

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

FACTORS INFLUENCING A BATTERED WOMAN'S  
DECISION TO RETURN TO THE ABUSIVE SITUATION;  
AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION CONSIDERING  
LEARNED HELPLESSNESS AND SURVIVOR THEORY

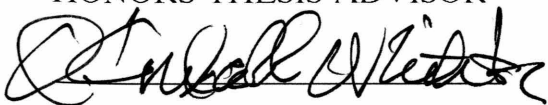
A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND  
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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In the United States, in many neighborhoods, on many streets, a horror story is unfolding. Partner abuse between men and women engaged in an intimate relationship is a widespread problem. More than 1.13 million women are victims of reported domestic violence each year, according to a report prepared by the Majority Staff of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Estimates suggest that an additional three million cases are unreported (Senate Judiciary Committee, 1992). Experts have found that one in every six marriages is characterized by spouse abuse (Straus and Gelles, 1990). Although the terms "partner abuse" and "woman battering" were only coined about 25 years ago, the phenomenon of woman beating is widely recognized by researchers and mental health practitioners (Shupe, Stacey & Hazelwood, 1986; Straus, Gelles & Steinmetz, 1980; Straus & Gelles, 1989; Walker, 1987). Extensive research on partner abuse conducted since the mid-sixties addresses factors such as the characteristics of abusers and victims, alcohol and battering, battering during pregnancy, the social causes of abuse, diagnoses of abused persons, and the effectiveness of services available for victims.<sup>1</sup> From many

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<sup>1</sup> Some researchers have discovered that abuse is not only inflicted by the men in relationships, but also by women. Several studies address battered husbands and battered gays and lesbians. Many of the theories and diagnoses discussed here also apply to heterosexual men and gay and lesbian victims. Due to the data available, this thesis will focus on female victims abused by male partners. Most research centers on women who have few resources and lack of physical strength to protect themselves from an abuser. Throughout the thesis I will refer to the abuser as "he" and the victim as "she" because men were abusers and women the abused in these data.

interviews with batterers and victims, researchers have categorized different types of abuse and the cycle in which abuse usually occurs.

Spouse abuse has been categorized into four types: physical, psychological/verbal, sexual, and destruction of or damage to property or pets. Physical battering consists of any aggressive behavior inflicted by the abuser on the victim's body. Examples include pushing, punching, choking, or use of a weapon. Psychological or verbal battering is the systematic destruction of the victim's self-worth through harassment and threats of violence and suicide. The abuser might control the victim's life through manipulating her eating and sleeping habits and denying access to social contacts, familial relationships, or money. Sexual abuse occurs when the abuser forces unwanted sexual activity on the victim, ranging from fondling to rape. Destruction involves no contact with the victim's body, but entails damaging her personal and prized property such as possessions or her pets. For an abusive relationship to exist, only one form of battering must be present, although others often are. (Walker, 1979)

These four forms occur in a "cycle of abuse" used to describe events surrounding the battering. The cycle appears in three stages: the tension building stage, the acute battering incident stage, and the honeymoon stage. During the tension building stage, the abuser inflicts minor battering, such as insulting or slapping the victim. The victim usually tries to avoid the batterer, hiding anger for fear of an explosion. This stage continues indefinitely until some event triggers the acute battering incident stage. This latter stage occurs when an external event or the internal state of the abuser causes extreme battering. Massive physical, sexual and/or psychological battering occurs, usually

lasting from two to twenty-four hours. During this stage, rapes, threats of killing, and massive beating occur. Some victims choose to leave and seek safety at a shelter for abused women or with family or friends. An unusual period of calm occurs next which is referred to as the honeymoon phase. Here the man is extremely loving, contrite, and kind to the victim. If she threatens or tries to leave, he begs for forgiveness and promises not to do it again. However, these promises rarely hold true. The honeymoon stage ends when minor battering and tension build up again. The cycle is continued when another acute battering incident occurs, typically worse than the previous one. The cycle of abuse continues during the relationship, and the battering usually grows more intense (Walker, 1979).

#### Purpose of the Thesis

This thesis will focus on presenting information to support different models that attempt to explain the behavior of abused women. The thesis will describe the steps a woman takes throughout her relationship to protect herself from abuse, and the situational factors affecting her decision-making. Responses of abused women range from a brief anonymous hotline call to ask a few questions about options, to divorce, and/or formal criminal charges. The latter generally requires several steps and complex decisions. Factors influencing decisions include the duration of the relationship, whether they are married, if children are involved, the actual or potential abuse of children, her age, her access to family and friends, her income, and the type and frequency of abuse she has experienced. Research determining which situational factors affect decision-making has been very limited (Aguirre, 1985; Dutton-Douglas & Dionne, 1991; Stacey & Shupe,

1983). This thesis will address the above mentioned situational factors to determine which, if any, affect a woman's decision to remain, leave, or return to her abuser. Since the phenomenon of abuse was recognized 25 years ago, many services have become available for battered woman (i.e. shelter, hotlines, counseling, job and housing placement, and legislation). Since some women who know about these services remain in abusive relationships, it is apparent that provision of the resources to empower women are not sufficient to break the cycle of abuse.

This research examines clients of a local agency for abused persons, examining records for five years to discover why certain women left abusers while others stayed with them. Project Horizon is an agency serving abused persons in a rural area of southwestern Virginia. While some of its clients are abused men and children, the overwhelming majority are women abused by male partners. Consequently, the data only include single, married, separated, or divorced female clients who were either living apart from or cohabitating with male abusers.

### Project Horizon

Project Horizon was formed in 1982, when the local mental health clinic and Department of Social Services saw the need for services for adult victims of domestic violence. Project Horizon formed an alliance with another local battered women's shelter and the United Way to start its services. In 1983, Project Horizon formed its eight member board and hired a paid project coordinator to oversee the services and train volunteers. Most of Project Horizon's services are carried out by about 30 volunteers. Volunteers, who are both male and female, are made up of local citizens con-

cerned with partner abuse, students from local colleges, and former battered women who wish to help others.

Services offered to clients of Project Horizon include a 24 hour help hotline and placement in emergency and/or long-term shelters. The hotline is manned by volunteers who undergo a day training program administered by the coordinator. Hotline workers are required to describe all available services to each caller and to provide emotional support and counseling as well as crisis intervention services. During a crisis intervention call, hotline workers can place an abused woman in emergency shelter for one to three days in Lexington, or refer her to a long term shelter in a local city that can provide additional services. Long term shelters have job placement services, support groups, individual counseling, children's groups, a men's (batterer's) group and parenting skills workshops. Short term shelter is for emergency only to remove the client from the abusive situation during a crisis and does not provide on-site services. Hotline workers are trained to provide referrals for resources to clients, such as legal, financial, medical and housing information, although all interaction is by phone. Volunteers have access to names of attorneys willing to represent battered women, are able to explain the intricacies of the laws, and provide companions for court and police proceedings. Volunteers also provide financial information by telling clients where to apply for food stamps, transportation help, employment or welfare. Clients in the process of leaving their abusers also can receive information about low income housing from hotline volunteers.

Project Horizon documents each call to provide a record for a woman who might later want to divorce her abuser, obtain a protective order, or charge him criminally.

The project coordinator also runs bi-weekly support groups for battered women, provides individual counseling, and can act as an advocate for clients in the court room. Clients can also be referred to the local mental health clinic for counseling.

### Organization of the Thesis

In the second chapter, the reader will gain an understanding of the three different theories that attempt to explain the behavior and characteristics of abused women. Three major diagnoses exist for practitioners to use when treating battered women. First, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is used frequently to describe the behavior of battered women and focuses on many of the physiological and psychological changes that occur in a woman due to battering (Herman, 1992; Gillespie, 1989; Stark and Flitcraft, 1988; Walker, 1984). PTSD was first conceptualized to describe the anxiety disorder caused by severe trauma such as rape, combat, or a natural disaster. The second theory is drawn from learned helplessness theory (Seligman et al., 1978). Theorists have recommended that battered women be diagnosed to ascertain learned helplessness, the idea that one feels helpless in the face of danger because any past attempts to alleviate the danger failed to produce favorable results (Ball & Wyman, 1978; Hendricks-Matthews, 1986; Rounsaville, 1978; Walker, 1979, 1984, 1987). The third, Survivor Theory, is based on the idea that battered women do not have PTSD or learned helplessness; rather, services and help sources simply do not exist or are not sufficient to enable a woman to leave her abuser. Since each help source that the woman utilizes fails to help, she has no other choice than to remain with or return to her abuser (Gondolf, 1988).



Chapter Three explores the emergence of agencies for battered women, including shelters and hotlines, and it also discusses the research evaluating the effectiveness of shelters. Do shelters break the cycle of violence by ending the abuse or by helping a woman to leave an abusive situation? This chapter will outline the little research that has been conducted exploring factors affecting decision-making.

Chapter Four outlines the propositions about the procession of steps and contributing factors that occur when a woman chooses to remain or leave her abuser. Since the data from my sample contain no information that would enable me to evaluate PTSD, I will present propositions relevant to learned helplessness and Survivor Theory. Suggestions regarding the utility of the two models will be presented. These propositions suggest that battered women take into consideration many factors when choosing to leave an abuser. The complexity of the decision-making process, coupled with the effects of PTSD, learned helplessness, and Survivor Theory may explain why certain women leave batterers while others do not.

Chapter Five describes the methods used to conduct this research and identifies their limitations. It also includes descriptions of the sample. Chapter Six analyzes the data and discusses the results in order to determine which model most effectively describes the behavior of victims and what other contributing situational factors are affecting battered women. Chapter Seven will conclude the thesis with a reiteration of the propositions and results and recommend efforts for future research and treatment of battered women.



## CHAPTER TWO

### DIAGNOSING BATTERED WOMEN

In an effort to diagnose battered women, develop therapy for them, and break the cycle of violence, many researchers have examined the behavior and characteristics of abused women. Three main diagnoses have been suggested for use with battered women. For the first, some therapists have diagnosed battered women with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, an anxiety disorder caused by a trauma such as war, rape or a natural disaster (Herman, 1992; Gillespie, 1989; Stark and Flitcraft, 1988; Walker, 1984). One of these theorists has requested that Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder be accepted as a new diagnosis for battered women (Herman, 1992; Ochberg, 1988). The second diagnosis stems from learned helplessness theory (Seligman et al., 1978). These therapists use learned helplessness to explain the behavior of battered women (Ball & Wyman, 1978; Hendricks-Matthews, 1986; Rounsaville, 1978; Walker, 1979, 1984, 1987). The third diagnosis rejects both PTSD and learned helplessness, and finds the problem in the services themselves. These theorists believe that battered women are forced to remain with abusers due to the lack of effective services to help them. These three diagnoses are important because each attempts to explain the behavior of abused women. The purpose of this chapter is to consider the literature involving each diagnosis and its application to battered women and to ascertain which are most valid from merits of the research alone. Later in the thesis, data from Project Horizon will be introduced to evaluate these models.

## Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) describes the symptoms which arise when an individual is faced with an unspeakable trauma caused by an overwhelming force that removes one from control. PTSD was first included in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual in 1980 and was defined as an experience "outside the range of usual human experience" (DSMIIIIR, 1986). Unfortunately, these traumas are much more common than we would like to think. "Rape, battery, and other forms of sexual and domestic violence are so common a part of women's lives that they can hardly be described outside the range of ordinary experience" (Herman, 1992:33). PTSD occurs when a life is put in danger in a horrible, inhumane way, and the person has no control over the danger threatening him. The individual's self defense system becomes overwhelmed and disorganized, and this condition persists even after the trauma is over. Researchers have identified this condition in trauma victims like prisoners of war, captives of terrorists, and battered women. Judith Herman (1992:33), a member of the committee working on the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV, states that PTSD is characterized by "a feeling of intense fear, helplessness, loss of control and threat of annihilation." The symptoms include denial, disbelief, feelings of powerlessness, depression, and confusion (Gillespie, 1989).

Presently, four criteria are used to determine if one has PTSD. First, the individual must have experienced a recognizable traumatic stressor more horrible than the normal stressors that most people experience. The victim must also experience three different effects, or symptoms, called hypertension, intrusion and constriction. These symptoms

could last anywhere from six months to two to three years depending on the extent of the trauma.

Hypertension, the second criterion, is usually the first symptom to occur. The victim is constantly physiologically aroused and has a sense of expectation of danger that will not dissipate. The sympathetic nervous system becomes aroused which causes adrenalin to flow and alters the individual's perceptions. The victim does not feel hunger, fatigue, or pain because the body is prepared for danger, rather than these ordinary perceptions (Herman, 1992). Kardiner calls the chronic state of arousal "Physioneurosis", describing the victim's behavior of startling easily, sleeping irregularly, and becoming irritable easily. The arousal even persists during sleep which causes the victim to wake frequently and have trouble initially falling asleep (Herman, 1992). The victim experiences panic attacks, generalized anxiety, and fears that could develop into phobias (Walker, 1987).

The third criterion, intrusion, is usually the second symptom to occur and is characterized by reliving the traumatic events through nightmares and flashbacks. These symptoms interrupt the person's life and cause more psychological pain. Sometimes just flashbacks occur, but stimuli can also bring back the memories. The memories usually occur with vivid sensations and images of the trauma, and are difficult to express verbally (Herman, 1992). Lenore Terr (1988) studied children diagnosed with PTSD and found that they had trouble verbalizing the traumatic event, but could reenact it. Other studies have suggested that the lack of memory could occur because of the central nervous system's reaction to danger. Pitman (1989) suggests that stress hormones could affect imprinting of the memory in the brain. People with PTSD suffer horrible flashbacks that

make them rarely feel safe. Some psychoanalysts have suggested that the reoccurrences in the mind serve to repair the trauma. Some survivors report reliving the event over and over again with different outcomes each time. According to psychoanalyst Paul Russell, this is a healthy way to get over the trauma (Herman, 1992).

The fourth criterion is a symptom called constriction, which has also been referred to as "psychic numbing" (Gillespie, 1989:155). The victim displays a detached calm and numbness to pain in the face of danger. The events register in awareness but are disconnected from their actual meanings. The victim could experience depersonalization or derealization, feeling outside of one's body or the world. Several theories have been put forth to explain why and how the dissociative state occurs. Hilgard (1977) states that the mind produces a state similar to the effects of morphine to alleviate the pain and suffering (Herman, 1992). Some researchers (Pitman, van der Kolk, Orr, and Greenberg; 1990) theorized that the opioids in the Central Nervous System alter perceptions of pain. These constriction symptoms can be maladaptive if they persist after the danger has passed or if they minimize violence and danger. Some battered women minimize the extent of damage the battering might inflict on their bodies, as they enter a state of shock and sometimes do not remember the full extent of the pain (Walker, 1979).

#### PTSD and Battered Women

Many theorists have applied PTSD to battered women because they are victims of repeated physical, sexual, and psychological abuse in "captivity" (Herman, 1992, p. 74).

A man's home is his castle; rarely is it understood that the same home may be a prison for women and children. In domestic captivity, physical barriers to escape are rare. In

most homes, even the most oppressive, there are no bars on the windows, no barbed wire fences. The barriers to escape are generally invisible. They are nonetheless extremely powerful. (Herman, 1992, p. 74).

The batterer keeps his victim "captive" in several ways. Many battered women are dependent on the man socially, economically and legally. As well, the physical force exerted by abusers creates fear in the women and keeps them from leaving. Abusers also seek to have control over their victims through threats of death and serious harm to them and their loved ones. Abusers often threaten to kill their victims if they attempt to leave the relationship. Rounsaville (1978) reported that 71% of the women in his sample said their abuser had threatened to kill them if they left and 97% said they feared he would kill them. Walker (1987) reported that many abusers threatened to find their wives and kill them if they tried to leave. One woman stayed with her abusive husband for years for fear he would kill her if she left. Finally, she left for fear that she would die from the actual abuse suffered while living with him. Abusers also try to control the victims' bodies through demanding intercourse, telling them when to eat and sleep, and controlling what they wear. Marital rape is common in abusive relationships (Walker, 1987).

While women are "captive" in the relationship, they suffer horrible violence and often serious injuries. They live in constant fear that an abusive incident might occur. The violence of abusers is usually inconsistent and unpredictable and the victim lives in a state of constant arousal and fear, wondering when the next outburst will occur. Abused women also demonstrate symptoms of PTSD when they are forced to violate their own principles. "Psychologically, this is the most destructive of all coercive techniques, for the

victim who has succumbed loathes herself" (Herman, 1992, p. 83) Sexual humiliation is one example, occurring when the abuser forces the woman to participate in sexual activities she finds immoral and disgusting. The abuser might also force the victim to lie for him or participate in illegal activities. She might stand by helpless while he abuses their children or pets. In the Burning Bed, Francine stood by in agony while her husband abused the children and killed their family dog (McNulty, 1981). The victim ends up hating herself for not standing by her values and allowing this to happen (Herman, 1992). The above tactics of control force the woman to be captive and cause her to experience trauma.

