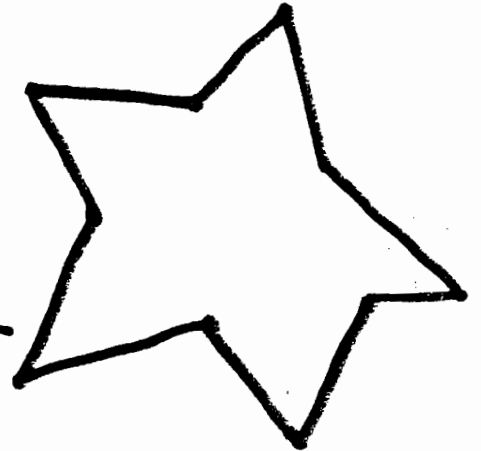
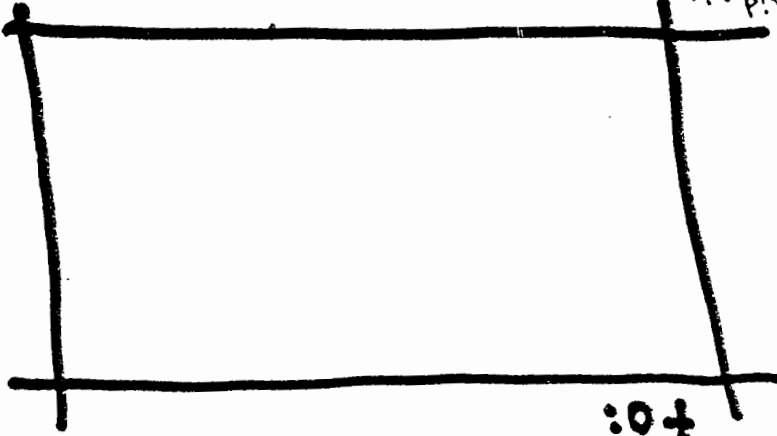
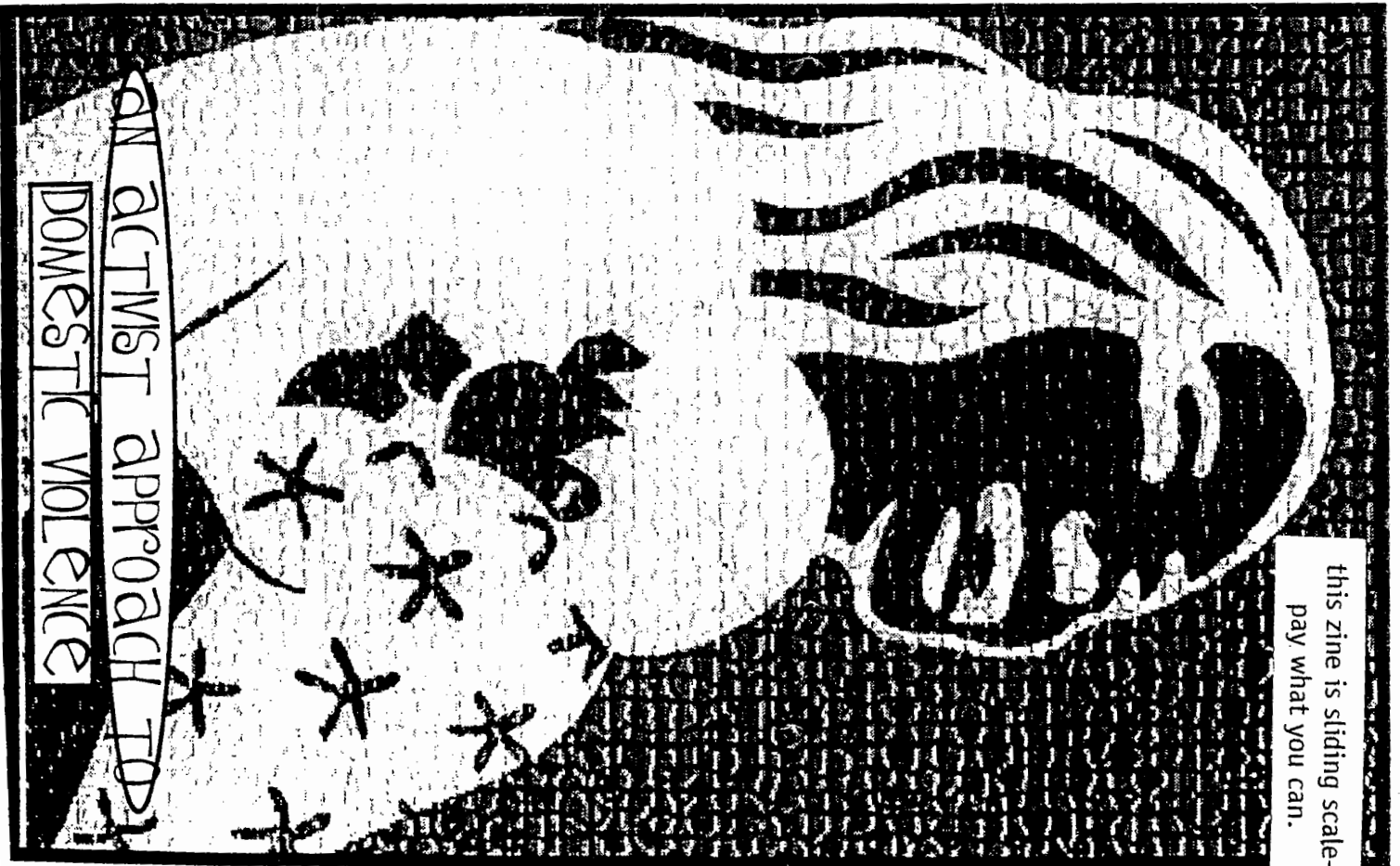
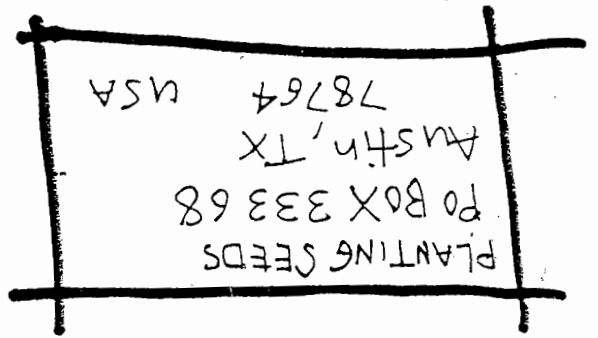
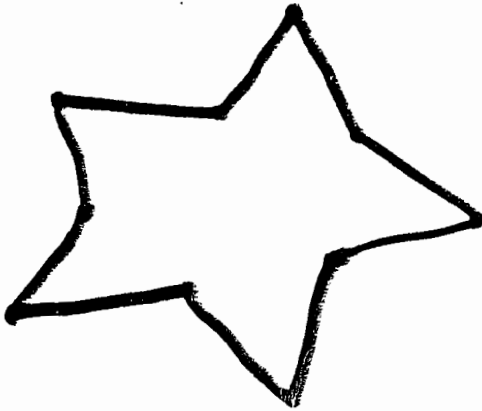


"Power Concedes Nothing without A Demand."

As Frederick Douglass said...



+



AN ACTIVIST APPROACH TO
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

this zine is sliding scale-
pay what you can.

it's four a.m. and we're just finishing up this zine. it all started with the coalition for human dignity, a grass-roots anti-domestic violence group, where we spend alot of our energy doing activism. we then took our ideas and turned them into this zine which we also did for credit in our class 'The Political Economy of Inequality' at school(which is why some of the writing in here might sound formal). we wanted to take our thoughts, experience, and activism around domestic violence and turn it into something useful. here is the result. we hope you find truth, hope and knowledge within these pages.

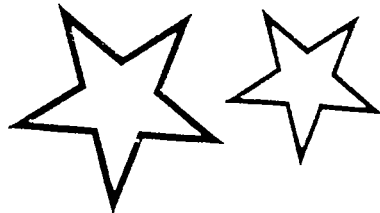
we want to thank the people in the coalition, and every one else who helped us with this project.
and all the people whose books we reprinted stuff from.

☆ basil & erika ♡

p.s. if you want to write us or to get more copies of this zine, our address is:
 p.o. box 12801/ Olympia, WA 98508. usa. PS how itz 6:15am!

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Goodbye

I've been there and
 I am here and here and here I'm going to stay.
 You won't find me
 thru the crowd of my experience
 or in the pain of losing you
 to those monsters at the gate
 who wouldn't let me
 touch your heart with
 golden hand.
 You were beautiful because of me.
 When I left
 you merged back into the plastic world.
 The miracle of your sorrow
 is your only redemption.
 Pray for that.

-Diane Martin
 4/29/97

Rape Victim Advocates
<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/~1oakleaf/RVA.html>
Safety Net
<http://www.cybergrrl.com/dv.html>

Safety Zone
<http://www.serve.com>

Sexual Assault Information Page
<http://www.cs.uck.edu/~bartley/sainfoPage.html>

South Asian Women Network
<http://www.umiacs.umd.edu/users/sawnet/violence.html>

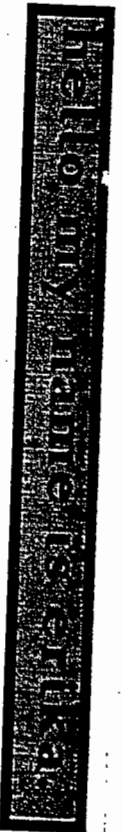
Stalking Fact Sheet
<http://www.acusd.edu/~prc/fs/fs14-stk.html>

Stop Abuse For Everyone
(focus on straight male and gay & lesbian survivors)
<http://ursula.uoregon.edu/~jarubick/safe/>

Sue's Abuse Pages
<http://www.pilot.infi.net/~susanf/sueabuse.htm>

US Department of Justice Violence Against Women Office
<http://www.usdoj.gov/vawo>

WEB RESOURCES



The first feeling I experience as I attempt to write this introduction is complete and total terror. I am utterly terrified to write about what has been done to me and by whom, and yet how can I write about domestic abuse without naming my own experiences? Do I even need to put my guts on paper for anyone to read just to explain why I am doing this in the first place? Suffice it to say, I am an abuse survivor. I came to this project, and to activism generally, as a direct result of the brutality of my upbringing. Besides the abuses of class oppression, I also endured abuse from my parents and other family members, although my father's abuse was by far the worst.

I do not know a single person (well enough to know) whose life *hasn't* been affected by domestic abuse. Most of the women I know have been sexually abused, either as kids or adults or both, and a good half of the men I know as well. It would be impossible to have a perfect family or upbringing, but the stories I have heard my friends tell about their childhood make me cringe. Their stories range from rape and torture to simply being told they were no good, but they were all extremely painful. What does it say about the society I live in that almost every single person I know has experienced, in one form or another, abuse in their home?

