



ISIS

international
bulletin 12

summer 1979

organizing against rape

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ISIS

ISIS is a resource and documentation center in the international women's liberation movement. It was set up in 1974 by a collective of women to gather materials from local women's groups and the feminist movement and to make these resources available to other women.

The quarterly ISIS International Bulletin reproduces theoretical and practical information and documentation from women's groups and the women's movement around the world. It includes resource listings, reports and notices to help pass on information about what is going on in the movement in other countries and continents and to help in the exchange of ideas, contacts, experiences and resources among women and feminist groups.

If you would like to have notices, information of your activities or resources produced by your women's group included in the ISIS Bulletin, please send them to the ISIS collectives in Rome and Geneva. We would like to exchange the ISIS Bulletin on a regular basis with those who are producing newsletters, magazines and other materials.

international feminist network

ISIS is coordinating the International Feminist Network (IFN), a communication channel through which women can mobilize international support for each other. The IFN was proposed at the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women in Brussels in March 1976 to aid in the mobilization of support and solidarity among the women's movement on an international scale when needed for the struggles and actions of women - as in the cases of rape victims, court cases or strikes of women. The IFN can also be used for rapid spreading of information about international feminist actions and demonstrations. Women needing international support should write or telephone the ISIS collectives in Geneva or Rome giving details of the case and the ways women in other countries can help them. Requests for support will be passed on to the contact women who have volunteered to inform the women's movement in their countries.

This issue of the ISIS Bulletin was prepared by Jane Cottingham and Marilee Karl with help from Constance Lawrence. Printed by Imprimerie Artisanale, Geneva.

Unsigned articles and reviews are by members of the ISIS collective. Other views presented here are not necessarily those of ISIS members.

Graphics : p. 3, *Womansong*, p. 6, Rachel Burger, *cpf*; p. 7, *CASA newsletter*; p. 8, J English / *Off Our Backs / LNS*; p. 10, Rachel Burger, *cpf*; p. 11, Tom Hill; p. 14, Jo Nesbitt, *The Rape Controversy*, National Council for Civil Liberties, UK; p. 15, *Majority Report / LNS*; p. 16, Jo Nesbitt, *The Rape Controversy*; p. 17, *cpf*; p. 19, *Womansong*; p. 21, Peg Averill / *LNS*; p. 22, *bülbül*; p. 24, *Health Advocate / cpf*; p. 26, *National Communications Network*; p. 27, 29, *cpf*; p. 30, 31, *National Communications Network*; p. 32, *What She Wants*; p. 33, *WAVM Newspaper*; p. 35, *Workbook / cpf*; p. 39, *Bar None*.

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ORGANIZING AGAINST

WOMEN HELP WOMEN

R A P E

This bulletin is about rape -- or rather, about women organizing against rape and violence against women. Rape helps us to focus on violence against women which takes many forms. It cannot be looked at in isolation. A feminist analysis demonstrates the political nature of rape and its far-reaching implications for our lives. Rape is the ultimate expression of male domination over and contempt for women as women. All women, whether or not we have been rape victims ourselves, live with the constant threat and fear of rape and this conditions all our lives. The cultural acceptance of rape by a male-dominated society is a means of keeping all women in their place and under control.

Historically, the treatment of rape has shown clearly how women are treated -- as the "property" of men. Rapists have been punished, not for having abused a **woman**, but another **man** -- the father or husband of the raped woman. Throughout history, male dominated society has never seriously done anything to remove the threat of rape, and this includes present day political parties and movements which still refuse to recognize the political nature of rape. At most, men have set up laws and regulations to protect and control their "property".

Women today, however, are organizing all over the world not only to reveal rape for what it really is and to denounce it, but to actively combat rape and violence against women, removing their root causes. The struggle against rape cristalizes in a way the feminist struggle: the right to determine our own lives, have control over our own bodies and our own sexuality and the right and need for autonomy and respect for women.

Focussing on rape then, automatically throws light on the wider issue of violence. Crimes and violence against women include institutional, economic, medical, legal and cultural violence as well as physical. The issue of violence concerns power, which means that violence cannot be separated from a discussion about who has the power in the world. Clearly it is the men who have power: power through institutions, through political parties, through the media, through governments, through development planning, through unions, through multinational corporations.

This bulletin presents a selection of articles from women around the world giving a feminist analysis and perspective on rape. We are emphasizing not just the denunciation of this crime against women but how women are organizing to combat rape and violence against women. The resource section provides a listing of materials produced by women for the purpose of sharing their experiences and strengthening each other in this struggle. We believe that these resources will be very useful for other women. Women all over the world are raising their voices on the issue of rape as the articles in this bulletin indicate, but we found that most of the material produced today still comes from the industrialized countries of the world -- although this is changing, as the materials from India and Mauritius show. The articles and resources also show the complexity of the issue and the diversity of political and tactical approaches in the women's movement. The discussion of rape invariably leads to a discussion of institutional as well as physical violence. Articles in this bulletin dealing with the police, prisons and the law bring this out. Women cannot combat rape only by going through legal channels. These channels themselves do violence against us. Women have also pointed out that we cannot talk about combatting rape without dealing with racism and classism too. The issue of institutional violence raises these questions. Although the limited size of this bulletin does not allow us to pursue all of these points fully, we want to stress them here in the introduction.

We hope that this bulletin will stimulate women in the struggle against violence, that the descriptions of women's initiatives and the resources will be useful to women organizing to combat rape, that the feminist analysis of rape will provide material for further discussion and action. We hope to hear reactions and responses from other women who are breaking their silence about rape and violence.



Jane Cottingham

Marilee Kart

WOMEN HELP WOMEN

In this article from the March/April 1979 issue of *Manushi*, a feminist journal from India, Vibhuti Patel of India interviews Berit Lakey of the Women's Organization Against Rape (WOAR), Philadelphia, USA. *Manushi* is available from A-5 Nizamuddin East, New Delhi 110013, India.

RAPE as an issue defines the common predicament of all women. It is a conscious act of intimidation which is used to keep women in constant fear and anxiety. Even though rape is a crime committed by individual men on individual women, yet it is an issue concerning all women, because it is the fear of a real or potential rape which keeps all women dependent for their protection on men. It is not as if one set of men act as "protectors" while the others violate women. The same man who forbids his wife or daughter to move out alone — who protects them as his personal "property" — violates with impunity the wives and daughters of other men.

Women are forced to believe that they are safe only as the property of this or that man. All male-dominated societies enforce this dependence in women. Thus the man-woman relationship becomes one of power and domination. Therefore, the fight against rape has to be a collective fight of all women against all forms of male domination and oppression of women. It is thus that rape becomes a political issue. In the West, rape is the crucial issue around which feminist organizations unite and fight. Among these feminist bodies is the Women's Organization Against Rape (WOAR). Berit Lakey, director of WOAR was recently on a lecture tour of India.

Berit, what are your views on rape?

Rape graphically conveys that "we are unfree" and keeps women in their place — always terrified, subdued and oppressed. Yet nothing is done about it. The social stigma attached to the victim of rape makes her feel further demoralized, ashamed, guilty and isolated. Much theoretical work has been done on issues like class struggle and economic injustice, but little importance is given to this specific form of women's oppression.

To which strata of society do women who face this problem acutely, belong?

From our (WOAR's) experience of two years in which we have seen 1500 cases in Philadelphia, we can say that rape happens in all social and economic strata. In India, also, rape

and sexual atrocities are committed on women — whether they are adivasis, harijans, typists, college students, rich women or housewives from any economic background. But women from lower economic strata have fewer resources, so they have to come to a government hospital if they have been raped. Rich women consult the best doctors if they are raped and the matter is kept secret. Women from the middle classes don't report the crime because of the social stigma.

Can you throw some light on the relationship between the rapist and the rape victim?

In 50 per cent of cases, the rapist is a person the woman knows — friends, acquaintances, bosses and sometimes even near relatives like cousins, uncles, fathers-in-law, etc. In 10-12 per cent of cases, brothers, fathers and other family members are involved. Fifty per cent of rape-victims are under 18. Many are sexually molested at home. Schoolgoing boys and girls are often the victims of forcible sexual intercourse.

How do you analyse the psychological aspect of rape?

There have been many myths relating to rape like, "because women wear provocative clothes they are raped", "women like to attract males" or "I might wear fashionable clothes because I would like to be admired; this does not mean that I would like to be attacked. Some Freudians say women have a phobia of being raped. To me the word "phobia" means an "irrational psychological condition" while rape is a "political condition". Its victim is any baby, girl or woman, from the age of nine months to 96 years.

Rape kills a woman's self-confidence in her destiny and her body. Thus rape is not sexual engagement but sexual violence. Both men and women can be victims of psychological rape, which is harassment by words or gestures such as obscene phone calls, whistles and pinches. Both physical and psychological rape have as direct objectives domination, aggression, degradation and humiliation.

As regards rapists I would like to tell you that statistics from various studies have shown that 71 per cent of all rapes were well-planned prior to actual practice. Rapists know their target. And it is not only the sex-urge that forces men to rape. Studies of rapists show that most are mentally "normal" with tendencies towards aggression and violence. Many are married or have girlfriends and other sexual outlets and are not "sex-starved". So WOAR says, "The major motive for rape is aggression, violence, humiliation, domination".

What are your views on marital rape?

Laws in the USA now state that a woman can't be raped by her husband. Forcible intercourse without the consent of the wife does take place but such instances of domestic sexual violence do not become public knowledge. The institution of marriage gives the male partner a freehold over the woman partner's body. Violation of a woman's dignity by her husband is as much a crime as when she is violated by X, Y or Z. Even in marriage, "domination dynamics" are at work.

How does WOAR function? What are its aims and objectives?

WOAR's activity is not confined to helping women only. It wants to raise people's awareness. To us it does not seem social work because the eradication of rape requires political work.

We are working in five different areas. The work is divided among (a) administrative teams (b) voluntary development teams (c) legal system teams.

When a rape-victim rings us up, we give her emotional shelter, listen to her experience. We have hot line services which are open for 24 hours of the day. WOAR is connected with hospitals, the police, the courts, psychiatrists and public education institutes. Our volunteers accompany rape-victims to the hospital, they stand beside the victim while a gynaecological examination is going on.

Volunteers also go to the police and to the court when the victim is cross-examined. Sometimes a victim is asked questions which make her feel humiliated and too ashamed to speak out in public. Our volunteer just asks the woman to forget that there are other people in the court-room. She suggests that the victim concentrate on her while making her statement. In this way we try to prevent the woman from breaking down in court.

WOAR also organizes education classes which try to make people more sensitive to this issue. Traditionally, a rape-victim kept the experience to herself and everyone who knew about it treated her as untouchable. But these attitudes are changing. People now show a willingness to talk about rape and sexual atrocities.

WOAR is a legal institution. There have been "illegal organizations" of women against rape and sexual assault. One of them is the SOS (Save Our Sisters). This organization's main activity is to expose the name of the rapist through wall posters like "so and so raped a woman at such and such place". This campaign really creates a stir.

Can you tell us something about WOAR's activists?

At present we have 12 full timers who devote themselves to the cause of WOAR. Many women, including rape-victims, have volunteered for the work. But it is very difficult to continue such work for more than two or three years because women find WOAR's experience very traumatic and emotionally disturbing.

Why do you consider rape to be a political question?

One, because the only solution to the problem is political. We will have to link the fight against rape with our struggle against capitalism under which women are mere sex objects of



the capitalist economy-market. Only organized women can help.

Moreover, other social factors are involved in rape cases in America. Among the 450 men so far executed for rape, 405 were black and poor men. The blacks are always punished. But not one white man has ever been executed for raping a black woman.

Do you have any experience of police-connivance? In our country it is the usual thing. If a rape-victim or her relatives go to the police to lodge a complaint, they are beaten up, and sometimes women are raped by the police themselves. In the cities things are no better. Do such things happen in your country?

There is always police connivance in cases of sexual atrocities and rape. Usually the police try to avoid registering a case; they ask the victim humiliating, irrelevant and insulting questions and put the victim and her relatives off. But because of WOAR things have changed to a great extent. But neither the police nor the law can help us women unless we are organized. So sisters, I repeat again that we will have to treat rape as a political issue, not an individual act. We must fight in a united way.

ONLY ORGANIZED WOMEN CAN HELP.





MARCH AGAINST RAPE

D.C. Area Feminist Alliance Task Force on Violence Against Women

In their work to stop rape, battering and harassment of women, the D.C. Area Feminist Alliance Task Force on Violence against Women has drawn up some underlying principles which present a concise analysis of violence against women. These were used by the Alliance during their organization of a march against violence to explain their actions to the community. We are reprinting these principles here because we feel that they could be very useful for other groups organizing to stop violence against women. They are reprinted with permission of the D.C. Area Feminist Alliance, P.O. Box 19362, Washington D.C. 20006, USA.

PRINCIPLE ONE: SELF-DETERMINATION FOR WOMEN

All people have the right to control our own bodies and sexuality. We should not have to restrict our freedom of movement, our bodies or our activities and behavior in order to be safe. We have the right to freedom from violations of our personal autonomy and our physical integrity on the street, in the home and at the workplace.

PRINCIPLE TWO: POWER FOR WOMEN

To stop violence against women and to exercise the right to control our own bodies, women need power. If women had political power (e.g., access to the legal system, influence over the media, etc.), the attitudes that foster violence against women could be eliminated. Women can become powerful by organizing together to express our will. Women need to break through the barriers of silence that isolate us from each other and to see that an act of violence against one woman is an act of violence against us all.

PRINCIPLE THREE: SELF-DEFENSE FOR WOMEN

Women have the right to self-defense. Self-defense is the ability, both physically and psychologically, to defend oneself against violence. We must understand how an individual woman perceives the threat of violence against her, and her ability to fight back (her size, training, self-concept) when we judge a situation involving self-defense.

PRINCIPLE FOUR: COMMUNITY CENSURE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

We promote the idea of community censure of acts of violence against women. People must speak out and condemn rape and battering as they happen. This means no more complicity: We are asking for a public expression of disapproval — that we will not tolerate violence against women.

What do we mean by violence against women?

By "violence against women", we refer to both specific and general abuse of women in this society. It includes battering rape and other forms of physical domination of women. But we also mean the attitudes which say that women are "fair game". Sexual access to women and physical domination of women are considered male prerogatives according to prevailing attitudes in our society.

What is rape?

Rape is any unwanted sex act or forced sexual contact. Rape can take place anywhere, not just on the streets but in the home or at the workplace. In this context, rape can occur between husband and wife, lovers, friends or strangers. Most rapes are attacks against women of the same race and class group as the rapist.

What is battering?

Battering is violence by someone with whom the victim has a close personal relationship (such as a boyfriend, husband or other family member). It also can include threats of violence which are used to control the victim. One estimate is that there are 28 million battered women in this country.

How are women considered "fair game"?

Attacks against women — including rape, battering, molesting and assault — have been tolerated or even encouraged in many ways. In the movies and on TV, the super macho male is presented as the ideal masculine type. Comedians make jokes about beating their wives. In the legal system, rape victims often are humiliated by lawyers who try to insinuate that they "asked for it". And assault by a husband against a wife rarely is even treated as a crime.

Who rapes and batters?

Any man may be or may become a rapist or batterer. All types of men rape and batter — men of all ages, races, classes and social statuses.

Who gets raped or battered?

All women are the potential victims of rape and violence. Women of all ages, races, classes and appearances are raped and beaten. Some women, however, are more vulnerable to assault because of their living and/or work situations. Women who work nights and must rely on public transportation and women living in buildings with poor security and lighting are more susceptible to assaults. In addition, battered women who lack economic resources, or who have children, find it especially hard to escape a violent home.

Why do men rape and batter women?

Men assault women primarily out of a need to express their power over women, and not out of sexual desire. The majority of rapes are premeditated. Accompanying this need may be hostility toward women and a view of women as sex objects. Rape is an act of humiliating and controlling another person. Men batter women for similar reasons. A man often considers his wife or girlfriend to be his property — someone he has a right to control in any way he chooses.

What can be done? Should we seek to increase police protection and rely on the criminal justice system?

Although we often cannot depend on the police and criminal justice system to protect us, the reality is that there are times when we need their services. Community demands for more foot patrols, for police who are bilingual or are of the same ethnic group as the community in which they work and for more officials (including more women officials) who are sensitive to women's specific needs, are urgent.

However, we know that the power of these institutions can be used against us. Until those agencies are accountable to women and to the community at large — until they respond to priorities set by the people and not by themselves — we must not rely on the criminal justice system to stop violence against women.



What is the long-term solution to ending violence against women?