#### Towards a New Diagnosis

PTSD does not precisely describe the behavior of battered women because the symptoms of PTSD are based on one traumatic event rather than repetitive trauma. Battered women, hostages, and prisoners of war require another diagnosis because they suffer more complex and deep personality changes (Herman, 1992). Herman and others are pushing for a new disorder to be included in the DSMIV for battered women and other victims of prolonged abuse. This is partly because practitioners need a unified approach to working with battered women. But the main reason Herman and others are urging a new diagnosis is due to a controversy that occurred over the printing of the American Psychiatric Association's DSMIII-R. Certain theorists had placed the blame on the victim rather than the abuser in a "masochistic" view of violence. Practitioners want to eliminate this diagnosis by replacing it with a new form of PTSD.

The masochistic idea evolved due to the symptoms of PTSD such as helplessness, passivity, depression and anger. These symptoms led some theorists to blame the victim. These researchers (Snell, Rosenwald & Robey; 1964) conducted research to determine if battered women have personality traits that might cause them to look for abusive men or cause non-abusive men to become violent. The experimenters blamed women for the abuse.

This structure (of partner abuse) is characterized by the husband's passivity, indecisiveness, sexual inadequacy; the wife's aggressiveness, masculinity, frigidity, and masochism; and a relationship between the two in which a frequent alternation of passive and aggressive roles serves to achieve a working equilibrium (Snell, Rosenwald & Robey, 1964:112).

The experimenters decided that the victim provoked the violence and actually wanted the abuse even though she protested it. They felt the women were "castrating" and caused the men's abuse. Studies such as this led a group of psychiatrists to propose having "masochistic personality disorder" added to DSMIII. Women's groups and other psychologists were outraged because they feared the disorder would be applied to battered women. The disorder was defined as, "any person who remains in a relationship in which one exploits, abuses or takes advantage of her (the woman) in spite of opportunities to alter the situation" (Herman, 1992:117). The individuals who were against the recognition of this disorder wanted men to take responsibility for their violence rather than blaming the victim. They also believed that the disorder had no scientific foundation, that recent studies on victimization were not considered, and that the disorder would be used to discriminate against women. The group compromised by changing the



name to "self-defeating personality disorder" and placing it in the appendix (Herman, 1992).

Evidence discounting the masochistic theory has been published. Rounsaville's (1978:15) study found little support for the theory, defining masochism as "an unconscious desire or need to seek suffering. The need to suffer might relate to desire to assuage guilt or reinforce a sense of shame and to manipulate others." He studied women in his sample to determine if they actively looked for men who would beat them, caused the men to beat them, failed to seek help, and had a lifelong history of being abused. He found that women in his sample did endure abuse for a long time. Sixty-eight percent admitted adding to the violence by triggering a fight. Walker states that this is a response to the constant fear and pressure of wondering when the next battering (acute incident) will occur. "Some (battered women) will even provoke an acute incident, just to 'get it over with' and, at the cost of grave physical injury, save themselves from real insanity or death" (Walker, 1987:43). Rounsaville (1978) found more evidence contradicting the theory. When determining if the women failed to seek help, he reported that many of the women had sought help but were turned away. They had called the police, told a friend, consulted a doctor and/or went to see a counselor. As for a life long history of abuse, only 13% had been previously abused and only 26% were abused as children by their parents. Rounsaville did not find masochism to be useful in describing battered women.

Therapists have since turned to other theories to explain the behavior of battered women. In an effort to find a common diagnosis for therapists to use, the new disorder



is being considered for DSMIV. Herman proposed calling the new diagnosis "Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder." Although the American Psychiatric Association is leaning towards including it under "disorder of extreme stress not otherwise specified," it is under consideration for inclusion on the basis of seven criteria (Green, Lindy, & Grace, 1985). First, the individual must have a history of being subjected to chronic, repeated totalitarian control for months to years. Examples are hostages, concentration camp survivors, and domestic battering of men, women, and children. Second, the individual should show an alteration in affect such as dysphoria, suicidal ideas, self-injuries, and explosive or extremely inhibited anger and sexuality. Third, there are alterations in consciousness including amnesia or hyperamnesia for the trauma, dissociative episodes, depersonalization and derealization, and intrusive symptoms such as flashbacks and nightmares. Fourth, alterations in self-perception also affect the victim. There are feelings of helplessness, shame, guilt and self-blame, lack of self-initiative and feeling different from others. Fifth, alterations in the perception of the perpetrator also occur. The person might have a preoccupation with revenge, an unrealistic idea of his power, and the belief that he is supernatural. She might accept his beliefs and rationalizations for his abuse. Sixth, she experiences alterations in her relations with others such as isolation, withdrawal, disruptions in close relationships, repeated search for a rescuer, and a persistent distrust of others. Lastly, the individual might experience an alteration in her systems of meaning including a loss of faith or a sense of hopelessness and despair (Herman, 1992). If this disorder is included in the DSMIV, it would finally provide a unified approach to helping battered women.

## Learned Helplessness Theory

In addition to Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, another theory has been used to diagnose and treat abused women. Walker, a psychologist who has counseled battered women for almost 20 years, was the first to apply learned helplessness theory to battered women, although she also feels that they suffer from PTSD. Since then several theorists have commented on her theory which was put forth in 1979 in her book, The Battered Woman. The premise of Walker's theory is the idea that repeated and prolonged abuse that is unaffected by the woman's behavior will cause the woman to perceive herself as helpless and unable to change her situation.

This theory is based on the work of Martin Seligman who formulated the theory during his work with animals in 1974. Walker (1979:45) summarizes his hypothesis:

Dogs subjected to noncontingent negative reinforcement could learn that their voluntary behavior had no effect on controlling what happened to them. If such an aversive stimulus was repeated, the dog's motivation to respond would be lessened.

Seligman and his colleagues put dogs in cages and administered electric shocks at random and varied intervals. The dogs realized that nothing they did would affect the shocks. During the initial shocking, the dogs tried various physical movements to avoid the stimulus. After repetition of the shocks, they became passive and submissive (Walker, 1979). In a subsequent study, they tried to teach the dogs to avoid the stimulus by leaping over a divider of the cage as soon as a warning noise or light was seen (Davidson & Neale, 1990). The dogs remained in the corner of the cage. Next they left the doors to the cages opened, but none of the dogs escaped, even after the experiment-

ers showed them the exit. Finally the dogs escaped the shocks, but only after they were repeatedly dragged out of their cages (Walker, 1979). Seligman also had a control group of dogs who were not subjected to the unescapable shocks. These dogs were upset from the first shocks but soon discovered that they could avoid the painful stimulus by jumping over the partition. The dogs who had been shocked earlier stayed in the pen and whined (Davidson & Neale, 1990). Seligman proposed that when an animal is subjected to an aversive and unavoidable stimulus, it feels helpless and continues to act helpless in situations that are not unavoidable. Since then, similar studies have been done on other types of animals such as fish, rodents, birds, primates and humans which have produced comparable results (Seligman, Abramson & Teasdale, 1978). Some of the animals showed helplessness in just the situation in which the painful stimulus occurred. Other animals generalized the helplessness to all of their behavior (Walker, 1979).

### Learned Helplessness and Battered Women

Seligman and others applied this theory to humans. Walker and others then carried the idea forward to apply it to the behavior of abused women. Seligman states:

"When an organism has experienced trauma it cannot control, its motivation to respond in the face of later trauma wanes. Moreover, even if it does respond and the response succeeds in producing relief, it has trouble learning, perceiving, and believing that the responses worked. Finally, its emotional balance is disturbed; depression and anxiety, measured in various ways, predominate" (Ball & Wyman, 1978:546).

Three things contribute to the learned helplessness in battered women. First, in formulating her theory, Walker (1979) states that the repeated shocks of the animals can be likened to the repeated physical abuse of the woman. Her motivation to respond

declines just as it did with the dogs. Then the woman generalizes the helplessness to all aspects of her life.

Second, learned helplessness is reinforced throughout childhood and adulthood. Women are taught to be passive and perceive their self-worth to be based on success in a relationship (Walker, 1979). Hendricks-Matthews (1982:133) agrees that women are socialized to believe they are inferior to men. "Women are socialized for helpless, compliant, passive behavior, and these characteristics are reinforced by the batterer." Ieda (1986:168) states that abused women often have traditional viewpoints of gender roles. "A young girl is taught that marriage is important, if not essential to her identity." She is taught to be passive, dependent and subservient to her husband. If a woman has been socialized to believe this, she will feel like a failure if she is not the perfect wife. If she left her abuser, she might feel like a failure as women are taught to base their self-worth on their marriage (Ieda, 1986).

Third, help sources reinforce the helplessness by rejecting the women who seek help. In two hour interviews with 31 abused women in New Haven, Connecticut, Rounsaville (1978) explored different theories of partner abuse. Of these women, 65% had called the police, but only 10% of them were satisfied with police intervention. The police only arrested 16% of the abusers and ended up charging only 3% of them. All of the women had asked a doctor or counselor for help, but the majority found them to be unhelpful as well. Ninety-seven percent of the women confided in at least one friend or family member but found that most of them blamed them rather than the abuser. In addition,

68% were abused in public and only 3% received help from a stranger. Ball and Wyman (1978:547) reported similar results.

This feeling of helplessness is strengthened by the responses of relatives, neighbors, police and social service agencies. The woman is often seen as a nagging wife who has driven her husband beyond a reasonable level of tolerance. There is a general unwillingness among neighbors and the legal profession to interfere in an ongoing marriage. A married woman is not considered to require the same protection due an individual. There is little realization of the economic and social constraints that which hold her in the marriage.

Pizzey (1974) reports that neighbors often ignore abuse by turning up their television sets to block out noises or crossing the street. Martin (1976) opened her book Battered Wives with the letter of a woman whose doctor asked her what she did to provoke her husband and consequently prescribed her medication. The Family Center told her she wanted to be hit and the clergy asked her to be more understanding of her husband. Martin (1976) stated that with responses like these, a woman is bound to feel helpless. Hendricks-Matthews (1986) also described the blocked attempts of battered women who seek help. A woman goes to the police, a social service, or a doctor and receives no significant help. She begins to think that no one can help her, and she is stuck in an abusive situation. Sometimes attempts to receive help can even worsen the situation, such as when a man brutalizes his wife, after the police have left, in retaliation for the call. In the famous case of the Burning Bed, Francine manages to get her husband convicted, but because of overcrowding in the jail, he was released on probation. He proceeded to come home and beat Francine badly for sending him to jail (McNulty, 1981). Police often dismiss abuse as a "spat" or "lover's misunderstanding", doctors

prescribe tranquilizers, and some therapists who hold the masochistic view tell victims that their personality causes them to provoke the abuse (Hendricks-Matthews, 1986).

Abused women also are treated for severe anxiety disorders and affective disorders, mostly depression. Seligman found that a sign of learned helplessness is the presence of anxiety and depression (Walker, 1979). Walker (1979) reports seeing much anxiety and depression in the women she sees just as Seligman suggested. In his study of 31 abused women, Rounsaville (1978) found that 80% of the women were depressed according to the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale. Of these women, 20% were depressed at the level of hospitalization.

According to Walker (1979), there are three basic components to the theory when applied to humans: (1) the information about what will really happen, (2) what one expects will happen, and (3) the behavior one shows towards what will happen. In a battered woman, for example, the former batterings have taught her that nothing she does stops the battering. She might try pretty clothes, a new recipe for dinner, or leaving the room during a fight, but each action she takes is still answered with abuse. This teaches her that she is helpless when it comes to the battering. If this behavior is generalized, she will believe that what will happen could not be affected by her behavior (Walker, 1979).

Psychologists such as Walker use this theory to explain why battered women do not try to leave their situations. According to Walker (1979:48), "They perceive themselves to be helpless due to a negative cognitive set." Ball and Wyman (1978:546) agree with Walker, stating that battered women have learned to be helpless in their situation.

Learned helplessness generalizes across situation. A woman who has learned that she has no control over early life experiences does not expect to have control later in life. She has no experience in controlling problem situations in her life, so she exhibits a passive, if not fatalistic, approach to present and future problems.

Walker (1979) states that learned helplessness also affects the battered woman's problem solving abilities, and that is why no options seem possible to her. Battered women clients of Project Horizon often have a reason why each suggested solution would not work.

Walker (1979) says this reaction occurs because they are blind to options, believing that they have no influence over the positive or negative things in their lives. Learned helplessness has been applied to battered women by many since Walker's formulation in 1979. However, some theorists have mistakenly believed that the theory meant that abused women were masochistic, helpless, and weak.

In an effort to clarify learned helplessness, Walker (1984, 1987) wrote several other books and renamed the theory "The Battered Woman Syndrome" to account for the fact that learned helplessness is sometimes just displayed in the relationship with the abuser and not in one's entire life. Practitioners following this premise believe that the women are really towers of strength and successful at adapting to the horrible situation. They manage to raise children, to care for the house, and to attend school, or work full time.

### Survivor Theory

Edward Gondolf (1988) formulated another theory as an alternative to the learned helplessness model which he called the Survivor Theory. Focusing on the lack of resources as the major contributor to helplessness, Survivor Theory assumes battered



women are amazingly strong and adaptive. Gondolf's research found battered women responding to abuse with help seeking efforts that are largely unmet. He proposed that increased and improved resources and social support would allow women to leave their abusers.

Gondolf asserts that abused women are not helpless victims but active survivors. Rather than being helpless and passive, battered women are full of inner strength, yearn for dignity, desire for well-being, and a great will to live. If a battered woman has remained in a relationship, it is not because she is exhibiting learned helplessness, but because she has tried to escape and each attempt has failed. He found that battered women actively pursued many different means of help. If one resource failed, they often sought another one.

Gondolf presents several objections to the learned helplessness hypothesis. First, he found that abused women increased their help seeking efforts as abuse escalated while learned helplessness assumes that more intense and frequent abuse would cause more passive, helpless behavior (1988:36). Secondly, the symptoms used to diagnosis learned helplessness (i.e. low self-esteem, guilt, self-blame, depression, vulnerability and futility) are simply misunderstood. These symptoms are normal reactions to helpseeking. Moreover, they are products of three factors: traumatic shock, attempts to save the relationship, and separation anxiety. The first, traumatic shock, is displayed by abused women after a beating. The passivity and detachment often seen during a shelter stay is the result of shock, not learned helplessness, for the woman is displaying the natural response that follows an accident. She uses the time of the shock to repair her mind and



body. Second, abused women appear vulnerable and to have low self-esteem when seeking help because they are trying to save the relationship. By admitting that they need help, abused women feel they have failed in their marriage role. This is a natural reaction to feeling like a failure. Third, separation anxiety explains feelings such as self-blame, guilt, and fear. When abused women consider leaving their abusers, they fear reprisals such as loss of financial security, custody of children, or reprisals from the abusers. The abused display guilt and self-blame for ending the relationship.

Three distinctive attitudes are displayed by abused women while abuse escalates from early to severe and frequent incidents of abuse. During the early stage, women blame themselves for the abuse. They have expectations of being the nurturer and feel they have failed. This failure is perceived as the reason their partners are abusing them. Consequently, women change their behavior to please their partners in order to halt the abuse. Second, the abused women begin to blame their abusers since abuse continues regardless of the abused's behavior. Abused women attempt to change abusers and might call the police or a shelter. Third, as extreme and frequent abuse occurs, the women realize that the batterers are not likely to change. The abused seek concrete help, perhaps legal assistance, and acquire a way to separate. If help is unavailable or unsatisfactory, they remain with their abusers. These women employ many coping techniques to endure abuse.

To document this hypothesis, Gondolf cited research measuring the amount of helpseeking. In one study of identified battered women, 55% had contacted the police, 44% had contacted lawyers, and 28% had contacted therapists (Pagelow, 1981). In a

study of Texas shelter residents, 75% of the women had left previously (Bowker, 1983). In other research, 45% had called the police at least once (Stacey & Shupe, 1983). The extreme dissatisfaction that abused women had with the availability of resources, evident in the above research, also supports this hypothesis.

### Conclusion

All three models, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, learned helplessness, and Survivor Theory enjoy supporting evidence suggesting that each can be applied to battered women. However, each theory has drawbacks as well. PTSD and learned helplessness both overemphasize helplessness and underemphasize the problems with resources as a primary factor in determining whether to leave an abuser. Although, learned helplessness theorists do point out that inadequate resources leads to more helplessness. PTSD and learned helplessness were both formulated and applied to other psychological problems before being applied to battered women. However, PTSD could be a more successful explanation for the range of behaviors of battered women. Learned helplessness does not account for the intrusive and dissociative symptoms or the hypertension that so many battered women experience.

Survivor Theory also has limitations because it does not explain why women remain helpless in the face of better resources for help, except to say that services are still inadequate. Today, a shelter for battered women exists in almost all areas of the country. Better community education has led to much better resources, including police intervention, the courts, social services, friends, and family. Yet abused women often refuse to utilize their options and continue to display helplessness in making decisions.

Consequently, the decision-making process must be influenced by some other factors. In light of the improved resources, Gondolf does not offer research suggesting what other direction services need to take to be more effective.