Domestic abuse is the attempt by any member of a household or intimate relationship to take control of the other's sense of self, by physical, sexual, emotional or economic means. Domestic abuse is about power and control, and not only about what specific attempts are made to obtain power over the other person/s. I am aware that there is an incredibly high instance of men being abusive to

their female partners, but I do not think the work that is done to end domestic abuse should be limited to this definition. Although the prevalence of domestic abuse is definitely shaped by patriarchal values, it is not restricted to heterosexual relationships and men do not perpetuate all abuse. I use the term *domestic abuse* instead of *violence* for clarity, because although I don't think violence in families or relationships is ever ok, abuse suggests something more systematic and does not include acts of self defense by the terrorized/abused.

Recently I have been dealing with a lot of domestic abuse in my life. Both my mother and I have been in abusive relationships in the past year. It is both depressing and frightening to have found myself displaying typical behavior of a battered woman- minimizing and blaming myself for his behavior and taking responsibility for it. It is fucking confusing to have been in an abusive relationship. Because first of all I know that I was no angel, so I tend to think of the ways it was abusive as mutual. But I realize what makes it abusive is not that I am an angel and he's a fucker, but that domestic abuse is about power. In our relationship his feelings were validated and listened to, but mine weren't. I have taken responsibility for my shitty and abusive behaviors, and have done something about them- he hasn't. He "only" hit me a few times in the four years we were together, but it is the climate that was created through his emotional abuse (and my acceptance) that enabled him to think it was okay to be physically violent towards me.

What I have seen of domestic abuse (and I have seen plenty), is that the abusive partner is IN CONTROL of how things are dealt with in the relationship. Just because my partner is sympathetic to feminism does not mean that he is automatically not going to be sexist or abusive. In abusive

Family Violence Awareness Page
<http://www.famvi.com/index.html>

Home Alive
<http://www.homealive.org/>

Jewish Women's International Domestic Violence Page
<http://www.jewishwomen.org/awaken.htm>

Joe's Place
<http://www.dynasty.net/users/peace/joeindex.htm>

Links to other information on Domestic Violence
<http://www.iaw.on.ca/~twebb/dvlinks.htm>:

Manavi- an organization for South Asian Women
<http://portal.research.bell-labs.com/orgs/ssr/people/bala/manavi/>

National Black Women's Health Project (NBWHP)
<http://www.protectchoice.org/partnerNBWHP.html>

The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA)
<http://www.interinc.com/NCEA/>

The National Child Rights Alliance
<http://linux.hartford.edu/~jerry/ncra.html>

The New York Elder Abuse Coalition
<http://www.ianet.org/nyeac/>

Partnerships Against Violence
<http://pavnet.org>

Phenomenal Women of the Web Against Domestic Violence
<http://spydersempire.com/forum/members/menu.html#y>

Project B.E.A.R.: Building Elder Abuse Resources
<http://www.ahs.uwaterloo.ca/bear/Web.html>

Project Sandoval
<http://wmmalls.com/nm/projectsandoval/index.html>

WEB RESOURCES

(These are some of the many resources available on the world wide web on domestic violence. Some are home pages of information, and some are link pages to more information. It's definitely not comprehensive, but it will definitely lead you in a great direction to finding more of the information you are looking for).

Advocates for Abused and Battered Lesbians (AABL)
<http://www.isomedia.com/homes/AABL/default.htm>

Assault Prevention Information Network
<http://galaxy.tradewave.com/editors/weiss/apinintro.html>

Childhelp USA
<http://www.childhelpusa.org/>

Clothesline Project
<http://cybergrrl.com/dv/orgs/cp.html>

The Coalition for Human Dignity
<http://192.211.16.13/users1/shadidb/coalition.html>

Communities United Against Violence (Gay and Lesbian related)
<http://www.xq.com/cuav>

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Resources
<http://129.82.209.104/violence.htm>

Domestic Violence in Lesbian Relationships
http://www.en.com/users/allison/1_dv.html

Domestic Violence Resources
<http://www.cyberpeddler.com/cyberlinks/domviol/index.htm>

relationships the person who is being abused learns that their feelings are not important, and the focus is always on what the abuser is thinking and feeling and what s/he is going to do next- not how I'm feeling and how my life and self worth are being undermined by this person's behavior!

I have a lot of strength to draw on as an abuse survivor, and I know that I don't have to allow abuse in my life anymore. Regardless of whether or not my partner changes his behavior and his life, I know that I made the right decision to confront his abuse. Confronting him was done out of self-respect. As I heal from the abuse that I suffered as a child & a teenager, I develop the strength I need as an adult to be in relationships that are respectful and fulfilling. And this is political because, as June Jordan so eloquently states, "Freedom cannot be qualified; my heart is not peripheral."

Domestic abuse is a difficult issue, and it is one that many people do not want to deal with. First of all, regardless of the work that activists, especially feminist activists, have done to make it public, it is still generally looked at as private. What happens in people's relationships is generally considered to be their business, unless you're real nosy. It's true that I don't usually like people messing with my life unless I ask them to, but on the other hand if I am in a situation where I am being controlled by another person's behavior, it should be the job of a concerned friend, or a caring society, to step in.

Last year I had the opportunity to open my house to a three-year-old girl who was being abused. My friend/roommate saw that the girl's mother was neglecting her, and her boyfriend was abusing both. We offered to take care of her for an indefinite amount of time while her mom "got her shit together". My friend was willing to take responsi-

bility for that child, and we, as her friends, supported her. Although our plan sort of backfired and we ended up being forced to return the child back to a potentially dangerous situation, we gave her space to tell and show us what she had been through, and we treated her with respect and kindness. She may still have a hard time as she grows up, but I'm sure the time she spent with us and the fact that the abuse she was experiencing was acknowledged will have a profound effect on her. Taking care of her was about taking personal responsibility for the kind of world that we want to live in.

Working with the Coalition has been both rewarding and draining. I have put more hours into this project than I ever wanted and I sometimes wonder if it's worth it. But then I think about the vigil/speak outs we put on and how many people were able to tell their stories and be listened to by a group of strangers. I think about the woman who is a ritual abuse survivor who came to share her songs, and the man who spoke for the first time about witnessing his mother being violently assaulted by her boyfriend. I think about my mother and I sobbing in each other's arms after I sang at the concert we put on. All these experiences in and of themselves are irreplaceable. And if domestic violence is such a silenced issue, then the fact that we were able to create public spaces where people can speak on their experiences with domestic abuse and be respectfully listened to, then the hours I put into it were worth it.

The work I have done with the Coalition this year has been very important to me, but it is only one level of ending domestic abuse. When I publish my poetry or sing about recovering from sexual abuse, I am working against domestic abuse. When I intervene on the street when a

Sojourn Services for Battered Women and Their Children
PO Box 5597
Santa Monica, CA 90409
(310) 392-9896
24 hr hotline

Survivors of Incest Anonymous
PO Box 21817
Baltimore, MD 21222-6817
(301) 433-2365

W.O.J.C.E.S. in Action (Victims of Incest Can Emerge Survivors)
PO Box 148309
Chicago, IL 60614
(312) 327-1500

WOMAN, Inc.
333 Valencia St, Suite 251
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 864-4722

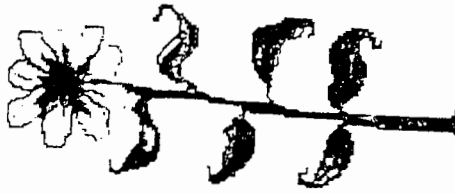
For lesbians in violent relationships.

Women Employed
22 W Monroe, Suite 1400
Chicago, IL 60603
(312) 782-3902

Women for Sobriety
Box 618
Quakertown, PA 18951
(215) 536-8026

Women of Color Task Force Against Domestic Violence
PO Box 1743
Aurora, CO 80040
(303) 696-9196

Women on Their Own, Inc. (W.O.T.O.)
PO Box 1026
Willingboro, NJ 08328
(609) 728-4071



Resource Center on Domestic Violence, Child Protection and Custody
(800) 527-3223

Resource Center on Child Custody and Child Protection
NCCJCCJ
PO Box 8970
Reno, NV 89507

Resource Center on Family Violence/
Center for Women Policy Studies
2000 P St NW, Suite 508
Washington, DC 20036

S.A.J.E. (Self Abuse Finally Ends)
PO Box 267810
Chicago, IL 60626
(312) 722-3113
Information and support for ending self inflicted injuries.

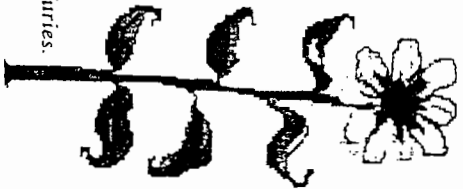
S.A.J.E. (Stop Abuse For Everyone)
(810) 658-9826

<http://ursula.uoregon.edu/~jarubick/safe>
For both genders, but promotes awareness that men can be victims of domestic violence.

Single Mothers by Choice
PO Box 1642
Gracie Square Station
New York, NY 10028
(212) 988-0993

Single Parent Resource Center
(International)
141 W 28th St, Suite 302
New York, NY 10001
(212) 947-0221

S.P.E.A.K.S. (Survivors of Physical and Emotional Abuse as Kids)
c/o Parents Anonymous
520 Lafayette, Suite 316
Los Angeles, CA 90057
(800) 421-0353



woman I don't know is being dragged barefoot down the street by her boyfriend, I am working against domestic abuse. When I listen to my fifteen-year-old neighbor talk about her mother's abuse, and she tells me nobody has ever really listened to her before, I am working against domestic abuse. And on a deeper level, the work I do against societal abuses like class oppression, white supremacy or ableism is working against domestic abuse, because one level of abuse or oppression cannot end while other are being upheld. As Audre Lordé says, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house."

love,
erika maria xoxoxo



photo by Karen Hagen Lisse, from Aloyful Path

ritual/abuse.

you marked me for life
in ways only you & i know
fucking me mentally
so you could fuck my body.

i sit here & wonder
if any of this really happened
if anybody feels the ways i feel
if the voices in my head are real
or just a figment of my imagination.

i want to cry
& release this wellspring of sorrow
but it's stuck somewhere
between my chest and my throat
sadness hovering inside me.

i want to release myself from your bondage
and walk tall among the rest-
in the world,
i want to drop this burden
from my back to the floor
but it is too much inside me.

thinking about this is one thing
but the way it turns my heart in place
is something else entirely.

i wonder what the trick is
to not turning everything
inward on myself,
letting their shit be their shit
not mine.
how do i convince myself
not everybody has to like me
& that i am still a good person.

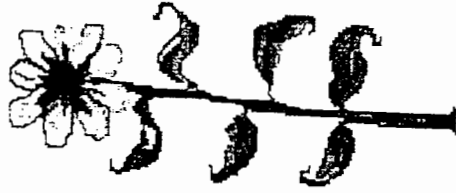
i am still a good person
and i was good
whenever you
did whatever you did
to me.