The ultimate answer lies in changing the basic power relationships between men and women in this society. In every sphere of life — economic, social, political, cultural and spiritual — women are kept down. We have to change and re-create new forms of living, child-raising, structuring work and income, governing, making policy, entertainment and communication. We have to create new values and systems that are based on equality, respect and self-determination for all people, and to fight to eliminate values and systems that are based on beliefs of supremacy of one group of people over another and on hatred and degradation of people and exploitation. Until these philosophical and structural systems are changed fundamentally, men will continue to dominate women and

women will continue to be victims. As long as men have power over women, physical violence will continue to be used to control women.

What can women do to defend ourselves?

Women have the right and must have the opportunity to learn effective means of self-defense. Martial arts (karate, judo, etc.) involve fees for instruction and long hours of practice. Self-defense (street fighting and survival tactics) is more practical as a way to learn to avoid bad situations and how to get out of them if they occur. Toward prevention of rape, we can learn tactics that help deter would-be attackers (i.e., listing first initials only in phone books and on mailboxes,



etc.; wearing clothing which enables us to run; keeping alert; moving confidently and quickly; carrying and using a whistle; having keys in our hands ready for use, etc.). We can learn and teach effective methods of self-defense and develop our fighting skills and physical strength.

Because most women are not as physically strong as most men a woman may need to use more force (e.g., weapons) to defend herself than a man in the same situation might have to use. Therefore, the law should define acceptable means of self-defense on the basis of what is necessary for the particular individual.

What about men?

We seek to increase women's mobility and freedom of movement without relying on the criminal justice system to restrict men's freedom of movement. We seek to promote solutions to rape and battering which involve the re-education of men (by women and by other men) to see that violating another person's autonomy and physical integrity is wrong.

Men must develop a consciousness of how their behaviour is threatening to women (e.g., harassment of women on the street, suddenly walking up behind a woman or following her too closely, etc.). Men have a responsibility for developing this sensitivity and for dealing with the behaviour of other men.

We want to live in a society in which men and women look out for and take care of each other, not a society in which men are the "protectors" and women are dependent upon men for protection. The role of protector gives men more power over women and prevents women from increasing our own power. We want all individuals to have the right and ability to protect themselves and to be autonomous. What we demand of men is that they confront other men who are being violent and that they support the right of women to defend ourselves.

Why doesn't the criminal justice system work?

First, the majority of men who rape or batter are not arrested. Police, judges, prosecutors and hospital officials commonly refuse to believe or take seriously a woman's complaint that she has been raped. Similarly, police and prosecutors are reluctant to intervene to stop spousal battering because they see it as the "husband's prerogative" or just a "family feud". And the conviction rate of those arrested is low — practically non-existent in cases of battering. Thus, the system is not a deterrent to acts of violence against women. Second, those who are arrested and convicted serve time in prisons where violence is constantly reinforced. Furthermore, upon release, these men rejoin a society which condones and even fosters violence against women. Third, the criminal justice system is often ineffective for handling a man who batters. The battered woman may be dependent on him for financial support for herself and her children, so that she is reluctant to prosecute him. Finally, the criminal justice system is racist, classist and sexist.

What do we mean by saying that the criminal justice system is racist, classist and sexist?

The structure of the criminal justice system reflects and perpetuates the inequalities of the larger society. In varying ways, the system functions to keep women, poor people and third world people in their "place" as less than equal to white, upperclass men. American rape laws, for example, are the descendants of laws originally set up to protect "property" (i.e., women) of white men. The rapist was considered to have committed a crime against the husband's or father's property rights. Third world women who lived independently of men were given little, if any, value by the law. And the woman who was raped by her husband had no legal recourse at all. Many of these sexist attitudes are still part of the law.

The racism and classism of the legal system are evident in many ways. Without money, it is usually impossible for a person to receive the same quality of legal service that a wealthy person can obtain. The people who are arrested and brought into the system in the first place are overwhelmingly the poor and racial minorities. And the history of the death penalty shows that those who are black or brown are much more likely to be sentenced to die.



What can women do to end violence against women?

Women can act as individuals and in groups to undertake various approaches to ending violence against women. We can work for improved legislation, public safety, services to victims, public policy and community education. Any action which increases women's self-sufficiency — including adequate, available child-care and economic independence — will help prevent battering because it will give women the option to remove themselves from a situation of battering and dependence on a man. We, the women of the D.C. Area Feminist Alliance, the Rape Crisis Center and the Task Force on Abused Women, have united to organize this march and have formulated its demands as a demonstration of what women can do in the D.C. area. These are the short-term measures we can work for now to help end violence against women.

How can the community deal with rape and assault?

People in the community should openly express disapproval of acts of violence against women and intervene to prevent them. We are against "staying out of other people's business" as an excuse, and we are against silence.

We should demand that our community resources (e.g., tax dollars) be used to eliminate rape and assault. We should also stop spending our own money on products that are sold to us by advertisements that foster anti-woman attitudes.

We should develop ways to institutionalize community censure of violence against women. Neighborhood groups, church groups and unions or other workplace groups must begin to take responsibility for their own members and refuse to tolerate or accept violence against women. This march is a beginning step in building a sense of community responsibility. If you endorse this march, then you accept the ideas of this paper and share in the responsibility for ending rape, battering and other forms of violence against women.

□

I FIND THE DEFENDANT
NOT GUILTY OF RAPE
AND SENTENCE THE PLAINTIFF
TO 1 YEAR TO LIFE FOR
INCONVENIENCING
THE COURT.



Joyful

INDIA

BREAKING FEAR'S SILENCE

Women all over India — peasants, workers and students — have been speaking out and organizing against rape and harassment of women. The March/April 1979 issue of the Indian feminist journal Manushi reports on this. We are reprinting here excerpts from several articles giving an overview of these actions. The introduction is from the Manushi editorial. This excellent issue is available from A-5 Nizamuddin East, New Delhi 110013, India.

The reports and articles we received for this issue testify to a greater ferment and restlessness among women. While on the one hand, sexual violence and atrocities on women are increasing, there are promising signs that women are beginning to organize themselves to demand Our Right To Our Bodies. This issue seems to have the potential of uniting women irrespective of class, caste or religion. Isn't there a lot in common between the slogans raised by the university women's morcha against eve-teasing in Delhi, and what the Andhra dalit women have to say about their organizations against rape? Eve-teasing and rape are manifestations of the same attitude towards us as women — an attitude which denies us our humanity, which reduces us to mere objects: mere bodies to be used or abused.

If these bodies are not on piecemeal sale for a few rupees, or life-time sale with a dowry thrown in, then they can be trespassed on, and sampled at will. If they are not the well-guarded property of one man, then any man is free to buy them if he can, or to grab them if he can't.

And this man is not necessarily a pervert, a "goonda". He could be the respectable elderly gentleman edging closer to you in the cinema; anonymous hands pinching you in the bus; a boyfriend who expresses his love for you by "screwing" you or any girl who comes his way, while his father keeps a virgin bride ready for him. He is often our employer, whose molestation we have to put up with to hold the job; the landlord whose fields we cultivate; the policeman we go to for help. And quite often "it's all in the family" — an uncle, a cousin, a father-in-law. There was a recent report from Delhi of a father who raped his 15-year-old daughter. And of course our own husbands, thanks to whom sexual violence and rape have become a part of our lives. We are "lawfully" expected to submit to their unchallengeable property-right over our bodies — a right superior to our own right to control our bodies!

Are we to blame if we are molested? Is it because we dress provocatively, invite attention, want to be whistled at, enjoy being teased, "ask for it" when we are raped? No, sisters,

this is an old lie, a male myth — that every woman wants to be pursued, dominated, raped. When a man dresses attractively, is he sexually attacked by women? No, eve-teasing is not a way of expressing appreciation, of reaching out to another human being; it's a way of spitting out contempt at us for being women. And this is true whether the remark hurled at us is "Hello Sweetie" or an obscenity. It is an act of aggression, psychological and physical, to humiliate and terrify us, just as much as is the rape of a dalit woman. **It is a systematic attempt to destroy our sense of self.**

What provocation do dalit women offer? Why has rape by upper caste men acquired the force of an institution in their lives? Do the landlords not use rape as a way of degrading those belonging to the lower castes? There has been a tremendous spurt in the incidence of gang-rape of dalit women, to punish the rural poor for trying to organize themselves and fight exploitation.

The assaults on women may take different forms in different settings, but the message is clear: the streets are not ours, the city after dark is not ours, our own bodies are not ours. Should we be more "careful", "non-provocative"? The logic of this would be: do not step out of the house (if you have one), go into purdah. And if we are raped at home? By landlords' men raiding our homes at night? By religious fanatics and communalists? By drunken husbands? (Marital rape is not a legal offence!) What then? It is only by ceasing to be at all, to be as women, that we can stop "provoking" aggression. We have to realise that we are not to blame if we are attacked — that **sexual violence is a conscious process of intimidation to keep women oppressed and in a permanent state of fear.** It is time for us to start being more provocative. We must provoke anger, by fighting back — like the women in Andhra who have formed organizations to defend themselves, like the women in Maharashtra who took out morchas against rape, women in Tamilnadu who conducted an anti-obscenity campaign.

This is going to provoke hostility, repression, violence. Wherever women have been protesting, the entire power structure, from the local to the national, has cracked down with greater brutality. Witness the way Andhra women have been hunted from their homes, JNU girl students were beaten up in Delhi, the heavy odds against which the Sangamner women organized their morcha. Women coming out of their isolation onto the streets, to protest, represent a threat to the whole power structure, from the family to the national, political level. The people's struggle enters a more militant phase when women begin to participate in larger numbers.

And this is what is beginning to happen — localized, embryonic, but definite beginnings.

At this stage it is vitally important that we keep in touch with each other, know what women in other parts of the country are doing, learn from each others' experiences. Many readers

emphasised this need for coordination. We hope that *Manushi* will play a role in developing links between localized groups and forging their struggles into a united women's movement in this country. □

"We have formed the Sangham to make our lives worth living, to protect ourselves from rape and insult".

SO spoke Kankamma, a young peasant woman, president of the Ryotu Mahila Sangham, Kodurpaka village.

Kodurpaka falls in Sirsilla taluk which, with Jagityala taluk, has seen severe repression of the year-long peasant movement, culminating in the notification of these taluks as "disturbed areas" on October 4, 1978. These two taluks are part of Andhra Pradesh.

In November, the People's Union for Civil Liberties, Delhi, sent a Fact Finding Committee to investigate the situation in these areas. In the course of its investigation, the committee met and talked with a large number of peasant activists, including Kankamma and others from her village.

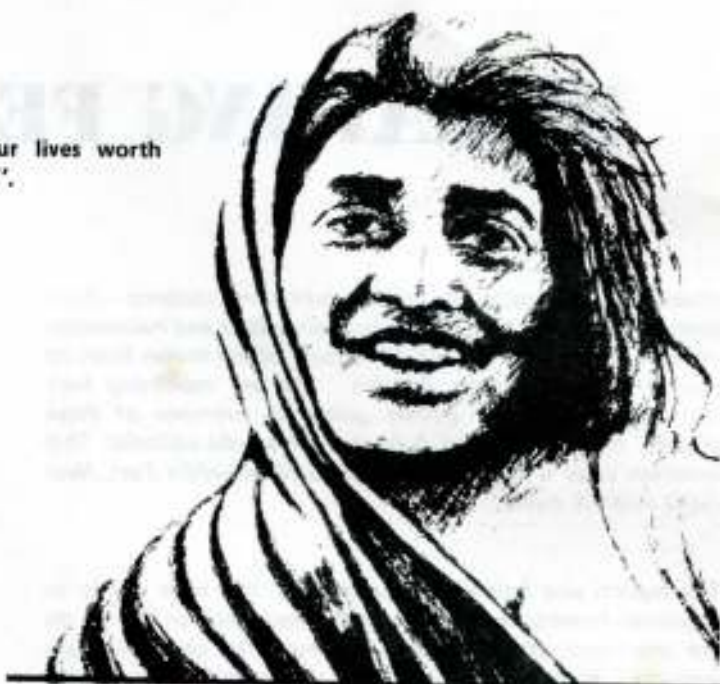
Kankamma had fled Kodurpaka and sought sanctuary with friends and relatives in another village. But she boldly accompanied us to her home village to take us to the house of Rajavva, a fifty-year-old activist of the Ryotu Mahila Sangham, who had been raped by the goondas of the landlord.

The landlord, Shri Venkatrao, who owns two hundred acres, was not present in Kodurpaka when the committee went there, but his "men" were everywhere, right from the road, where Venkatrao (who is also a member of the Lions' Club) has constructed a bus stand, to every place inside the village visited by the committee. His father, though present, refused to meet us.

Rajavva, the victim of the rape, had left the village with other key activists of the Ryotu Mahila Sangham. Her old husband had been beaten very badly and could hardly talk. It was Kankamma who narrated events, though she quietened down for a while when the landlord's men came and joined the group surrounding the committee. About ten to fifteen women had also gathered but they moved away as soon as a committee member attempted to question them.

The attack on the women activists came a few weeks after the notification. "On October 29", said Kankamma, "Nampally, Potinarsiah, Kondiah, Bariah, Hanumiah, Padolla Narsiah, Sudha Narsiah, and Ventiah slaughtered a buffalo, ate the meat and got drunk. In the evening, they came to Harijanwada from the fields, with the bottles in their pockets. They wanted to rape me. But I had not been living in my house for some time. Then they wanted to rape Bannava. She was not to be found".

Not finding either of these two women, the goondas beat up another activist and her husband, who fled towards



Harijanwada. The goondas then came to Rajavva's house and took her to the fields. When her men-folk tried to help her, they beat them up and tied them to poles.

"There in the fields, seven men raped her. She lost consciousness. They brought her back and threw her into the house. When we tried to take her to the hospital, no cart, rickshaw or any other vehicle was allowed to take her".

They managed to get her to Karimnager Hospital only the next evening. Rajavva's eldest son went to lodge a complaint with the police. The Sub-Inspector said, "Do you know what rape means? Your father owes the landlord Rs 3,000. You are making up a false case to evade the debt". However, the rape case was registered — No. 101/78, P.S. Sirsilla. The committee was told that the police had come and made enquiries but no action had been taken.

"Day in and day out we are exposed to such treatment", Kankamma continued, "The *doras* (landlord's) goondas of our own caste have vowed to rape us, to beat us and to ransack our houses. They are not letting us live in our homes. Nor are they allowing us to enter the village. After the Ryotu Mahila Sangham was formed, Kondiah, my own cousin, took an oath that he would rape me whenever he got the chance".

As we walked with Kankamma to another house which had been ransacked by the goondas, a menacing crowd of men and women, many armed with spears, gathered around us. They were people of her own caste; they hurled abuses and threats at Kankamma who withstood it all defiantly. The *mukhia*, and old man who is the community leader of the 150 Harijan families in Kodurpaka, said, "We must stay united. We must be with the *dora* and keep to the old customs. No need of any Sanghams".

"Kankamma has brought trouble to the village. We were fine until she and the other women started their meetings", shouted someone else in the crowd. As the situation grew increasingly tense, we put Kankamma in our car and left Kodurpaka. A group of the landlord's men were on watch at the crossroads outside the village as, in the deepening twilight, we transferred Kankamma to the jeep that would take her back to her refuge.

The Sanghams

What are these Sanghams that the *mukhia* did not want in his village? He was referring, not just to the Ryotu Mahila Sangham but also to the Ryotu Coolie Sanghams (peasant organizations) which have been formed in both Jagityala and Sirsilla taluks. In both taluks, the Ryotu Coolie Sanghams have led a powerful and popular agitation against illegal landholdings, against bribes and fines extracted by the landlords, against *vetti* system of compulsory labour for the landlords, and for higher wages.

Almost every report of the demonstrations and meetings mentions the presence of peasant women in large numbers. Women participated most in the Pudipalli Ryotu Coolie Sangham meeting. In Gummalapuru (Mettapalli taluk) it is reported that on October 21, 1978, the police came in a jeep to arrest the organizers of the newly formed Ryotu Coolie Sangham. Hundreds of women surrounded the jeep. One young woman took the ignition key of the jeep and hid it.

After a few hours, more policemen come to the rescue of their besieged colleagues. They fired in the air and made a lathi charge in which many women were injured. In some villages women have been implicated in false cases. In many villages, the Ryotu Coolie Sanghams have organized a social boycott, that is, a total strike against the landlords. No villager, man or woman, would go to work for the landlord during this time.