The question researchers must focus on now is whether some battered women manifest "learned helplessness" or PTSD as a result of battering. If passivity and helplessness do really affect battered women, the newly proposed theory of PTSD could provide a common diagnosis for practitioners. PTSD explains the passivity and helplessness of battered women as a result of consistent and repetitive trauma. Moreover, a PTSD diagnosis explains other symptoms and actions of battered women that cannot be accounted for by learned helplessness. PTSD allows for the personality changes, social withdrawal symptoms, and the dissociative and intrusive symptoms so often described.

However, researchers may find other factors could be causing women to not take action and be perceived as "helpless". These other variables affecting a woman's decision could be due to economic, social, and psychological factors, including among those a lack of employment, limited access to friends and family, and a lingering commitment to the relationship. If this proves to be so, Survivor Theory would more closely explain the phenomenon of battered women. After researchers determine if learned helplessness and PTSD are valid explanations, the next step would be for practitioners to continue research into what other factors exist and to find solutions to them. Relevant data from my research will be presented in the results and discussion section, Chapter Six, to consider the above suggestions.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SHELTERS

In the last twenty years many resources have become available for abused women including legislative reforms, revised training for police intervention, and emergency and long-term shelters. The first shelter for battered women emerged in England in 1972 to provide a safe haven. Social workers both in the United States and England had noticed that many of the women populating homeless shelters were escaping spouse abuse (Pizzey, 1974). Social service agencies, rape crisis centers, and the Salvation Army were inundated with battered women who had no other place to seek help (Stacey & Shupe, 1983). This led to the opening of the first shelter in the United States, Rainbow Retreat, in 1973. Since then, a shelter has been established in almost every area of the country. Estimates in 1991 suggest that over 1200 battered women shelters are now operating (NCADV, 1991).

#### The Battered Woman Shelter

Shelters might have the same objective, namely, to provide battered women with safety from battering, but by no means are they homogeneous. They range in size from large homes able to house over 50 abused women to small operations that accommodate under ten. Some shelters are completely manned by professionals with advanced degrees, while others are run by formerly battered women and other volunteers. In a survey of 127 shelters, 55% were staffed by workers with advanced degrees (Ferraro, 1981). Only 46% were an outgrowth of a feminist group or had board members who

defined themselves as feminists. Of the counseling services offered at the shelters, 76% were conducted by professionals with advanced degrees. Most shelters were governed by a traditional hierarchy. Only 11.7% of the shelters made policy decisions collectively. The location of shelters is confidential and kept hidden from the general public. Potential residents are interviewed by phone to gain access (Ferraro, 1981). Funding comes from both public and private sources. Social services, social security, state and federal grants, CETA, LEAA, the United Way, and private and corporation gifts are among the benefactors (Brown, Aguirre, & Jorgensen, 1985).

### Shelter Services

Many battered women choose to stay in a shelter and utilize advocacy services in an attempt to alleviate or escape abuse. Although battering occurs in all social classes, most residents of shelters come from lower socio-economic classes (Davidson and Jenkins, 1989; Johnson, 1992). Upper and middle class women typically have other resources when leaving abusers or escaping acute battering episodes (Johnson, 1992). Lee Bowker (1983) found that the 854 battered women in his sample had used shelters over 3000 times, more than three times per woman. Other estimates suggest that thousands of women each year seek shelters (Stone, 1984). Research indicates that battered women often escape to the home of a friend or family member before considering a shelter. The women might eventually turn to shelters for advocate services that friends or family cannot provide. First, contact with other abused women is extremely valuable. Living together 24 hours a day gives the women a chance to confide in each other and provide support. Formal support groups meet regularly with volunteers and professionals.

Second, most shelters have professionals available to discuss legal and financial options, give individual mental health counseling, and to refer lawyers and physicians. Third, the shelter supplies a confidential, secret, and safe refuge. Once removed from the abusive situation, women can effectively assess their situations. While in the shelters, battered women must consider two basic options. They can either return to their abusers and cope with the battering or make an attempt to start independent lives (Stone, 1984). Shelter life provides confidentiality to stop abusive men from discovering their partners' whereabouts. "Most battered women have not experienced this degree of personal safety and the opportunity to freely plan their futures since early in their marriages" (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). While hiding their locations, abused women also avoid endangering the lives of their neighbors, families, and friends. Providing victims with a safe refuge to allow them to make decisions about the future is an important service (Shutte, Bouleige, Fix, & Malouff, 1986).

#### Shelter Effectiveness Measurements

After shelters had existed for some time, researchers began to determine their effectiveness as a way to reduce violence between partners. To judge this, researchers have used three different criteria: self reports of helpfulness from shelter residents, the decision of the victim to leave the abuser, and the recurrence of abuse (Dutton-Douglas & Dionne, 1991:121). Potential problems exist with each of these measurements. The self-reports of victims are not only subject to deception, but research has suggested that judging the shelter to be useful correlated positively with returning to the abuser. In

other words, women who judged the shelter to be effective were more likely to return to their abusers (Aguirre, 1985). Judging effectiveness by the number of victims who leave abusers can also be deceiving. Leaving an abuser does not always guarantee safety as many abusers retaliate violently (Dutton-Douglas & Dionne, 1991; Walker, 1987). In a study on spouse murder, 57% of men who killed their wives were living apart from them at the time of the murder (Dutton & McGregor, 1991). On the other hand, if abusers receive therapy and abuse discontinues, the correct decision might be to remain with the abuser. If the shelter stay was the motivation the abuser needed to seek help to stop battering, the shelter was effective, and the cycle of violence was broken without breaking up the family. In fact, research on mandatory and voluntary therapy for batterers has found it to be effective in about two-thirds of the cases, including men who did not finish the programs (Shupe & Stacey, 1986). Although most of the focus is still on helping battered women, many shelters and other services have begun to offer therapy for batterers and many courts have ordered therapy rather than a thirty day jail sentence. If therapy is so successful, more efforts could be focused on getting the batterer into counseling, rather than finding a way for the abused to leave (See Appendix One). To resolve the difficulties in measuring effectiveness, some researchers choose to look at the recurrence of abuse. Since access to batterers is limited, data to ascertain the recurrence of abuse are difficult to obtain. Moreover, women who are interviewed may feel guilty for returning to the abuser after using shelter services, so they might underreport violence.



Researchers examining self reports have found that most victims are satisfied with shelter services. Lee Bowker (1983) observed that 44% of the shelter residents in his sample rated the shelters as highly helpful. In a study of Texas shelter residents, researchers found that two thirds had no negative comments about the shelter, staff, or services. The remaining third mostly complained about lack of privacy and comfort in communal living and other problems adapting to shelter life (Stacey & Shupe, 1983). In a study that also measured effectiveness of advocacy services, 64% of the abused women found the services to be very helpful while 32% rated them as somewhat helpful (Sullivan and Davidson, 1991). However, the effectiveness of the shelter might not be correctly determined through questioning shelter residents, because research demonstrates those rating the shelter as useful also have a high tendency to return to the abusive situation (Aguirre, 1985).

The research focusing on the decision whether to return to the abuser or to start a new, independent life assumes that by helping a victim leave the relationship, a shelter has been effective in stopping partner abuse. Results vary from many women to only a few leaving their relationships. However, this disparity may be a function of particular services and the effectiveness of individual shelters. While one study reports that only three out of seventeen shelter users returned to their abusers (Shutte, Bouleige, Fix, & Malouff, 1986), another finds that approximately 50% of the shelter residents left their partners (Stacey & Shupe, 1983). In statewide research of all Texas shelter residents, 20% of the women remained in the shelter indefinitely or moved in with family or friends, 33% lived independently, and about 50% returned to their abusers (Stacey &



Shupe, 1983). Other research found 66% intending to separate from their abusers after leaving the shelter (Aguirre, 1985). Linda Labell (1979) produced similar results in her research of Hubbard House in Jacksonville, Florida. Only 28% returned to the abuser, while 25.8% stayed with a family member, 26.6% lived independently, and 13.9% went to another shelter or to live with friends. Additional research shows many women return to their abusers in the months following shelter use. Other researchers (Snyder and Fruchtman; 1981) found a 60% return rate within six to ten weeks, and (Giles-Sims; 1983) that 42% had returned by six months.

Another study dealing only with married shelter residents found that 58% intended to divorce their husbands (Stone, 1984). Going beyond previous research, women were asked if they had decided to leave the relationship before or during the shelter stay. An overwhelming 34.7% of the women had already decided to divorce the abuser before entering the shelter. Only 7.3% decided to seek divorce while staying in the shelter. This evidence suggests that shelters do not cause a woman to choose divorce as an option, but they facilitate the decision.

Taken together, these studies suggest that many of the women who intend to leave the abuser end up returning months later. A permanent separation usually takes many attempts (Hofellor, 1982; Gondolf, 1988; Sullivan & Davidson, 1991). Follow up studies on women three and six months after leaving shelters are difficult to conduct because of the problems contacting the women. If the former studies had followed up on the women, the figures for returning to their abusers might be even higher.

The third measure of the effectiveness of shelters involves determining if abuse recurs after a shelter stay. The study of shelter residents of Family Place in Texas found that in the 50% who had returned to abusers, violence had diminished greatly or disappeared entirely (Stacey & Shupe, 1983). Only one woman reported that abuse had worsened. In the statewide study of shelter residents, two-thirds of the 50% who returned to abusers said that violence did not recur. Of these women, 71% reported being more in control of their own lives, and 79% indicated that their abusers had sought counseling (Stacey & Shupe, 1983). Cris Sullivan and William Davidson (1991) contacted women to determine if advocacy and shelter service lessened violence. Only four of the forty-four women reported experiencing greater abuse in the ten weeks following their shelter stay. The remaining women reported that the abuse had lessened or remained the same.

### Situational Factors

Research on which situational factors affect a woman's decision to return or not to the abuser is sorely lacking (Dutton-Douglas & Dionne, 1991; Stacey & Shupe, 1983; Aguirre, 1985). Most explanations have involved PTSD (Herman, 1992), learned helplessness (Walker, 1979, 1984), hope that the abuser will change (Bowker, 1983; Roy, 1977), or problems with the resources available to enable the woman to leave (Gondolf, 1988). Other research addresses financial, social, and psychological factors such as economic dependence, the frequency and severity of abuse, psychological commitment and duration of the relationship, the presence or lack of abuse while the victim was a

child, previous separations, and religious affiliation. Each study found different results with their particular battered women sample.

In some of the studies, financial situational factors have been found to affect a victim's decision to leave. Gelles (1976) determined that the fewer the resources and the less social power of a victim, the less likely she will leave her abuser. To test this hypothesis again, B.E. Aguirre (1985) studied the economic dependence of victims on abusers. Results showed that financial dependence almost always guarantees that the victim will return to the abuser. Eighty-four percent of the wives whose husbands were solely responsible for the family income returned. Of the women whose husbands were not solely responsible for the income, 82% left the relationship. These findings are supported by other research showing that unemployed victims are more likely than employed to return to abusers (Johnson, 1992; Okun, 1986; Pagelow, 1981; Sturbe, 1988). Additional research found that 73.2% of the employed victims left, while only 47.6% of the unemployed left. The researchers also used a more subjective measure by questioning the women as to what hardships existed in their lives. Of the ones who cited economic hardships, only 18.2% left, whereas of those not reporting economic hardship 70.6% left their abusers. (Sturbe & Barbour, 1984). Different research found that women report many needs to advocates at shelters and that the needs must be met in order to allow the women to remain independent from the abusers. Researchers asked a sample of shelter users what they would need in order to leave their abusers. An astonishing number of needs were reported, including 46.3% for child care, 48.8% for housing, 75.6% for education and transportation, 82.9% for material goods such as

clothing, and over one half requested financial help, legal and medical assistance, social support, and employment. The researchers then provided each woman with an advocate trained to provide each of these services. Of the women who completed the study, 83% were still independent of their abusers five months after the service (Sullivan, 1991).

The frequency and severity of physical abuse also affects victims' decision-making. Gelles (1976) found that the less frequent and severe the abuse is, the more likely a woman will choose to stay with an abuser. Aguirre (1985) also tested this hypothesis by studying the number and type of injuries battered women received. Contrary to Gelles' findings, a significant relationship between the number of injuries and the decision to leave a partner did not occur. Different research measured the violence by the type and severity, yet also did not find a significant relationship (Snyder & Scheer, 1981). Possibly other factors not explored by the authors would have proven to be masking variables. On the other hand, Johnson (1992) did find that severe abuse, including massive beatings and threats with a weapon, caused a woman to be more likely to leave an abuser. Interestingly, these research results tend to contradict the premise of learned helplessness.

Another hypothesis suggested by researchers is that women who have more commitment to the relationship will be less likely to leave. Some researchers believe that women measure their self-worth by the success of their marriage, and are willing to endure abuser rather than admit to a failed marriage by leaving the abuser. Therefore, researchers hypothesize that married women are less likely to leave than victims who are single or living together (Ieda, 1986; Strube & Barbour, 1983). To measure this,

researchers used both objective and subjective measures. For objective measures, they looked at the length of the relationship and marital status. Two researchers found that women who left their abusers had substantially shorter relationships with them (Snyder & Scheer, 1981; Strube & Barbour, 1983). In one study the mean length of the relationship was ten years for women who did not leave and 4.5 years for women who did leave (Snyder & Scheer, 1981). Additional research found that 94% of the victims who stayed with their abusers were married, while 72% of the victims who left permanently were single (Snyder & Scheer, 1981). The subjective measurement consisted of asking battered women why they had not left their batterers earlier. Of the women who cited love, only 18.2% left, while 70.6% of the women who did not cite this factor left their abusers (Strube & Barbour, 1983).

Other hypotheses involve a victim's exposure to violence during childhood and earlier relationships.<sup>2</sup> According to researchers, the more abuse a woman experiences during childhood, the more likely she is to remain with her abuser. Gelles (1976) found that past exposure to abuse, especially during childhood, increases the tendency to remain with abusers. Contrary to Gelles findings, other research does not find a significant relationship between leaving the partner and previous abuse during either childhood or former relationships. Aguirre's explanation (1985) suggests that emergent stigmatization

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<sup>2</sup>. Certain studies explored factors that this sample cannot address due to lack of information. Previous abuse and religious affiliation will be described regardless. The amount of literature that exists on factors influencing a woman's decision to leave the abuser is so small that studies finding the effects of any factor to be significant are important for consideration and inclusion.

against woman beating has caused women to view abuse as unacceptable. A negative correlation was found by other researchers. For instance, abused women who had experienced previous abuse were actually more likely to leave their abusers (Hofellor, 1982; Pagelow, 1981; Prescott & Letko, 1977; Roy, 1982).

Previous separations seem to predict whether a victim will leave the abuser permanently upon leaving the shelter. Much research has established that it usually requires several separations before victims are able to leave permanently (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Gondolf, 1988; Martin, 1976; Walker, 1979). For instance, one sample showed that 88% of battered women had left and returned to their abusers at least once, and many of them had left multiple times (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). When considering whether or not a woman had left previously, the victims who have had previous separations are more likely to leave permanently than women who have never left before. For example, only 53% of the women who stayed with their abusers had left previously, while 91% of the victims who left had previously separated from their abusers (Snyder & Scheer, 1981).

Religious affiliation was also found to have an effect on a woman's decision to leave her abuser. Research found that 37% of the women who remained with their abusers were Roman Catholic, whereas only 3% of the women who left were Roman Catholic (Snyder & Scheer, 1981). It is also important to point out that no correlations have been found between socio-demographic characteristics and the decision-making process, so race and age have not been found to be factors (Snyder & Scheer, 1981).

## Conclusion

After considering the findings in the existing research, it is difficult to come to any real conclusions due to the many discrepancies. However, it is possible that the discrepancies exist due to the research process itself and the amount of time that has lapsed during the research in question. For example, many different samples and methods have been used to gather information. Samples are drawn from different populations of the country, and more importantly, from different battered women agencies. Research could vary due to the area of the country studied or the particular shelter studied. For example, some shelters have recently opened and cannot offer as many services as those founded years ago. Volunteer philosophies also differ and could explain some discrepancies in research. The methods used to gather information also varied from study to study, including formal face-to-face interviews, hotline intake forms, written questionnaires, random phone interviews, and shelter exit surveys. It is possible that the method of gathering the information might affect the results of the study. Face-to-face interviews could intimidate or embarrass some battered women who might not be willing to divulge certain information. Yet, face-to-face interviews allow the researcher to add follow up questions and guide the interview for each particular case. Intakes, shelter exit surveys, and questionnaires can leave out important variables (Roy, 1982). There is also evidence that women often misconstrue certain questions. For example, on a question about violence, battered women responded that no violence occurred. Later, they reported slaps and punches, leading the researcher to believe that the women did not perceive this as violence (Labell, 1979). When asked about a history of psychological problems the



women wrote, "He is insane," and "He needs help," but the researchers were asking if the abuser had a diagnosed mental illness such as depression (Labell, 1979). Most studies also suffer from a lack of information on many variables in their data.

Variability in the studies might also have occurred due to the fifteen year period that the research spans. Considerable education and community awareness has occurred, resulting in services and options for battered women. The effects of better and more available resources and the assertion that abuse is wrong could change the situation for battered women. Therefore, the battered woman has changed over the past fifteen years in such a way that different factors are important when considering if she should leave. In addition, considerable general cultural change has occurred. Therefore, a battered woman in the late seventies might have worried how divorce would affect her children, but a woman in the early nineties might not worry as much since divorce is common.