7.3.97

National Self Help Clearing House
CUSNY- New York
25 West 43rd St, #620
New York, NY 10036
(212) 345-8525
(212) 642-2944

National Training Project
206 West 4th St
Duluth, MN 55806
(218) 722-2781

On-site training and technical assistance for the criminal justice system, law enforcement, mental health practitioners, and advocates for battered women in the US and Canada.



National Victim Center
309 West 7th St, Suite 705
Fort Worth, TX 76102
(800) FVJ-CALL

Information and referrals, no crisis counseling.

National Women's Health Network
1325 G St NW
Lower Level
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 347-1140

New York Asian Women's Center
(212) 732-5200

New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project
1208 W 13th St
New York, NY 10011
(212) 807-6761 Office
(212) 807-0197 Hotline

The Oakland Men's Project (OMP)
440 Grand Ave
Oakland, CA 94610
(510) 835-2433

Parents Helping Parents
535 Race St, Suite 140
San Jose, CA 95126
(408) 288-5010

Support and education for families of disabled children.

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
1734 14th St NW
Washington, DC 20009-4309
(202) 332-6483
Crisis line (800) 221-7044

National Lawyers Guild
National Immigration Project
(617) 227-9727

National Network to End Domestic Violence - Policy Office
701 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

National Network to End Domestic Violence - Administrative Office
c/o Texas Council on Family Violence
8701 North Mopac Expressway, Suite 450
Austin, TX 78759

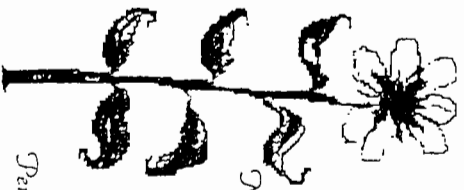
National Organization for Changing Men/ BrotherPeace
PO Box 451
Waseka, IL 60970

National Organization for Men Against Sexism (NOMAS)
54 Mint St, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 546-6627

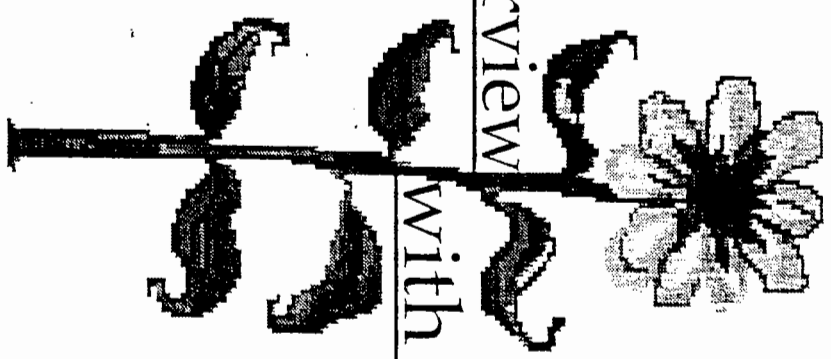
National Organization for Women
1000 16th St NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 347-1140

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
National Battered Women's Law Project
799 Broadway
Room 402
New York, NY 10003

National Resource Center on DV
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence
6400 Frank Drive, Suite 1300
Philadelphia, PA 19113



an interview with myself



b- why did you pick domestic violence as your topic for this project?

basil- For a few reasons. First, I think domestic violence is so widespread and yet so silenced. Secondly, I believe in educating myself and the people around me. Domestic violence is so depressing and dangerous. I have seen too many people get hurt in so many ways by their partner, parents, siblings, and other people in their households. I have too many friends who are struggling to heal the wounds they've suffered because of domestic violence. Because of these people domestic violence is so close to my life. It really hurts sometimes to think about the pain my friends suffered. Also, as a man in this society I have certain privileges, whether I choose to acknowledge them or deny that I have them. If I am not mindful in my actions I can easily perpetuate domestic

National Battered Women's Law Project at the National Center on Women and Family Law
799 Broadway, Suite 402
New York, NY 10003
(212) 674-8200

National Child Abuse Hotline
(800) 422-4453

National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women
125 South 9th St, Suite 302
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 351-0010

National Clearinghouse on Domestic Violence
PO Box 2309
Rockville, MD 20852

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
PO Box 34103
Washington, DC 20043
(703) 765-0339
(202) 638-6388

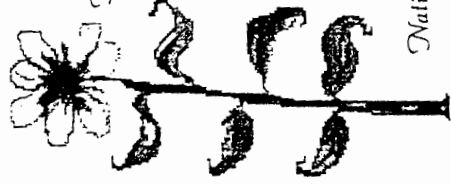
or

PO Box 18749
Denver, CO 80128
(303) 839-1852

National Council on Child Abuse and Family Violence
1155 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
(800) 222-2000
(202) 429-6695

National Domestic Violence/Abuse Hotline
(800) 799-SAFE
(800) 787-3224 (TDD)

National Gay and Lesbian Domestic Violence Victims Network
3506 S O'Ray Circle
Aurora, CO 80013
(303) 266-3477



violence and abuse. No matter how much I do not want these privileges, I have them and have to actively be conscious of them to have healthy relationships. So, doing this project for me is one way to do something against domestic violence, to give back to all those who share their stories with me, educate me, and believe in me as their ally.

b- do you think, as a man, that you can only be an abuser?

basil- No. I know that I can be abused also, in straight relationships or, being queer, in queer relationships too.

b- the project is titled 'An Activist Approach to Domestic Violence', why this specific angle?

basil- Since domestic violence encompasses so much, we needed to narrow our focus. We chose this angle because we both are working with a local anti-domestic violence group called the Coalition for Human Dignity, and we've been doing the work, so why not write about it. We wanted to tie in our experiences and activism with different essays and articles and be able to offer what we've learned with others. Plus, so many people see domestic violence as a "private" issue, and we wanted to break that myth and say it's everybody's issue. Domestic violence is an activist's issue. This is important too because dealing with domestic violence means dealing with people's relationships and abuse and communication. It's work that requires respect and being open and caring and connected to yourself. I see a lot of activists being totally disconnected from what they're working for; Someone who is trying to save the environment, but goes home and hits his girlfriend. They don't see the connection. Doing this project, for me, is like saying domestic violence is important as an activist issue and is connected to every issue.

b- who is the "we" you refer to?

basil- Me and my friend Erika.

Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute

1310 Clinic Dr,
Tyler, TX 75701
(903) 595 6600

Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project

647 Hudson St
New York, NY 10014
(212) 807-0197

Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence

Family Violence Prevention Fund
383 Rhode Island Street - Suite 304
San Francisco, CA 94103 - 5133

Immigrant Assistance Line

(415) 554-2444 (English & Spanish)
(415) 554-2454 (Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese)

Next Survivors Anonymous

PO Box 5613
Long Beach, CA 90805-0613
(213) 428-5599

Men Overcoming Violence

54 Mint St, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 626-4067

Molesters Anonymous

c/o Baller's Anonymous
16913 Lerner Ln
Fontana, CA 92335
Call Dr Jerry Goffman
(714) 884-6809

For men who molest children.

National Alliance of Psychiatric Survivors

PO Box 618
Sioux Falls, SD 57101
(605) 334-4067



b- what is working together like?

basil- Well, me and Erika have known each other for two and a half years now and are pretty involved with each other's lives on all these different levels. She is an abuse survivor too. Previous to this project, I have been doing a lot of work on being an ally to her with the issues she faces. Working on this project is bringing up a lot of that. I mean, we're not only writing a bunch of articles. Having tons of books around all the time about domestic violence and talking about it in all these different ways and organizing events for others brings up a lot of issues. It gets pretty intense sometimes. We deal with issues of power and communication in our relationship. Doing this project is really challenging for me in many ways and makes me really question our relationship and myself. We've had many talks about all these issues in an academic way, as organizers, and how it fits into our lives and our friendship. In the same sense, I don't think I'm at a point to do a project like this with someone I'm not comfortable to be vulnerable around. I feel like I'm really connecting these issues to my life in so many different ways, and at a time like this, I feel like I really need someone to talk to that will understand and be caring of what I'm feeling. It's been really important for me to work on this project with Erika right now.

b- has this project brought up a lot for you, emotionally?

basil- Yeah totally. I feel like everything I read or write I've been totally questioning my present and past relationships, and myself. Domestic violence can be anything from really subtle to really outright, and I know that I've participated in some of the subtle stuff at least, and I need to deal with that. Shit like this is hard to do. I've come out to myself as an abuser, and I don't think I've realized what this means for my ex-partner until now.

b- do you want to talk about that here?

basil- I was in this relationship for about nine months in high school, and I didn't know anything about questioning myself or about domestic violence on a level to question it. The girl I was involved with is an abuse survivor too. She grew up in a really abusive and unsafe house. I added to the cycle. I would call her a lot from being jealous, and once sexually assaulted her. I was fifteen. Now I look back and am like, fuck, what was I thinking. The thing is that I wasn't. And that's the problem. I can't take back what happened to her, or any other abuse in relationships in my past. What I can do is be active now: To tell about this story. I can do something now against domestic violence, and maybe someone will know better than what I knew at fifteen.

b- what is an ideal relationship for you?

basil- I know that in all the relationships I'm in there is power dynamics. An ideal relationship for me is one where my partner and I work on our communication between each other. I believe in the idea of "always getting to know each other." Trying not to assume things about each other, and keep learning about each other (our pasts, present, processes for working things out, future plans and aspirations, etc.). I think there needs to room in a relationship for making mistakes but only where there is room for everyone's feelings to be acknowledged and listened to, and a place for working on these mistakes is made. I think that an ideal relationship is one that is always in process: one where we are always growing and trying together. A few keys to this relationship are honest communication, understanding, respect, and vulnerability... among many others. I don't have a utopian vision for the perfect relationship, but I do have ideas that create equality and growth between my partner and me.

b- what gives you hope?

basil- Simple things that people do for each other. I get a lot of hope from small actions. Resistance gives me hope. People who go against the status quo and do what's right give me hope.

Children's Rights Council
7 St NE, Suite 230
Washington, DC 20002-4362
(202) 547-6227

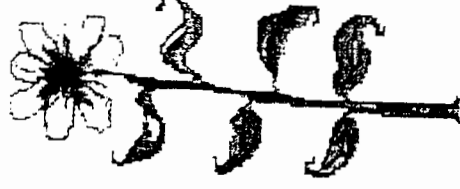
Clearinghouse On Family Violence Information
PO Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013
(703) 385-7565

Committee for Mother and Child Rights
RI I, Box 256 A
Clearbrook, WA 22624
(703) 722-3652

Information for mothers with custody problems.

Community Foundation against Domestic Violence and Abuse
1224 W Main St, Suite 707
Charlottesville, VA 22903
(804) 293-2273

Mostly local services, but can provide referrals for gender-neutral services in the US and Canada.



