzey in her book *Scream Quietly or the Neighbors Will Hear* discovered, she will return home, for it is better to be where she knows where he is than to sit, night after night in fear, waiting for him to catch her. She also fears the court system and fears living on welfare.

But if she leaves, where does she go? To a Refuge Centre, described by Micheline Toupin, director of one of Montreal's centres, as a place which is an "aid relation to help the women to grow."

"It means when a woman comes to the centre she feels insecure, abandoned. By discussion we try to make her see the problem more clearly. If she needs social and legal aid, we have the tools," Toupin added.

Aside from these outlets, says Wendy Ayotte of Women's Aid Centre, a shelter can also offer battered women a sense of not being alone in her situation.

Engels feels also more emphasis should be put on trying to counsel the couple, especially where children are involved, even if the woman does not want to continue the relationship.

"Part of the thing is to get them to come for counselling. I'm not an advocate of people staying together in a situation they don't want to be in," said Engels.

According to Brown, this is a recent attitude for no one dared to interfere in the intimate relationship between husband and wife, even when the husband's violent attitude and the wife's danger is apparent. She writes, "The Church sanctioned the subjection of women to their husbands in everything - it is difficult to escape this all pervading mentality, and the concept that men are allowed ownership over their wives combined with the women's duty to 'obey' reinforces the dominant position of men over women within our society."

Another problem, Engels says, is the attitude of hospitals. When she

was working at the Montreal General, she found that many women who came in with injuries were never considered victims of domestic violence. Also the police are very limited in what they can do in response to calls on cases of domestic violence.

Engels suggests "There should be some mechanism where the family gets referred for followups by a social agency or the police hire their own staff to deal with this thing."

Sgt. Michel Leblanc of Station 52's Youth Sections says laws must be changed to allow the police more power when dealing with domestic violence. From his experience he sees a grim situation, and doubts that things will change in the near future. He is also in favour of some special organization. "We do our best now to prevent the situation, but in the

long-run, I don't know."

Engels also says, "We must begin to offer the men more services. Somehow we can't leave these men just alone. We have to have some program where they can get some help or else they'll just repeat the pattern."

Lucy Stafel, the director of the Auberge Transition suggests non-sexist feminist education begun early in schools and courses on marriage could help to prevent domestic violence.

Women must "know that the problems are not only related to them, but to a wider women's issues," according to Engel, and support and help in finding alternative lifestyles are needs of the battered woman.

Because of the emergence of Refuge Centres for Women, these needs can be filled and closer studies can now be undertaken to

ascertain what trends if any, are emerging.

Tragically one is that family violence breeds family violence. Getting the children out of the situation and into a more supportive one is essential. More women are becoming aware of this and according to Sandy Felheim, worker at one of the Centres, when violence is shown to the children the wife makes the decision to leave. She will suffer for them but when they become physically involved, she leaves. Also, the relationship between the mother and child was warm because they joined together against a common enemy, according to Pizzey.

Although, for the moment, shelters for women and children provide solace an help, they are not the long-term answer. We must do more.

## Teaching jobs available

Kingston, Ont.-A survey conducted at Queen's University among 550 newly-graduated teachers shows that contrary to current popular belief, there are teaching jobs available, particularly for those willing to relocate.

The survey, conducted by teacher placement officer Alan Travers of the Queen's faculty of education, shows that over 65 per cent of Queen's 1979 B.Ed. graduates have found full-time teaching jobs.

Travers said he finds the survey results highly encouraging. "The results show that if our grads want to teach—and don't care where—their chances of finding a job are good. The big factors are versatility, determination and mobility."

The high success rate among new Queen's graduates hunting for jobs can also be attributed to the university's unique teacher placement office. One of very few university teacher placement services in Canada, the office takes a positive, aggressive approach in placing new teachers.

Of the graduates now teaching, one-third found jobs outside Ontario, in other provinces or countries. Several included notes about their experiences when they responded to the survey.

Heather Earl, now teaching at Northern Lights School Division 113, north of Prince Albert, Sask., wrote: "I'm enjoying my experience here and will likely stay another year. I don't miss the hustle and bustle—the stores, movies and bars—of city living." Another graduate wrote from northern Alberta: "The school I teach in has grades one to 12 and is the only complete school in the Northlands area."

There are 1979 Queen's B.Ed. grads teaching in every province of Canada (except PEI) and five in the Northwest Territories. More than 20 are in other countries including five teaching music in the Bahamas, and one teaching at an American school in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. Travers notes that several current students have applied to teach English in China, technical and vocational teachers are in demand, according to Travers, as are teachers of French, music and physics. Students with specialized academic backgrounds are also

getting jobs. "Twenty of the 27 English majors have teaching jobs; so have nine of the 10 math majors."

To help place the beginning teachers, Mr. Travers contacts school boards across the country, urging them to advise Queen's of their teacher needs. "We are trying to establish a reputation for meeting their requests quickly. Some schools now call us regularly, and alumni are starting to feed us leads on jobs." During the academic year, Travers arranges lectures for the student teachers—on teaching in commun-

ity colleges, in other provinces and in other countries. Last September over 150 students showed up for a lecture on teaching overseas.

And for those who have not yet found a teaching job, he can offer hope. "There are still positions open for February, 1980," he said. "Last week two of our 1979 grads began new jobs teaching English in Mexico. A large Ontario school board is still looking for 25 teachers to finish the year. In fact, since early September, 100 Queen's grads have reported finding teaching jobs."

## Here a war, there a war....

According to the Center for Defense Information, a Washington based lobbying group, there are now 37 major and minor wars taking place around the world.

The most violent conflict they say, is the Cambodian (Kampuchean) Civil War with up to four million deaths. The conflict in Afghanistan is second. Even before the recent Russian invasion, a civil war between conservative Moslems and the Marxist Amin government had claimed as many as 250,000 lives. The third largest war is one that many Americans have never heard of - Indonesia's invasion of the tiny island nation of East Timor. Since 1975, according to the center, more than 100,000 people have died, many of them civilians reportedly massacred by Indonesian troops.

But many of the remaining wars are revolutionary guerrilla conflicts in Africa and Latin America - but some are in developed countries as well. The center includes the activities of the Red Brigades in Italy, and Basque movement in Spain, the IRA in Northern Ireland, and the Puerto Rican separatist movement in the United States.

Wars are also taking place in: Lebanon, the Western Sahara, Israel, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, North and South Yemen, the China-Vietnam border area, Northeast India, the Philippines, Malaysia, Burma, Laos, Thailand, Indonesia, Chad, Angola, Ethiopia, Namibia, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, Mozambique, South Africa, Argentina, Columbia, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, and Guatemala. (Newsprint)

## 10 receive STU bursaries

Ten St. Thomas University students have been awarded bursaries totalling \$1,600 by the University's Faculty Fund Committee. Funds for the awards are provided by free will contributions from faculty and staff.

Receiving bursaries of \$200 are: fourth-year students, Terry Collier, Canterbury; Carol Hemphill-Ely-Hoyt, Fredericton; and Susan Sanders, Fredericton; third-year

students, Barry Biggar, Fredericton Junction; and Jane Forestell, Saint John; and second-year student, Mustapha Kamara, Kambia, Sierra Leone.

Receiving bursaries of \$100 are: third-year students, Donna Hunt, Saint John; Donna Murray, Moncton; and Wanda Sampson, Saint John; and second-year student, Walter Reid, Saint John.

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