In order to resolve these discrepancies and find a common ground, research needs to be conducted with similar type samples and methods in order for conclusions to be comparable. Researchers should explore other variables as test factors to judge whether a factor is really influencing abused women. This study will attempt to explore many different variables to gain some knowledge about which factors do seem to influence this sample of battered women.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THEORY AND PROPOSITIONS

#### Theoretical Model

In order to determine which of the models discussed earlier (PTSD, learned helplessness, and Survivor) is the most useful, many propositions were formulated to identify relationships in the available data. PTSD is a clinical diagnosis based on the idea that battered women suffer from the effects of prolonged and repeated trauma. Theorists who adhere to the learned helplessness model believe that women become passive and helpless in the face of danger and are blind to the options due to repeated beatings and abuse. Survivor theorists, on the other hand, find that problems in the availability and types of services are the culprit that keeps women locked in dangerous, abusive relationships. Testing several hypotheses should provide information for interpretation to determine which of the previous models is the most successful in the description of abused women.

While both learned helplessness theory and Survivor theory assume the salience of the severity, frequency, and type of abuse, they anticipate different consequences. Both theories claim these factors will affect whether or not abused women will leave an abusive situation, but they differ in their predictions. A proposition logically following from survivor theory states:

**SEVERITY & FREQUENCY**--The more frequent and the more severe the abuse, the greater the likelihood that a woman will leave her abuser.

If this proposition is not confirmed, it would suggest that abused women may be displaying learned helplessness. For example, if battered women are found to remain with their abusers in the face of more frequent and more severe abuse such as threats of death and rapes, they could be exhibiting learned helplessness. Severity of abuse can be measured through types of physical abuse and injuries. For example, a woman who is threatened with a weapon, shot at, or cut will be more likely to leave than battered women who are slapped or punched. In addition, serious injuries such as broken bones or internal bleeding are more likely to cause the victim to leave than minor bruises or cuts. The more frequently the abuse occurs, the more likely a woman is to leave her abuser. A woman who experiences abuse daily or once or twice a week is more likely to leave than a woman abused once a month or year.

Studying the type of abuse experienced might also shed some light on which model is most useful. Battered women in this sample experience one, some, or all of the four types of abuse: verbal, physical, sexual, and destruction of property/pets. A logical proposition supporting Survivor theory suggests:

TYPE OF ABUSE--Women who experience only verbal abuse are less likely to leave abusers than women who experience physical abuse as well. Women who experience all four types of abuse are the most likely to leave due to the cumulative effect of each abuse.

If the data fail to support this hypothesis and victims remain with abusers as abuse accumulates, then these results may support the learned helplessness model.

Survivor theory and learned helplessness also assume that the amount of control that the abuser exerts over the victim's life will affect her decision to leave an abuser. A proposition following from Survivor theory states:

**CONTROL**--The more control the abuser tries to exert over the victim (i.e. access to money, car, friends, family, and the ability to leave the house), the more likely she will leave permanently to escape the abuse.

If the data show that such women are less likely to leave their abusers, then this would lend support to the learned helplessness model. The more the abuser controls the victim, the more abuse she is experiencing. This abuse causes more helplessness and passivity, causing the victim to be less likely to leave. On the other hand, some women are so alienated from family and friends because of this control that they have no one to whom they can turn if they decide to leave. If this were to be found true, a solution would be to provide them with someone to turn to other than friends and family as Survivor theory suggests.

The effects of the duration of the relationship may also help to measure each model.

**DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP**--The longer a woman remains in an abusive relationship, the less likely she will eventually choose to leave.

The length of the relationship can imply a stronger bond which may make it more difficult to leave. The same phenomenon can be explained by learned helplessness theory. Prolonged abuse lowers the abused's self-esteem, intensifying her sense of helplessness. If abused women are found to leave less often the longer they remain in the relationship, learned helplessness would enjoy support.

A victim's financial status may affect whether she can leave her abuser. A proposition following Survivor theory would state:

**FINANCIAL STATUS--**(1) The greater the economic dependence of a woman on her abuser, the less likely she is to leave the relationship. (2) As a corollary, unemployed abusers or abusers providing little financial support will be less able to prevent the abused from leaving the relationship.

This can be measured by looking at women who are unemployed and do not receive welfare and depend solely on their abusers and women who are employed or have income from welfare enabling them to support themselves and their children. If these hypotheses are confirmed, it may be that the lack of resources for battered women causes them to remain in abusive relationships; this lends support to Survivor theory since it points to a lack of resources as the reason women do not leave.

Survivor theory points to the actual services as the only way women are enabled to leave abusers. If women who utilize the available services are found to leave abusive relationships more often than women who do not use the services, Survivor theory would be supported. If these data show that women who utilize services leave abusers, then the assumption can be made that the services are successful in helping women leave. The success of services for some victims can be explained because for these victims the available services are enough. For other victims, the availability of services may not be sufficient to help them to leave abusers.

**PROTECTION ORDERS--**Women who obtain protection orders are more likely to leave their abusers permanently.

At first this makes common sense; anyone who obtains a protective order would definitely intend to leave. In fact, of the women who intend to leave, the ones who obtain

protective orders are less likely to return to abusers. As seen earlier in Chapter Two, many women attempt to leave permanently, but eventually return within a few months. With the order, the abuser loses access and cannot apologize or beg forgiveness. In other words, the harmony phase cannot occur because they are not together. Protective orders also serve to empower women making them feel as if they have some control over their lives. This empowerment might reinforce the intention to leave.

Empowerment might also come from the service of individual or group counseling.

**COUNSELING**--Women who receive counseling, either through an individual counselor or Project Horizon support group, are more likely to leave abusers than women who do not.

The personal, one-on-one therapy might give them the strength and reinforcement they need through weekly, rigid appointments. Support groups offer weekly support and interaction with other abused victims and the coordinator. This interaction may provide women with role models and more knowledge of options. Advocate services also contribute to their knowledge of options. In fact, the more often a woman calls Project Horizon, the more likely she will eventually leave the abuser. Each time she calls, she hears more about options. However, some women call excessively, yet make no effort to leave. These victims might not be willing to take steps and only want to vent some anger.

Filing for separation is another option that advocates help women decide to do.

**FILING FOR SEPARATION**--Married victims who file for separation are more likely to leave permanently than those who simply leave and take no legal action.

Without formally severing the marital tie, victims are more likely to return to the abuser. Legal separation on paper might also empower the woman the way the protective order would by making her feel in control. If women who file for separation are found to be more likely to leave abusers permanently, Survivor theory would again be supported.

Of all the options explored, the data measuring the effects of shelter use will provide the most information on service efficiency. Because Project Horizon was formed so recently, women are referred to one of many local shelters which range in the number and type of services they offer. Studying the leaving and returning actions of women who used each particular shelter can show which services were more effective in helping women to permanently leave the abuse.

**AVAILABILITY OF SHELTER SERVICES--**The broader the range of services offered by a shelter, the more likely participants will leave their abusers.

Women who stay in the shelters in nearby cities are more likely to leave their abusers permanently because these shelters offer services that the local Lexington shelter cannot. These services include job placement, group and individual counseling, peer groups and role models, and companions to accompany women to court hearings, police reports, and appointments with lawyers. On the other hand, women who use the Lexington shelter are more likely to return to the abuser because they are alone in a temporary shelter without the services available at the shelters in local cities. While at the shelter in Lexington, a woman might be tempted to break shelter rules. Frequent violations include contacting the abuser and telling him where she is or letting him visit her at the shelter. This leads the abuser to beg for forgiveness and apologize during the harmony



phase of abuse. In addition, women who stay in the Lexington shelter only have access to advocates through the hotline. Nevertheless, women who use the Lexington shelter will be more likely to leave permanently than women who never used such a facility. Women who stay with a friend or family member are more likely to return to the abuser because he can find her and persuade her that he is sorry, loves her, and wants her to come home.

Length of stay in the shelter also is presumed to affect decisions of the victims. A proposition supporting Survivor theory states:

LENGTH OF SHELTER--The longer a woman stays in the shelter, the longer she is away from the abuser; thus, the longer a woman stays in the shelter, the more likely she will leave the abuser permanently.

The time spent in the shelter may give her more strength and reinforce her decision to leave. The longer she is exposed to the available services, the more empowered she becomes, enabling her to begin an independent life.

#### A Model of Steps

If many of the above hypotheses prove to support the Survivor Model, it is worthwhile to study which factors are influencing battered women in their decision making. Survivor theory suggests that battered women agencies are not offering either enough or the right services. If researchers can determine what factors keep women from leaving, practitioners can provide new services for women to deal with these factors. For example, if economic dependence is found to keep women from leaving abusers, agencies need to implement new services that address these needs and provide the

money and economic independence they need. However, research is needed to determine which services are lacking and why.

Battered women take many different steps in the process of leaving their abusers. A model of these steps would be useful to have when determining how factors affect different steps. In this model, it is common for victims to repeat several steps, use them in different orders, and/or not utilize all of them. However, it is useful to describe them in a clear progression that usually occur. The first step involves admitting to oneself that the abuse exists. After this occurs, battered women usually reach out to a friend, neighbor, family member, or doctor. They might describe the abuse and ask for advice. Catharsis can also occur through a brief, anonymous phone call to Project Horizon to ask a few questions. Discussing the situation, acknowledging the abuse, and learning about options might be the first step many battered women take. Before the second step takes place, women might tell many people or only speak to a few select people several times.

The second step occurs when a woman decides to temporarily escape the situation. This is likely to occur when the cycle of abuse has repeated itself so often that the abuse has become severe. The victim chooses to call the police and lodge a complaint, escape to the home of a friend or family member, and/or check into a shelter. After the acute battering incident passes, the woman has two choices. She must either start a life independent from the abuser or return to the abusive situation. Earlier studies that judge the effectiveness of shelters cannot legitimately blame the shelters for the approximately 40% return rate. Many other factors rarely considered influence each woman's decision as she weighs alternatives. These factors may range from socio-demographic

characteristics such as her age, number of children, marital status, and financial situation, to personal characteristics of the relationship such as commitment to the abuser and the frequency and type of abuse, to the types of services she chooses to utilize, including protective orders, criminal charges, and separation. However, if researchers can determine these other factors and discover how they interact with decision making, shelter advocates may find ways to deal with the intervening factors causing a woman to return to the danger.

If the woman returns to the abuser at this point, she often repeats the step of temporarily escaping the abuser. As previously established, it usually requires several attempts before a victim's separation becomes permanent. Each acute battering episode leads her to escape and reconsider her position. Eventually, she may decide to leave the relationship, again taking the above factors into consideration. At this point, the battered woman can choose numerous options to facilitate her decision, including obtaining a protection order, filing for separation if married, and/or charging the abuser criminally. Again the above factors will affect her decisions.

### Factors Affecting Decision Making

In order to ascertain which factors influence women's decisions to leave abusive situations, I will examine several hypotheses derived from this data set. When researchers determine which factors affect the decision making of battered women, practitioners can then develop counseling techniques to address each factor. For example, the time of the onset of abuse has significant consequences for whether a woman decides to leave her abuser.

**ONSET OF ABUSE**--When the abuse begins within the first year of a relationship, the woman will be more likely to leave because less time has been spent in the relationship. When the abuse begins later, for instance after six years in the relationship, the woman is more likely to remain with the abuser.

Women who experience abuse right away are probably less committed to the relationship, while women who experience the first abuse later in the relationship may have a stronger bond with the abuser. Early in a relationship the commitment is not as strong and the victim has less of a vested interest in the relationship. When the abuse occurs later, more time has been put into the relationship. Because of this deeper commitment, women might be willing to endure the abuse for sake of relationship. These women also remember when the abuser did not abuse them and they think these days might return.

Many battered women tend to look for reasons to explain the abuse. If a victim can attribute the abuse to a particular reason, she then has hope that she can fix the problem and eliminate the abuse. From research, experts know that these so called reasons are in fact only contributing factors. Abuse of women originates from deeper issues such as the culture of violence pervading society and traditional viewpoints of the role of wife/girlfriend (Brown, 1985; Ieda, 1986; Levine, 1986; Rounsaville, 1978; Shupe, Hazelwood, & Stacey, 1987; Straus, Gelles & Steinmetz, 1980). Even so, the possibility of attributing the abuse to an identifiable cause convinces some women that the abuse can be controlled.

**FEAR OF RETALIATION**--When a woman perceives a reason for the abuse, for example jealousy or alcohol abuse, she is more likely to remain with the abuser.

Having perceived a reason or cause for the abuse, perhaps a victim assumes that there is a solution, and consequently remains with the abuser. Perhaps she thinks she can change the abuser's behavior by curtailing his drinking or avoiding jealousy. This is consistent with Survivor theory's assumption that during the second stage abused women try to discover what is causing the abuse and attempt to change the abuser. If this hypothesis is supported, advocates may be able to help women in this situation by counseling them about the deeper issues causes woman abuse.

Another factor that may influence a woman's propensity to stay in an abusive relationship is children.

**CHILDREN**--If the woman has children with the abuser, regardless of marital status, she is less likely to leave.

She might stay with the abuser for fear of denying the children their father and a two-parent home. If this hypothesis is found to be true, advocates for abused women would need to explore services that would deal with these conditions.

Though battered women with children are more likely to remain with abusers for the children's benefit, this does not follow if the children are also abused.

**ABUSE OF CHILDREN**--When her children are abused, a woman is more likely to leave the abuser permanently, placing the children's welfare above her own.

However, an intense fear of the abuser might also affect the decision making process.

**FEAR OF RETALIATION**--Women who do not leave abusers regardless of abuse to the children fear retribution such as death if they were to leave.

If fear is found to cause women to not leave abusers, battered women's agencies need to form services to ensure protection of victims who do decide to leave.

As children age, the tie to the abuser weakens because the victim is no longer responsible for keeping the family together in order to raise the children well.

**ADULT CHILDREN**--Women with adult children are more likely to leave abusers than women who have children of school age.

Because many adult children leave the home, the victim only has financial responsibility for herself. Adult children may also provide a place for her to stay.

Age is also considered relevant because a younger woman might have stronger and more recent ties to her nuclear family, enabling her to leave the abuser.

**AGE OF VICTIM**--Younger women will be more likely than older women to leave abusive relationships.

A younger woman may feel less guilt for returning home to escape the abuser. She may feel she can start over more easily, is less likely to have children, and will have been with the abuser for a shorter time. An older woman might not have such close access to her family members, and so might be less likely to leave the abuser. If this hypothesis is supported, advocates would need to discover how to help older women recreate familial ties or provide other resources to enable them to leave.

Marital status is also expected to affect the decision making process of abused women. Married women have more at stake than single women, as society tells women that self-worth is based on the success of their marriages (Ieda, 1986).

**MARITAL STATUS**--Married women are less likely to leave their abusers than single women.

Married women have a stronger tie to abusers that is harder to sever than women who are single or just living with abusers.

### Conclusions

The above hypotheses are grouped into two sections. The first section includes propositions that directly shed some light on the controversy between the diagnoses of learned helplessness and Survivor Theory. The section explores some factors other than helplessness that may affect the decision-making process of abused women. These hypotheses will be tested and discussed in the Results section in Chapter Six.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### METHODOLOGY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

This research on battered women clients uses a descriptive design. The data consist of records from 228 cases covering a five and one half year period, from March 1987 to October 1992. Moreover, the data represent battered women from a small, rural area in southwestern Virginia which contains two small colleges employing some citizens. Other citizens earn a living through farming, construction, and factory occupations. The closest major city, Washington, D.C., is within three hours. These data enable a different analysis from earlier studies drawn from urban and suburban populations.

Certain cases had to be discarded from the sample due to a lack of information, producing an accidental sample. Ideally the data would include the entire population of female callers who had been abused by male partners. With these data, hypotheses could be tested to learn more about women who call hotlines in rural areas. These data cannot be generalized to the entire population of abused women because some do not call hotlines and deal with their battering through other resources. The number of women of lower economic status who use hotline services seems to indicate that woman abuse occurs only in these classes. However, research shows that abuse occurs in all economic classes (Davidson and Jenkins, 1989). Clients of hotlines and shelters usually are of a lower economic status since these women are more likely to hear about these social services. By contrast, women of a higher economic class are more likely to use their own money or resources to deal with the abusive situation (Davidson & Jenkins, 1989; Labell, 1979). The data were derived from information recorded by hotline

workers for each phone call on Project Horizon intake forms (See Appendix 2 & 3). Intake forms were grouped by case and assigned a number for confidentiality. Information was recorded and coded to form the data set. The data were analyzed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Variables in the codebook include socio-demographic factors, characteristics of the battering, options explored, and effects of options (See Appendix 4).

#### Limitations of the Research

There are limitations to this study. First, problems arise from hotline volunteers who differ in the amount of information recorded for each case. Some volunteers record the entire conversation while others only record biographical statistics. Consequently, cases with incomplete information have to be removed from the data set. Some volunteers also focused on the same questions and issues during the call, again leaving unanswered questions. It is also possible that different hotline interviewers record information differently. For this reason, opinions of interviewers on intake forms were excluded.