Community United Against Violence
Gay & Lesbian Domestic Violence
514 Castro St
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 777-5500

Domestic Abuse Awareness project
PO Box 1155
Madison Square Station
New York, NY 10159-1155
(212) 807-0197

The Family Violence Prevention Fund
38 Rhode Island St, Suite 304
San Francisco, CA 94103-5133
(415) 252-8900
(800) 537-2238

Resources

Asian Women's Shelter (San Francisco)
3543 18th Street, Box 19,
San Francisco 94110
(415) 751-0880

Battered Women's Justice Project
206 W 4th St
Duluth, MN 55806
(800) 903-0111

Battered Women's Justice Project
Minnesota Program Development, Inc.
4032 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55407

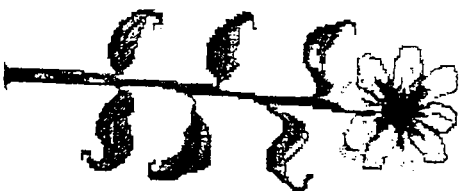
Battered Women's Justice Project
c/o National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women
125 South 9th Street - Suite 302
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Battered Women's Justice Project c/o PCCADV - Legal Office
524 McKnight Street
Reading, PA 19601

Battered Anonymous
16913 Lerner Ln
Fontana, CA 92335
call Dr Jerry Goffman
(714) 884-6809

Black Women's Health Project
450 Auburn Ave NE, Suite 157
Atlanta, GA 30312

Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence
1914 North 34th St, Suite 105
Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 634-1903



an activist approach to domestic violence by basil

Mainstream information on domestic violence tends to be misleading. Many media sources portray it as something that does not affect all of us, and people are led to feel powerless against it. Domestic violence is seen as a private issue, something that the general public does not need to get involved in because it would involve getting inside someone's "personal" business. These myths are attitudes I notice on television, in the newspapers, on the radio, and in conversations around me; Attitudes I do not agree with.

Domestic violence affects many people. It is the single major cause of injury to women, more significant than street rape, muggings, or even auto accidents. More than 4,000 women are beaten to death annually in the United States (The Family Place, 1996). More than 50% of all women will be battered at some point in their lives (Genesis House, 1994). According to the FBI a woman is beaten every 15 seconds. It was estimated that there were 60 million childhood sexual abuse survivors in America as of 1993 (Forward, 1993). More than 3 children die each day as a result of parental maltreatment. These statistics are only of reported cases and don't even take into account all kinds of domestic abuse. Domestic violence is an issue that everyone needs to be aware of, in order to understand and do something about.

Domestic violence is abuse that takes place in the home, family, or community of the person

being abused. Survivors of domestic abuse are both men and women, straight and queer, children, adults and elders, and come from all race, class, religious, and geographical backgrounds. From Sourcebook for Working with Battered Women by Nancy Kilgore, abuse is defined as "a pattern of control that physically harms, induces fear, prevents another from doing what they wish, or forces them to perform in ways they do not want to." Domestic abuse includes physical, emotional, sexual, and economic control.

Webster's online dictionary defines an activist as someone who "takes direct action to achieve a political or social goal." In the context of an anti-domestic violence activist, the "someone" in this definition can be anyone of any (class, race, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.) background. The "direct action" is anything we do, from listening to a friend tell their story to working with an anti-domestic violence organization. The "political or social goal" in this case is ending domestic violence on any or every level. An activist against domestic violence is someone who not only knows about the problem, but also does something about it.

Anyone can be an activist and anyone can help end domestic violence. We must all be accountable for the violence in our lives and in the world around us.

It is important to recognize that domestic violence is not a "personal" problem. It is imbedded in the structure of our society. We grow up with socially defined power dynamics that affect our everyday interactions with others. Paul Kivel expands on these power dynamics in his book Men's Work:

There are differences among us in

This River of Courage: Generations of Women's Resistance and Action, by Pam McAllister. New Society Publishers, Philadelphia; 1991.

Transforming a Rape Culture, Edited by Emilie Buchwald, Pamela Flecher, and Martha Roth. Milkweed Editions, Minneapolis, MN; 1993.

Transforming Abuse: Nonviolent Resistance and Recovery, by K. Louise Schmidt. New Society Publishers, Philadelphia; 1995.

Violent No More: Helping Men End Domestic Abuse, by Michael Paymar. Hunter House, Inc., Alameda, CA; 1993.

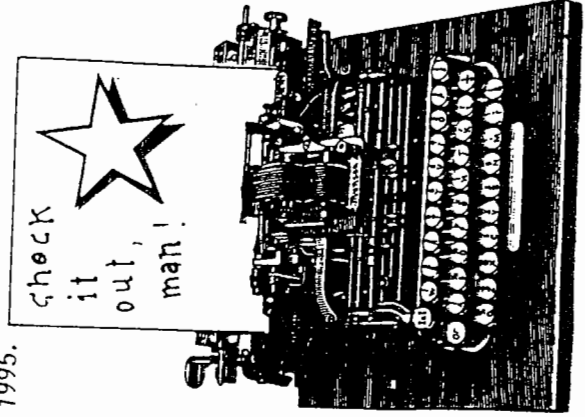
When Love Goes Wrong: What to do When You Can't do Anything Right, by Ann Jones and Susan Schechter. HarperCollins Books, New York; 1992.

Where the Rivers Join: A Personal Account of Healing from Ritual Abuse, by Beckylane. Press Gang Publishers, Vancouver, BC, Canada; 1995.

A Woman Like You: the face of domestic violence, photographs and interviews by Vera Anderson. Seal Press, Seattle, WA; 1997.

Women and Male Violence: The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women's Movement, by Susan Schechter. South End Press, Boston; 1982.

The Words Hunt, by Chris Loftis. New Horizon Press, New Jersey; 1995.



Learning to Live Without Violence: A Handbook for Men, by Daniel Jay Sonkin and Michael Dunphy. Volcano Press, Volcano, CA; 1997.

Mejor Sola Que Mal Acompañada: For the Latina in an Abusive Relationship/ Para la Mujer Golpeada, Bilingual Edition/ Edición Bilingüe, by Myrna Z. Zambrano. The Seal Press, Seattle, WA; 1985.

Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence, by David Island and Patrick Letellier. Harrington Park Press, Binghamton, NY; 1991.

Men's Work: How to Stop the Violence That Tears Our Lives Apart, by Paul Kivel. Ballantine Books, New York; 1997.

Naming the Violence: Speaking Out About Lesbian Battering. Edited by Kerry Lotel for the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Lesbian Task Force. Seal Press, Seattle; 1986.

Next Time She'll Be Dead: Battering and How to Stop It, by Ann Jones. Beacon Press, Boston; 1994.

No Visible Wounds: Identifying nonphysical abuse of women by their men, by Mary Susan Miller. Fawcett Columbine, New York; 1995.

Outgrowing the Pain: A Book for and about Adults Abused as Children, by Etiana Gil. Dell Publishing, New York; 1983.

Reach for the Rainbow: Advanced Healing for Survivors of Sexual Abuse, by Lynne D. Finney. Perigee Books, New York; 1990.

Recovery for Male Victims of Child Sexual Abuse, by Hank Estrada. Red Rabbit Press, Santa Fe, NM; 1994.

Soul Survivors: A New Beginning for Adults Abused as Children, by J Patrick Gannon. Prentice Hall Press, New York; 1989.

Sourcebook for Working With Battered Women, by Nancy Kilgore. Volcano Press, Volcano, CA; 1993.

Stopping Rape: A Challenge for Men by Russ Erwin Funk. New Society Publishers, Philadelphia; 1993.

gender, racial and ethnic heritage, age, physical ability, class, religion, sexual orientation, and so on. Some differences are visible, others are hidden. Some we look for automatically, others we may pretend not to see. These differences separate us into groups with varying amounts of power. They have access to work, housing, education, physical security, legal protection, and representation in government. These groups often have this power at the expense of other, less powerful groups, whose access to such resources is limited or denied (Kivel, 77).

These differences in power show the basic inequalities of U.S. society. These inequalities define our relationships and create the dichotomy within a domestic violence situation of "if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." In addition to these power differences, the stress and violence in our everyday lives stretches into our homes through us. Unless we have positive ways to deal with this violence and stress we have the possibility of taking it out on the people around us. Domestic violence is not a "private" issue because many of the circumstances that create domestic violence situations are societal sicknesses that are brought into our lives.

Ending domestic violence can be done on many levels: in ourselves, our communities, society, and institutionally. Personally we must look at ideas of violence, power and control in our lives. Are we in a domestic violence situation? What can we do about it? Are we in healthy, healing relationships? Do we have trust

... our relationships? were we raised around violence? How does this affect us now? We can ask these questions and many more to understand our own lives and how we fit into ideas surrounding domestic violence. In our communities, we can ask ourselves if we know of anyone around us who is in a domestic violence situation. We can then ask ourselves if there is anything we can do to help (whether it is to call them up and listen for a few minutes, offer information, support, etc.). In society, we must look at how ideas of violence, power and control are passed on. We can offer non-violent alternatives as a way of living. We can support, join or start anti-domestic violence groups that offer education and awareness programs and look critically at the society we live in. We can work with or support shelters that provide direct support and immediate safety to people who are escaping domestic violence. Institutionally, we can educate ourselves about what laws are out there about domestic violence. We can write to our government voicing our opinion about current and future legislative policies and laws.

An activist approach to domestic violence is a conscientious approach. It is an approach by which we accept responsibility for the issues surrounding domestic violence that are in our lives, and deal with them on one level or another. An activist approach to domestic violence requires us to make a commitment to ending violence in our lives and in the world around us.



Critical Condition: women on the edge of violence, Edited by Amy Scholder. City Lights Books, San Francisco; 1993.

Defending Our Lives: Getting Away from Domestic Violence and Staying Safe, by Susan Murphy-Milano. Anchor Books, New York; 1996.

Domestic Violence for Beginners, by Alisa Delfufo. Writers and Readers Publishing Inc., New York; 1995.

Domestic Violence: The Effective Coordination of Volunteers, National Clearinghouse on Domestic Violence, Rockville, MD; 1980.

Elder Abuse: Conflict in the Family, Edited by Karl A. Pillemmer and Rosalie S. Wolf. Auburn House Publishing Company, Dover, MA; 1986.

Ending Men's Violence Against Their Partners: One Road to Peace, by Richard A. Stordeur and Richard Stille. Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA; 1989.

Escape From Violence: The Women of Bradley Angle House, written by the women of Bradley Angle House, Oregon; 1978.

Every Eighteen Seconds: A journey through domestic violence, by Nancy Kilgore. Volcano Press, Volcano, CA; 1992.

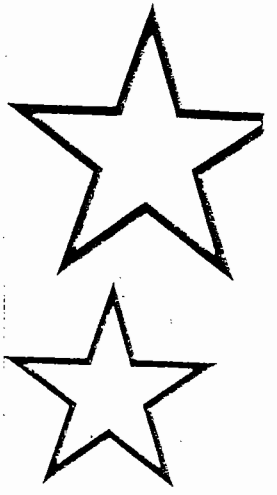
Getting Free: You Can End Abuse and Take Back Your Life, by Ginny Nicarity. Seal Press, Seattle, WA; 1997.