The peasant movement, which has been organized after the revocation of the Emergency and has developed momentum through last year, has attracted the wrath of the landlords, the local police, and finally of the Andhra Pradesh Government. Seventy landlords reportedly called upon the Chief Minister, Chenna Reddy, urging him to take stern measures against the peasants. Ten days later, the two taluks were notified "disturbed areas" under the Andhra Pradesh Suppression of Disturbances Act....

In both Chakapalli and Kodurpaka, the women's organizations appear to be ancillary to the peasant organizations. The women's organizations are being formed in the context of the peasant movement against the big landlords and are organically linked with it.

Meeting A Need

The Mahila Sanghams, however, meet a specific need of the women of the poorer classes who are sexually abused by men of the upper classes. There are districts in this region where it is customary to send a girl to the landlord when she attains puberty. Village women are also made available to the landlord when his wife is pregnant. Over the years, this sexual exploitation by the upper class men has become part of the daily life of the poorer women. But now women are beginning to resist and revolt.

The attacks on Rajava and other women activists are, on the one hand, part of the repression of the movement of the poor peasants. They are also specifically directed against these women as women who are defying "old customs" and practices which are degrading to the female sex. The repression has taken the form of sexual violence, either threatened or actual — from molestation to rape. This form of repression is by no means isolated or accidental. It is an important part of the spectrum of repression let loose on the struggles of the oppressed for their rights. Witness the recent Bijatpur violence on women and the landless poor by the landlord's goondas, the rape of women and killing of workers by the police in Bailadilla.

Though the Ryotu Mahila Sanghams are only at a nascent and embryonic stage, these and other such organizations are of vital significance. The women's movement in India can evolve its own coherent and distinct shape only by examining and participating in movements for change at the grassroots level, movements that aim at ending exploitative relations between employer and worker, landlord and peasant, man and woman.

The inspiration and the strength of the Indian women's movement will come from women in the factories, fields and plantations, fighting against exploitation, both economic and sexual — women like Kankamma, who are breaking fear's silence. Kankamma says: "Earlier, we never spoke publicly of how we were treated. Now we have formed the Mahila Sanghams and we will struggle".

SUDESH VAID



RAPE PROTEST

INCIDENTS of rape are not a rarity in rural India. Any attempt to bring the criminals to justice sets off a chain of reactions which prove how the entire power structure in this country is weighted against women, especially if they happen to be Dalit, poor, working class women.

In January this year, some of us in this taluk town in western Maharashtra read a small newspaper item about the rape of a woman worker here. We decided to organize progressive public opinion in the town to condemn the criminals and demand justice in this case.

The police informed us that the attack had taken place at about 9.30 at night, on a road a little outside the town, and that it was a case of multiple rape by four men. The woman was a worker in a tobacco factory, which is a major employer of female labour in the town. The woman had been hospitalized, and had lodged the complaint a few days later. The police assured us that the matter "was being attended to".

We then held two small meetings to discuss what action we could take. College students, schoolteachers, and trade union organizers, all agreed to hold a protest demonstration. The girl students we talked to told us that the incident had already affected their freedom of movement; parents warned them against going out in the evening, and one girl was told that she might have to leave college. The girls felt that this was wrong and that the townspeople should take the responsibility of ensuring their security. Some girls complained about eve-teasing in college and some were afraid that those who joined the *morcha* would be harassed by boys in college. Most trade unions also responded favourably. The trade unions here are affiliated to one political party or other. The town in general prides itself on its "progressive" tradition, Communist trade unions are influential, and political meetings are usually well attended.

We held a meeting in the office of a progressive trade union, where we fixed the date of the demonstration, and drew up a leaflet calling on citizens to join us. Some women from the factory, where the rape victim had been working, also attended. An activist from their union was present; in fact it was in that office that the meeting was held. The company for which they work is owned by a local capitalist who has several factories and is also a trustee of the local college.

The demonstration became a subject for conversation and gossip. "Who was the woman?" many people asked. "Oh, she was a loose woman", answered others. Some asked us why we were taking up the cause of a woman of "doubtful" character. We talked to as many people as possible, making the

SABOTAGED

point that whatever the woman's character might be, quadruple rape was a case of terrible violence. Also, why were they keen on knowing the identity of the woman, and not that of the criminals?

We learnt from some male students that the criminals were not "goondas" but were the sons of "respectable" traders. These boys, who live near the centre of town, had been awakened at night by noises of a scuffle, when the attackers were forcibly bringing the woman to their rooms. They came out to investigate, but the night-watchman told them to keep away.

We had discussions with male college students, many of whom come from nearby villages. They felt that the protest was a significant action and agreed to mobilize support. In their experience, it is usually women from poorer classes who get raped, and because the rapists are usually men from influential families, the incidents are rarely reported. We also spoke about the oppressive relations between men and women in this society, and about how boys look at girls.

The next morning a girl student from the college came to see me. She was agitated. "The women from the tobacco factory have withdrawn their names from the leaflet. One of their union activists told us that the woman had a loose character, and the rape happened with her consent". I was at first taken aback, and then angry. I knew that the local union leaders were complacent about the status quo and acted as paid go-betweens in labour disputes. But I had not expected them to actively oppose us on a social issue like this.

We women then distributed the leaflets in the town. We visited the *beedi* factories and spoke to women workers about the incident. These women immediately grasped the significance of the demonstration, and felt that such acts of violence against women constituted a threat to every woman's safety. However, it was hard to fight the influence of the established trade unions' politics in such a short time. As an activist said to us, "The workers are like sheep. When we tell them to come, they come". This is how the trade unions in the town function!

The next day I heard that the college principal had received phone calls from the owner of the tobacco factory and from a trade union leader, asking him to discourage his students from participating in the *morcha*.

The principal called me later, told me that he had been informed by an "unprejudiced" source that the woman had not been raped, that she was a prostitute who had done it for money.

I replied that I knew the factory owner had called him, and also said that we had checked the facts. But the attitude of the principal was enough to dissuade most students from taking part.

We made one more attempt to talk to the women of the tobacco factory. This time they tried to avoid us, saying, "She was a bad woman. She doesn't work here now. She was a temporary worker. We have nothing to do with her". When we continued to press the point, they finally admitted that their "leader" had visited the factory that morning and warned them not to join in the *morcha*. He used a subtle argument to convince them: "If the woman had been attacked while she was going to work, or coming back from work, then it would have concerned us. As it is, this incident has nothing to do with us".

So, as usual, the woman victim of the rape, far from receiving public sympathy, has been subjected to a slander campaign conducted by the most influential members of the community— industrialist and philanthroper, working class leader, college principal.

The demonstration was small. About thirty boy students participated, but only three girls dared to face the threats and pressures brought to bear on them. About seventy or eighty women workers also joined the action.

But there is no doubt that those who stayed at home felt a little uneasy that night. □

—Vandana Sonalkar

RAPE & THE LAW

FOCUS ON FRANCE

In this section, we reproduce three pieces from France, with special emphasis on the law, the way in which it treats women, and the way in which women have responded to the heavy penalties for rapists.

The first piece consists of extracts taken from the **Dossier sur le viol**, prepared by the Committee on Rape of the organisation **Choisir**. **Choisir** is a national organisation of women which began in the early 1970's under the inspiration of Gisèle Halimi, a lawyer, to fight for free, legal abortion and contraception. Gisèle Halimi herself has fought in court for many women who were accused under the pre-1975 law of having illegal abortions (the 1975 law made abortion legal up to 12 weeks, but it comes up for revision in 1980).

More recently, **Choisir** has become involved in the fight against rape, and in supporting women who take rapists to court. The most publicized of these cases was that of Anne Tonglet and Araceli Castellano, two Belgian women who were raped by three men near Marseilles, France, in 1974. The details of their story, given in **Crimes Against Women** by Diana Russell (see resources section in this Bulletin), are a damning example of how the law treats raped women:

"The next day we appeared before the magistrate - an appalling woman, cold, cutting and aggressive. The questions she asked were typical of the sort of trap laid for women. For example, "Do you want to live?" she asked, "Do you value your life?". We were silent, "Come on, I'm in a hurry, I have no time to waste. Yes or no?" She demanded. "Yes, I want to live, I value my life", we both said. She took this simple assertion as evidence of consent. To her it meant that we would rather submit to physical outrage than expose our lives to risk. Furthermore the fact that we were

homosexual was interpreted by the court as a provocation, and as yet another insult to the manhood of the three men.

... "In September 1975, one year after we were raped, the reduction of the charge of rape to one of assault and battery meant that we appeared in front of a court of summary jurisdiction. We claimed that the court was not competent to try our case. Our women lawyers refused to plead, since the fact that we had been raped was not recognised. Three weeks later, the court, presided over by a woman, declared itself not competent, and referred our case to an Assize Court. This was a great victory, as this sort of thing hardly ever happens... These victories are thanks to the solidarity of women from many countries in Europe and elsewhere who have sent telegrams, organised petitions, and been present in court at all our trials up to now. Without these women, without their support, we could never have distanced ourselves from this rape enough to be able to talk to you about it now".

Their case finally came up in the Assize Court in 1978. They were represented by Gisèle Halimi, and with the enormous support from women all over the world, their case was won. One of the men was given a 6-year prison sentence, and the other two were given four years' detention. Yet the court case itself was extremely unpleasant, with insults being hurled at women outside the courtroom, and the lawyers for the defense making constant digs at Anne and Araceli.*

The whole issue, however, raised the question of whether we should demand prison sentences for rapists, or whether the fight against rape should not rather also be directed against the patriarchal penal system. The second and third pieces, therefore, present the two sides of the debate. They

are taken from *le Nouvel Observateur, France*. All translation from the French by ISIS.

* A full report of the court case and the outcome, with commentaries, is published in the magazine *Choisir: la cause des femmes*, no. 33, June 1978. Available from: 102, rue St. Dominique, 7507 Paris, France, price FF5.00. The magazine is monthly, in French.



HISTORICAL DEFINITION OF RAPE

The first known definition of rape subsumes it under theft of a man's property, i.e. of the father if the woman was a virgin, or the husband if she was not. History has never defined rape *per se* — as sexual aggression against a woman, and has simply defended the property or "goods" of men. According to Hammourabi law, for example, a man who raped a betrothed virgin could be killed. If he raped a married woman, this was considered adultery and both of them were thrown in the river. The Hebrews stoned people in such cases. Later, still in Hebrew law, someone who raped a virgin was liable to pay 50 pieces of silver to her father, in compensation for the loss of bride price.

The pattern which emerges shows that the more the law considered rape as destruction or theft of property, the more serious was the punishment of the rapist. To illustrate this: in England during the 10th century, a man raping a virgin was killed and his animals mutilated; during the time of William the Conqueror, a rapist was castrated and has his eyes put out. In the 13th century, the manorial courts broadened the concept of rape to include — at least in theory — "mothers of families, religious people, widows, concubines and even prostitutes", but it seems the law was almost never applied in these cases.

At the end of the 13th century rape of a married woman was considered the same as rape of a virgin — punishable by 2 years' imprisonment and a fine, and later by the death penalty. At the same time it was declared that rape was impossible within marriage. Nonetheless rape became a question of public and State security, punishable under the Crown.

If history has had a restrictive view of rape, the law today hardly deals better with it: the notion that rape has to do with stealing from another man is still dominant. In fact rape is defined essentially as "the forced penetration by a man's penis of the victim's vagina" — that is, implying the possibility of illegitimate pregnancy. This definition excludes not only all other forms of sexual violence (sodomy, fellatio, penetration of the vagina by foreign bodies, etc.), but also rape within marriage. The latter is still not recognised, which underlines the clear relationship between rape and the defiling of a man's property.

In France today, rape is considered an attack on decency, and therefore a crime. Yet it is the only crime for which the accused is allowed attenuating circumstances which depend on the victim's personality. It is also the only crime for which the victim must prove her innocence, i.e. not having consented; and the best way for her to prove this is to show she was wounded, or better still killed! The law tends to treat the victim as the accused.

This is why so few women have dared to bring a rape case to trial until now. They are either scared of facing the police and the law, or they are pressured by society not to disclose this "shameful" (for them) event. Women have been systematically accused or suspected of having provoked the aggression.

Since 1975 women, especially in France, have been fighting for rape to be judged as a crime and recognised as a criminal attack against the dignity and liberty of all human beings.

As feminists we want a redefinition of rape to include all sexual violence, whether or not it involves coitus. Violence implies that the victim does not consent. Thus rape is possible within marriage.

In this way, we want to show that the dignity of all human beings must be respected and that women whose dignity and liberty are attacked through rape have the right to be treated as human beings. They have the right to be treated under the law, not as guilty parties or as minors because they don't behave according to the roles which men assign them (going out alone at night, hitch-hiking, etc.) but as adults responsible for their choices and actions.

Some statistics about rape in France

In 1975 there were 1,589 charges of rape in France. Given that as few as one in fifteen cases of rape are actually reported, this means that there are probably about 20,000 cases of rape committed in France each year. Of the rapists brought to court in 1973, 291 were convicted, and 218 were convicted in 1974.

The cases of rape increased by 2.1% from 1973 to 1974, and by 3.3% from 1974 to 1975. For the whole period 1963-1973 they increased by 55.8%.

In 1974 a police census shows that of the 1469 people charged with rape, 14.5% were minors, and 28.4% were foreigners; but it must be taken into account that it is easier to bring charges against a foreign worker than against a neighbour. In addition there are considerably less foreigners brought to justice according to the figures of the Assise court: in 1972, of the 289 convicted rapists, 251 were Frenchmen, i.e. 86.9% ; 54.3% were married, 40.8% had no children, and 30.1% had many children (between four and nine). The kinds of people convicted were:

- 69.8% workers
- 14.7% unemployed
- 7.3% farmers/farm labourers
- 6.6% office workers
- 0.8% executives
- 0.4% professional workers
- 0.4% teachers

is, for it is the only one we have. Is this tantamount to turning towards repression? **Objectively-speaking**, yes. The very process of civilians bringing charges, sets a repressive machinery in motion. This is a judicial fact we can do nothing about. But what is the alternative? To accuse raped women a second time, this time with being repressive? This is just a new form of violence for which certain feminists feel guilty on behalf of their victims. First there is shame, then silence, then fear. Thanks to their own courage, to Choisir and to women's solidarity, raped women have come out of a kind of coma. But what about justice? "I am fascinated by this paradox", wrote Françoise Mallet-Joris about the trial in Aix. "On the one hand you have the misogynists who will always believe a woman is at least partially responsible in a rape case, and on the other hand so-called progressive people are claiming that women are also responsible for the repressive nature of the law to which they are appealing. So the raped woman has no way out. She is the primary cause both of the rape and of the verdict..."

People who say we should not bring charges against migrant workers are simply confusing the issue politically, unless there is a personal choice not to bring charges. First of all, it is wrong to put migrant workers in the middle of the debate about rape, since they are rarely rapists. In France the great majority of rapists are ordinary Frenchmen. But, migrant worker or any other worker, the rapist is a rapist. Politically speaking, he is no longer the oppressed person demanding the social justice and changed society which true feminists are also demanding.

The strength of feminism is that it is fighting to create new

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IMPRISONMENT FOR RAPE?

Josyane Moutet, Colette Auger, Monique Antoine

Translated from an article in Le Nouvel Observateur, Paris, No. 707, 29 May - 8 June, 1978.

Imprisonment can only make those who suffer it feel more vindictive. It will not diminish the number of rapists.

We feel obliged to come into the debate about rape in order to clarify our point of view, so that it is not distorted.

When Gisèle Halimi asked us several weeks ago to come to a meeting of "feminist lawyers", we declined, telling her that we didn't think it was appropriate since so many women are doing things about rape outside the limelight of the recent rape trials. Women are writing, making films, demonstrating and holding discussions, creating art, and in fact living out their revolt in many ways. These women come from all social milieux, and are becoming more and more numerous. All these expressions are necessary, and nobody — and certainly not us — should claim to have a monopoly, or "the right line" for combatting rape.

Since the beginning we have thought it important to deal with the law. But to say that only a "radical change in attitudes"

relationships between men and women, by destroying not only economic exploitation, but also male-female domination. Otherwise there would be no point in being a feminist — we could simply all belong to unions. Don't let's fool ourselves: the question of punishment for rapists would simply not arise if all convicted rapists came from the upper classes. The struggle against rape begins by the struggle against all rapists.

If we were talking about preventing police brutality, accidents at work, or racism, the discussion would be very different. Leftist-feminists have fallen into a trap. The question of punishment for rape cannot be raised by itself, outside the issue of punishment as a whole, because this is precisely the issue. The recourse to justice is pathetically necessary for raped women, as is conviction of the rapist. Anne and Araceli said this very clearly, as do all raped women. And what else is there to do? Be silent? Or encourage private justice in the form of vigilante committees or brigades of women who go about castrating or killing rapists (as some women's groups in the USA have proposed doing)? Don't we have the right to reply that there is no final answer to this question?