The second limitation derives from the structure of a hotline call. Some callers hang up before all questions can be asked, and others are unwilling to divulge certain types of information. It is also possible that a caller may lie about information. When they will not divulge their names, it is impossible to follow their cases by subsequent calls.

The last limitation follows because Project Horizon is still growing and changing. During the past five years, the intake form has changed three times. Each form asks some different questions; the same questions sometimes appear in different order; and the form itself leads the hotline volunteer to interview in a certain way. For example,

one intake requests information about drug and alcohol abuse, while the others do not mention it. Another form relies heavily on biographical data. However, intakes and interviews with battered women are usually the only means of obtaining information. Many experts in the field have chosen to conduct research from data obtained this way (Johnson, 1992; Labell, 1979; Rounsaville, 1978; Roy, 1982; Schutte, Bouleige & Malouff, 1986).

### Demographic Factors

The socio-demographic variables used in this study include age, race, marital status, number and ages of children, employment and occupation of both victim and abuser, and use of welfare.

Clients of Project Horizon ranged from age 16 to 77, with the mean of 32.3 and the mode of 32. Age was reported in 78% of the cases. Only 9% of the clients were age 20 and under. Thirty-three percent were between 21-29, and 35.4% fell between 30-39. The remaining 22.5% were age 40 and above. Race was reported in 81.1% of the cases. Of these cases, almost all the callers (95.1%) were white. Four percent, or eight callers, were black and .5%, or one caller, was hispanic. Marital status was reported in 99.1% of the cases. The majority (63.7%) of the women were married and living with their partners. Another 27% were single, with 18.6% co-habiting. There were 3.5% who were married and not living with their partners, one caller (.4%) who was divorced from her abuser yet still living with him, and two callers (.9%) divorced from their abusers and not residing with them. Nine callers (3.9%) were legally separated from their abusers.

Whether or not the victim had children with the abuser was reported in 82% of the cases. Of the Project Horizon clients, 74.9% had children whose ages were reported in 71% of the cases. Of these cases, 10.5% had infants, 32.3% had children between 1-4, 26.7% had children between 5-8, 23.6% had children between 9-13, 14.3% had children between 14-18, and 11.2% had children of adult age. The number of children was reported in 82% of the cases. Under one half (41.5%) of the clients had one child, 32.3% had two children, 18.5% had three children, 6.9% had four children and one caller (.7%) had five children.

Employment status of the victim was reported in 54% of the cases and of the abuser in only 30% of the cases. Among those reporting, 37.4% of the victims were employed, 60.2% unemployed and 2.4% occasionally or rarely employed. For the abusers, 71.6% were employed, 26.9% unemployed, and 1.5% rarely employed. The victim's occupation was reported in 44% of the cases and, the abuser's occupation was reported in only 14% of the cases. Slightly over a half of the women reported being housewives, 24.2% claimed to be unemployed though seeking work, 20.2% were unskilled workers such as grocery sales clerks, 3% were skilled workers such as secretaries, and only one caller had a professional job. Of the abusers, 43% were identified as unskilled workers such as maintenance, 43% skilled workers such as construction or factory work, and only two abusers (14%) were professional workers. In only 50% of the cases, callers indicated whether or not they received welfare, with approximately one-fourth receiving some form of assistance.

## Battering in the Relationship

Variables exploring the battering in the relationship include the time of the first incident; abuse of children; frequency of abuse; type of abuse (i.e. physical, verbal, sexual destruction to pets and/or property); types of physical, verbal, and sexual battering; battering during pregnancy; number of injuries; and the victim's perception of the factors triggering the battering.

Of the 62 (27%) women who reported when the first incident of abuse occurred, 74.2% reported that the incident occurred within the first year of the relationship. Over one half (56.5%) reported abuse starting between one and six months, 3.2% within one month, and 14.5% between six months and one year. Almost ten percent reported that abuse began between one and two years, 12% between two and eight years, and 3.2% after fifteen years.

Eighty-two percent of clients with children indicated whether or not their children had or had not been abused by their partners. Slightly less than one fifth (19.6%) of the clients reported that their children were abused. However, the abuse of children may be underreported in order to avoid a law requiring that such abuse be reported to the authorities.

Frequency of abuse was reported in about 45% of the cases. Only 1.9% of clients were calling about their first incident. Seventeen percent experienced abuse daily, 44.7% once or twice a week, and 30.1% once a month. Project Horizon clients experience all four categories of abuse. Verbal and mental abuse occurred in 97.4% of the cases. Examples of verbal abuse include insults, curse words, and excessive yelling while mental

abuse includes trapping the victim in the house or controlling her actions. Physical abuse existed in 88.1% of the cases and is defined by any harm inflicted on the victim's body by the abuser. On the other hand, the other forms of abuse were less common, with only 12.9% reporting sexual abuse, and 30% destruction of personal property or pets. Sexual abuse includes sexual taunts, fondling, assault and/or rape. Destruction of personal property or pets includes damaging any personal items of the victim. One woman described her abuser who broke their infant's crib and toys. Another women described her abuser who dented her car with a bat and slashed the tires.

Clients also identified the type of physical, verbal and/or sexual abuse they experienced. Among the physically abused, 97.6% reported being slapped, 91.3% punched, 4.2% burned, 37.6% threatened by a weapon such as a knife or gun, 12.3% shot at, 9% cut, 25% kicked, 5% pushed down stairs, and 27.5% choked. Sixty-nine percent of the women experiencing verbal abuse stated that abusers denied them access to friends, 34.5% to money, 23.2% to a car, 54.3% to their family, while 50.4% reported that the abusers did not let them leave the house, 8.1% were not allowed to work, and 3% were denied access to their place of worship. Among those sexually abused, 45.5% reported sexual fondling and 37.8% rape. About one half of the women reported whether or not they had been battered while pregnant. Of the women who experienced physical abuse, 37.8% reported having been abused while pregnant.

Clients of Project Horizon often call for medical assistance and report injuries caused by battering. Of the women who reported physical abuse, 1.1% reported broken glasses,

88.5% bruises, 73.1% cuts, 11% broken bones, 4.4% internal injuries, .6% complications with pregnancy, and 7.7% black eyes.

Alcohol abuse is the most frequent contributing factor identified by clients. They indicate that 75% of the abusers drank often, 14.1% sometimes, and 10.9% rarely. However, 6.2% of the clients drank often, 38.5% sometimes, 50.8% rarely, and 4.6% never. Drug abuse was infrequent among both abusers and clients. Only seven abusers (3.1%) and one client (.4%) used marijuana, while four abusers (1.8%) and two clients (.9) used drugs like cocaine or LSD. Other contributing factors identified by clients include job pressure (9.2%), money troubles (13.1%), jealousy (24.2%), family problems (9.8%), health difficulties (6.5%), and pregnancy (3.9%).

#### Options Explored By Battered Women

Project Horizon clients employ various options in response to the abuse. They contact the police, call the hotline, escape to the shelter, stay with friends or family, attend the support group, consult legal aid, apply for a protection order, file for separation, and/or press criminal charges against the abuser.

Placing a call to the police to record a complaint or ask for help during an acute battering episode was an option used by 49.3% of the callers. Since these data are derived from Project Horizon callers, every woman had called the hotline at least once. Over one half, or 57.5%, called Project Horizon only once, 21.1% twice, 14% three to five times, 4.8% six to ten times, and 2.6% eleven or more times.

Shelter use was another option some clients utilized, sometimes more than once. Over one half of the callers, 57.5% never used the shelter, 29.4% used it once, 7% twice,



5.7% three to six times, and only one caller over six times. Most of the women, 73.5%, who used this service stayed in the short-term emergency shelter in Lexington. The remaining 26.5% were referred to several different long term shelters in local cities. The length of stay varied from 30.6% of the participating women staying one night, 16.3% two nights, 13.3% three nights, 16.3% four nights to one week, 11.2% one to two weeks, 10.2% two weeks to one month, with only two callers remaining more than one month.

Many of the callers who utilized the shelter left to relocate with friends or family members. Other callers chose to stay with friends or family overnight rather than go to the shelter. Of the 78% reported cases, 47.2% of the women went to stay with friends or family before and/or after leaving the abuser. Although Project Horizon provides a biweekly support group, only 2.6%, six callers, attend the support groups. Whether the caller consulted legal aid or not was reported in 76% of the cases. Thirty-four percent of these women consulted an attorney regarding their abuse. Use of a protection order was reported in 92.5% of the cases. One third of these callers obtained the protection order to reduce the violence. Of the married callers, 86% indicated whether or not they had filed for separation. Fewer than half (46.2%) of the married callers decided to separate from their abusers. The option of filing formal criminal charges against abusers was reported in 75% of the cases. One fifth of these callers filed criminal charges, and 70% of those charged with abuse were arrested.

#### Effects of Options

After utilizing these options, clients either chose to remain with the abuser or leave him and begin an independent life. A cycle of leaving and returning, justified by fear of

retribution or the needs of children, appears among many clients. The duration of abuse varied among clients who did leave their abusers.

Of the 94.8% of the cases whose present status with the abuser is known, 24.5% never left the abuser, 25.9% left but returned at least once, and 49.1% left permanently. A majority (56.3%) of the clients who used the shelter left permanently. The remaining 43.7% who returned to abusers offered various reasons to explain their behavior. Prominent explanations for returning include fear of retaliation (51.2%), for the sake of children (42.4%), not ready to leave him (32.1%), still love him (30.5%), lack of money (31.3%), hope he will change (19.3%), and no place to live (38.6%). Of the 56.3% who left the abusers permanently, 3.3% left after experiencing under six months of abuse, 10% after six months to one year of abuse, 30% after one to four years of abuse, 22.2% after four to eight years of abuse, 21.1% after eight to twelve years of abuse, and 13.3% after twelve years of abuse.

#### Comparisons with Urban/Suburban Samples

Many of the variables turned out to have similar results as the urban/suburban samples. For example, married women made up about two-thirds in other samples (Giles-Sims, 1983; Labell, 1979; Roy, 1982).

Differences occurred in the attributions and types of physical abuse. In this sample, alcohol was overwhelmingly the most reported factor that contributed to beatings. In other samples, arguments over money, jealousy, and sexual problems were cited more often than alcohol or drug problems (Roy, 1982). In this sample, alcohol was a problem for only 35% of the abusers. However, two other samples reported higher incidence of

alcohol abuse that are similar to this sample. Both found alcohol to be a problem for 72% of the men in their samples (Giles-Sims, 1983; Labell, 1979). However, one sample also had higher reports of jealousy (90%), sexual problems (83%), and arguments over parenting (90%) as contributors to violence (Giles-Sims, 1983).

Physical abuse and type of bodily injury varied from sample to sample, but showed many similarities. One sample found that 25% had been hurt by a knife or gun, 54.8% had been threatened with a knife or gun, 77% had been kicked, 90% had been slapped and 96.8% had been pushed or grabbed (Giles-Sims, 1983). A different sample revealed that 18% of clients had been assaulted with a gun or knife, 49.8% had been bruised, 17.8% had black eyes, 9% had broken limbs, and 24.3% include bodily injuries such as stab wounds (Roy, 1982). The clients of Project Horizon were threatened by a knife or gun in 37.6% of cases, kicked in 25% of cases, slapped in 97% of cases, and hurt by a knife or gun in 21.3% of cases. The injuries consisted of cuts and wounds (73.1%, black eyes (7.7%), bruises (88.5%), and broken bones (11%).

### Conclusion

The methodology of this study included a descriptive design and an accidental sample of battered women clients. Intake forms from battered women callers recorded by Project Horizon hotline advocates were coded into SPSS to analyze. The data will be analyzed to measure the usefulness of the three models of victim behavior. Other contributing factors including situational, psychological, and financial will be measured to determine if any have effects on battered women's decision-making process.

## CHAPTER SIX

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents my analysis of the data collected from Project Horizon. When this research was formulated, the original goal was rigorous hypothesis testing to make a judgement on the validity of the three theoretical models: PTSD, learned helplessness, and Survivor Theory. Unfortunately, the nature of the data precludes a genuine test of the hypotheses. I did not have access to the women whom I needed to discover why they had chosen not to utilize certain services and/or why they did not leave their abusers. A real test of these models requires systematic psychological testing of a sample of battered women. Nevertheless, this chapter can advance our understanding of spouse abuse in the area through descriptive statistical accounts of the experiences of Project Horizon clients. The data provide important correlational evidence of relationships that may lend credence to a particular model. Accordingly, I will indicate when appropriate what each correlation implies for the three theoretical models. The chapter is organized according to the propositions presented in Chapter Four and relevant tables can be found in Appendix Five.

#### Propositions

##### SEVERITY

A relationship between the severity and frequency of abuse and whether a victim chooses to leave or remain with a batterer may provide support for one of the models. The type and number of injuries, the type and number of physical abuses, the occurrence

of battering during pregnancy, and the type of sexual abuse were used to measure the severity of abuse that victims experienced. To test the severity proposition, the measurements of severity were examined to determine if they affect the decision to leave, to leave and return, or never to leave the situation. In order to simplify matters, I have considered only the cases who reported some type of physical abuse.

The first measure of severity, the type of injuries, included bruises, cuts, broken bones, internal, and black eyes. Women who reported bruising left abusers for good 49% of the time while women who were not bruised left abusers in 60% of the cases. Women who were cut left abusers in 46.9% of the cases, while women who were not cut left in 60% of the cases. Women who suffered broken bones left abusers 57.9% of the time, while women who did not left 50.3% of the time. Women who suffered internal injuries left abusers 57.1% of the time, whereas women who did not sustain internal injuries left 50.8% of the time. Women who suffered black eyes left abusers 46.2% of the time, while women who did not receive black eyes left abusers in 51.4% of the cases. Women who suffered more severe injuries such as broken bones or internal complications left abusers more often than women who did not receive this injuries. However, women who suffered lesser injuries such as black eyes, bruises, and cuts left abuser less often than women who did not suffer these injuries. These results appear to support learned helplessness, while the more severe injury results apparently support survivor theory. Of the women who sustained one injury 33.3% remained with the abuser, while 66.7% left permanently. Of the women who sustained two injuries, however, 59.4% stayed with abusers and only 40.6% left. These results are consistent with learned

helplessness, since the more severe the injuries, the less likely the victim is to leave the abuser.

The second measure of severity, the type of physical abuse, made little or no difference as to whether the victims chose to leave their abusers. Physical abuses were ranked as to severity in the following order: slaps, kicks, punches, burns, choking, threats of weapon use, stabbings, and shootings. Almost all of the women who reported physical abuse also reported being slapped. Only three women were physically abused by their partners, yet never slapped. As abuse became more severe, women reported experiencing many forms of abuse, but this was not related to whether one chose to leave. Of the women who reported being kicked, 51.4% left the abuser, while 48% of the women who did not receive kicks also left the abuser. Of the women who reported being punched, 49.3% left the abuser. Similarly, 46.2% of the women not reporting being punched also left the abuser. Of the women who reported being burned, 66.7% left for good, while 48.5% of the women who were not burned also left for good. This is a slightly significant relationship suggesting that women who experienced burns were more likely to leave than women who were not so severely abused. Women who were choked left in 56.4% of the cases, while those not choked left in 45% of the cases. A slight difference also exists in this relationship, again suggesting that women experiencing severe abuse such as choking will be more likely to leave than women experiencing less severe abuse. In the cases where women reported being threatened by a weapon, 46.3% left the abusers for good. Similarly, 48.4% of those not threatened by a weapon also left, showing no significant relationship. Of the women who reported being stabbed, 46.2% left their abusers. Again

no significant relationship was found as 48% of the women who were not stabbed also left the relationship. Of the women who reported being shot at, 37.5% left the abuser for good. Of the women who were not shot at, 48.4% left the relationship. Here is a slight difference suggesting that women who are shot at are actually more likely to stay with abusers than women who are not shot at. This result supports the learned helplessness model. Women who reported one or more injuries left 47% of the time, while women who reported three or more injuries left 51% of the time. Here again, no difference is found for severity of abuse.

According to the above percentages, no major differences exist in the relationships between the severity of abuse and the decision-making process in this sample of battered women clients. However, it is worthwhile to point out that in all but one of the abuses, women who experience the particular type of abuse always leave more often than women who do not experience the abuse. In all but shootings, women who experienced the particular abuse in question left their abusers more often than the women who did not experience the abuse. This does not support the learned helplessness theory, because the results do not show that women stay with abusers in the face of severe violence.

However, it is also important to point out that when comparing the leaving rate of women who experience each different type of abuse, the women who experienced more serious abuse left abusers less often as the severity of abuse escalated. For example, 51.4% of the women who were kicked left, 66.7% of the women who were burned left, and 49.3% of the women who were punched left. However, of the more severely abused, only 37.5% of the women who were shot at left, 46.2% of the women who were stabbed



left, and 46.3% who were threatened with a weapon left. These results suggest that severe abuse does affect a woman's decision making process by making her less likely to leave as more severe abuse occurs. This relationship supports learned helplessness theory.