Ghosts in the Bedroom: A Guide for Partners of Incest Survivors, by Ken Gruber. Health Communications, Inc., Deerfield Beach, FL; 1991.

Helping Elderly Victims: The Reality of Elder Abuse, by Rosalie S. Wolf and Karl A. Pillemmer. Columbia University Press, New York; 1989.

How to Make the World a Better Place for Women in Five Minutes a Day, by Donna Jackson. Hyperion, New York; 1992.

I Can't Get Over It: A Handbook for Trauma Survivors, by Aphrodite Matsakis. New Harbinger Publications, Oakland, CA; 1996.



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Abuse and Neglect of Handicapped Children, by Sharon R. Morgan, College-Hill Press, Boston; 1987.

Abused Men: The Hidden Side of Domestic Violence, by Philip W. Cook, Praeger Publishers, Westport, CT; 1997.

The Battered Child, Edited by Ray E. Helfer and Ruth S. Kempe, University of Chicago Press, Chicago; 1987.

Battered Women as Survivors, by Lee Ann Hoff, Routledge, New York; 1990.

Being Peace and Touching Peace, by Thich Nhat Hahn, Parallax Press, Berkeley, CA.

"Breaking the Silence: Author Beth Richie studies the impact of abuse on African American women", Interview by Rachel Pinsky, HLES magazine, Summer 1997.

Chain Chain Change: For Black Women Dealing With Physical and Emotional Abuse, by Evelyn C. White, The Seal Press, Seattle, WA; 1985.

A Community Secret: For the Filipina in an Abusive Relationship, by Jaqueline R. Agtusa, in collaboration with the Asian Women's Shelter, Seal Press, Seattle; 1994.

Compelled to Crime: the gender entrapment of battered black women, by Beth E. Richie, Routledge, New York; 1996.

Confronting Lesbian Battering, . Edited by Pamela Elliot, A Program of Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women, St Paul, MN; 1990.

The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse, by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis, Harper & Row, New York; 1988.

Here are a list of goals the Oakland Men's Project, an anti-domestic violence group out of California, came up with for ending domestic violence:

1. To Challenge the cycle of violence through active intervention in people's assumptions of continued abuse and victimization.
2. To Empower individuals to come together and reach beyond/out to each other to build community responses to violence and oppression.
3. To Understand men's unique training to perpetuate violence, and to challenge each of us to unlearn that training.
4. To Support the struggle of each person to overcome pain, hurt, and learned helplessness, to heal and become a more powerful community member.
5. To Provide young people with the information, support, resources, and encouragement they need to create violence-free relationships and communities.
6. To Understand and make connections between all the complicated ways power and abuse are worked out in our lives and in society.
7. To Promote a variety of powerful and effective alternatives to violence in social and personal situations.
8. To Confront the violence of local institutions and social practice.
9. To Model, in all of these areas, the powerful role that we all can take in breaking the cycle of violence (Kivel, 188).

Challenging Assumptions About Domestic Abuse

bi: erika

What do you think about when you think “domestic abuse”? Most people probably imagine a man beating his wife. It’s unfortunate that this type of abuse is common, but mainstream ideas about domestic violence tend to obscure other equally devastating abuse that does not fit this definition. For example, when I looked up “domestic violence” at the school library, I was referred to the topic of “wife abuse.” What does that say about the accepted and acceptable definition of domestic abuse?

Right now, at this very moment, [domestic violence] is happening in households all over the United States. Men are bashing their wives; some women are abusing their husbands. And lesbians and gay men are battering their lovers. Yet while millions of Americans, straight and gay, are affected each year by domestic violence, the topic remains shrouded in secrecy, under the rug, “closeted” (Island & Letellier, 7-8).

When talking about violence and abuse it’s important to understand that violence in US society is so pervasive there is no way that its manifestations are limited to adult heterosexual relationships. In working against domestic abuse, we must be willing to examine our own ideas about *who is abused and by whom*.

The assumption that domestic abuse only hurts straight adult women is not only false, but also harmful to any movement fighting against this abuse. There’s no way I could address every

important thing I want to say here is that because I’ve always identified as a radical feminist, people really didn’t support me getting out of my situation. As many people on the receiving end of domestic violence experience- I didn’t talk much about what happened unless things were really bad. I’d say to a close friend, “He’s in jail because he choked me. It’s really over this time.” And a few weeks later we were back together. I had to explain this somehow. I know it was incredibly hard to figure out how to support me, but friends actually said things like, “Well you’re a really strong woman and I know it can’t be all him or all that bad because you wouldn’t stay if it was.” Or “Well, I would never let someone treat me that way.” - Implying “What’s wrong with you?” I eventually just shut up.

What work do you do against domestic violence and how do you feel your experience influences this work?

I guess everything I do is work against domestic violence because that is so strongly rooted in my experience and who I am. I do volunteer work and activism and I have a lot of women in my life who are in violent situations. I think the most crucial thing I can give is my individual support, and not criticism for not leaving, but support on their terms- whatever that is. That’s what my experience has taught me. I want to be there for other people instead of trying to get everyone to act on my “great ideas.”

What needs to happen in society to end domestic violence and what can people do to reach this goal?

The more direct we are, the closer we will come to ending domestic violence. We often know what’s up and don’t talk, or have questions and don’t ask. I remember going to school with a black and blue mouth and bleeding lip and coffee stains on my clothes because my dad had hit me and dumped coffee on my head on the way to school. I got there late and my teacher just yelled at me for being late, and never asked of I was ok. We think people will be hurt or embarrassed if we ask, but I walked around feeling that my pain was invisible, or no one cared. That was the basis for a lot of my decisions later on in life.

Really one of the greatest things anyone ever did for me was just to stand witness to my situation. I was outside my apartment and my partner was in my face screaming at me- whatever the hell of the day was, and this neighbor woman who I barely knew came out and stood on her porch and watched. I was mortified to

Interview with X-tine

since unfortunately there are too many possibilities. I will attempt to touch on some common forms of abuse that usually are left off the agenda, such as child physical, sexual and emotional abuse, elder abuse, abuse in queer relationships and of straight men, and class and race differences among straight women. By highlighting these forms of domestic abuse I hope to bring people's attention to the diverse groups of people who it affects, and the importance for everyone working against it (which really should be everyone!) to be consciously inclusive in the way we address this issue.

"There's no reason in this whole wide world to harm a little child, be it your hands or your words that do the abuse" (Loftis, 38). Child abuse is incredibly prevalent in our society, and child abuse happens in all levels of society. Parents, relatives, community leaders, and other adults physically, sexually and emotionally abuse children. Many are also victims of neglect. In 1996 more than three million reports of child abuse were made, and "the actual incidence of abuse and neglect is estimated to be three times greater than the number reported to authorities" (Childhelp USA). Growing up in a violent home, even if the violence is not directed at the child, is harmful to children. A formerly abused woman writes; "Growing up in a house with a batterer is like living in a war zone. You can be attacked at any time and there's nothing a child can do to fight back" (Agtuca, 30). Children who grow up in abusive homes are likely to develop a dissociative disorder or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, formerly known as "Vietnam syndrome", as a result of witnessing or experiencing firsthand abuse.

How do you define domestic violence?

I define domestic violence as- Any act (in the context of however the people involved define family) that aims to hurt another person physically, mentally or emotionally.

How did you come to this definition?

Domestic violence is different from other kinds of violence. It involves a family relationship of some kind- a parent, partner, relative, or housemate. Because of the relationship between the people involved, the violence can be very subversive, even undetectable, until it reaches a crucial point, and by that point the people involved are often so ingrained in this dynamic of violence that it's incredibly hard to break the pattern. It's important to point out that the AIM IS TO HURT. No matter how many abusers claim they "didn't mean it", "can't help it" or whatever- we need to remember that any act of physical, mental or emotional violence is intentional, and we need to hold people accountable for their actions.

How does your definition compare with the mainstream?

I think mainstream definitions probably focus on the violence itself than the intent to hurt. I think physical violence, especially severe physical violence, is how most of society defines domestic violence. I've actually heard people say things like, "He just slapped her. It's not like that's domestic violence or anything."

Do you want to talk about your experiences with domestic violence?

I grew up in a violent home and I repeatedly got myself in violent relationships. I had a child with a very violent man; I tried to leave him many times- it finally worked. I think that the most

called once. But he started seeing someone in Colorado, and I was like "good, she can have him," and then she kicked him out after a week. I thought that was rather amusing. I said, why don't you go visit your sister in Ohio, she really wants to see you. So, a week later, he shows up on my friggen doorstep. But in that time I thought over a lot of stuff, cuz I was really in love with this guy. I think he's one of these people where if you say you love them, he hears "I'm a doormat for you," and that wasn't what I was saying. He would twist things around so much. But it was really good cuz he was gone for two weeks and I got a good perspective on things. I thought, I'm really glad that he's gone, I don't want to be with him anymore. And it was really really hard to do that. Then he came back... And we owned all this stuff together, finally, a long time later, we just finished sorting that stuff out. He couldn't let go of me. He wanted to have a mother. He didn't want to be in an adult relationship. He wanted to have his cake and eat it too. Not be responsible for his actions. He got violent. He'd get mad and he didn't want any negative feedback. He'd break things, and, he only hit me once, but this one time he took a two by four and smashed a windshield of a car two feet from me. That was intimidating. I got a restraining order against him after that. To this day he says I got the restraining order because I was trying to keep all the stuff that we had that was at my house, cuz he moved out. He wasn't like, okay let's divide up our stuff and I'll have my share and leave. It's not cuz I wanted to keep his stuff though. The whole summer he was coming around and if I said something wrong he would start yelling at me. I thought he would start breaking things again, and I didn't want to see him or talk to him... Later I got a restraining order against him and that was really a relief because he stopped coming over and yelling at me all the time. It was interesting too, because I went to the court at Thurston County, cuz I didn't want to bring the authorities into my personal life, but I had been asking him not to come over without calling first, and he didn't listen to me. I decided to call in the authorities, unless I'm gonna go find some friends to beat the shit out of him, which a lot of people offered to do, but I said no. When I got the restraining order I went to the court room and was saying stuff like, he's not always that bad, sometimes he can be a really nice guy. Since he was living in Lacey, I had to take it over to the Lacey police department so someone could serve him the order and he wouldn't be able to come visit me at school or work or home and he couldn't call. Before I could do that, the next morning he showed up un-announced as I was getting ready to drive over to Lacey. He started yelling at me after I asked him how he was doing. He was like "why shouldn't I be doing alright?" It was that bizarre. After he left I look the papers over to the police department and he didn't come over anymore.