Rape is a question of culture, but surely the punishment of rape is a question of civilisation?

...I see only one line of action, which must be continuous and will take many forms. We must force society to examine itself, by changing our culture and by radically transforming attitudes. "Laws cannot make people do what they are not already prepared to do by custom", said Montesquieu. We must fight so that words, images, books, education, schools, everything, show that rape is outlawed.



will "prevent" rape is not enough. We must try to clarify what the means are for changing attitudes, and we must especially question imprisonment as a solution to the horrors suffered by women who are raped.

It must be emphasized that justice is done in the name of fathers and husbands by judges who are protecting "their" women by giving prison sentences. Women should not feel reassured by this judicial system: they are being dealt with by a patriarchal law.

This analysis does not denounce rape as a crime against women, nor does it question recourse to justice as a consciousness-raising tool or even as a method of struggle. A judicial tribunal can be used for consciousness-raising. But imprisonment will not reduce the number of rape cases. This

is why we reject open public trials which are more of a spectacle than a debate.

The women's struggle has shown that the means are at least as important as the end. Surely it's necessary to limit certain actions when we know the limited effectiveness of these actions? Rather than passively allowing the machinery of justice to profit from raped women's great need of it by imposing prison sentences.

Thus, one of us felt compelled to impose her own limits when confronted by rapists who were migrant workers: "I know that the migrant worker is not very often a rapist, and that it is only the judicial system which points the finger at such a person in the punishment it metes out. But as a lawyer faced with this problem, I can never forget what the system does everyday to migrant workers — blacks and arabs — in a foreign country".

If imprisonment is not a deterrent for every crime, then it never is. There are no exceptions, not even for rapists.

Women today want to throw off the restrictions which history has put on them. But even if in our "civilised" countries today when these restrictions cannot be likened to a prison, there are still many women who feel strongly that we must reject any kind of repression, especially, prison, as an exemplary punishment.

For us, adopting this legal stance in the midst of the fight against rape is very difficult. By asking for suspended sentences dependent on good behaviour (which is provided for under the penal code), we are refusing the notion that seriousness of a crime carries with it a prison sentence. In this way we want to denounce both rape as a crime, and the inadmissibility of a legal system — which we did not construct — being the only body responsible for meting out prison sentences. Is this what Gisèle Halimi calls an attitude of being guilty? Quite the contrary, raped women are not guilty since prison sentences are chosen only by judges.

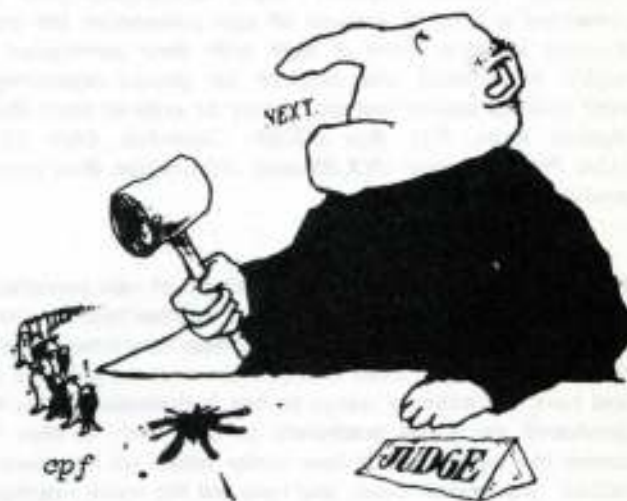
We believe it should be possible to act within the law (since we reject private police forces, vigilantes and personal revenge) to break down the symbols of repression: imprisonment and fines. It must be possible to use the lesser of the two evils — money, even if we have to question what this means for women — to help reduce the greater evil — prison.

We must then enter into a fundamental political debate concerning the respect of all life-giving activity which includes sexuality, and the rejection of all violence including sexual violence. Our common aim as women is to take control over our own bodies so that we are no longer sex-objects and so that our sexuality can be expressed in terms of mutual exchange and not violence.

If we accept the institutional repression of this patriarchal society which itself is founded on violence, we can never question that society or its violence. Repression by imprisonment only creates fear, and adds fuel to the fire of violence. And hatred will never lead to respect for women and their sexuality. As we saw during the trial at Aix — men outside spat in our faces. The repression which has been used since

the beginning of the campaign against rape, the long prison sentences, have simply led to an increasing contempt for women, their increased vulnerability and therefore an increased need to have them protected. It is important for women to have recourse to justice in order to come out of their ghetto of silence, but at the same time it is indispensable to monitor the function and role of the judicial system. If there is no analysis, no questioning, and no struggling to change such a system, it will contribute to destroying our aim which is to fundamentally question our whole society.

Why should anyone feel "furious" by the expression of different points of view? On the contrary, let's have no more monopolies on struggles, and let's have constructive criticism rather than demeaning punishments which echo the history and norms of men.



FEMINIST OFFENSIVE AGAINST RAPE IN ITALY

Feminists in Italy are preparing a new campaign against rape which includes the collection of 50,000 signatures needed to present a new law on rape. The new law would combine the existing laws on rape and lewdness into one and make any sexual assault on a woman against her will a crime, including assault by a woman's husband. The new law would provide for immediate trials open to the public (unless the victim requests otherwise) which would permit the presence of the women's movement at the trials. The law would also permit the women's movement to constitute itself plaintiff in the case. Questions about the woman's personal life and sexual behaviour would not be allowed. The law would abolish the old Italian legislation which still refers to "crimes of honor". Part of the campaign is to find means of self-financing the costs involved in collecting and authenticating the signatures. The new law has been collectively designed and discussed by the women's movement in Italy.

Although some political parties are considering introducing new legislation on rape, Italian feminists strongly feel that the discussions which will be generated all over the country during the collection of signatures is a very important aspect of bringing about change.

FREEING OUR LIVES

A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF RAPE PREVENTION

*In an excellent 25-page booklet entitled **Freeing Our Lives** the staff of "Community Action Strategies to Stop Rape" (CASSR), Women Against Rape, Columbus, Ohio have presented a feminist analysis of rape prevention. We are re-printing excerpts from it here with their permission. We highly recommend this booklet for groups organizing to stop violence against women. It may be ordered from Women Against Rape, P.O. Box 02084, Columbus, Ohio 43202, USA. Price per copy US\$.85 plus .40 postage. Bulk rates are available.*

Most rape victims are women. The threat of rape pervades our lives. Yet, until recently, the issue of rape has been considered inappropriate for action by women. Men have interpreted and responded to rape. Even though men have perpetrated rape and have had minimal reason to fear it themselves, they have developed the social machinery to deal with it. Men have passed the sexual assault laws under which we live, have publicized the known cases, and have led the social reaction to rape. As husbands, fathers and authority figures, men have told women how to avoid rape and have assumed a protective role over us.

The women's anti-rape movement of the 1970's reverses this tradition. Women's groups in many countries are seeking to analyze rape and develop strategies to eliminate it. Women Against Rape in Columbus, Ohio, is part of this movement to stop women's victimization and to plan prevention based on our own experiences of rape. **Freeing Our Lives** probes the causes and consequences of rape, and suggests ways to stop it. We hope that we and other women will continue this analysis and develop more powerful methods to end rape. The time must come when no woman need fear for her safety and integrity.

THE THREAT OF RAPE

Women learn to fear rape at an early age. Mothers teach daughters not to talk to strangers and not to accept gifts or rides. Parents watch over girls more carefully than boys, who are allowed to roam and to stay out late. As children, we do not know the reasons for parents' protective actions. Only as we grow older is their fear, and ours, identified as the fear of rape.

The fear of rape follows women all of our lives. As a result, we learn to take precautions to avoid rape. We plan our time so we will be home before dark. We make sure the porch light is left on. We recheck locked doors. We even schedule routine

chores carefully, knowing that a nighttime trip to a deserted laundry room or a jaunt through the backyard to dump the trash can be hazardous.

Often women do not acknowledge the ways in which rape restricts our lives. Safety considerations often affect a woman's choice of job, transportation, clothing styles and living arrangements. Activities that men take for granted, such as working a night shift, walking alone after dark, or hitchhiking, are riskier for women because of the danger of attack. Every time a woman says to herself, "Perhaps I shouldn't do that; it might not be safe", she is assessing the risk of rape.

The effect of rape is greater than just the effects on victims of actual assaults. Living with fear, being constantly watchful, and restricting our lives over a long period of time damage all women. In this way, we are all victims.

Women's fear is a natural, rational response to the pervasive threat of rape. We cannot just pretend the threat does not exist, or try not to be afraid. We must acknowledge both the threat and our fear of rape — then go on to plan prevention strategies to change the social conditions that foster rape.

Traditionally, rape prevention programs have ignored the impact of constant threat on women and have focused only on actual cases of rape. Prevention has been based on controlling either the victim or the rapist. Both victim control and rapist control have severe limitations as prevention strategies.

LIMITATIONS OF VICTIM CONTROL

Victim control, also called "victim avoidance", teaches women to avoid rape: women learn to take various safety precautions and to avoid situations where the probability of attack is presumed to be high. We must not consider this approach a basis for rape prevention. Although caution and security devices save some women from immediate danger, they do nothing to reduce the threat of rape. Even if a woman successfully avoids violence, her knowledge that other women are raped reinforces her own awareness of the threat. This awareness continues to control her activities.

Avoidance has several undesirable consequences as a prevention approach. First, avoidance reinforces women's helplessness. Locking doors and staying in at night give us a temporary sense of relief, but do not make us strong and

capable of defending ourselves. Women's helplessness perpetuates our vulnerability to rape. A prevention approach should combat helplessness, not reinforce it.

A second consequence of the avoidance approach is victim blame. If a woman who does not follow avoidance advice is raped, people tend to assume that her lack of caution caused the rape. This assumption shifts the blame for rape from the rapist to the victim. Any approach which burdens the victim with the blame for the attack is unacceptable.

The worst consequence of the victim control strategy is that women must lead circumscribed lives to feel safe. Since every woman is a potential rape victim, victim control programs amount to mass control of women's lives through restriction of our liberty and mobility. This constraint is intolerable in a society that values freedom. We must find a prevention strategy that does not force women to trade freedom for security.

LIMITATIONS OF RAPIST CONTROL

Many people view rape as a crime which can only be effectively combated through the criminal justice system. They encourage stiff penalties to deter potential rapists, and incarceration to remove dangerous offenders from the community. They confuse prosecution with prevention, despite the fact that police and courts enter the scene after a rape has already occurred. Prosecution is intended to redress, not prevent, injustice. In the case of rape, it not only fails to prevent injustice, it cannot redress the full extent of the injury. The prosecution of a few rapists cannot correct the daily injustice to women who may never be raped, but whose lives are damaged by fear.

There is little evidence that punishment serves as a deterrent or that imprisonment includes re-education for rapists. Society has punished rapists for centuries, yet sexual assault against women remains a serious problem. Even if the criminal justice system could work optimally, it would only detain some rapists, not eliminate rape.

RAPE PREVENTION: ENDING WOMEN'S VULNERABILITY TO RAPE

Rape prevention must focus on eliminating the conditions in society which make women easy targets for rape. Our approach is to reduce the threat of rape by eliminating women's vulnerability to it. Our specific prevention strategies evolve from an analysis of the individual, community, and social factors which reinforce each other and maintain women's victimization.

We have identified three areas of vulnerability that maintain women's status as potential rape victims:

- (1) a lack of information about and understanding of rape;
- (2) women's subordinate relationship to men and the resulting characteristics women develop which contribute to our vulnerability;
- (3) women's isolation from one another and in the community.

We will discuss each area as it relates to rape, and then explore strategies for reducing our vulnerability in each area.

Our approach to rape prevention draws on women's long-ignored experience of living with the constant threat of vio-



lence. As individuals, we can begin the process of gaining strength, developing skills, and changing our beliefs about ourselves. As a group, women can organize to change the power relationship between women and men, and to reduce our isolation from each other and within our communities.

As women, we must participate in prevention, not because we bear any responsibility for men's attacks, but because we have the most to gain by ending rape. We can only end our victimization through our own actions. We must act responsibly toward ourselves and toward other women to alter the conditions that keep us vulnerable. We can then become strong enough to stop rape.

ISIS: Following this introduction to the issue, **Freeing Our Lives** goes on to analyze the lack of understanding and information about rape and women's subordinate relationship to men, emphasizing women's status and men's power in society and rape as a means of control over women. It also analyzes women's dependence on men for political representation, economic support, social position, physical protection and psychological approval. Finally, it analyzes women's isolation from each other and in the community.

Not stopping at this analysis, **Freeing Our Lives** goes on to discuss strategies to overcome these areas of women's vulnerability. Some of these strategies are:

- 1. *redefining rape in terms of our own shared knowledge and experience; making rape a public issue.*
- 2. *changing the power-dependence relationship between men and women in a patriarchal culture;*
- 3. *developing physical strength and skills, and gaining confidence in our ability to assert our rights;*
- 4. *learning to recognize our power as a group;*
- 5. *organizing for our common defense in neighborhoods and making women's safety a community priority.*

The thorough but concise presentation of all these elements makes this booklet a very good resource for all people trying to understand and organize against violence against women. It is also a good basis for further discussion and analysis.

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

P.O. Box 42
London N6 5BU
United Kingdom

"Our definition of rape is much wider than that of the law. We say that any unwanted, forced or coerced sexual attention is a form of rape. While on the whole we have dealt more with attacks on women which are at present recognised as rape or sexual assault, we feel that it is important to consider the widest possible range. All women who feel that they have been forced to take part in a sexual situation should feel that we are open to them and will treat their feelings with equal care and gravity.

"In a society where man is seen as initiator and woman as consentor, aggressive and passive, predator and prey, wolf and chick, then rape is not abnormal. Obviously some rapists are clearly very disturbed but they make up 2 to 2 1/2 % of convicted rapists. Rape is the logical and extreme end of the spectrum of male/female relationships. It brutally opposes a woman's right to be self-powered and sexually self-determined, and is totally unacceptable".

In Britain, the first rape crisis centre to be set up was in London. The Rape Counselling and Research Project opened the Centre on 15th March 1976 in Haringey, North London. They had become a registered charity and they could receive non-taxable funds, and they had managed to negotiate for a house with the Department of Environment.

The group which opened and ran the centre had developed from an informal group of about 40 women who met to discuss rape with a view to "doing something about it". They were housewives, lawyers, journalists, a couple of doctors, students, counsellors, nurses, unemployed, some married, or living with people, some single, some with children. The one-and-a-half years during which they met before opening the centre was dedicated to discussing and examining their own motivations and priorities, in laying the groundwork for their position vis-à-vis reporting to the police, counselling, the law and reform, the treatment of rape in the press; current medical practice etc., and in acquiring premises, funds and charity status.

The centre now operates a 24-hour service run by two paid workers during weekdays and by volunteers at night and

weekends on a rota basis. More than 16 women are involved in volunteer counselling. The aims of the centre are:

1. To provide emergency legal, medical and emotional counselling by having a 24-hour phone service.
2. To provide a supportive, calm and sympathetic environment for the woman.
3. To train women to be able to cope with the problems of women who have been raped.
4. To set up a coordinated group of contacts in different geographical areas who would be willing to personally meet and counsel raped women and accompany them to hospital/police/doctor and court.
5. To research the pattern and incidence of rape locally and nationally.
6. To publish informational and educational material to destroy the current myths about rape.
7. To liaise with those community services which come into contact with raped women.
8. To help women equip themselves with a mental and physical attitude towards rape which would lessen the possibility of future victimisation and provide them with the basic skills of self-defence.

The activities, objectives and experiences of the centre are extremely clearly set out in the two annual reports so far (1977 and 1978), and ISIS strongly recommends groups elsewhere to use their information as a resource. The 1977 report goes into considerable detail on counselling: methods of counselling, problems and reactions of raped women, counsellor training, the problems of recruitment of volunteer trainees. It gives a good evaluation of counselling training and points to the need for a structured approach. The group is preparing a training guide to give necessary practical information to new counsellors.

The importance of research into all aspects of rape is clearly stressed:

"As well as providing a counselling service, we are concerned to promote serious and detailed research into rape in the British Isles. Through research we intend to provide a factual basis for public information and education.

... The myths surrounding rape are widely subscribed to and deeply held. They are a true reflection of con-

temporary attitudes towards women, and factual evidence to destroy these myths is a necessary part of any meaningful education of the public."

The report also examines the influence of the media, its biased approach to raped women — an attitude which contributes greatly to reinforcing the idea that rape is not a serious crime — and the way in which the media has treated the Rape Crisis Centre.