No significant relationships exist between battering during pregnancy or sexual abuse and a victim's decision to leave her abuser. Of the women who were battered while pregnant, slightly over one half (52.6%) left abusers. Of the women who were not battered during pregnancy, slightly under one half (46.5%) of the women battered during pregnancy also left their abusers. Of the women reporting sexual abuse, 55.6% of those fondled and 50% of those raped left their abusers permanently. These percentage differences are too small to find a relationship between these variables and a victim's decision to leave.

A reasonable explanation for the lack of relationship between severity of abuse and the decision to leave follows from Gondolf's work. As he asserts in his conceptualization of Survivor theory, women go through three stages while they are victims of abuse. They enter the first stage disbelieving the abuse and alter their own behavior to eliminate it. Realizing that abuse continues regardless of the changes they make in their own behavior, they progress to the second stage. Here, a woman aims to change the abuser and find explanations for his behavior. When she realizes that her efforts to change him do not work since the abuse continues, she enters the last stage. It is here that she plans to escape the abuser and his battering. Meanwhile, the cycle of abuse is repeating itself throughout the former three stages. Each time the cycle is acted out, the acute battering

incident worsens. Abuse becomes more frequent and severe. As women progress through the stages, the severity of the abuse increases. I do not know what factors determine how quickly a woman progresses from stage one to stage three. Because women reach stage three at different points in abusive relationships, severity does not seem to affect decision-making. Rather, many women may leave when abuse is becoming severe simply because they have finally entered stage three.

#### FREQUENCY

No differences emerged for the frequency of abuse and whether a victim leaves her abuser. The percentages of cases that left permanently were 50% for all victims regardless of whether they experienced abuse for the first time, once or twice a year, once or twice a month, once or twice a week, or daily. Therefore, the results of the frequency hypothesis do not support either model of behavior. Instead, results suggest that frequency of abuse does not affect a woman's decision to leave.

#### TYPE OF ABUSE

The type of abuse was also hypothesized to affect a woman's decision whether or not to leave an abuser. Of the women only experiencing verbal abuse, 36% left their abusers. On the other hand, women who experienced both verbal and physical abuse, though no other forms, left their abusers permanently in 48.3% of the cases. Therefore, a slight relationship is found between type of abuse and the decision making process. Women who experience only verbal abuse are somewhat less likely to leave than those who also experience physical abuse. Learned helplessness theory is then not supported, and Survivor theory enjoys support instead because women are found to leave more

often in the face of greater violence. However, some clients who only experienced verbal abuse feared that police, advocates, and others would not take her problem seriously. In addition, women may be likely to believe that verbal abuse is acceptable, as the media focuses on violent abuse. No significant relationship was found for measuring the cumulative effects of experiencing all four types of abuse, as the leaving rate is 53.8% for women who experienced all four types of abuse (verbal, physical, sexual, destruction of property/pets). The rate, as noted before, of women who are only physically abused is 48.3%. Women who experienced the three types of verbal, physical, and destruction to property/pets left in 46.4% of the cases. Differences here are too minimal to find a significant relationship between them.

## CONTROL

The amount and type of control exerted over the victims also were expected to affect decision-making. The proposition asserted that the more controlling the abuser, the more likely a victim will leave. The overall result found no relationship between the amount of control exerted over a victim and her inclination to leave. Women who experienced no forms of control left abusers 46% of the time, while women who experienced one to three forms of control left abusers 45% of the time. Victims who experienced four or more forms of control left abusers in 53% of the cases. Therefore, increased control of an abuser does not seem to affect victim's decision-making. However, the results show that the decision made varies due to the type of control, as certain types correlated with leaving, staying, or had no effect at all. One type of control was identified with a victim's decision to leave. Women whose abusers controlled their

access to friends left their abusers more often than women whose abusers did not control their friends. Abusers who limited their partners' access to friends had partners who left them in 55.8% of cases. Women who were not controlled left in 36.4% of the cases. On the other hand, one type of control was associated with a woman's decision to stay. Women whose partners controlled their access to transportation, such as the family car, stayed with the abuser more often. Only 38.5% of these women left the abuser, while women who had access to transportation left 51.2% of cases. Types of control that were found to have no effect on the decision-making process included access to money and family and the ability to leave the house and work outside the home. Women who reported that their abusers controlled their access to money left for good in 51.3% of cases, while women who had access to money left in 48.6% of cases. Women reported whether or not their abusers controlled their access to family. Of the women who were controlled, 49.2% left their abusers, while women who were not controlled left 47.1% of the time. Women who were not able to leave the house managed to leave their abusers permanently 45.6% of the time. Women who were free to leave the house when choosing to do so left their abusers in 50% of the cases. Women whose partners would not allow them to work outside the home left their abusers in 44.4% of cases. Women who could work if they chose left in 47% of cases. On the whole, most types of control did not make a difference when making the decision to leave or remain with the abuser. Only transportation and access to friends had even slight relationships. A possible explanation is that the control exerted on a woman does not affect her decision-making. To explain why transportation tended to keep women in the relationship, it is possible

that women without a car had no other means of transportation to escape. To explain why controlling a woman's access to her friends causes her to leave, it is possible that friends wonder why they never see the abused and discover the abusive situation. They may persuade the victim to leave and provide her a place to stay. Of the women who reported that their abusers controlled their access to their friends, 56.2% did not escape to family and friends and 43.8% did. Women who reported control and stayed with friends or family left abusers permanently 71.9% of the time, while women who did not report control but stayed with friends and family left abusers in 64% of the cases. Women who did not stay with friends and family and reported control left abusers permanently in 46.3% of the cases and remained with abusers in 53.7% of the cases. Because the overall percentage is 55.8%, these results suggest that coupling the control with a stay with family and friends increases the likelihood that a victim will leave the abuser.

#### DURATION

The duration of the abuse is another potential measure of learned helplessness. The hypothesis supporting learned helplessness stated that the longer the woman stays in the relationship, the more likely she will not leave because she is subjected to repeated and prolonged violence, worsening her learned helplessness. These data showed no relationship between duration of the relationship and whether or not the victim chose to leave. However, it is interesting to note that of the women who left, 67% did so before eight years of abuse, while 33% left after eight or more years. This could support learned helplessness by suggesting that it is easier to leave the abuser earlier on in the relation-

ship before prolonged and repeated abuse causes the victim to exhibit learned helplessness. However, another explanation is that earlier in the relationship the commitment is not as strong and women do not feel they have invested as much in the relationship. It may become harder to leave as the relationship becomes longer because of the time invested rather than the effects of learned helplessness.

#### FINANCIAL STATUS

It was suggested that financial situation could affect battered women's decision-making. First, employment status of the victim and whether she left the abuser were examined to find a relationship. As 48.9% of the employed women and 52.1% of the unemployed women left the abuser, no significant relationship evolved for employment status. In order to detect a possible masking variable, whether the woman was a welfare recipient was also examined. I assumed that receiving welfare would provide victims with financial income comparable to women with income. Although this narrowed the number of available cases, women who were welfare recipients were actually the least likely to leave. Women on welfare remained in 64.7% of the cases, while women who work remained with abusers in 41.9% of cases, and women who have neither a job or welfare remained in 45.5% of cases. Contrary to the expected results, employment status did not affect the decision-making process. As discussed earlier, previous research has found a strong relationship between lack of income and remaining with the abuser. A possible explanation for the absence of a relationship is that the woman's income may not be enough to support herself and children. Rockbridge county is an economically depressed area and many women work in addition to their partners in order to secure

enough money to support the family. In this sample, only one woman reported having a professional career, while the remaining were unskilled or skilled workers. If the women who work do not make enough income to support themselves once separated, this could explain why they do not leave. In this sample, working may not make women any more independent than women who are housewives. Another explanation could be that the women in this area often have family close by to support them. It is possible that many women go to stay with family regardless of their income. When measuring the availability of family to help, employed women left far more often than unemployed women. Of the employed women who had stayed with family, 76.5% left abusers permanently while 23.5% returned to abusers. Of the employed women who did not have family available, 61.9% remained with or returned to abusers, while only 38.1% left abusers. Of the unemployed women who stayed with family, 43.8% returned to abusers while 56.3% left permanently. Of the unemployed women who did not have family nearby, 50% left abusers permanently and 50% remained with abusers. It is possible that having family available combined with some supplemental income helps women leave abusive partners.

In addition, an opposite relationship from what was expected was found for whether abusers were employed. Women whose partners were unemployed actually stayed with abusers more often than women whose abusers were employed. Of the men who were not employed, 64.7% of their partners did not leave them, whereas only 40.4% of the women who had working partners remained with them. A possible explanation is that the women feel the men need them for support and feel too guilty to leave, a premise of



learned helplessness. However, the data do not reveal how long the duration of unemployment was for each case.

## PROTECTION ORDERS

The type of services that a battered woman chooses to utilize while she is in the process of leaving the abuser might also affect her decision to stay away. If the following services are found to empower women and help them stay away from abusers, Survivor Theory would enjoy some support. During the first call to Project Horizon, one of the advocates first goals is to explain all of the services and options available. Working under the assumption that each caller was made aware of the services available, I can examine the differences that occur between people who utilize services and those who do not. The securing of a protection order might enable victims to escape from their abusers. Women who received a protection order only returned to their abusers in 15.9% of the cases. Women who did not secure a protection order in their attempt to leave returned to their abusers 30.1% of the time. Women who gained protection orders left 81.2% of the time, while women who did not receive one left only 32.3% of the time. A significant relationship can be described then between utilizing a protection order and leaving the abuser permanently. Protection orders keep abusers away from victims so they cannot use the harmony phase to apologize or beg forgiveness. The victim may also feel she finally has some control over the situation; thus, empowering her to remain separated from the abuser. Although the severity of abuse was not found to affect a woman's decision to leave, it did affect her decision to secure a protection order against the abuser. Indirectly, therefore, severity could affect whether a woman leaves her

abuser permanently. Of the women who were threatened with a weapon by their abusers, 57.4% received a protection order. Of the women who were not threatened, only 20% received a protection order. Of the women who were shot at, 52.9% secured a protection order. Women who were not shot at only secured protection orders in 29.9% of the cases. The severity of abuse may have caused women to feel unsafe while leaving abusers, so they sought a protection order to avoid more violence.

## COUNSELING

Seeking mental health counseling may also affect a victim's decision to stay or leave. I compared the relationship between individual counseling or support group attendance with the decision of whether to leave the abuser. Of the women who attended support groups, 83.3% left the abuser permanently. Women who did not utilize the support groups left in 48.1% of the cases. It is possible however that support group attendance and mental health counseling do not actually cause victims to leave. Rather, women may make the decision to leave before attending the group. Choosing to attend the group is a serious decision, indicative of victims' intention to deal with the abuse. A function of support group then is to facilitate a woman's decision to leave through reinforcement by peer support and role models. Access to the project coordinator contributes to the victim's knowledge of options. Of the women who utilized counseling services at the local mental health clinic, 57.9% remained with abusers, and 42.1% left abusers. Again, the victims who left often sought counseling after making the decision to leave. The purpose of the counseling was to help them deal with starting over. Many of the women who received counseling at the clinic also received joint marital counseling, possibly

contributing to the larger number who remained with the abusers. However, the success of mental health counseling does not have to only support survivor theory. It can also support learned helplessness and PTSD because it is possible that mental health counselors address the helplessness and trauma in therapy. Once therapists deal with the effects of PTSD and learned helplessness, women may be able to leave abusers.

A significant relationship was not found between the length or number of calls made to Project Horizon and the decision to leave. About one half of victims, plus or minus 10%, left permanently regardless of whether they called once or over ten times. A slight difference occurred when victims called only once, supporting the notion that women who call only once may call just to ask a few questions. Again, about one half of victims left for good regardless of whether they spoke to advocates for ten minutes or an hour. This suggests that advocate services and the counseling services over the hotline may not affect a woman's decision to leave an abuser.

#### FILING FOR SEPARATION

Women who chose to take legal action and formally separate from their abusers left permanently more often. Women who filed for separation returned to abusers 14.9% of the time. Women who left abusers yet did not file for separation returned to abusers in 37.2% of the cases. Women who filed for separation left abusers 83.6% of the time, while women who did not file for separation left only 12.8% of the time. Taking the step of filing for separation empowers women and facilitates their decisions to leave the abusers. It is possible that a legal, tangible document reinforces the decision to leave and gives women a stronger feeling of control.

## AVAILABILITY OF SHELTER SERVICES

The data available for this research is unique because clients stay at many different shelters that offer services ranging in number and type. This enables me to address hypotheses regarding the effects of services that previously has not been done. By looking at the decisions made by women who used the Lexington shelter versus women who used other area shelters versus women who used none of the shelters, it can be determined if these services are enabling women to escape abuse. Women who used the Lexington temporary shelter left abusers permanently 50.7% of the time, while the remaining 49.3% returned to abusers after shelter use. On the other hand, women who utilized shelters of local cities left abusers 88.5% of the time and returned in 11.5% of the cases. This suggests that the services available at the shelters located in the nearby cities that Lexington is unable to offer may enable women to establish independence from abusers. Because Lexington does not provide access to other battered women and all interaction with advocates is carried out over the phone, some women might be tempted to break shelter rules. Frequent violations include contacting the abuser, telling someone where she is, or inviting the abuser to the shelter. Because the women are alone in the shelter, they may become lonely and downplay the abuse in order to excuse a call to the abuser. Of the women who broke shelter rules, 54.5% returned to their abusers, while only 35.4% of the non-violators returned.

However, the differences between the return rate of the two types of shelters might not be related to the services at all. Another explanation for this phenomenon is that women who choose to enter a shelter in a local city between one half of an hour and an

hour away are more serious about their decision to leave permanently. Because they are determined to leave, they are willing to move a slight distance away and many may choose to enter the more distant shelters in order to be farther away from the abuser. Women who used none of the shelters, but escaped to the house of a friend or family member, left abusers permanently in 62.9% of the cases, which was actually higher than women who escaped to shelter. This disproves the hypothesis that women who stay with their friends and family are less likely to leave due to lack of exposure to other battered women, advocates, and objective legal advice. It is also interesting to note that women who stayed in the shelter at least once and stayed with family and friends left abusers permanently in 82.1% of the cases. This suggests that shelter services in addition to family support increase the leaving rate. Thus, women who used none of the shelters nor left to stay with friends and family were the least likely to leave their abusers. Women who never stayed with friends or family nor used a shelter only left abusers in 29.8% of the cases. This suggests that support from and access to family and friends helps victims leave permanently, as was also found in the financial status proposition. However, 63 women in the sample were inadvertently not informed about the shelter when they called. When examining this variable, more women used the shelters. Of the 63 women not told about shelters by Project Horizon advocates, 93.7% did not stay in the shelter, while 6.3% (4 clients) did use the shelter. Of the women told about shelter, 56.4% utilized them. Earlier, it was noted that of the entire sample, 44.5% used the shelter. It is possible that the 59 women may have used the shelter had they known about it. Simply telling clients about services must be the first step to helping them leave.

## LENGTH OF SHELTER

It was expected that the more times the shelter is used and the longer the stay, the more women are exposed to services and empowerment. Women who used the shelter only once left for good 66.1% of the time, with the remaining 33.9% remaining with abusers. Women who used the shelter between two and seven times left in 50% of the cases and returned in 50% of the cases. These results do not support the hypothesis because women using the shelters more than once are actually more likely to return to their abusers. There is an alternate explanation for the slight difference that women who do not leave their abusers permanently on the first try are less likely to leave later. It is possible that some women use the shelters as an escape for acute battering incidents while planning to return home once the harmony phase sets in.

Measurements of the length of stay in the shelter were considered also. Women who stayed only one or two nights in the shelters returned in 46.3% of the cases, those who stayed three to seven nights in the shelters returned in 41.4% of the cases, and women who stayed in the shelters over one week returned in only 21.7% of the cases. This difference also supports the above conjecture that some women use the shelter to escape the acute battering incident. Some of the women who only stay in the shelters for one or two nights may leave when they believe it is safe to return home. Women who stay for a week may be seriously considering their prospects, making plans for future living arrangements, and/or securing legal decisions. Again, the longer women stay in the shelter, the more time they have to utilize the available services to empower themselves to leave their abusers. These results are consistent with Survivor theory.

## Summary

The above relationships found between the utilization of services and leaving the abuser can be used to support survivor theory by asserting that those who used the services left abusers more often than women who did not use the services. However, Survivor theorists argue that clients either do not know about services, and those known are ineffective. However, most Project Horizon clients know about the services available. Advocates are required to describe each service to first time callers to enable women to make informed choices. Yet, many women did not choose to utilize the available services. Until we can persuade victims to use services, how can we determine if the services are inadequate? Women must have other reasons for not using the services besides Survivor Theorist notions of service inadequacy. I cannot ascertain whether it is learned helplessness or other factors not considered. Other factors that will be addressed later, such as marital tie and the number of children, may affect decision-making of abused women. These factors have been found to keep women from leaving abusers and utilizing services. These factors could explain the many women who remain in abusive situations better than or in addition to inadequate resources. Consequently, if new factors are found to affect the decision-making, then resources must be added to resolve these factors. On the other hand, the effects of learned helplessness could be the factor causing women not to use the services available.