Basil: What work do you do against domestic violence and how do you think your experience influences this work?

Irene: well with Bob, we're sending him information about domestic violence.

Clara: That's why I got involved with the Coalition for Human Dignity, to raise awareness and education about these issues.

around here the tape got muddled and we lost the rest of the interview.

One in three girls and one in four boys is sexually abused before the age of eighteen, and children with disabilities are four to ten times more vulnerable to sexual abuse than non-disabled children (Joe's Place). My father severely sexually and physically abused me for the first seventeen years of my life. Today I am legally and significantly disabled as a direct result of that abuse. No matter what I do to heal, I will most likely carry certain scars to my grave.

my father
lean in blue & white striped pajamas,
snatches my pajama bottoms off
& grabs me by my little skinny knees
& drives his dick in.
i scream
i scream
no one hears except my sister
who becomes no one 'cause she didn't hear.
years later i become no one 'cause it didn't
happen.
-Sapphire, from "MICKY MOUSE WAS
A SCORPIO" (Scholder, 113).

I know too many people, male and female, who were sexually abused as children. Most of them were not able to comprehend what had happened to them or speak about it until they were adults. Child sexual abuse is such a crime, not because it is illegal, but because of the incredible damage it does to a young mind, body and heart.

"Not all blows are made by the hand and not all whipping is done with a belt" (Loftis, 40).
Public education about physical and sexual abuse is increasing, but many people still do not realize the damaging affects of emotional or verbal abuse on children. Andrew Vachss defines emotional abuse as:

...the systematic diminishment of another. It may be intentional or subconscious (or both), but it is always a course of conduct, not a single event. It is designed to reduce a child's self-concept to the point where the victim

... of the natural birthright of all children: love and protection (Sue's Abuse Pages).

Many survivors of physical and sexual abuse report that the emotional abuse they suffered was far more damaging than the actual blows. "The bruises form his slaps would eventually heal and go away, but I'll never forget the awful things he said" (White, 10). When I was being sexually abused by my father, the things he said to me and the threats he made damaged my self-concept and made me fear for my life if I told. In a poem I wrote: "Fucking me mentally/ so you could fuck my body." To this day I struggle to disentangle my self-image from the horrible things my father said I was, on top of dealing with the damage that was created by his physical and sexual abuse.

Elder abuse is one of the least talked about forms of abuse. My search for people's personal stories has been completely unsuccessful so far, although I have found some academic books and informative web-sites. Between 1986 and 1988, reports of elder abuse in the US increased by almost 20%, and "research studies indicate that only one in four elder abuse incidents are reported, suggesting that two million incidents of elder abuse occurred in 1988" (SafetyNet). The elderly experience the same kinds of abuse as other adults, but they are also vulnerable to neglect, abandonment, and financial exploitation. More than two-thirds of older abuse perpetrators are family members of the victims, typically serving in a care-giving role. Many younger Americans don't even think about taking care of our elders, but until we collectively acknowledge the importance of older people, they will con-

-21-

leg and I couldn't really walk. I was on crutches for five or six months. I didn't know anyone in this town. It's hard to meet people when you're really tired a lot and it was hard to get around. Then I made some friends. I would do this thing where I would go and do gardening every Sunday, and he would try and get me not to go. I didn't think about it at the time. He would try and get me not to go in these weird and subtle ways.

Irene: and also he would say why don't you have any friends and you're such a loser.

Clara: He would say why don't you have any friends, what's wrong with you. I was like, I just moved here and I'm not going to school and have nowhere to meet people and I'm tired, cuz I was recovering from a big operation at the time.

Basil: Were you living with him at the time?

Clara: Yeah, we moved in together. Part of it was that he would just put me down. He was really selfish. Then eventually we moved into this house and we had other people around too. That was better because we had other people around and didn't fight as much. But he was also screwing around on me a lot and lying, and I feel like it would be a lot better if he was just up front with me about it cuz we said we were gonna be in a monogamous relationship and I was under the impression that we were. And if he really wanted to then I would have appreciated it if he would talk to me instead of lying to me because then it really made me feel like I was wrong in the head because I was seeing signals that things were going on and I'd say something about it and he would just deny it. I'd much rather have him say Yeah, I'm sleeping with so and so or I'm interested in sleeping with so and so, and just be up front so we would have a more mature thing going on. He wasn't mature. He was really immature and really selfish. He wanted a mommy figure to take care of him. Eventually I found out that he had been telling other people several months before that we had broken up and that we weren't getting along as well, and I asked him "do you want to break up with me?" and he said no, but he was telling other people that we had broken up several months before. I was like, fuck you, go away, get out of my life. Eventually he did, and he went to Colorado and then came back. He was gone for two weeks and only

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doesn't want him being around anybody but her. She can't deal with it if he goes out, and he has to spend all his time with her.

Basil: Do you have other experience with domestic violence aside from your friend?

Irene: Well it's just the same thing. That's really familiar. I had the same thing with this guy I went out with. When I hung out with Bob, he thought I was fucking Bob. When I went to the store, he thought I was fucking someone at the store. It was a lot of that. He really isolated me from all my friends. It was typical. He would scream and yell at me. But then it could be sensitive and really sweet too.

Basil: What made you finally leave?

Irene: I was with him for four years. In the first couple months I thought he was really dangerous and that I gotta get away from him. But then I thought I could be his friend and help him. and I didn't get away from him. I was living with him and my mother was going through a divorce and I told her she could live with me. And that was a huge thing. He said I had to come live with him and that I can't live with my mother cuz she could take care of herself. But I think just having her helped, because now I had someone and before I just had him. I had my mother there. I decided I would transfer schools and go as far away as I could possibly go.

Clara: he still called you up though.

Irene: He still called for the first year I was here. He called and asked me, where were you, I know you're fucking your roommate... He would call my roommate and accuse him of sleeping with me. He threatened to kill me, and to kill this guy I was going out with. But he didn't..

Basil: What about you Clara?

Clara: It was really strange. It went on for a long time too. I got together with this guy and it was great. He was so sweet, and in love with me, and I actually moved to Olympia to be with him. We would argue and I felt like he didn't listen to me. Like my opinions didn't matter. When I moved to Olympia I just had this big operation on my

time to be exploited and abused.

Queers are another group that is rarely acknowledged in the mainstream. Many queers who are in abusive relationships hesitate to "go public" about their experiences because it might reinforce the homophobia of the straight world. A survivor writes, "All the years I spent trying to convince [my family] of the validity and positiveness of my lifestyle... Well that's really the crux of it for the whole lesbian community, isn't it?" (Lobel, 123). Still another problem in acknowledging abuse in queer relationships is the difficulty many people have in letting go of the sexist and heterosexist assumption that all women are potential victims and all men are potential abusers. "Just as lesbian battering forces us to admit that some women batter their partners, gay men's domestic violence forces us to look at some men as *victims*" (Island & Letellier, 16). The fact is that domestic abuse occurs in male-male and female-female relationships with as much frequency and severity as it does among straight relationships (CUAV homepage). "This is not just a male-female issue, it's a male-male issue and you know what, if you're being abused, you don't need it" (interview with Edwin).

There is little talk about within mainstream definitions of domestic violence about battered men in straight relationships. On the men's issue's page on the world-wide-web, the alienation of battered men from the definition of domestic violence is described:

Domestic violence is an issue framed in the media and in the political arena as one of male perpetrators and female victims. Violence in gay and lesbian relationships is rarely discussed, and violence against men in heterosexual relationships less so. Battered men wonder

where to turn. Many organizations that offer services to domestic violence victims offer their services exclusively to women. It is assumed that in a sexist society, men abuse women, and if any men are abused by women, they are the exception to the rule. A man who was abused by his wife called a domestic violence shelter in his area asking for help: "I asked, 'Well, what would you say to a woman in this situation?' They would refuse to answer my questions because I am male" (Cook, 64). It may be true that men abuse women more than vice versa, but what is served by denying battered men services and protection from their abusers?

Within straight relationships, women who are being abused by men may not all have the same needs or issues. Women of color may have strong connections with their communities that make it difficult to be cut off from them to escape an abuser who is also a victim of class and/or race oppression. "You cannot hit black and Hispanic women over the head with feminism, meaning men are the enemy, given the history of minority communities. For these women, the oppressor is white" (Schechter, 274). Many women who are not US citizens also worry about their immigration status on top of the fact that they are being abused. "In the United States domestic violence is considered criminal conduct whether the victim is a citizen or not. Police officers, prosecutors and criminal court judges will generally not ask or turn in a woman reporting domestic violence into the INS" (Agtuca, 58). There are people who can help with these issues (see resources), and advocates for domestic abuse victims need to be aware of services for immigrant women and be prepared to be their advocates as immigrants as well as abuse victims.

"wow, there's all these patterns that go on." One of them is isolating. Where someone wants to isolate you from your friends and be really mean to your friends.

Irene: That's a good way to break down your support system.

Clara: And so they don't come around or hang out with you. Then your partner gets suspicious of you and they say "oh you're cheating on me. You're only hanging out with so and so cuz you're having sex with them." They do these things and chase your friends away and then you don't have anyone to talk to and you're isolated and that puts you in a weaker situation where it's easier for someone else to manipulate you or get what they want out of you. Another thing is the cycle of abuse, where sometimes they're really happy and sometimes they're really nice and then it gets worse and there's a bad time and then it gets better and you're like oh well, sometimes they're really nice.

Irene: When they're good they're really good and when they're bad they are really bad, and there's the good part and you want to hold on to that.

Clara: And think that's the real part. Wait, what was the question?

Basil: How did you come up with your definition of domestic violence. We're kinda moving into the next question though about talking about your experience about domestic violence.

Clara: Well my answer to the first one is how I came to that is from talking to people about their experiences. It helps too because it makes you realize that you're not crazy and not a psycho.

Irene: Bob doesn't know all this. Should we talk about Bob?

Clara: Yeah, go ahead.

Irene: Bob's girlfriend is really possessive. She's got this thing in her past where this boyfriend ran around on her. Now she's convinced that anybody Bob leaves the house without her, he's screwing around on her. She made him throw out all his letters from me who is 3000 miles away, and got mad at him for having a picture of me in his desk. She

Irene: We can also talk about why people stay in abusive relationships.

Clara: We saw this really good movie, *Swingblade*, the other night and there is this retarded guy and he was in a mental hospital for 25 years cuz he killed someone and instead of putting him in jail they put him in a mental hospital. Then he makes friends with this little kid whose mom... The kid's dad is dead, and his mom has a boyfriend who's abusive.

Irene: It was a good portrayal too.

Clara: It was really good. A really good character development and showing of how things go on. One of the things a lot of people say is why do people stay in this situation. Why don't they just leave? And it's not that simple. One of the things this movie showed clearly was that she was really afraid to leave because he would come and track her down.

Irene: And she would think that there might be an easy out later. And she fell bad for him too. She kept saying "he had a hard life", "he's got a lot of problems." And she was a real helper type of person.