"Considerable time has been devoted to the discussion of media treatment of rape. Before we opened, two unpublished research studies on the myths perpetrated by the media and the comparative style and content of rape reporting were completed (Rape and the Mass Media: a content analysis" by Sue Lines, and "Rape as Entertainment" by C.M. Roberts). The juxtaposition of a rape story and a "daily pin-up" was not unusual. Raped women often fell into the category of "buxom blonde" and rapists are without exception "sex-starved" and "maniacal". Rapists were on the whole "rightly acquitted" and an element of blame ascribed to the woman. Although there had been a "gentleman's agreement" with the Press Council not to publish raped women's names this was not always observed. Our research showed that the media, with few exceptions published sensational, distorted images of rape and its components, and upheld the many anti-female myths with the intent of providing vicarious entertainment". "Our policy is not to introduce raped women to the press and media; not to divulge internal information about the Centre, its counsellors and supporters unless we approve of its use; to be as helpful as possible but to avoid giving out factually unsupported opinions; to reduce the level of sensationalism and hysteria surrounding rape. Serious journalists have respected our policy".

Sections on the law and the police give a good idea of the kinds of problems we face as women combatting rape, and the way it is currently dealt with in society. Several specific cases of the way in which the police treat raped women are given at the end of the report. The following is just one example.

A 29-year old married woman was raped after being beaten in the groin, chest and back with a shoe by a friend of one of her girlfriends. The rapist, a seemingly respectable and educated middle-class man, threatened that if she told anyone he would come back and murder her children. The woman was so terrified that she told no-one for twelve hours and only plucked up courage to tell the police two days after. She eventually decided that the only way to protect her children was to tell the police and, with the support of one of our counsellors, approached them with the intention of informing them but not necessarily proceeding with a prosecution. Having informed the police the case was taken out of her hands and the police said they were duty bound to prosecute. She gave a lengthy statement and visited the scene of the crime with detectives. She had washed and changed her clothing and so was not given a medical examination. (We were later to find out that there is a slim but useful chance of picking up forensic evidence up to a week after the rape, as long as the woman has not had intercourse with anyone since



the rape; immobile sperm can be picked up from the cervical canal).

Two days after, the accused man was picked up, questioned and released within a few hundred yards of the woman's home. The police arranged to meet the woman at her home and question her again. It was agreed that our counsellor should be there but when the police turned up early the woman felt very threatened and refused access until the counsellor arrived. When the police questioned her their attitude had changed completely. They said that they didn't believe her story, that the alleged rapist was a very nice man and wouldn't do something like that, and that the painful and marked bruising on her groin, breasts and back was either "the result of rough love play", self-inflicted, or that her husband had done it in a fit of jealousy. They left saying that they expected to hear that she was dropping the case and added that if the allegation proved to be unfounded it would lead to a prosecution for wasting police time.

The raped woman took legal advice about making a complaint but had a breakdown before she could complete the process. Six months later she is still receiving psychiatric help and wants to put the whole thing behind her. There is absolutely no doubt in our minds that the police treatment in this case was a central cause of her breakdown.

We do not view the use of the threat of prosecution for wasting police time lightly. In this case, where the accused had actually been questioned, the police would have been compelled to prove their case, the raped woman would have had a defence, the alleged rapist would have been a witness, and the police would have been closely questioned on their reasons and motivations. In all cases we see this type of pressure as no more than an empty but powerful threat.

In this case the police dropped the prosecution.

Finally, there are sections on self-defense and compensation, and a useful reading list. This is a highly recommended resource booklet which not only gives practical information, but also shows the measure of organisation and commitment behind women building up their own initiatives which help other women, at the same time as pressuring governments, local authorities, the media and the public generally to take rape seriously, and to deal with it.

RECLAIM THE NIGHT

Women live in fear of male violence, because for us, sexual harassment is an all-day, everyday occurrence.

Women have begun to reclaim the night in many countries. The first "reclaim the night" march took place on the night of April 30, 1977 in Germany (Federal Republic) where women demonstrated in towns all over the country against being barred from the streets at night, against the way we're hassled, abused and raped. The idea caught on and since then there have been many marches in Canada, Britain, Ireland, the USA and other countries.

The idea of reclaim the night is not to demonstrate in order to ask men for the right to walk the streets without fear; it is a collective and positive move of women to take some measure of control over our lives. It is innovatory because it is also a *celebration*, a night when, as the name indicates, women for once take over the streets for themselves, singing, dancing, and brandishing torches.

All the reports women have made of these marches have talked of how positive an experience this action is: a great sense of solidarity, a joy, and a feeling of power. Reclaim the night is not the puritan pilgrimage the traditional media would prefer to portray. Women are reclaiming the streets, reclaiming space for women, reclaiming the right to be out and ourselves at any time, retrieving our bodies. But the action has not always been without incident.

In Britain the first "reclaim the night" demonstrations were held, simultaneously, in November 1977 in eleven different towns. It was a positive and enjoyable event. By the second reclaim the night in London on 7 July 1978, the racketeers and the police were already on their guard, though the event passed without incident. But the third time through Soho (Halloween, 31 October 1978) the joyful atmosphere of the torch-lit demonstration, with many women in fancy dress, was rapidly shattered. After a scuffle in the New Swedish

Cinema Club in Brewer Street (central London) where women were registering their protest at the material displayed, an employee threatened them first with a stool and then with a hammer. A few police officers then arrived and waded into the crowd with their wooden truncheons, hitting women at random. Sixteen women were arrested on charges of obstruction, threatening behaviour, assaulting police officers, bodily harm. Five women had to be treated in hospital with head and face injuries, and numerous others left with big bruises. Sixteen women were arrested to set an example, to make women think twice before we go out again.

Six of the women were tried at Marylebone Court on April 22nd when the magistrate, Sir Ivor Rigby, acquitted three of them, gave three token convictions and criticised the police, both for their behaviour on the demonstration and for the way in which false evidence had been given in court. The magistrate said that he was influenced by photographs which showed women being assaulted by the police. The same magistrate heard the cases against four more women on May 2nd. Again he criticised the police and cleared the women. The women who have been acquitted are considering civil action against the police for assault, wrongful arrest, and malicious prosecution. Donations and letters of support to Reclaim the Night Defence Group, Box 1, Sisterwrite, 190 Upper Street, London N1. There has also been a call for a public enquiry into police behaviour at demonstrations and in court. The existence of photographic evidence against the police should ensure that the incident is not 'forgotten'. The photographs were taken by Diane Bailey who had to flee from the demonstration when police noticed her with her camera.

In spite of this incident, and the violence – ironically – displayed by the police, these events are extremely important, both for women to see what it is really that we are up against, and for us to gain strength and power from each other.

(Information from *Women's Report*, and *Spare Rib*)



HONG KONG

WAR ON RAPE

Edith Horsfall

The Hong Kong Council of Women together with three other organizations, the Samaritan Befrienders, the Family Planning Association and the Kwun Tong Community Mental Health Project have been coordinating a War on Rape Campaign in Hong Kong. This report was sent by Edith Horsfall of the Hong Kong Council of Women.

Women learn to fear rape at an early age, and this fear follows us all our lives. Safety considerations often affect our choice of job, transportation, clothing styles and living arrangements. Every time a woman says to herself, "Perhaps I shouldn't do that, it might not be safe", she is assessing the risk of rape. Thus the effects of rape are greater than the effects on victims of actual assaults. Living with fear, being constantly watchful, and restricting our lives over a long period of time, damage all women. In this way we are all victims.

To provide accurate information about rape, women have begun to redefine rape in terms of their own experience. This redefinition of rape, based on women's experience of it rather than legal statutes and cultural myths, forms the basis for realistic rape prevention strategies. The three essential points which the feminist analysis of rape stresses are:

1. Rape is an act of power and control.
2. Rape can happen to all women.
3. Rape is violent not sexual.

The vulnerability of women does not depend solely on actual or culturally determined 'weakness', but on women's dependence on men:

- for political representation
- for economic support
- for social position
- for physical protection
- for psychological approval

Women can pressure the community to respond to rape victims with care and sensitivity; to ensure that the criminal justice system operates optimally, though imprisonment removing some offenders from the community does not appear to act as deterrent or preventive measure; and to make rape a public issue - to remove the stigma from victims, define the extent of the problem, and demand that rape prevention become a high priority for community agencies.

We should ensure the recognition of rape as a woman's political issue. Unless our society undergoes a fundamental change

in the relationship between men and women, rape will be perpetuated. Safety measures only re-enforce women's helplessness. We must strive for prevention measures that do not further restrict our lives, and not trade our freedom for security.

War On Rape Campaign 1978

LEGAL:

On 31st March 1978 the Government gazetted the Crimes (Amendment) (No 2) Ordinance which safeguards the anonymity of rape victims and provides that the victim's previous sexual history may not be adduced in evidence except in very special circumstances. The implications of this change in the law for rape victims were explained on a Chinese TV Programme by Maria Tam. We have publicly denounced the less responsible sections of the press who have managed to circumvent the law and still publish details by which victims can be identified. We have also written to the Attorney General on this point. By monitoring the press and more recently by arranging for women to sit in on rape trials in court and critically report on procedures, we are constantly on the alert for flaws in criminal justice concerning rape. Stiffer sentences for sexual offenders, composition of juries which should include women jurors, in rape trials, and the validity of self-defence for women attacked by rapists have been our active concern, voiced in the media and to authorities. We plan to pressure changes in the law as regards corroborative evidence in rape trials: we feel rape victims should not be put in the same category as accomplices, children and mentally retarded and the issue should rest on the victim's CONSENT.

MEDICAL:

The Family Planning Association "Help Rape Victims" service is now well known and widely publicised. Well over 100 rape victims have been helped and given aftercare. Compensation for victims has on occasion been obtained by referral to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

The Medical Sub-Committee of War on Rape has drawn up a protocol for Casualty Officers who deal with victims of alleged sexual assault (those not seen by the forensic pathologist). We have also critically analysed the textbook used to teach medical students about sexual assault; sexist attitudes and no mention of the rape trauma syndrome and care in handling victims engenders a wrong approach. The senior forensic pathologist who teaches students and liaises with Medical and Health Department has been consulted about this and has shown sympathetic cooperation.

LIAISON:

We were consulted by the Police Public Relations Unit to advise on the Report Rape Campaign in Tsuen Wan Oct/Nov. We supplied material for their news sheets (100,000) and were invited to participate in the press conference which had very good media coverage. The Rape Counsellors Manual has been distributed to all police stations. War On Rape also participated in the Kwun Tong Fight Crime Campaign in July. We have been writing to and seeing legal aid, attorney general, prisons, forensic pathologist, housing department and urban services department. The posters and pamphlets advertising the hotline for rape victims and the FPA service have been widely distributed throughout the colony. Every registered doctor (2600) has been informed, with special emphasis on Estate doctors. The Federation of Youth Groups and YWCA have attended our meetings.

RESEARCH:

The pattern of rape in Hong Kong and the "profile" of victims has been clarified from monitoring the press and data gathered from victims who approach the FPA. This is helpful for preventive campaigns, but until we have a clearer "profile" of the rapist and his motivation, further progress in the War on Rape is difficult to achieve. Public attitudes must be changed to regard the rapist's crime as one not primarily sexual, but of a violent nature. We need research students, access to convicted rapists and their files and funds. We have been in touch with research workers in London, Cambridge and San Francisco. We subscribe to FAAR (Feminist Alliance Against Rape).

TRAINING:

Two comprehensive training sessions for volunteers (in Cantonese) were very successfully held in June and January (1979). The intensive weekend courses were first conducted at FPA Headquarters, then at Morrison Hall as a camp. Funds were generously donated by the HK Council of Women. Several of the volunteers are in service professions, but all have benefited by correct information and enlightened attitudes towards rape, which will benefit the community. Their services are used in exhibitions, by the Samaritans and preparing the Manual for distribution. The Family Planning Association is

giving orientation courses to women Police Community Relations Officers, who will lecture to schools.

WAR ON RAPE T-SHIRTS:

Bearing a pair of helping hands supporting the feminist symbol, these shirts have been sold wherever possible (including at Star Ferry) as a fund raising measure.

HOMANTIN CENTRE:

The Samaritans have made a room in this centre at 48 Princess Margaret Road available to us. All records, literature, manuals and display material are now in one place; the centre is "open" on Thursday mornings for routine work, discussions and interviews with visitors and the media. Our monthly meetings are held there. It is a small beginning for our dream of a Women's Crisis Centre.

Rape Counsellor's Manual:

500 copies in both languages have been printed and widely distributed to government, voluntary agencies and interested individuals. Every police station has a copy.

PUBLICITY:

Our main target is still to keep the problem of rape in the public eye and to raise the consciousness of the community. This has been greatly facilitated by the interest shown by the media. In the press there have been feature articles, editorials, letters to the editor and an apparent increase in reports of rape trials with striking captions. The FPA held a press conference at the end of their first year of helping rape victims. The T-shirt sale was given good cover. Television has several "spots" aimed at rape reporting and safety. A Chinese programme "Common Sense" and a Police Call programme were devoted to rape. Open Line, Commercial Radio, Insight, BBC Documentary "Hello Tomorrow" have all dealt with various aspects of rape in Hong Kong. We have approached the Carr Foundation for their sponsorship of broadcast time. Our coordinators and publicity contacts are often consulted on various related problems, including child abuse and abortion. We aim to continue to remain in the public consciousness and eventually win the war on rape.



RESOURCES

The resources listed here on rape and on organizing to stop violence against women are selected ones. To include all the resources available would require at least one book! We have tried to give a representative selection of the books, articles and other materials covering the various aspects of this crime against women, from analyses of rape to very concrete and practical initiatives organized by women against it. We have included only a very few of the thousands of rape crisis and rape relief centers around the world just to give an idea of how these operate. Organizing to stop violence against women is one of the important parts of the women's movement and almost every national and local feminist magazine or newsletter deals with it. We would refer readers to these resources particularly for information on national and local initiatives. For information about local rape relief projects, women could also consult their local or national women's houses and information services. We have also tried to indicate which books contain good bibliographies for further research. We feel that these resources could be very useful for other women and women's groups organizing against violence against women. The women's movement has done so much in this struggle and our sharing of these experiences is very valuable for each other.

How to start a rape crisis center

The Rape Crisis Center
P.O. Box 21005
Washington D.C. 20009
USA

Second and revised edition of a useful manual. US\$ 4.75 from above address.

Toronto Rape Crisis Centre
P.O. Box 6597, Station 'A',
Toronto, Ontario, N5W 1X4
Canada

This is one of the 23 rape crisis centres that have been set up across Canada in the last decade. It publishes a *Newsletter* four times a year, subscription for which help to support the Rape Crisis Centre financially. Articles cover areas such as self-defense, rape laws, incest, the activities of the centres. Subscriptions: individual Can\$ 5.00, institutions Can\$ 12.50 per year. It also publishes useful booklets such as "Emergency Room Care for Rape Victims", guidelines for the care of rape victims.

Tel-Aviv Rape Crisis Centre

contact address;
The Feminist Centre,
228 Dizengoff Street,
Tel Aviv,
Israel
tel: (03) 220 420

Opened on 1st February 1978, this centre operates a 24-hour telephone service, and has a team of volunteers to meet raped women, and accompany them during police interrogation, medical examination etc. Beds are available at the centre, not only for the volunteers on the night shift but also for raped women who live alone and are afraid to go home after

their harrowing experience. It also provides a referral service to psychological, legal or other assistance on a long-term basis.

The Feminist Centre at the above address has a library-reading room, coffee corner and other facilities. Visiting feminists are always welcome.

Vrouwen Tegen Verkrachting

p/a JAC
Amstel 30
Amsterdam
The Netherlands

This rape crisis center provides medical and legal advice and women to accompany rape victims to the hospital, police and courts. It also does educational work about rape in the Netherlands. A variety of publications about rape are available in Dutch.

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
USA
Tel.: 492 - RAPE

Established in March 1972, the Center has handled over 4,000 calls from women aged 6 to 84. It provides a variety of services in the fight against rape. Preventing attitudes that victimize women is a major project and includes discussion groups, speaking engagements, and support of legislative reform. In addition, the Center conducts specialized training programs for police departments. Of primary concern is the victim herself; the Center maintains a 24-hour a day hotline and accompanies and supports rape victims through the medical, police and court systems. A short, but complete, pamphlet gives information for the victim on medical needs, including the pros and cons of the morning after pill, emotional needs, and the criminal justice system.

Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape

Susan Brownmiller
Simon and Schuster
New York, USA

Written in 1975, this remains one of the most powerful and complete books on rape, written from a feminist perspective. In this thorough investigation of rape throughout history, Susan Brownmiller concludes that rape and the threat of rape have been and are used to control all women everywhere: "the threat, use and cultural acceptance of sexual force is a pervasive process of intimidation that affects all women". She analyses the use and meaning of rape from biblical times until the present in western culture, with references to other cultures as well, and pays particular attention to the use of rape in war from the Trojan War to Bangladesh and Viet Nam. Against this historical background, she examines cultural acceptance of rape as a means of controlling or violating women seen as the property of men in patriarchal society. Using solid statistics, she dispels the myths of rapists and their victims and reveals the conspiracy of society in promoting this crime against women and absolving the men who rape. She also deals with the subject of racism and sexism in the area of interracial rape in the USA. The last chapter of the book, speaks about women fighting back, not only against the crime of rape itself but against the patriarchal attitudes which promote this crime. Brownmiller emphasizes that throughout five thousand years of history, men have never done anything to stop this all-pervasive crime - except in the sense of protecting "their property" - that it is women who are organizing for the first time as a movement to combat rape. Some of Brownmillers' assertions and conclusions have been the subject of discussion and debate by feminists who may not accept everything she has said in this book. However, this work is a really indispensable analysis to start from and a powerfully moving book.

**The Politics of Rape: The Victim's Perspective**

Diana E.H. Russell
Stein and Day
Briarcliff Manor, New York 10510
USA

Based on the accounts of rape by 22 victims, Diana Russell dispels the major myths about rape, such as women "asking for it". The book is divided into four major sections: The Victim, the Rapist, Rape and Racism, and Rape and Society. It shows how attitudes about rape and about the rapist and his victims define how rape is experienced. A critical example is the way the criminal justice system treats the woman as

somehow guilty and the rapist as a victim of a temptress or liar. The author analyzes how society promotes and rewards rapist characteristics in men, i.e. aggressive behaviour is "masculine"; rape is aggressive, therefore rape is masculine. She shows how these rapist characteristics are conformist in our society and not deviant as we are led to believe. The book includes helpful information on solutions ranging from rape, self-defense, feminist actions, rape crisis centers and neighborhood organization to changing public opinion, the laws and the medical, police and court procedures. The book contains an excellent and extensive bibliography.

Against Rape

Andrea Medea and Kathleen Thompson
Farra, Stras and Giroux
New York, USA

A very good book written by feminists and published in 1974. It is filled with women's voices. Subtitled: "A Survival Manual for Women: How to Avoid Entrapment and How to Cope with Rape Physically and Emotionally", this book discusses the various aspects of rape in a sexist society, why rape occurs, who rapes, why rape is increasing, how rape affects women's daily lives. The book is also a valuable guide: how to recognize and avoid dangerous situations, how to train for self-defense, what to do in a situation of rape, the medical, legal, psychological and emotional aspects, the police and the courts. It includes a good chapter on "little rapes", harassment on the street and other public places. It includes information about rape crisis centers with a listing of addresses and a bibliography. A valuable guide. Price US \$2.95.

Crimes Against Women

Les Femmes
231 Adrian Road
Millbrae, California 94030
USA

Documenting the testimony heard by the Brussels Tribunal on the institutional, cultural and criminal victimization of women throughout the world, this book is an electrifying account of the first International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women. This Tribunal was held in Brussels, Belgium in March 1976 with over 2,000 women from forty countries participating. The editors, Diana Russell and Nicole Van de Ven describe how the tribunal was organized, recreate the events, record the personal testimony, present the resolutions and proposals for change, analyze the media's response and assess the impact of these five powerful days. Battering and rape are only the tip of the iceberg - **Crimes Against Women** reveals the appalling dimensions of what lies beneath the surface. The editors and compilers of this book were organizers and participants in this tribunal and they have donated the royalties of this book to help finance the International Feminist Network. The book is available from the above address for US \$ 5.95 plus \$.50 postage and handling.

Gewalt Gegen Frauen

Erica Fischer, Brigitte Lehmann and Kathleen Stoffl,
Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Köln, 1977. German.

Inspired by and based upon testimonies given at the International Tribunal of Crimes Against Women (Brussels, Belgium, March 1976), this excellent book gives a detailed analysis of violence against women in our society. The authors, who are Austrian, cover three major areas of violence against women: domestic/family violence, rape, and the violence committed by medical institutions against women (forced sterilization, breast removal, hysterectomy, drugs, medicalized birth etc.). In each section they give considerable space to describing and analysing women's initiatives, such as refuges for battered women, rape crisis centres, and self-help groups. The sections on rape deals at length with the myths about rape, about rape within marriage, laws on rape and women's initiatives. There is also a good final section on the women's movement, and some useful addresses.

Rape: The Price of Coercive Sexuality

Lorenne Clark and Debra Lewis
Toronto Women's Press
280 Bloor Street West, 305
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

Analyzing rape and the Canadian judicial system, the authors show how rape is a product of and perpetuates a misogynist society. Central to the problem is the view of women as property and the control of reproduction by men. Society and current laws see men as needing protection from false accusation by "alluring/masochistic/vindictive" women. A rape victim not only has to prove that she did not consent, but that it was obvious to the rapist and that she used her best judgment to avoid the situation of risk. She must prove that she was not overstepping the bounds defined by a patriarchal society. The authors remind us that rape is one of the safest crimes to commit. Only a tiny fraction of rapes committed are ever reported, and of those reported only a fraction are brought to court and a tinier fraction yet result in conviction of the rapist.

Law and the Status of Women

Columbia Human Rights Law Review, USA, 1977.

available from:

Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs
United Nations, New York,
N.Y. 10010, USA

An anthology of descriptions and assessments of the law as it affects women in 15 countries (Brazil, Egypt, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, Peru, Philippines, Sweden, Togo, USA and Yugoslavia), written by leading women lawyers in these countries. Although the format is standardised, i.e. descriptions of civil law, penal laws, health and family planning, education and training, employment and related problems, - the assessments from the different countries are so variable, that comparison is hardly



possible. Some go into great detail, for instance, about rape laws, while others barely touch on it, or (in the case of Kenya) even lament the fact that women cannot be tried for raping men! Nonetheless a useful starting reference book which at least tells you what is on the statute books of these countries.

Women, Crime and Criminology, A Feminist Critique

Carol Smart
Routledge Kegan and Paul

Unfortunately, we have not seen this book but it is recommended reading by *Women's Report*, United Kingdom. Published in 1977.

The Rape Controversy

Anna Coote and Tess Gill
National Council for Civil Liberties
186 Kings Cross Road
London WC1 X 9DE
United Kingdom

This brief but comprehensive pamphlet gives a good overview of the laws on rape in the United Kingdom, how these laws work in practice, what the rape victim can expect from the police, the medical examination and the courts. It also examines the myths surrounding rape, the role of rape crisis centers, and what to do if you are a victim. It discusses the controversial 1975 Lords ruling on rape which states a man cannot be convicted of rape if he believed that a woman consented to the act, no matter how unreasonable that belief may be. This 39 page pamphlet is available for 50 pence.

Breaking the Hold

D. Smith and V. Woollacott
Vancouver Rape Relief
Vancouver, Canada

Subtitled "A Booklet about Rape Prevention", this 48-page work deals with the deep and complex causes of violence directed toward women throughout history and today. It gives ideas for individual action for change, including self-defense and prevention and organized action for change by

women, men, and the community. The suggestions for action are well-thought out and helpful. It also includes a list of resources on self-defense, rape and sexism.

Rape: the Victim as Criminal

Cathleen Schurr
KNOW, Inc.
P.O. Box 86031

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15221
USA

These articles clearly expose the injustice of attitudes and laws on rape in a sexist society, such as that of the USA; how rape is treated in the press, why there is so much silence about this crime, why it is so often unreported, the double violation of women by the attacker and by society and the court, ways of protection and self-defense.

Rape: The All-American Crime

Susan Griffen

Also published by KNOW, Inc. (see address above), this is a short but very good analysis of rape as a political crime against women. Susan Griffen places rape in its context in a patriarchal sexist, male-dominated society as a means of keeping women terrorized, dominated and in fear. She examines rape as it is treated by this society as a crime against male property and examines the role of racism, male violence, double sexual standard, the family and marriage.

Fighting Back: A Self-Defense Handbook

Columbus WAR
P.O. Box 02084
Columbus, Ohio 43202
USA

The 16 pages of this booklet are filled with numerous tips for avoiding and resisting rape. Price: US .40 plus .20 postage.

The Violent Sex:

Male Psychology and the Evolution of Consciousness

Laurel Holliday
Bluestocking Books
Box 475
Guerneville, California 95446
USA

"Maleness is a biocultural phenomenon". The main argument of this book is that aggressiveness and violence which are much greater in men than women, are the result not just of socialization, but also of biology. Drawing on studies in the fields of biochemistry, neurology, genetics, endocrinology, psychology, behavioural sciences and paleoanthropology, Laurel Holliday

shows that not only are males more disposed to be aggressive from birth but also this aggressiveness is biologically connected with the male sex hormone, androgen. This turns the thesis that sex behaviour is entirely socially conditioned on its head. However, the book makes an important link between biology and environment throughout the book. Violence is not just a question of body chemistry. Published in 1978. Price: US\$ 4.95.



Not a Fleeting Rage: a Handbook on Rape

San Francisco WAR
1800 Market Street
Box 139
San Francisco, California 94102
USA

This 48 page booklet contains information on a wide range of subjects including harassment from men on the streets, child rape, rape laws, the morning after pill, self-defense and brief discussions on the historical, political and social origins of rape.

Sexual Shakedown: The Sexual Harassment of Women on the Job

Lin Farley
McGraw-Hill (1978)
New York, USA

Presenting a feminist analysis of sexual harassment of women, this book explores the effects of sexual harassment on women at work. It makes connections between the threat of rape on all women and the threat of sexual harassment on working women. A good introduction to a complex subject.

Women Against Rape (WAR)

c/o Falling Wall Press Ltd.,
79 Richmond Road,
Bristol 6
England.

Collected testimonies and reports from a meeting in London. July 1977, where women denounced rape, recounted their experiences and told about what they are doing to stop it.

The meeting took the form of a trial against the Law, the police, the Government and rapists. Edited by Ruth Hall, this book is one in a series produced by the Power of Women Collective (wages for housework group) and published by Falling Wall Press. Other titles include: **All Work and No Pay**, women, housework and the wages due, edited by Wendy Edmond and Suzie Felming, **Sex, Race and Class** by Selma James, and **Women's Liberation and Revolution**, a bibliography compiled by Sheila Rowbotham. Falling Wall Press has pamphlets listing all publications, prices etc.

Aegis
Magazine on Ending Violence Against Women
Box 21033
Washington, D.C. 20009
USA
tel: (202) 543 5580

Aegis is the most comprehensive and excellent resource on violence against women currently being produced. Its stated purpose is "to aid the efforts of feminists working to end violence against women. To this end, **Aegis** provides practical information and resources for grassroots organizers, along with promoting continuing discussion among feminists of the root causes of rape, battering, sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women". Although clearly dealing mainly with the US situation, the listings of groups, projects, publications and many of the articles will be relevant and helpful to women elsewhere. The magazine is produced by a coalition of three groups, two of which previously had their own newsletter. The groups are: the National Communication Network (NCN) which focuses on issues in the battered women's movement, the Feminist Alliance Against Rape (FAAR) which focuses on organizing against rape and other forms of violence against women, and the Alliance Against Sexual Coercion (AASC) which writes a sub-section for FAAR about sexual harassment at the workplace, and provides services to women who are sexually harassed on their jobs. **Aegis** is published six times a year with the following subscription rates: individual US\$8.75 (US\$10.00 outside North America), institution US\$20.00 (US\$25.00 outside North America). All subscription requests should be addressed to FAAR at the above address. Articles submitted to **Aegis** should be sent to the appropriate publication group, care of the above address.

Alliance Against Sexual Coercion (AASC)
Box 1
Cambridge, Ma. 02139
USA

AASC is a feminist group with the ultimate goal of eliminating sexual harassment at the workplace. The group's commitment is both to individuals trapped in abusive situations and to groups working towards a more profound transformation of society. With this in mind, strategies are measured in terms of immediate effectiveness and long-range implications. Sexual harassment at the workplace must be linked with other conditions affecting women, particularly violence against

women and economic issues. A basic assumption of the group is that the failure of our social system to respond to women's needs is rooted in unequal distribution of power and resources inherent to this social structure. Direct service to women workers include: legal options and referrals, unemployment compensation referrals for women who quit their jobs, emotional support, and vocational and educational counseling referrals. See also **Aegis** listed in this Bulletin, for details of their publication activities.



"Women and Violence"

Heresies 6
P.O. Box 766
Canal Street Station
New York, NY 10013
USA

This 130-page issue of **Heresies** is a hotch-potch collection of more than 100 articles, poems, think-pieces and reports. "Women and Violence" is taken in a very broad sense, covering rape, battering, genital mutilation, psycho-surgery, the media, homeworkers, prison, and historical images of women. The articles are extremely varied, and for this reason the publication is somewhat uneven (and in the way it is presented), and it is especially geared to an American audience. However, there are some important analytical articles, such as, "Why the Women's Movement cannot be non-violent" by Karen Haggberg "A social history of battered women" by Mary Metzger, and "The social meaning of violence" by Janet Koenig. The collective which produced this issue clearly sets the problem of violence in a class/race/sex context, demonstrating that you cannot look at violence without dealing with the whole gamut of socially oppressive structures. **Heresies** is a quarterly feminist publication on art and politics, costing US\$ 11 (plus US\$ 2 postage outside USA and Canada) for four issues, US\$ 18 for institutions. Single copies US\$ 3.50.

Victimology an International Journal
Visage Press, Inc.
P.O. Box 39045, Washington D.C. 20016
Volume 1, No. 2 Summer 1976

A 378-page collection of essays on theoretical perspectives, treatment and prevention, institutional victimization, victim services and several articles on rape victims. Very academic and not particularly feminist.

Women's Rights Law Reporter

c/o Transaction Periodicals Consortium
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, N. J. 08903
USA

A quarterly feminist legal journal published by students at Rutgers University School of Law. Gives analysis and commentary on sex-based discrimination and the impact of law as it affects women. Several issues have been devoted to covering rape laws and analysis of proposed changes. Vol. 4, No. 3, 1978 contains a particularly interesting article "Representation of Women Who Defend Themselves in Response to Physical or Sexual Assault" by Elizabeth Schneider and Susan Jordan. The article deals with how to win an acquittal on grounds of "justifiable homicide" when a woman has murdered in self-defense in a situation of rape or battering. Annual subscription: individual US\$12.00 (US\$ 14 outside North America), institution US\$ 24.00 (US\$ 26.00 outside North America).

**Atak Lor Fam**

Muvman Liberasyon Fam
c/o Libreri Morisyana
36 Sir Virgil Naz Street
Port Louis
Mauritius

As part of its campaign against rape, the Muvman Liberasyon Fam of Mauritius has published this 34-page booklet in Creole on rape, with information about the definition of rape in a patriarchal society, self-defense, and actions against violence against women.

"Rape Avoidance and Resistance: A Nonviolent Approach"**WIN**

Mary Crane
503 Atlantic Avenue, 5th floor
Brooklyn, New York 11217
USA

In this article, Mary Crane analyzes some of the theses of the practice of nonviolence and finds that they are very male-oriented. Many of the positions of the nonviolent movement do not apply to women. For example, the movement asserts the necessity of overcoming aggressiveness, yet women need to overcome their passivity and to learn some aggressiveness in order to overcome the injustice of rape. On this basis, Mary Crane goes on to discuss forms of nonviolent resistance to rape. This article is followed by a critique by Wendy Schwartz who asserts that "I believe it's also essential to establish

that violence to ourselves is no more acceptable than violence to others... I feel it's necessary to prevent rape in any available and reasonable way". Other articles in this issue are on "The Martial Arts: Options for Women's Self-Defense", by Cathy Carson and "Contradictions Between Feminist Anger and Nonviolent Practice" by Pam Mc Allister. This issue is essential reading for all those in or interested in the nonviolent movement.

Women Against Graphic Rape,

3700 Chestnut
Philadelphia, Pa. 19104
USA

In our everyday lives, many women find that we cannot walk down a street, read a magazine or newspaper, or listen to radio or television, without being affronted by some dehumanizing portrayal of women. Sometimes we feel outraged, sometimes we tell ourselves that we are over-reacting. Almost always, we have feelings of frustration.

Women Against Graphic Rape is a group of women working to end the public display of women as victims: helpless and vulnerable. We have organized in order to promote effective protest against the visual abuse of women: depictions of rape, sadism, battery, and dehumanizing acts against women.