The above relationships vary in support of learned helplessness and Survivor Theory. Severity of abuse supported both while frequency supported neither. Duration of abuse and financial status supported learned helplessness, while the type of abuse, and all the



services, including protection orders, counseling, filing for separation, and shelter services, supported Survivor Theory. Although there is much support for Survivor Theory, the support for learned helplessness cannot be ignored. However, these models are not necessarily in opposition to each other, as previous research assumes. Rather, they can be integrated by interpreting learned helplessness as one of the factors that services are not addressing. Gondolf did not offer any explanation as to where the services are deficient. It is possible that among many factors, learned helplessness is a factor that impedes some battered women. Other factors in addition to learned helplessness can impede abused women. Testing other factors to determine which ones affect decision-making can help clarify why some women do not display PTSD and learned helplessness. The following section will address additional factors expected to influence decisions of battered women.

### Factors Influencing Decision Making

Propositions regarding other factors that may keep battered women from leaving abusers will now be examined. These are important to study so that service agencies can develop techniques to deal with each factor. Project Horizon is available to help battered women twenty-four hours a day. The services have reached many, yet some of these women still remain with their abusers. If we assume that the services are effective, since they work for some victims, we realize that other factors must be important. The lack of research on these factors may hinder the effectiveness of service agencies. Until we can determine what they are, services for battered women will be insufficient. The



purpose of the following section is to identify relevant factors so that shelters and agencies for battered women can address them and provide better services.

#### ONSET OF ABUSE

The time of the onset of abuse is expected to affect battered women. First, 73.7% of abuse begins before the first year of the relationship. It is unusual for abuse to start later in the relationship. In this sample, women explained the abuse in various ways. For instance, a woman who lost over 150 pounds said her husband was jealous and intimidated because of her new appearance. Another client had a baby at age 45, following 25 years of marriage, and blamed the abuse on her husband's refusal to believe the child was his. Another client reported that the abuse started forty years into the marriage when she discovered she had cancer and they lost their retirement savings to pay doctor bills. Women who reported onset of abuse before four years left the abusers permanently in 55% of the cases. Women who reported the onset of abuse after four years left abusers 25% of the time. A possible explanation for this phenomenon may be that women who experience a late onset remember when the abuse did not occur and believe those days may return. In addition, these women have much more at stake in the relationship, including the investment of time and commitment. By pinpointing a particular reason for the abuse, they feel they can find a solution.

#### ATTRIBUTION

Women who find a particular reason for the abuse are less likely to leave abusers than women who place the blame directly on the personality of the abuser. Examples of attributions are alcohol and drug abuse, job or money pressure, jealousy, family prob-

lems, health problems, and pregnancy. Women think they can eliminate abuse by finding a solution to the problem they believe is causing the abuse. This hypothesis was tested by adding up the number of attributions, looking at the particular reasons women gave, and measuring their effect on decision making. Women who did not give an attribution for abuse remained with abusers 44% of the time and left abusers 56% of the time. Women who offered one or more attributions for abuse remained with abusers in 57.9% of the cases, and left for good in 42.1% of the cases. The more attributions a woman had, the more likely she was to remain in the abusive relationship. For example, women who had three and four attributions remained with abusers 80% of the time, and only left in 20% of the cases. These results do support the hypothesis and suggest that advocates of abused women should focus on educating women that abuse originates from other factors rather than the attributions which are simply contributing factors or rationalizations. Survivor theory would assert that these women are in the second stage of abuse and are looking for characteristics of the abuser to change. Upon recognizing that a particular victim is in this stage, practitioners could work to hasten the third stage. By educating victims about abuse, practitioners could possibly help victims escape abusers sooner than they would have; thus lessening the chances a victim could be killed by a batterer.

The particular attribution a woman believes was interesting to explore. Women who attributed the violence to alcohol abuse left abusers 37.3% of the time, while those not reporting alcohol abuse left 51.2% of the time. The low leaving rate may be a result of the well publicized programs that are available to help sober alcoholics. Women who

reported job or money pressure left for good 10% of the time, while those not citing job or money pressure as a cause of abuse left 49.2% of the time. It is possible women feel guilty for wanting to leave while their partners have money or job problems. Women who perceived jealousy as the root of the problem left for good 59.5% of the time, while those not reporting jealousy left 41.4% of the time. This rather high rate of leaving could be because women do not perceive as great a chance of eliminating jealousy. The only solution may be to avoid any situation that would make the abuser jealous; in other words, working on the victim's own behavior. This type of action occurs during the first stage of abuse. Once women realize that the abuse continues regardless of the changes in their behavior, they give up attempts to eliminate the jealousy. Women reporting family problems left in 53.3% of the cases, while women not reporting family problems left in 45.1% of the cases. This rather high rate might be explained for the same reasons. Women try to solve all of the family problems, but by the second stage they recognize that none of their efforts have made a difference. In addition, many of the women in this sample who reported family problems explained that the tension was between her partner and her family. In this case, loyalty to her family may take precedence over the relationship. Women reporting health problems left abusers in 30% of the cases, while women not claiming health problems left in 47.1% of the cases. An explanation for this low leaving rate might be that the health problems preclude the woman from leaving. In this sample the health problems are exclusively of the victim or of the children. When the victim herself has health problems, she is dependent on the abuser and probably does not have an income or means to support herself. When the

children are sick, the victim is probably focusing on caring for the child and does not wish to distress the situation further by leaving. Women who reported pregnancy left their abusers 16.7% of the time, while victims not reporting pregnancy as a cause for violence left in 46.9% of the cases. Women who believe their pregnancy is the cause of abuse might hope that once the child is born the abuse will discontinue. Using the above information, advocates can deal with the implications of each attribution used.

## CHILDREN

The involvement of children is another consideration when determining which factors affect decision making. A significant relationship did not form between women who had children and the decision to remain with their abusers. In fact, women with children left abusers slightly more often (50.4%) than women without children (44.4%). Therefore, the involvement of children does not seem to affect the decision-making process.

## ABUSE OF CHILDREN

In order to discover if a masking variable might exist, the above results were compared with the results of women whose partners also abused their children. A significant relationship does not exist here either, because exactly one half of both the women who had abused children and those without abused children left abusers permanently. Therefore, whether an abused woman's children were abused did not affect whether she left the abuser, challenging the notion that they might leave to avoid more battering of children.

## FEAR OF RETALIATION

However, it is important to note that some women might not leave abusers for fear they would kill them and their children. Of the women who reported a fear that the abuser would kill her and the family if she left, 76.2% remained with their abusers. Of the women who reported that their partner abused their children, only five reported that they feared leaving the abuser due to retaliation. Therefore, this relationship could not be examined due to the lack of cases.

## ADULT CHILDREN

It was also expected that women with adult children would be more likely to leave abusers than women who had school age children. In fact, an opposite relationship was found. Women who had adult age children 38.9% left for good, whereas women who had younger children left in 51.4% of the cases. Women with adult children actually left less often than women who had young children. One possible explanation is that the women with adult age children had longer relationships with their partners. Perhaps the commitment was stronger, and the women would endure more abuse to save the relationship. Women with older children are also usually older than women with younger children. Age may be another factor, if younger women are found to leave more often.

## AGE

Little difference was found between women of different ages. Of the women 20 and under, 43.8% remained with abusers and 56.3% left abusers. Women who were between 21 and 29 remained with abusers in 45% of the cases and left in 55% of the cases. Women between 30 and 39 remained with abusers in 48.2% of cases and left in 51.8% of

cases. Women over forty remained in 57.9% of cases and left in 42.1% of the cases. There is a slight increase in the number of women who remain with abusers as the groups of women increase in age. Thus, the hypothesis has slight support, but no overwhelming evidence.

## MARITAL STATUS

Marital status was found to have an effect on the decision-making process. Women who were married to their abusers were much more likely to remain with them than women who were single and/or living with their partners. Of the single women both living and not living with their partners, 62.1% left for good, whereas only 40% of the married women left for good. This difference is noted further by looking at the difference between women who are single and not living with the abusers and women who are single and living with abusers. Single women not residing with abusers left abusers 66.7% of the time, while those co-habiting with abusers left 60% of the time, showing a small difference between the strength of commitment. A possible explanation for this phenomenon is that married women are reluctant to break the marital tie, and less likely to leave abusers permanently.

The results of the above propositions can lead to new treatments and services for battered women by pointing out which factors do affect the decision making process of battered women. Factors found to correlate with the decision-making process were onset of abuse, attributions, and marital status. Survivor theorists would use this as support claiming that these factors and others may be causing some battered women to remain

with abusers. However, it is still possible that learned helplessness and PTSD are factors as well.

### Conclusion

Although rigorous hypotheses testing was not possible due to the nature of the data, correlational evidence emerges in the results of analyzing data. Some of the hypotheses resulted in correlational evidence for learned helplessness theory. Severity and duration of abuse and counseling were found to support learned helplessness. On the other hand, type of abuse, control of access to friends, protection orders, filing for separation, availability of shelters, were found to provide correlational evidence for Survivor Theory. Frequency, financial status, and length of shelter stay did not provide evidence for either theory, although they did in some cases correlate to the decision-making process.

Severity, duration, and effects of counseling led to correlations with learned helplessness theory. Severity was measured through types of injuries sustained and types of physical abuse experienced. Slight differences emerged showing that women who experienced less severe injuries such as bruises and black eyes left abusers less often than the women who did not experience these injuries. Women who sustained more severe injuries, such as broken bones and internal complications, left abusers more often than women who sustained more minimal injuries. Measures of severity of abuse were considered through types of abuse as well. Physical abuses ranged from slaps, kicks, punches, burns, choking, threats of weapon, stabbings, and shootings. As abuse escalated to the more severe types, the victims left abusers less often. Duration lends some



support to learned helplessness theory also. Of the women of this data set who left their abusers permanently, an overwhelming number did so within the first eight years of abuse. Women with relationships of longer duration were less likely to leave abusers. This supports learned helplessness because the longer the women remains with the abuser, the more she is subjected to the trauma that produces helplessness. Mental health counseling and support groups helped the women of this data set and provided some evidence for learned helplessness theory. An overwhelming number of women left when attending support groups and individual mental health counseling. Therapists address helplessness and effects of PTSD throughout the sessions.

However, other variables lend support for Survivor Theory such as type of abuse, control of access of friends, protection orders, filing for separation and the availability of shelter services. Women who only experienced verbal abuse left abusers less often than women who experienced other more severe forms in addition. Women who experienced control from their abusers in the form of limiting their access to friends left abusers more often. Victims who secured protection orders, filed for separation, and utilized available shelter services left abusers more often than women who did not. The use of better services helped the abused to escape battering situations.

Because support exists for both theories, a reasonable suggestion would be for practitioners to utilize each theory when determining what a particular individual needs. Each theory attempts to explain a different piece of the puzzle that surrounds the treatment of battered women. PTSD offers an explanation for the intrusive and constricting symptoms that many battered women, like most trauma victims, display.



Survivor theory, while not adequately explaining the intrusive and constricting symptoms, points to the inadequate resources. Learned helplessness explains the behavior of some battered women who remain helpless regardless of the help offered to them continually. An integration of these theories could resolve the problem. PTSD can explain the mental health problems that some battered women often experience, while survivor theory explains their "passivity" and "helplessness" by referring to inadequate resources. If some abused women do experience mental health problems as a result of the repeated trauma of abuse, services could improve their effectiveness by addressing this need. It is possible that Survivor theory explains those victims who do not have PTSD, learned helplessness, or other psychological problems and consequently, are in a position to benefit from services causing empowerment. Survivor theory may provide a good model for improving the availability and effectiveness of services. Further research on demographic, economic, and situational factors could lead to better resources and better address the needs of abused women. In the above research, onset of abuse, marital status, and attributions were found to be factors affecting the decision-making process. If further research validates these claims, practitioners should implement methods to combat these factors.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSIONS

The purposes of this research were to describe the population of battered women clients in southwestern Virginia, to assess three diagnoses for battered women clients, and to examine factors influencing their decisions to remain with or leave their abusers. The research provided information about the demographics, attitudes, and options used by women in a rural part of southwestern Virginia, but was unable to provide compelling evidence for or against any of the models.

#### Research Complications

My research design did not enable rigorous hypotheses testing, but it did enable me to identify relationships among crucial variables. Direct access to the women in my sample would have provided me with information that could answer many of the questions posed in Chapter Four that could not be answered in Chapter Six. Moreover, new questions emerged as a result of analyzing the data, but they often could not be answered without information that was unavailable. To answer these questions, I would have had to collect information from abused women in personal face-to-face interviews. This would have provided me the opportunity to follow up on questions that could not be answered from reading intake forms. For example, I could have asked women directly if their economic status impeded their chances to leave abusers. With the available data in this research, I can only compare their employment and their decision to leave. With this information I can suggest correlational implications, but cannot make well supported

arguments. Problems such as this occurred in many of the propositions that I attempted to examine.

### Suggestions for Project Horizon

One of the most interesting findings of this research was the higher return rate of women who utilized the Lexington shelter versus the long term shelters in local cities. Although it is possible that the women who went to the long term shelters in nearby cities were more serious about leaving before they entered the shelter, the difference of nearly 40% is worth studying further. It could be worthwhile for volunteers to contact women who left permanently via the local shelters to determine if the services there facilitated their decision. If the services available in the local cities are found to help women leave abusers, a long term shelter in Lexington could be helpful for the women of Rockbridge county. Personal contact with volunteers, other shelter residents, the project coordinator, and court advocates could make a difference for women trying to leave abusers.

In addition, Project Horizon should reiterate the necessity of making all clients aware of each resource available. Sixty-three of the clients were not even told by advocates of the available shelters. Of these women, 93.7% did not utilize shelters. On the other hand, women who were told about shelter services used them in 56.4% of the cases. This suggests that making clients aware of the services is the first step in helping victims leave abusers permanently.

## Future Research Implications

Researchers who want to find better methods of treating battered women must study the problems of victims to develop appropriate therapies and services. The three most important explanations for women remaining in abusive situations are Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, learned helplessness, and Survivor Theory. Researchers can use one, or attempt to integrate two, or integrate all three. I suspect that integrating the three into a general treatment strategy holds the best promise. Both the results of this research (see Chapter Six) and my reading of intake forms convince me that some cases reflect PTSD, others learned helplessness, and still others involve no psychological disorders but involve women who could benefit from the empowerment implied in Survivor Theory. Why is it that some victims pack up and leave after a few months of abuse, while others endure abuse for years? This question must be answered if we are going to reduce, much less eliminate, the abuse of women. There may be important disciplinary biases. Sociologists tend to rely on Survivor Theory, while psychologists emphasize the psychological diagnoses of PTSD and learned helplessness. This may result from the samples available to each researcher. For example, women with psychological problems as a result of battering are more likely to be encountered by psychologists. Many sociologists, who derive information from shelter residents, may come into contact with women who are not manifesting psychological problems and instead are actively seeking help. This might be illustrated with Walker's research (1979, 1984, 1987). She formulates her theories of PTSD and learned helplessness by studying battered women clients who killed

their abusers in self-defense. Almost all of these victims were diagnosed with PTSD and learned helplessness.

Regardless of how the initial diagnoses originated, they enjoy support from research. The three models originated out of the samples available to each theorist. I would like to suggest that each model has validity and can explain the behaviors of some battered women. Researchers perceive women as suffering from different problems and difficulties as a result of abuse. Women who are able to leave abusers either on their own or with help from local agencies are not perceived to be suffering from PTSD or learned helplessness. I suspect that some battered women experience PTSD and/or learned helplessness, for whatever reasons, while others can leave abusive relationships if they can obtain requisite psychological, social, and/or economic resources. It is possible that the available resources, whether personal or public, are effective enough to support them and help them escape abuse. Women in this situation may have close relatives to help them or social services supplying adequate resources. Another group of women never leave abusers, or return after each escape although they know about the services available to help them. Some researchers diagnosis these women with PTSD or learned helplessness. Trauma may cause severe psychopathology that can become intensified when services prove inadequate. The coupling of severe and repetitive abuse and a lack of responding help intensifies feelings of helplessness. However, how do we know if women do not leave as the result of helplessness and PTSD, or of other factors? For example, a single woman who only needs job placement and the shelter can leave an abuser once these are available. However, a married woman with children may not be

able to leave with the above services. She could feel committed to the abuser due to the marriage certificate and feel too guilty to deprive her children of a two parent home. She would also need counseling to help her face these problems. Additional factors, including religious affiliation, severity and frequency of abuse, past abuse, attributions for abuse, and the abuse of children apparently influence the decisions of battered women.

Future research needs to address the implications of these factors for practitioners who deal with the decision-making process of battered women. Practitioners, meanwhile, need to continue to provide resources and make them known to battered women. They should not disregard learned helplessness and PTSD as a lot of evidence supports these diagnoses for some battered women. If some victims do experience these psychological problems, mental health counselors need to continue to be available through shelters and hotlines to address these needs.