Clara: Sometimes people say he's had a hard life, he can change, he'll get over it, he's just having a hard time, works bad, or money's bad.

Irene: Or, I deserve to be hit. there's a lot of reasons.

Basil: How did you come to your ideas and definitions about domestic violence? How do they compare with more mainstream definitions?

Clara: I'm not sure what the mainstream definition is. I think a lot of people are really confused about domestic abuse and emotional abuse. Most people say that domestic violence is when a husband beats up their spouse or kids. Kids can't leave. they don't really have the choice unless they run away. I got to my definition because I was in an abusive relationship. I didn't realize that I was for a long time. I thought that sometimes it's a bad time and sometimes it's a good time and I wanted to work through it and have it be a good time and I didn't want to give up on it. Then I went to this domestic violence support group and I kept hearing all these same themes from different people. And your like

Activism against domestic abuse has historically been connected with mainstream liberal feminism- and white women's racism has influenced the direction of that activism. Author Beth Richie states that "the concepts, even the paradigms that are used to explain battering have been developed on white middle class women's response to abuse. Now when we think about the 'typical' battered woman, we envision someone who looks like Nicole Brown Simpson rather than a Black woman at Rikers Island" (HUES, 60). This leaves abused women of color in a delicate position. Many have no choice but to seek out battered women's services who may not understand the issues they face in their communities, yet if they do not leave they might be putting their own and their children's lives in danger. "Until the feminist movement actively and publicly deals with eliminating racism within it's own ranks, service to black women and other women of color will be seriously lacking" (Schechter, 273).

What this all boils down to is the fact that domestic abuse is not limited to any one group of perpetrators or victims. In fact, that type of dualistic thinking acts as a barrier to many people who need assistance and/or could be an important part of activism against domestic abuse. Violence is a far reaching problem in this society and that goes way beyond the scope of this project, but those of us who focus on ending domestic abuse must realize that it is *also* far reaching. Racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, ageism, ableism... all these issue contribute to the problem. It is not simply an issue of sexism- it is an issue of power. When we begin to look at *who is being hurt* critically and realistically, we have to include people who do not fit into an oversimplified analysis of domestic abuse that focuses solely on sexism.



Suspicion and fear are common among children who have lived in violent homes. Many who seek refuge along with their battered mothers are seriously troubled. Anna (top) had seen her father burn and stab her mother. While she waited to go to another shelter with her mother and sister, Anna kept her eyes on the street, frightened her father would find them before they could get away.

Interview with Clara & Irene

Basil: How would you define domestic violence?

Clara: Domestic violence is violence between people in a domestic situation. I guess it's more involved than that because why would there be violence in a domestic situation. Families or couples or whatever. It tends to indicate that there is a dysfunctional relationship or relationships going on and there is emotional violence as well.

Irene: It stems from domestic abuse.

Basil: What's the difference between domestic violence and domestic abuse?

Clara: When you say violence, that is actual physical hitting, contact, and breaking things. But you can be emotionally abusive without actually hitting someone.

Irene: And that's the basis of violence.

Clara: Sometimes that comes out as smacking someone around and sometimes it doesn't come around as physically smacking someone around, but you can be really manipulative and be suspicious and scream at someone and make them feel bad.

Irene: And be controlling.

Clara: And have double standards, and things like that without actual violence. But there both equal. They make people feel bad or unhealthy. A lot of it has to do with bad communication and a lack of respect. People thinking that someone else is their property and not having an attitude of you're someone I care about and we're gonna both be better through this, but you're my property. I think it's a mental problem of the person who is abusive.

Marion (right)

Because of one moment in time, my life is forever changed. My friend's life is gone, and I do wish I could change that, but it was an accident and no amount of time that I serve will bring her back. I don't make any excuses for what I've done, but I don't believe the sentence I received was reasonable for the crime when you compare my case to other crimes. I'm glad the public is beginning to learn about battered women's syndrome, understanding abuse for what it is. Maybe justice can be done for others, even if it's too late for me.

My partner was much younger and she sometimes drank and took drugs, and at those times she would get crazy and that's when she would jump on me. One time she and I were fighting because I wouldn't give her any money, and I got knocked down. She kicked me in the side and stomach, took what she could find and left. My grandkids put me in bed where I stayed for three or four days, and finally I was taken to the hospital. I was bleeding internally and they had to remove my spleen. She came to the hospital crying and told me how sorry she was and she would never hurt me again. I was so sick and so glad to see her, and when she kissed me I was in love all over again. She took me home and all was well for a while, but then it started up just like before. The rest is history. Here I sit doing seventeen years to live for second-degree murder. End of Story.

with right now such as HIV and AIDS. But, domestic violence in the sense of seeing an up and running, viable, not for profit organization, that's the capacity that I would like to see it in. What I try to be for other friends that I come across, is a conduit to let them know that this is not just a male-female issue, it's a male-male issue, and you know what if you're being abused, you don't need it. From that aspect yeah, I bring that education into the picture for people that I come across in the walk of life that I'm in right now.

Q: What do you think can be done to end domestic violence as a whole, and what can people do to reach that goal?

E: Ignorance is so easy an avenue for people to be inactive. So the flip side of ignorance is education. In the domestic sense: community. I guess in my lifetime, and especially being a person of color from that community, a lot of mainstream white people have not been attuned to personally seeing it. Growing up as a child in my life, definitely if there had been a more open arena, a more informative arena about the issue itself a lot of other things may have been averted. As far as, not only myself but my siblings, but I have to definitely speak for myself when it comes to wanting to see a change in what I'd like to see as far as domestic violence issues. So definitely education is paramount. Even for those people who are still frightened and behind the walls that are dealing with it on a day to day basis, hey- it has to be where you are aware that there are resources available. Out of those resources there are havens for individuals to go. It's definitely gonna have to be not only a domestic but a community thing. With the end result being something that will have some stick power to it, legislatively. Yeah.

Q: What makes you feel hopeful?

E: (Sigh). Oh, that's a really hard question. What makes me feel hopeful is the level of maturity I've attained as a result of being on both sides of the fence right now. That there will be individuals sensitive to not only addressing the domestic violence from a female aspect, but also from a male aspect, a universal aspect. That's what I would hope to see, hope that could be attained, as a result of wanting to see a positive change happen.



(story & photo taken from *A Woman Like You* by Vera Anderson)

Marion died in prison in 1993.

Why should men care about sexual violence?

1. Men rape

The great majority of all sexually violent crimes are committed by males. Even when men are sexually victimized, other men are most often the perpetrators.

2. Men ARE raped

We don't like to think about it, and we don't like to talk about it, but the fact is that men can also be sexually victimized. Studies show that a staggering 10-20% of all males are sexually violated at some point in their lifetimes. Men are not immune to the epidemic of sexual violence, nor are male survivors safe from the stigma that society attaches to victims of rape. Male survivors are often disbelieved, accused of being gay, or blamed for their own victimization when they report an incident of sexual assault. Frequently, they respond, as do many female survivors, by remaining silent and suffering alone.

3. Rape confines men

When some men rape, and when 80% of those who are raped know the man who attacked them, it becomes virtually impossible to distinguish men who are safe from men who are dangerous, men who can be trusted from men who can't, men who will rape from men who won't. The result is a society with its guard up, where relationships with men are approached with fear and mistrust, where intimacy is limited by the constant threat of violence, and where all men are labeled "potential rapists."

4. Men know survivors

At some point in every man's life, someone close to him will likely disclose that they are a survivor of sexual violence and ask for help. Men must be prepared to respond with care, sensitivity, compassion, and understanding. Ignorance on the part of men about the situation of rape and its impact can only hinder the healing process and may even contribute to the survivor's feeling further victimized. A supportive male presence during a survivor's recovery, however, can be invaluable.

Looking back over my lifetime, I told this as a joke one time, I was 19; there was a pastor that I had dated when I was in Texas - the calmest guy you wanna know - but that extra factor in there was him drinking. And with him drinking that would trigger a series of events to take place. By and by chances one evening I was late coming in, and you know I was quite happy, I had no problems or anything like that. I walked through the door five minutes late and it was like, BAM! He hit me across the face. At the time I thought it was a joke. I thought he was joking; he was dead serious. Needless to say I, being so naive, wanted to know why, what had I done wrong? It got down to a question of self worth. As far as I was concerned and my self worth as far as that applied to it - I had none. Because it was always based on how the other individual perceived me, not how I perceived myself. So, those were a couple. But on the flip side, how I realized that I had become the perpetrator rather than the victim was how, out of those few experiences, I treated someone whom I was just consumed with. Unfortunately that person had no respect for me. That's another factor in perpetrator/victim and victim/perpetrator relationships. Unfortunately that was as recent as about three years ago. As far back as three years ago, rather. And I caught someone I was dating, although there was no commitment there, and they were in bed with another person. I had picked the lock to find him in an intimate embrace with somebody. It just sent me up the wall. I put his head through the wall. And that's when I caught myself, because love shouldn't hurt. Especially outside of an uncommitted relationship, that attachment, that intensity, it should never take place. So yeah I've been on both sides, as the perpetrator and as the victim. Looking at it from both sides guess what? Again, love shouldn't hurt. Definitely as adults, dialogue is key.

Q: What work do you do against domestic violence?

A: For right now, luckily I've been able to be with the Coalition for Human Dignity. But I see myself more in an administrative role, rather than a hands on role for right now. I'm definitely dealing with other avenues in my life that are of higher priority. I see the domestic violence issue as paramount as other issues I'm dealing

an interview with

Basile So: how would you define domestic violence?

Edwijn: Domestic violence is either physical or mental abuse perpetrated between individuals in the same household. It doesn't matter whether they're male or female. It is one individual's will to submit to another person's manipulation via verbal or physical; that's domestic violence. I had given Diane a little history on how I got to the place where I was, living in Olympia. Do I have to elaborate on that?

Be that's one of my questions. You can if you want, but you don't have to.

E: Being the veteran that I am, you know, of that male bonding thing, I had met another gentleman - and domestic violence can stretch even into a platonic relationship where there's not that intimacy factor goin on. But as it turned out, before our relationship, between another veteran and myself who took me into his home, before it even culminated into something intimate there was a lot of unresolved issues that he had had. PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, where he was having flashbacks back to Vietnam, where at any given time he thought that I was the enemy, you know, the Viet Cong or whatever. He had had times off in whatever hallucinogens he had done during that time where he had picked up, be it male or female, foreigners, and simply got his pleasure from them, and afterwards, with the exception of him not being able to talk the language - abused them. And so it was something that I recognized early that I wasn't willing to allow to happen to me.

5. Men can stop rape

Rape is a choice men make to use sex as a weapon for power and control. For rape to stop, men who are violent must be empowered to make different choices. All men can play a vital role in this process by challenging rape supporting attitudes and behaviors and raising awareness about the damaging impact of sexual violence. Every time a man's voice joins those of women in speaking out against rape, the world becomes safer for us all.