Women Against Graphic Rape has decided to focus our protest on public displays, such as billboards, shop windows, and other visual depictions of violence against women. We are organizing a telephone tree which will be engaged whenever we discover instances of graphic rape.

Women Against Violence Against Women - WAVAW

P.O. Box 928 Station Q
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

Set up after the national day of women against violence against women (November 5, 1977) this action group will support any women on the issues listed in their demands. These demands cover:

- freedom of movement for all women in city or countryside, unmolested either physically or verbally
- action which focuses on taking the profit out of violence and hate propaganda against women and NOT harassment of working women
- decriminalization of prostitution
- that rape is a crime based on hate and not on sex, and intended to confirm men's power over all women
- that police and court respond to wife and child beating as they would (or should) to any assault
- the elimination of female job ghettos and the growing wage gap between men and women
- the right of any woman to bear and raise children in dignity and freedom from economic want, i.e. adequate support for single mothers, and no separation of children from mothers because of their lesbianism

- the decriminalization of abortion and the provision of women-run clinics where good healthcare, birth control information and safe abortions will be available free to all women
- dignified treatment of women in prisons and so-called correctional institutions
- the right of women to express themselves sexually - no harassment or discrimination for lesbian sexual orientation
- that forced sterilization of immigrant and native women be stopped
- an end to violence against women in mental health institutions and the offices of private psychotherapists.



Solidarité Femmes

B.P. 15
76800 St. Etienne-du Rouvray
France
tel: 60 54 70

Principally a group to give solidarity and practical help to battered women, this group is set up to help all women in the region who suffer moral or physical violence. They produce an irregular magazine (in French) called **Solidarité Femmes**.

Violence Against Women

National Conference on Violence Against Women, October 2-5 1979, Executive Tower Inn, Denver, Colorado, USA. "For the first time a national conference will address acts of violence committed against women as a single social phenomenon. Sexual assault, battering, marital rape, sexual harassment on the job, incest, pornography, and rape... Will be explored from the perspective of sex-role stereotyping and socialization, and their contributions to perpetuating prejudice and discrimination". This description is from the pamphlet announcing the conference. For further details contact: Workshops, Institutes and Conferences, Metropolitan State College, 1006 11th Street, Box 9, Denver, Co. 80204, USA.

This Film is About Rape

Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Center
406 Jarvis St.
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2G6.

"An analysis of rape that is intended to reach people at an emotional level so that they may wish to change some of their possibly wrong ideas about rape -- a subject permeated by myths. The facts and many more are discussed in the

film. The message is that rape is not a crime of sex, but one of assault, using sexual humiliation as its method. The film is serious without being militant. It presents a very painful fact of our lives in a compassionate manner". The film is accompanied by "Rape Prevention Resource Manual". Colour 29 min., Rental \$ 30.00, sale \$ 395.00.



Battered Women: A Hidden Crime

Slide show by Cathy Avina
Battered Women's Project
Minnesota Department of Corrections,
Metro Square Building,
St. Paul, Mn. 55102
USA

This slide-tape show demonstrates one woman's experience with violence, the reactions of her family, and two attempts to leave the situation. In the first attempt she is seen as defeated by the humiliation she experiences at the hands of various agencies and bureaucracies and by her isolation and fear of living alone. The second, and successful flight is to a shelter. A good basic introduction to the issue of battering.

Nobody Told Me: Childhood Sexual Abuse

Feminist Radio Network
P.O. Box 5537
Washington, D.C. 20016
USA

A one-half hour audio tape for use in organizing, education and broadcasting concludes that "it appears that the only long term solution to the problem of childhood sexual assault, as with rape and battering, is to change the age-old attitudes which view women and children as property...". Cassettes US\$ 7; 7 1/2 IPS reel \$ 8; 3 3/4 IPS reel \$ 7.

Disarm Rapists

c/o Betsy Warrior,
46 Pleasant St.,
Cambridge, Ma. 02139
USA

A poster costing US\$ 1.50 plus 50 cents postage, original, heavy paper, 17 x 22, black on white.

Betsy Warrior has also produced an excellent resource book on battered women, called **Working on Wife Abuse**, now in its 7th edition (114 pages). It is a directory of coalitions, task forces, groups and individuals working to offer support,

refuges and services to battered women both inside and outside the USA. Lists publications pertinent to the issues, including books, films, research studies, statistical reports, theses, posters, pamphlets, speeches, funding sources, etc. Also contains an introduction examining the history and purposes of refuges. US \$ 5.00 from the above address.

"Rape: 'In' and Dangerous"

Emergency Librarian

c/o Phyllis Yaffe

39 Edith Drive

Toronto, Ontario M4R 1Y9

Canada

In the July/August 1976 issue of this magazine intended primarily for feminist librarians, there is an excellent bibliography on rape. The following books and films are taken from it.

Rape! Victims of Crisis

Ann Wolpert Burgess and Lynda Lytle Holmstrom

Robert J. Brady Co. (Prentice-Hall)

1974

While it is intended primarily for those who are involved in the immediate crisis situation, it tells a whole lot about rape, its victims, its perpetrators, the medical, legal, and law enforcement problems, and everything else concerned, all in a readable, fascinating form—including a chapter on male homosexual rape.

Rape: The First Source book for Women

Noreen Connell and Cassandra Wilson, eds.

New American Library

1974

Writings by New York Radical Feminists on every aspect of rape—from the heavy feminist standpoint. Covers C-R, psychosexual abuse, feminist action, formation of rape prevention groups, self-defense, and more. Highly recommended.

Sexual Assault: Confronting Rape in America

Nancy Gager and Cathleen Schurr

Grosset and Dunlap

1976

This is the second book on rape you should own if you can only afford two. About the best book of its kind on every aspect of rape except what Brownmiller covered in her excellent book. Highly recommended (available in both trade and paper editions). Fine bibliography.

Hot Line!

Margaret O. Hyde

McGraw-Hill

1976

A juvenile book that has some good things to say about crisis-intervention work, especially hotlines, and especially using the hotline if you're a youthful victim, as so many of the rape victims who call us are. Not for young kids, but certainly for young adults.

Speak Out on Rape!

Margaret O. Hyde

McGraw-Hill

1976

Classified as juvenile literature, this is an excellent overview for mature children and YA's, written in clear, readable style and yet containing a vast amount of information on all aspects of rape, including rape crisis centers and outdated laws and how to change them.

Rape: The Bait and the Trap

Jean MacKellar

Crown

1975

Interesting only because it is a good example of what makes the myths flourish. Based on Amir's study of rapists, the author's thesis is an amplification of his findings, which seem to be that the rapist is more to be pitied than censured, and that "woman's role in rape is not a simple one" — i.e., women help a bit, too. A very dangerous book and one that should be read and evaluated very carefully before purchase.

How to Say No to a Rapist — and Survive

Frederick Storaska

Random

1975

Possibly the worst book around on rape, by a self-styled "authority" who is getting rich on this book and his lecturing—but who is also under investigation in several states for a number of irregularities. Makes getting raped sound like sort of fun, especially once you learn to flatter and cajole (sexily) your attacker and thus disarm him. Rape is not fun, however, and phonies like this lull many women into a sense of false security regarding the handling of rapists. A very dangerous book that should be looked at very carefully before it is disseminated.



FILMS

Rape Alert

Charles Cahill
17 min, colour film
Aims Instructional Media
1975

A black policewoman in L.A. talks about how you can avoid getting raped or fight back if it happens. Contradicts Storaska's ideas, and good for that reason as well as its sensible content.

Rape Culture

Margaret Lazerus and Renner Winderlich
25 min, colour film
Cambridge Documentary Films
1975

The whole socialization process that leads men to rape and women to become victims of rape. Very good.

No Tears for Rachel

National Educational Television
Educational Broadcasting Corp.
27 min, colour film
Indiana University Audio-Visual Center

Good film on how a rape victim is treated by police, friends, and family, the medical profession, and the legal profession. Deals with the lasting paranoia felt by many women who have been raped, attitudes of males, especially husbands of rape victims, and boyfriends. Powerful and moving.

Sex and Violence

27 min, colour film
Benchmark Films
1976

One of the best films I've seen on rape--powerful and informative. Talks with victims, a child victim's mother (the child raped three times!), a prosecutor, a judge, and others give a vivid picture of this nasty business, but the most frightening part is the discussion at the end with several rapists now in prison: it is simply horrifying. **Highly recommended!** (Also available is an excellent 8-page guide to the film and to subsequent discussion).

How to Say No to a Rapist -- And Survive

Harry Wilard
52 min, colour film
Learning Corporation of America
1975

Every bit as bad as Storaska's book, on which it is based. A very dangerous film, especially as it has received rave reviews--all from men and/or non-feminists, of course. (See review of Storaska's book).



POLAND

An article in the *Gazeta Lubuska* of Zielona Gora, Poland, dated 5 November 1977 reports on the handling of rape cases in the courts. When women bring charges of rape, they are treated in the courts as if they were the accused. They are subjected to interrogation on such things as, why did they use the public underground transportation, knowing that this is risky; why did they choose deserted streets to go home by; why did they get into empty lifts, etc. As far as the aggressors are concerned, the medical doctors often testify that the poor fellow is sick, therefore, innocent.

While there is very little material available on rape in Eastern Europe, this article indicates that perhaps things are not so different there than in Western Europe.

MEXICO

"One out of every six Mexican women has been a rape victim, the president of the National Association to Aid Raped Women said yesterday. Maria Urquidi said that many girls between the ages of 6 and 8 are sexually assaulted by members of their families. She said that local courts are not tough enough with men accused of rape and that judges often free defendants in exchange for bribes". *International Herald Tribune*, 1 June 1978.

international feminist network

The International Feminist Network (IFN) is an international network to mobilize support and solidarity for women. The history of people's solidarity internationally is long: there are now well established organisations to fight for workers' rights, for the release of political prisoners, and against racism. But there has been no such organisation for women. Over the past decade we have come to realise the extent of the countless injustices against women throughout the world, and if we are to gain strength and power to combat these injustices, it is imperative to create and build up international solidarity. IFN is an attempt to do this.

IFN started after the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women in Brussels, Belgium, in March 1976. The idea was that there should be continuing support and publicity for crimes against women anywhere. ISIS coordinates IFN by sending out appeals for support to national contact people in (at present) twenty-four countries. These national contacts then disseminate the information within their own countries, for action. Usually, the action to be taken consists of sending telegrams and letters of protest or support, of organising demonstrations, and of getting national and international publicity for the case. Any woman or group of women can send in information to ISIS for distribution through IFN.

The guidelines under which IFN operates for taking up cases are as follows:

- priority is given to supporting feminist issues and women not supported by other kinds of networks or channels;
- women should be supported even if the issue is not particularly "feminist" wherever their struggles are looked on as "secondary", (e.g. women political prisoners, women in mixed groups such as labour unions, liberation movements etc.);
- care is taken that the IFN is not used as an instrument of male-dominated or male-oriented groups.

The cases we have dealt with up to now have included: abortion campaigns, victims of sterilization abuse, women workers' struggles for their rights, forced kidnapping, victims of rape, and women who have defended themselves against rape and battering. Since our last report in the *ISIS Bulletin* No. 10 (winter 1978/79), the following cases have been taken up:

1. **Yvonne Wanrow**, a native American woman (USA), who had to stand trial a second time for second degree murder. In August 1972 Yvonne Wanrow shot and killed in self-defense a white child molester who trespassed on the Colville reservation and broke into the house where she was staying. He had molested her son and her neighbour's child

before. Police did not respond to her calls then. Yvonne feared for her safety and the safety of her children. She was convicted of second degree murder and second degree assault on Mother's Day of 1973. She did not face a jury of her peers – the jury was white. She had to fight for the right to wear her native dress in court. Her conviction was largely based on her phone call to the police after the shooting. The prosecution charged that her voice on the phone (the police tape-recorded it) was too calm for a woman who just killed a man in self-defense. The male court would have believed her more had her voice been hysterical.

This conviction was overturned on grounds the tape of the phone calls to the police to report the shooting was improperly used in the trial. However, the state prosecutor pressed for a retrial, and she was tried again on April 2, 1979, under the felony-murder law. In the days before the trial, letters poured into Washington State in support of Yvonne. At the trial she pleaded guilty to manslaughter and second degree assault, and received a five-year suspended sentence. She will be on probation for five years – but she will be free! The Yvonne Wanrow Defense Committee feels that the intense pressure from Yvonne's supporters was a key factor in her victory. Further information from: Yvonne Wanrow Defense Committee, 1205 South Tower, Seattle, Wa. 98104, USA.

2. **Jenna Kelsie** who shot and killed her ex-husband in 1973 while he was beating her. This was after years of repeated beatings, including a near-death accident in which he drove her car off the road with his truck. All this was systematically ignored by the local police. She was convicted of second-degree murder and started serving a 15-16 year sentence in 1976 at the Indiana Women's prison. A petition for clemency is now being prepared. More information from: Carol Hegland, 4407 Linwood Ct. 1, Indianapolis, Ind. 46201, USA.

3. **Janice Painter** who was convicted for shooting her son, a Vietnam veteran who had repeatedly abused her, her blind husband, her other children and two elderly women, after he threatened and then physically attacked her when she tried to call the police. She is appealing her life sentence for first-degree murder. At her trial, her court-appointed lawyer failed to represent her adequately, and she herself was on heavy medication for her injuries and could not effectively defend herself. Contact the Janice Painter Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1018, Tacoma, Wa. 98401, USA. She needs support and money.

4. **Maria Antónia Palla**, a Portuguese woman journalist who was accused of "moral offences" and of "encouraging

crime" because she was responsible for a film shown on television in 1976, which talked about abortion and the aspiration (Karman) method. The film was part of a series (Nome: Mulher) for which Maria Antónia was responsible, and which has been banned ever since.

The law on abortion in Portugal is nearly a century old, and penalises any abortion or accomplice to abortion with 2-8 years imprisonment. In spite of pressure to change this law, nothing has yet been done by the Assembly of Republic (Portuguese Parliament). There are about 180,000 abortions every year in Portugal and 2,000 women are estimated to die because of bad conditions. Maria Antónia's film talked about this and showed a women's group that performed abortions by the Karman method.

Because of national and international pressure, Maria Antónia Palla was acquitted on June 11, 1979.

BUT, the struggle goes on with the case of *Conceição Massano da Santos*, a 22-year-old woman, and mother of a two-year-old girl. She is going on trial, accused of the "crime" of an abortion which she had on 1976. She is married to a working man, who was then her boyfriend, and he is being incriminated, as well as a woman friend, because they helped her to have this abortion. They might get four years in prison, and she risks a penalty of eight years. Conceição is very poor and lives in a small village in Alentejo, Aldeia dos Fernandes, Rua Nova no. 22, Almodovar.

The Portuguese National Abortion and Contraception Campaign (CNAC) is supporting her, but they are counting on the help of women all around the world, who have already supported Maria Antónia Palla and have pressed the government and public opinion for her acquittal. CNAC asks all women and women's organisations for support to stop this trial and free Conceição and all the other women who have abortions and are now risking imprisonment.

They ask for demonstrations of solidarity such as:

- demonstrations at Portuguese Embassies
- telegrams to the Presidente da Republica, Presidente da Assembleia da República, and the Ministro da Justiça, Lisboa, Portugal (copies to CNAC)
- pressing the International press to publish this case, which is against the Portuguese constitution and against women's rights.

Contact: CNAC, Rua Rodrigues Sampaio No 79-r/c, Lisboa, Portugal.

5. On 38th April 1979, the **Progressive Women's Organisation of Turkey** was banned by a Martial Law Command of Istanbul. The head office and all branch offices were searched and closed down, and several officers were detained. PWO has a membership of over 15,000, and none of their activities constitutes a breach of the law, according to their report. On July 20-23 the women organised a long march and demonstration to attract international support. Contact: Beria Onger, Bakirköy, Zeytinlik Mah., Hocahasan Sk. No. 1/2, Istanbul, Turkey.

6. **Norma Jean Serena**, Pittsburg, USA, whose case was sent out earlier through IFN, finally won part of her fight. She charged that Welfare officials placed her children in foster homes and had her sterilized against her will. When her case



came up for trial, the verdict, arrived at by an all-white jury of six men and two women, declared that the two social workers were guilty of misrepresenting Serena's case and placed her children in foster homes under false pretenses. As compensation for that and for the years Serena has spent trying to get her children back, the court awarded her US\$ 17,000.

However, the jury decided that Serena had given consent for her sterilization, although the paper she has signed was dated the day after the operation. This confusion has had some impact on the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's decision to set up guidelines on sterilization, designating a 30-day waiting period in between signing consent forms and having a federally funded sterilization procedure.