"What can I possibly do?"

- Take Rape Seriously. Rape is violence. There is nothing funny about it.
- Work to Change Institutions. Make your school, dorm, fraternity, and community safer for women. Women shouldn't have to be afraid of men. Other societies are essentially rape-free; ours can be too.
- Friends Don't Let Friends Rape. Have the courage to challenge yourself or others if they harass others or joke about rape. If you don't speak up, who will?
- Support Survivors of Sexual Assault and the agencies that help them. Women, girls, men or boys... no one ever deserves to be raped.
- Donate time or money to rape prevention programs in your area.

Work on Your Own Relationships. Listen to women, examine the ways you have been taught to interact with women, and make changes.

Credits

(this article was taken from the Men's Rape Prevention Project, which you can find on the world wide web at http://www.mrpp.org/html/doc_malerape.html)



(drawing taken from A Community Secret)

the Coalition for Human Dignity

The Coalition for Human Dignity is a coalition of people grouped together to raise our voices against domestic violence. We formed in the spring of 1997, and since then have organized a fourth of July vigil, a benefit concert, and a weekend of education and healing on superbowl weekend

The purpose of the Coalition is to raise awareness and consciousness about domestic violence in order to mobilize our communities to take action to protect ourselves, our friends, and our children from violence at home. We intend to give direct material support to people who find it necessary to leave their homes because of domestic violence, who often face poverty and further abuse by society at large. We understand that this issue affects all communities, crossing race and class lines and see the necessity for a broad-based movement to confront domestic violence.

In the next few pages are interviews with people in the Coalition, an article on how we organized the *No Use for Abuse* weekend, and some after-thoughts on the weekend.

E: That makes a lot of sense. Ok, the next question is what work do you do against domestic violence and how do you feel your experience relates to this work?

D: Well I do the Coalition for Human Dignity, hahaha, which is a totally grassroots group that's not, you know, official in any way and is totally egalitarian and it relates to my situation with domestic violence because it grew right out of my last domestic violent partner. I was angry and I really wanted to do *something*, to lash out in some way but instead of lashing out I presented this Coalition and allowed people to speak out and do stuff like that, which is really healthy. Now I'm at the point where I really feel that healing is the best thing and that if we can heal both sides, heal ourselves and try and help heal relationships, that's the only way it's gonna be all right.

E: How can we do that? How can people do that and what needs to happen in society for that to be accomplished?

D: I think that the values of society need to change so that the value is more on the emotional qualities like love and compassion and mercy and that kind of stuff, and not on getting ahead and stepping all over everybody else and making lots of money. A person isn't good because they make lots of money; a person is good because they're good. That's it.

E: What makes you feel hopeful?

D: I feel hopeful because I think that my daughter and I are healing together.



LINDA ROSIER

me & my mom

E: Do you wanna talk about your personal experiences with domestic violence?

D: Shut off the machine and let me think.

Is it on?

E: Yeah it's on.

D: I experienced the feeling that I no longer, you know, domestic violence to me was violence against my inner life. I mean I just felt as if I was losing my life and that I was no longer a person but only a machine to satisfy the needs of another person. I think this is the general situation of women in this society to begin with. I think that women are basically brought up to fulfill the needs of the patriarchy. So domestic violence goes in a lot of ways, but in any case it gets serious when you feel like your whole life is occupied with trying to keep this person from blowing up, and when they do blow up they just trample all over your heart.

E: Do you think... ok what?

D: go ahead.

E: Do you think other people experience domestic violence besides men abusing women?

D: Totally. Women abuse men, you know everybody abuses everybody, we're in one big abuse shit. (Laughter).

E: You said that domestic violence was really related to patriarchy...

D: Yeah, totally.

E: but also that anybody can abuse anybody, so how are those things related?

D: Wait a minute shut that off!

OK, Patriarchy isn't necessarily a male thing, I mean patriarchy is just a term that basically means the person in power lords it over and in the worst scenario they try to destroy the person that's not in power. It can go anywhere from just being the overlord to being a totally abusive overlord where you're trying to completely destroy and control the person that you're over. That's what I mean by patriarchy.

ORGANIZING THE NO USE FOR ABUSE WEEKEND

The No Use For Abuse weekend was organized in response to the alarming increase of domestic violence on Superbowl Sundays. Our purpose in organizing this weekend was to offer an alternative to domestic violence; something that was both educational and healing for the Olympia community. Our hopes were to raise awareness, bring the community together, and to raise money for survivors of domestic violence.

In preparation for the weekend, a group of five (and sometimes six) core people got together weekly since the beginning of November to plan these events. We broke the tasks down into different sections and had one person in charge of coordinating each group. These groupings included location, community outreach, workshops, concert, and vigil. The coordinator would oversee the tasks for their section and report back to the rest of the group about what had already been done and what still needed to be done. We had three months to put this all together. The weekend was scheduled for Saturday, January 24 and Sunday, January 25.

Along with organizing the specifics of the weekend, we needed to raise some money for planning costs. We decided to coordinate a benefit show, which happened on December 6. The work going into the benefit show was simple compared to the rest of the weekend. We found a location, rented a sound system, called the bands, and put up flyers. Our problems were that many of the bands cancelled and the flyers kept changing, so we didn't get them up in time to have a huge turnout. The money that we did raise helped us out with postage, phone calls, and copies.

For the weekend, the location coordinator was in charge of finding a place where the workshops, concert and vigil could take place. She called around at community centers, churches, halls,

ERIKA INTERVIEWS DIANE

cafes, and other local places that might be open to hosting our event. The tasks she coordinated were making initial calls to places, finding out their costs and our budget for a place, filling out any paperwork, making confirmation calls with the chosen place, and staying in touch with the location managers until the event takes place.

The first task of the community outreach coordinator was to write up a press release for the weekend to be sent out to various local organizations and individuals. In Olympia there is a directory of activist and community service organizations called Interlink (available through Media Island) that we used for most of the addresses. About forty press releases were sent out. We also needed to contact the local newspapers and radio stations, and various Coalition members became contact people for specific media. Flyers were made and posted for all of the events and the weekly meetings.

The workshop, concert, and vigil coordinators had specific jobs in planning out the who and what for the weekend itself. The tasks of the workshop coordinator were to figure out the time available for workshops, what workshops were needed and wanted, who could facilitate these workshops and to contact these facilitators, and to make sure that specifics for each workshop was taken care of (if one facilitator needed a certain amount of chairs, or pens, etc...). The concert coordinator took care of finding performers, a sound system for the show, and keeping in contact with the performers until the show. Lastly, the vigil coordinator was in charge of finding certain performers for the vigil, getting candles, and a sound system. These three coordinators also worked with the community outreach and location people to make sure the flyers and space were available for each event.

At each meeting we tried to have the coordinators check in with the progress of what they were working on, then go on about how we're feeling with doing this work, and what else needed to be done.

On the following page are different flyers for meetings and events, the press release we sent out, and the schedule for the No Use for Abuse weekend.

Diane Martin is one of the people who started the Coalition for Human Dignity, and she is also my mother. She raised me single-handedly after my abusive father left when I was five. We have had our ups and downs in our relationship, but I have a profound respect for my mom and it has been an honor to be able to work on political activism with her.

Erika: Ok, ma.

Diane: What!

E: you have to talk into the tape recorder.

D: What!

E: How have you...

D: What!

E: hahaha! You sound just like Grandma. How do you define domestic violence?

D: Saying I'm just like Grandma! Hahaha! Ok shut it off Erika so I can think!

I define domestic violence as anything that makes another person, that one person is making another person feel small, and putting down their self esteem, whether it be through hitting, through verbal abuse, through emotional putdowns or calling names or any of that stuff. All of that is domestic violence, it's violence against a person's character and soul and body. Is that good?

E: How did you come to this definition?

D: Through personal experience.

E: How do you think it compares with the mainstream version of domestic violence?

D: I think that the mainstream version is usually about physical violence which is really awful but that's not the only kind of violence and that's not necessarily the worst kind of violence either.

thoughts on the NO USE FOR ABUSE Weekend

Looking back from one month away, I feel like I have a good perspective on the planning and events of the No Use for Abuse Weekend. All in all, as organizers we did a good job. We started planning on November first, and the weekend took place on January 24 and 25. There were five people (and sometimes six) at most meetings, and most of these people went away for two to three weeks for the holidays. We planned the workshops, concert, and vigil plus the benefit show for the weekend in 8 meetings, and the organizing including fliers, phone calls, and all other production costs came to about \$35.

First of all I want to say that organizing all these events with five (and sometimes six) people is hard work. Each of us was coordinating one piece of the weekend, and aside from making sure everything in that part was going all right, we had to take on many other tasks to make sure the overall weekend was gonna happen. At times we thought of just dropping the whole idea, and forgetting the event. We were all generally frustrated and trying workers at many different points in organizing. So, with the hard work of every body involved, I really think we did the best we could.

During the weekend, attendance fluctuated. We canceled a few of the workshops because of low attendance, and the ones that did happen were really intimate. There were also only a few men at the workshops, so all workshops specifically for men didn't happen. Four out of the seven planned workshops happened and the attendance ranged from five to ten people per workshop. The concert and vigil were well attended though. There were

around fifty people at the concert and 30 people at the vigil. For the weekend we distributed around 200 fliers, 50 press releases, plus had announcements on TCTV, KAOS, the Young Country radio station, and articles in the Cooper Point Journal, Works in Progress, and on the front page of the South Sounder section of the Olympian.

My observations on the attendance of this weekend, compared to other well attended events I've helped organize, are that some issues are more popular and "safe" than others, and it's not always about how well the event is advertised; especially in this scenario. For Olympia, we did a great job with publicity and media outreach for this event. Silence, shame and ideas of abuse being "a personal issue" that surround domestic violence are things that keep people away. The fact that more people show up for the concert and vigil, where they can watch people perform, speak, play music, read poetry, talk, and otherwise not get involved more than being a voyeur shows the level of comfort people have talking about these issues. The workshops are more personal, where people have to be intimate with their lives and experiences. This scares people, and to a certain extent, they need to be somewhat prepared emotionally to attend. Another factor of attendance is media popularity of the issue. I went to a protest against the bombing of Iraq recently that was advertised less but was attended by around 250 people. The media has been covering issues concerning Iraq for some time now and really building up the tension in people's minds. There is a strong popular anti-war sentiment, and since the war is far away, being an anti-war protester is safe. On the other hand, the media constantly portrays violence as normal (through television programs, sports, etc.) and hardly any anti-domestic violence sentiment. There is hardly any media tension around the issues of domestic violence. Domestic Violence is portrayed as a "private" issue that doesn't affect many people. These reasons all affect the attendance of a weekend focused on domestic violence.

Another aspect of organizing the No Use for Abuse Weekend that I'm critical of is the meeting structure and space. The meetings were loosely facilitated, with no spe-