7. A **South Wales woman** (United Kingdom) is on remand at Pucklechurch Remand Centre, accused of murdering her ex-husband. She has been divorced for three years, during which time she and her three children aged nine, seven and three were terrorised by her ex-husband. He broke into her home and destroyed property, as well as using violence and threats of violence.

Last November this woman came to a Women's Aid refuge for protection against him and left the refuge confident and "together".

Her ex-husband broke into her home and lay in wait for her on her return on Christmas Eve. When she arrived there was a struggle when he tried to assault her, during which time he received fatal injuries. She was then arrested and charged with murder. She has been repeatedly refused bail. Newport Women's Aid and Women's Action Group are giving her support.

This woman desperately needs support. She is pleading not guilty, but if the case is proved she could go to prison for ten years at least. Letters of support and donations to her Defence Fund, c/o Newport Women's Aid, P.O. Box 11, Newport, Wales.

8. **Dessie Woods.** The struggle to free Dessie Woods is picking up momentum and it is vitally important that we continue to support her. We are presenting the details of her case here. Please support Dessie by any of the actions listed below.

On June 16, 1975 Dessie Woods, a 32-year-old black mother of two children, successfully defended herself and a friend, Cheryl Todd, against an armed rape attack by white Ronnie Horne. She got his (unlicensed) gun and shot and killed him. Woods was sentenced to a 22-year term in Georgia's Women's Institute of Corrections.

The National Committee to Free Dessie Woods reports that Dessie has been subjected to brutal treatment during the last three years because she is strong, militant and proud of her Africaness. They report that she has been beaten, drugged, held nude in a freezing-cold isolation cell and denied visits from her children and supporters. She has been taken twice to Milledvillage State Mental Institution and, according to the Committee, she has been drugged with prolixin, (generic name: fluphenazine), a very dangerous mind-controlling drug, whose known side effects include tremors, rigidity, immobility, and stiffening of the extremities (may persist and be irreversible), hypertension, nausea, lack of appetite and blurred vision. A successful barrage of telephone call-in support for Woods and protest for her treatment got Dessie Woods released back to the prison.

Dessie Woods is not the only person to be receiving prolixin or other forms of behaviour modification treatment in prison. She is someone we can build support around and focus on exposing such things and getting her release from prison. Demand an end to the drugging and unjust imprisonment of Dessie Woods! We can do any of the following:



*WRITE AND SEND LETTERS to *President Carter*, White House, Washington, D.C., U.S.A. and to *Governor George Busbee*, Capitol Bldg., Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A., demanding the immediate release of Dessie Woods!

*SEND LETTERS AND MAKE PHONE CALLS to U.S. Embassies demanding Dessie Woods immediate freedom, and condemning U.S. colonial domination over African people.

*SEND LETTERS to *K. Linahan, Warden*, Georgia Women's Institute of Corrections, Hardwick, Georgia 30314, U.S.A., demanding an end to the forced druggings, and that he guarantee the safety of Dessie Woods.

*WRITE LETTERS to *Judge Wilbur Owens*, P.O. Box 65, Macon, Georgia 31202, U.S.A. Judge Owen will soon be hearing a Writ of Habeas Corpus appeal on Dessie's behalf. Demand that he grant Dessie Woods an appeal!

*WRITE OR CALL *Amnesty International* c/o Ms. Anne Burley, International Secretariat, A.I. 10, Southampton Street, London WC2, England (Tel. 01-836-7788) urging

Amnesty International to adopt the case of Dessie Woods and demand that the U.S. state release her immediately.

*WRITE LETTERS to *Dessie Woods* (A78927) G.W.I.C., Hardwick, Georgia 30314 U.S.A., and tell her of your support. This will also put prison officials on notice that Dessie Woods continues to have thousands of supporters who are aware of her plight and will not tolerate her imprisonment or abuse any longer!

*HELP BUILD for the *European tour of Damesha Black-earth*, Chairwoman of the NCDDW, in October 1979. You can help through raising funds, distributing materials, organizing speaking engagements, arranging transportation and lodging in your area, and many other ways. Please contact the National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods (address below) and the Dessie Woods Support Coalition if you are interested in helping in any way.

*CONTRIBUTE TO the *Trust Fund for Dessie's two children*, Samantha and Calvin who are presently barely surviving in Savannah, Georgia with Dessie's elderly grandmother. We urge supporters to send "Dollars for Dessie's Children" to the National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods.

*The NCDDW is in urgent need of financial support to continue this difficult struggle. Send a financial contribution — check or money order — to the National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods, P.O. Box 92084, Morris Brown Station, Atlanta, Georgia, 30314, U.S.A.

With your support, the international campaign will be successful, and Dessie Woods will be free!

Further information and contacts:

National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods, P.O. Box 92084, Morris Brown Station, Atlanta, Georgia 30314, USA,

Dessie Woods Support Coalition, P.O. Box 921, San Francisco, Ca. 94101, USA.

New York Dessie Woods Support Coalition, P.O. Box 565, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215, USA.

Campaign to free Dessie Woods, c/o Gerolaan 52, ZEIST, Netherlands.

The countries currently within the IFN network are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the USA. If your country is among these, it does not mean you cannot also become an IFN contact. It is very difficult for individuals or groups to cover a whole country. IFN needs to expand if it is going to become more effective. We need to cover more stories, to be able to support more women — the thousands who need international support. If you would like to become an IFN contact, please let us know. If you have information to be sent out internationally, please send it to us. IFN also needs financial support. Donations, information and further details to: IFN, c/o ISIS, C.P. 301, 1227 Carouge/Geneva, Switzerland.

INTERNATIONAL SISTERHOOD IS MORE POWERFUL!!

RESOURCES!

latin america - caribbean

FIRST MEETING OF LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN:

Caracas (Venezuela), May 1980.
Let's prepare this together! Write your
ideas to:
Grupo la conjura,
Aptdo. 16361 Coliseo
Caracas 101, Venezuela.

HACIA EL PRIMER ENCUENTRO DE MUJERES LATI- NOAMERICANAS

Caracas, Mayo 1980
Preparemos juntos estol Escriben dandonos su opinion
Grupo la conjura
Aptdo. 16361 Coliseo
Caracas 101
Venezuela

Fem

Publicación feminista trimestral
Nueva Cultura Feminista
A.C. Av. Universidad 1855, Desp. 401
Mexico 20 D.F.,
Mexico

This quarterly feminist journal is a fairly academic publica-
tion, but important since it is one of the few really feminist
works coming out of Latin America. Started in 1976, this

journal takes one theme each time: abortion, work,
sexuality, feminism, language, family, the International Year
of the Child (Vol. II no. 8 - the most recent). Annual sub-
scription US\$ 12.00.

Caribbean Women's Features Syndicate

P.O. Box 159
Bridgetown
Barbados
Caribbean

"The Syndicate is a regional feature service which was set
up in July 1978 as part of a proposed world network for the
production and distribution of features on issues of particular
concern to women. Special emphasis is placed on women's
changing roles in society and their more active participation
in the development process. Features are produced and
distributed from material sent in by correspondents from
around the English-speaking Caribbean. The Caribbean News
Agency (CANA) aids in the distribution by sending out the
features to its subscribers - the regional media. All the
correspondents are practising journalists.

"The Syndicate is a Unesco project although the bulk of its
funding comes from the United Methodist Church of
America". (self-description). For further details write to above
address.

europa

NETHERLANDS

Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 90733
2509 LS The Hague

The Institute of Social Studies is a centre of higher education
and research concerned with problems related to the develop-
ment process. It is now offering a Master's Degree Course in
"Women and Development" which can be chosen together
with other programmes (e.g. on rural development, interna-
tional relations, labour studies etc.). The new course starts
in September 1979 and scholarships are available (information
from Dutch Embassies). Further information from Maria
Mies at the above address.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Information für die Frau
Augustastrasse 42
5300 Bonn 2 (Bad Godesberg)

This is a monthly publication put out by the Information
Service of the German Council of Women. It is a somewhat
dry publication (no graphics, all text) giving information
especially about the activities of women's organisations in
Germany, but includes some analytic articles about, e.g.
women in Africa, and news from other countries. Annual
subscription: DM 28. - (DM 30. - outside Germany).

FRANCE

"Choisir de Donner la Vie"

Is the theme of a conference to be held from 5-7 October 1979 organised by CHOISIR, 102 rue Saint Dominique, 75007, Paris (tel: 277 33 00). It will deal with contraception, abortion, pregnancy, childbirth, working conditions for pregnant women and women with children. Many eminent persons are invited as speakers. For further details and registration form, write to CHOISIR.

UNITED KINGDOM

IDS Bulletin

Institute of Development Studies
University of Sussex
Brighton BN1 9RE

Volume 10 number 3, April 1979 issue of this Bulletin is entitled "Special Issue on the Continuing Subordination of Women in the Development Process". It is a report on and resolutions from a conference which took place in September 1978 on the theme of the subordination of women in the development process. It also includes papers on women and health in Bangladesh, an analysis of the official ideas on women and development, and a research and education

project for women in the Dominican Republic. A very important resource for anyone concerned with women and development.

Labrish

Women's Centre
P.O. Box 287
London NW6

Labrish is the West Indian word for gossip and is the title of a new paper put out by black women of the Wages for Housework Campaign in Britain. This group also publishes a "Campaign Bulletin". Free to women, but donations are welcome.

PORTUGAL

Editora das Mulheres

Avenida Sidonio Pais 28, 5 Dto.
Lisboa

A Cooperative of women which publishes feminist books. They are also setting up a documentation centre, and helping to organise actions around women's culture. They would like to receive books, periodicals and all kinds of women's publications for their centre.

north america

Women in a Hungry World

World Hunger/Global Development Project,
American Friends Service Committee,
15 Rutherford Place,
New York, NY 1003
USA

Women in a Hungry World is a study/action kit on women in development. It includes a variety of short readings in the areas of women's lives, economics, population, agriculture, food production, how development plans exclude women and how US actions affect them. It is geared to a US audience, but could be used elsewhere. US 5.50 from the above address.

Reproductive Rights National Network (RRNN)

3244 N. Clark Street,
Chicago, Il, 60657
USA

RRNN is a national coalition of 18 feminist and women's health groups formed to educate and organize both women and men around the issues of: safe, legal abortions (regardless

of ability to pay); freedom from sterilization abuse; other issues of reproductive freedom, including access and availability of childcare and decent health services. They are currently fighting specifically against possible new restrictive abortion legislation, and are involved in organisation of an "Abortion Rights Action Week" from 22-29 October 1979.

Broadside

P.O. Box 494
Station P
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T1
Canada

A new feminist monthly newspaper which starts on a regular basis in September 1979. Their introductory issue, May 1979 explains: "In many ways **Broadside** is a review: a review of the arts, a review of the news, all filtered through a pro-woman screen". It has analyses, interviews, columns, cartoons, local community events. The May issue has a good article about the treatment of women in the print media. Subscription: Individual \$ 8 for 12 issues, \$ 15 for 24 issues; institution \$ 12 for 12 issues, \$ 24 for 24 issues (add \$ 2 for out-of-Canada addresses).

CAMPAIGN AGAINST DEPO-PROVERA

What is Depo-Provera?

Depo-Provera is a contraceptive for women which is given by injection. Depo-Provera makes women infertile for three to six months or longer, depending on the dose. An injection of DP consists of a massive dose of a synthetic hormone called progesterone, which is the same hormone found in the birth-control pill. DP alters the natural hormones which make a woman ovulate (i.e. become fertile), and menstruate.

The idea of an injection for birth control may sound very simple and attractive, especially for women who live in areas of the world where it is difficult to get access to medical services, or where society frowns on contraception. However, DP has some very nasty side-effects, and the long-term effects of its use on women and on their children have not been adequately researched.

What are the side effects?

1. DP has been associated with an increased risk of cancer of the cervix (opening to the womb).
2. It has been shown to cause breast cancer in dogs.
3. It causes irregular bleeding, heavy bleeding or none at all.
4. It has been associated with the malformation of fetuses in women who are pregnant when given the drug.
5. It has been shown to cause long-term infertility and possible permanent sterility in many women *after* they have stopped taking the drug.
6. It has been found to cause many other side-effects such as weight gain, change in skin colouring, raised blood sugar level, hair loss, acne, migraines, nausea, severe depression, aches, loss of orgasms and sex drive, and enlargement of the clitoris.
7. DP is passed on in breast milk at the same level of concentration as is found in the mother's bloodstream. This has grave long-term implications for the health and safety of the child.

How has Depo-Provera been developed?

DP is manufactured by an American company, Upjohn. As with the Pill, and many other drugs, thousands of poor and Third World women have been used as "guinea-pigs" for Depo-Provera. It was first used as a contraceptive drug in 1963. Since 1972 international agencies such as International Planned Parenthood Federation have been using DP on a massive scale as part of their population control programme; so that now, in 1979, it is being used in 76 countries. It is

particularly being recommended for use immediately after birth and during breast feeding, and in view of the *as yet unresearched* effects of DP on babies who consume it in this way, this is a matter of great concern. It is known that the synthetic hormone progesterone can have an adverse effect on the development of the reproductive organs and functions.

Even though DP is being widely used in 76 countries, it has *not* been passed as safe for use in the USA by that country's Federal Drug Administration (FDA). Neither is it widely available for use as a contraceptive in Canada, Great Britain, Japan or Sweden.

The Campaign

Women in the USA and Great Britain are now undertaking a campaign against Depo-Provera, since it is harmful to women and their children everywhere. In the USA, the campaign is focused on (a) collecting information from women who have been given the injection, (b) bringing the issue as much as possible to public attention, and (c) continuing to protest against Upjohn's efforts to get FDA approval for the drug. In Great Britain, the aims of the campaign are, (a) withdrawal of Depo-Provera, (b) to expose the way in which Depo-Provera has been developed, experimented and used on women, often without the prior knowledge and consent of the women involved, and (c) free, safe and reliable contraception on demand – contraception that does not endanger people's health.

What you can do

- Start collecting information on the use and effects of Depo-Provera in your own area or country;
- send any relevant information to the addresses below; if you have had the injection, it is important to let one of the groups know your experiences;
- help to publicize the issue in your area/country.

For further information and contacts, write to:

National Women's Health Network,
Parklane Building,
2025 "I" St., NW, Suite 105,
Washington D.C. 20006,
USA.

Campaign against Depo-Provera,
c/o ICAR,
374 Gray's Inn Road,
London WC1,
England.



- No. 1 **The International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women** (Brussels), March 1976. Testimonies from over 30 countries.
- No. 2 **Women in the Daily Press**, October 1976. An analysis with resources.
- No. 3 **Women in Liberation Struggles**, April 1977. Almost entirely from Third World sources and a variety of political movements.
- No. 4 **Battered Women and the Refuge**, July 1977: Brings together most of the current resources on women battering and the initiatives taken by the women's movement.
- No. 5 **Feminism and Socialism, Part I**, October 1977. Reports from two international feminist conferences held in June 1977.
- No. 6 **Feminism and Socialism, Part II**, Winter 1977/78. Articles from five continents, and extensive annotated resource on women and socialism.
- No. 7 **Women and Health, Part I**, Spring 1978. Who controls health, who controls reproduction.
- No. 8 **Women and Health, Part II**, Summer 1978. Health initiatives from around the world.
- No. 9 **Women in Southern Africa**, Autumn 1978.
- No. 10 **Women workers**, Winter 1978/79.
- No. 11 **Women, Land and Food Production**, Spring 1979.

Subscriptions (payable to ISIS in Switzerland, in currency equivalents)
US dollars 15 per year for women and women's groups (US dollars 20 airmail outside Europe).

US dollars 25 per year for libraries, institutions, etc. (US dollars 30 airmail outside Europe).

Individual copies : US dollars 3.00 (postage : surface US dollars .75, airmail US dollars 1.50 per bulletin).

RESOURCE GUIDES

Bottle Babies : a guide to the baby foods issue, dealing with the impact of multinational companies' sales techniques on women and children in the Third World : the dangers involved in the sale and use of powdered baby milk and feeding bottles. Available in English, French and German from ISIS Switzerland, price US\$ 3.00 (airmail postage outside Europe \$ 1.50).

Resource Guide on Women in Development (in preparation).

This Guide raises the questions about the concepts of the "integration of women in development" and presents a picture of what women themselves think of development, using material coming directly from women in developing countries.



Via della Pelliccia 31, 00153 Rome, Italy
Tel: 58 08 231
Case Postale 301, CH-1227 Carouge, Switzerland
Tel: (022) 43 40 22