## APPENDIX ONE

Recent evidence has shown that batterers' groups and individual counseling can be very effective (about 85%) in eliminating woman abuse while keeping the relationship intact (Shupe & Stacey, 1986). If counseling for abusers is this effective, practitioners should be focusing on persuading men to join groups for abusers or seek individual counseling. Advocates need to lobby the courts to mandate counseling as a sentence rather than a brief jail stay. Efforts should be made to help victims persuade their abusers to seek help. Breaking the cycle of violence while keeping the family intact, if possible, is a highly desirable outcome.

The key to solving domestic violence through batterer's groups is discovering how to persuade the abuser to seek help. Some research indicates that in order for the counseling to be successful, an abuser must usually volunteer to go. Among a sample studied by Lee Bowker (1986), the most successful ways of persuading abusers to seek therapy included threats of divorce, public exposure, or prosecution. Some courts have required counseling in lieu of a jail sentence (Bowker, 1986). According to therapists, men forced into counseling can be helped, but only if they are willing to take the therapy seriously (Sonkin & Durphy, 1982). Sonkin and Durphy (1982) describe this process through several steps. First, the abuser must admit his mistakes and realize the behavior is unacceptable. Second, he must stop denying the violence and blaming the victim for the abuse. When a victim requests her abuser to attend counseling, he is likely to feel angry and rebellious. Advocates and counselors of abused women tell a victim to keep trying



until he acquiesces, even if it requires repeated arrests, calls to the police, or threats of separation and divorce.

### The First Counseling Center for Abusers

Once a batterer volunteers or is forced to attend counseling, several methods are utilized by therapists and group programs. Most existing programs are based on Emerge, the first group designed to help male batterers. Emerge was formed in Boston in 1977 by eight men at the request of women's shelters. The group is based on a strong community education program and structured group counseling for abusers (Roy, 1982). The goal of community education is to prevent abuse by asserting that partner abuse is not acceptable. The counseling groups are formed to eliminate occurring abuse. The founders of Emerge base their therapy techniques on the assumption that abuse results from learned behavior through socialization. Boys are taught and encouraged to be aggressive and dominant. Society reinforces this through television, movies, and news accounts of violence encountered by police and military. Boys learn that it is acceptable to be dominant over their wives and feel free to exercise their strength.

The Emerge counseling program tries to combat three basic beliefs of batterers. Batterers believe they have the right to dominate a woman, use violence to solve problems, and beat a woman (Roy, 1983). The designers of Emerge use groups therapy to create peer groups for batterers and provide reinforcement needed to facilitate change. Within groups, men can practice new behaviors and ways of relating. The abusers can learn from each other and use each other as role models. "The individual therapist's ability to serve as a role model is impaired by the client's conception of him as different,

e.g. he doesn't beat his wife, he's more educated" (Roy, 1983:181). The groups number at about eight and last 24 weeks divided into several different stages. In the first stage, the counselor tries to set up linkages among the group, help them to express any concerns or fears about counseling, and offer alternatives to violent outbursts. These include leaving a potentially abusive situation, yelling rather than hitting to reduce some tension, and calling a friend or group member for support. In the next stage, the counselor tries to shift discussion from their wives to themselves. The men should begin to direct each other and take on leadership roles, while the counselor sits back and intervenes less. The counselor suggests exercises such as role playing to illustrate different issues. During this time, with permission, the counselor can contact the wives of the men to hear about the amount of violence that might still be occurring. In the last stage men are encouraged to talk about their feelings and emotions that they have been taught to hide. After the session is over, the men can choose to volunteer for Emerge, get individual, marriage or family counseling, or join certain men's groups to continue what they have learned.

#### Methods for Stopping the Violence

Since Emerge began, people have designed and formed other programs, most using the same techniques of the Boston group. A group in California formed by Daniel Jay Sonkin and Micheal Durphy teaches anger and frustration control, listening and communication skills, methods to deal with jealousy, and stress reduction techniques. They also provide alcohol and drug counseling if necessary. Other groups have been formed throughout the country. Three programs formed in Texas were studied to determine

their effectiveness (Shupe, Stacey & Hazelwood, 1986). In addition to the above mentioned skills taught to batterers, these programs also teach the sociological and psychological elements of sex-role relationships.

### Anger and Frustration Control

Among methods taught to deal with anger and frustration control is the "time out" device. Sonkin and Durphy teach abusers to leave whenever they feel anger or tension. First therapists help men distinguish between anger and violence by teaching that anger does not have to result in violence. Men then learn to determine what body signals occur to tell them when they are angry. This should help them catch their anger before it gets out of hand. They are taught to tell their partner that they are feeling angry and need a "time-out." It lasts an hour to give the abuser enough time to cool off and determine what has made him angry. During this time he is encouraged to engage in physical activity to release some angry tension. Once his tension is gone and he has cooled off, he can direct his anger. This is done through communication of what caused the anger and tension in the beginning.

### Listening and Communication Skills

Listening and communication skills are also considered important. One method starts with questioning the men about how they feel when their partners yell. Some men feel criticism and become defensive, while others report fear because it elicits memories of parental fighting during childhood. The therapist helps abusers see that becoming defensive only worsens the situation, while recognizing the shortcoming or problem would

lessen the violence. Communication skills are also taught to men in an effort to help them express emotions they were taught to repress as children. Expressing their own needs and becoming aware of needs and emotions are the first steps to being able to nurture one's partner.

### Stress Reduction and Jealousy

Stress reduction exercises including breathing, meditation, visualizing oneself elsewhere, and relaxation techniques are also taught. By alleviating stress, therapists hope to reduce anger caused by external factors. Men who abuse sometimes think they have no control over their lives. In an effort to grasp some control, some men abuse their wives. Reducing stress can help men gain more control in their everyday existence. Therapists teach the men how to recognize stress in their bodies and the factors that might cause it. Then abusers are taught to deal with each stressful situation as it occurs, rather than allow a build up.

Certain programs also teach men to deal with extreme jealousy. Therapists teach men that jealousy often results from a fear of loss. Some of the fears might be actual, but many could be symbolic. For example, a man may be afraid that his wife may be unfaithful to him and fears losing her to another man. He attempts to stop this through control and intimidation, such as yelling if she is late. In order to eliminate these behaviors, men must recognize their jealousy and determine whether they are realistic fears. Confronting the jealousy is the next step by realizing it punishes the partner for things others might have done in the past. Working on each man's self-worth and security also helps to lessen jealousy. The man with a self-esteem and self-worth will not

need to look at his wife for approval. The couple will form independence and a more loving, trusting relationship.

To learn the above techniques, clients participate in role play to practice the newly learned behaviors. Obviously, practice is much easier than utilizing the skills at home. Therefore, some programs recommend role play between partners during times absent of any tension or problem. Role play can also teach the couple what signs each partner gives when angry, sad, hurt, happy, etc. The exercises teach them to read and understand each other more than they did before counseling.

#### The Effectiveness of Therapy

The study of three programs for men's counseling done by Anson Shupe, William Stacey and Lonnie Hazelwood determined that the therapy was effective in about 85% of the cases. Although each program studies had different methods and therapy techniques, each was found to be successful in treating batterers. The first program involved men meeting in groups of 12-18 to discuss and work on anger management. The therapists also taught communication skills and the sociological and psychological elements of gender roles and socialization. The therapists also addressed individual problems with marriage or alcohol and drugs. In the second program counselors met with abusers and the wives individually. They focused on communication of angers and fears anger management. In the third program, counselors met with each couple and taught anger control and stress reduction. They also included couples counseling and skills geared towards reducing stress and violence.

The research found that in over one half of the cases where men completed the counseling, the violence ceased completely according to both men and women who were interviewed separately (Shupe, Stacey & Hazelwood, 1986). The violence was much reduced in most of the remaining half. The researchers used several criteria to determine if the programs were successful. First, most of the physical violence had to stop. Second, any violence that continued had to be reduced. Third, the marital relationship had to improve in areas other than reduction of violence. The researchers hired graduate students to interview the men and their wives that had completed the programs. The study found that over two-thirds of the men stopped abusing their wives physically as soon as counseling began.

The third factor, whether the relationship improved, was based on the assumption that teaching the men sociological and psychological ideas about sex roles would help them to understand their behavior and treat their wives better. This type of therapy involves teaching the men about socialization of gender roles. The clinicians presumed that this would help abusers to understand why they erroneously believed they had the right to abuse and why they really do not have this right. As a result, the men should form a higher respect for their wives and for women in general. The interviewers found that the programs did help to improve the relationships. Some women reported an increased sexual intimacy and tenderness between themselves and their husbands. Others reported more respect and care from their husbands and real communication between partners.







SHELTER AUTHORIZATION

TO BE COMPLETED & MAILED TO PROJECT COORDINATOR WITH  
CORRESPONDING INTAKE FOR EACH CLIENT TO WHOM SHELTER WAS  
PROVIDED

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CLIENT DATA:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

MOTEL \_\_\_\_\_ # OF NIGHTS AUTHORIZED \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHORIZED CHECK \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUS:

\_\_\_\_\_ INCIDENT UNREPORTED                      \_\_\_\_\_ REPORTED/ARREST/PROSECUTION  
\_\_\_\_\_ REPORTED/NO ARREST                      \_\_\_\_\_ UNKNOWN  
\_\_\_\_\_ REPORTED/ARREST                      \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER

PROTECTIVE ORDER REQUESTED \_\_\_\_\_ YES                      \_\_\_\_\_ NO  
PROTECTIVE ORDER GRANTED \_\_\_\_\_ YES                      \_\_\_\_\_ NO

CLIENT PREGNANT \_\_\_\_\_ YES                      \_\_\_\_\_ NO                      \_\_\_\_\_ UNK  
CLIENT PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED \_\_\_\_\_ YES                      \_\_\_\_\_ NO                      \_\_\_\_\_ UNK

APPENDIX FOUR

PH intake forms 1986-92

Question	Variable#	Column #	Responses*****
age	V1	C4-5	two digit column with actual age
race	V2	C6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. white</li> <li>2. hispanic</li> <li>3. black</li> <li>4. asian</li> <li>5. other</li> <li>6. not known</li> </ol>
marital status	V3	C7-8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. single, not living with abuser</li> <li>2. single, living with abuser</li> <li>3. married and living with abuser</li> <li>4. married, not living with abuser</li> <li>5. legally separated from abuser</li> <li>6. divorced from abuser, still living with</li> <li>7. divorced and not living with the abuser</li> <li>8. when first called was married, now is either separated or divorced</li> <li>9. other</li> <li>10. not known</li> </ol>
children	V4	C9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. not known</li> </ol>
ages of children less than one	V5	C10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. NA</li> </ol>
ages of children 1-4	V6	C11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. NA</li> </ol>

ages of children 5-8	V7	C12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. NA</li> </ol>
ages of children 9-13	V8	C13	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. NA</li> </ol>
ages of children 14-18	V9	C14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. NA</li> </ol>
ages of children over 18	V10	C15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. NA</li> </ol>
number of children	V11	C16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1</li> <li>2. 2</li> <li>3. 3</li> <li>4. 4</li> <li>5. 5</li> <li>6. 6</li> <li>7. 7 or more</li> <li>8. not known</li> <li>9. NA</li> </ol>
is victim employed	V12	C17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. occasionally</li> <li>4. rarely</li> <li>5. not known</li> </ol>
is abuser employed	V13	C18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. occasionally</li> <li>4. rarely</li> <li>5. not known</li> </ol>
victim's job	V14	C19	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. homemaker</li> <li>2. unskilled worker</li> <li>3. skilled, clerical</li> <li>4. professional</li> <li>5. farm worker</li> <li>6. military</li> <li>7. unemployed</li> <li>8. unknown</li> </ol>

abuser's job	V15	C20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. unemployed</li> <li>2. unskilled worker</li> <li>3. skilled, construction</li> <li>4. professional</li> <li>5. farm worker</li> <li>6. military</li> <li>7. unknown</li> </ol>
is victim on welfare i.e. AFDC	V16	C21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. not known</li> </ol>
victim's education	V17	C22	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. middle school or less</li> <li>2. some highschool</li> <li>3. high school diploma</li> <li>4. post technical school</li> <li>5. some college</li> <li>6. college degree</li> <li>7. some graduate school</li> <li>8. graduate degree</li> <li>9. not known</li> </ol>
abuser's education	V18	C23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. middle school or less</li> <li>2. some highschool</li> <li>3. high school diploma</li> <li>4. post technical school</li> <li>5. some college</li> <li>6. college degree</li> <li>7. some graduate school</li> <li>8. graduate degree</li> <li>9. not known</li> </ol>
first incident of battering	V19	C24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. less than a month</li> <li>2. 1-6 months</li> <li>3. 6-12 months</li> <li>4. 1-2 years</li> <li>5. 2-4 years</li> <li>6. 4-8 years</li> <li>7. 8-15 years</li> <li>8. over 15 years</li> <li>9. not known</li> </ol>
are children also abused	V20	C25	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. not known</li> <li>4. NA</li> </ol>
type of abuse victim has-physical	V21	C26	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. yes</li> <li>2. no</li> <li>3. not known</li> <li>4. NA</li> </ol>

type of abuse V22 victim has-mental/verbal	C27		1. yes 2. no 3. not known 4. NA
type of abuse V23 victim has-sexual	C28		1. yes 2. no 3. not known 4. NA
type of abuse V24 victim has-to objects, pets	C29		1. yes 2. no 3. not known 4. NA
if physical - slaps	V25 C30	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
punches	V26 C31	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
burns	V27 C32	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
threat of weapon	V28 C33	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
shot at	V29 C34	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
cut with knife	V30 C35	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
kicks	V31 C36	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
pushing down stairs	V32 C37	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
choking	V33 C38	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
other	V34 C39	1. yes 2. no 3. NA	
x victim used shelter	V35 C40	1. none 2. once 3. twice 4. 3-6 5. 7-10 6. more than 10	
did caller get a protection order	V36 C41	1. yes 2. no 3. not known	
did caller violate shelter rules	V37 C42	1. yes 2. not known 3. NA	
did caller file for separation (if married)	V38 C43	1. yes 2. no 3. not known 4. NA	
did caller charge abuser (criminal)	V39 C44	1. yes 2. no 3. not known	

did caller use legal aid	V40	C45	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
did victim who used shelter return to abuser	V41	C46	1. yes 2. no 3. not known 4. NA
reasons for not leaving the abuser	V42	C47	fear of him 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V43	C48	children 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V44	C49	not ready 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V45	C50	love him 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V46	C51	no money 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V47	C52	hope he'll change 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V48	C53	no where to go 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V49	C54	other 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
did victim call police	V50	C55	1. yes 2. no 3. not known 4. NA
alcohol use by batterer	V51	C56	1. very frequently 2. sometimes 3. rarely 4. never 5. not known
alcohol use by victim	V52	C57	1. very frequently 2. sometimes 3. rarely 4. never 5. not known
does victim think abuser has an alcohol problem	V53	C58	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
is victim interested in support group	V54	C59	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
what info did advocate give out	V55	C60	legal 1. yes 2. no
	V56	C61	housing 1. yes 2. no
	V57	C62	food 1. yes 2. no
	V58	C63	medical 1. yes 2. no
	V59	C64	counseling/mental 1. yes 2. no
	V60	C65	other 1. yes 2. no



x victim called PH	V61	C66	1. once 2. twice 3. 3-5 4. 6-10 5. 11-15 6. over 15
was there an immediate crisis	V62	C67	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
was victim battered while pregnant	V63	C68	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
frequency of abuse	V64	C69	1. first time 2. once or twice per year 3. once a month 4. once or twice a week 5. daily 6. not known
victim's attributions for abuse	V65	C70	alcohol 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V66	C71	job pressure 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V67	C72	money pressure 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V68	C73	jealousy 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V69	C74	family related 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V70	C75	health related 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V71	C76	stress 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V72	C77	witnessed parents 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V73	C78	pregnancy 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
	V74	C79	other 1. yes 2. no 3. NA
how long each call on an average	V75	C80	1. 5 min or less 2. 6-10 min 3. 11-20 min 4. 21-30 min 5. 31 min - 1 hour 6. 1-2 hours 7. over 2 hours
injuries - broken glasses	V76	C2	1. yes 2. no
bruises	V77	C3	1. yes 2. no
cuts	V78	C4	1. yes 2. no
broken bones	V79	C5	1. yes 2. no
internal	V80	C6	1. yes 2. no
complications with pregnancy	V81	C7	1. yes 2. no
black eye	V82	C8	1. yes 2. no
other	V83	C9	1. yes 2. no

amount of \$ V84 on hand	C10	1. none 2. under \$20 3. \$20-\$50 4. \$51-\$100 5. \$101 or more 6. not known 7. NA
does victim V85 use drugs	C11	1. yes, marijuana 2. yes, cocaine LSD, etc. 3. no 4. not known
does batterer V86 use drugs	C12	1. yes, marijuana 2. yes, cocaine LSD, etc. 3. no 4. not known
was batterer V87 arrested	C13	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
does batterer try to control victim's ...		
access to friends V88	C14	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
access to money V89	C15	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
access to car V90	C16	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
access to family V91	C17	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
ability to leave house V92	C18	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
ability to get a job V93	C19	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
access to place of worship V94	C20	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
other V95	C21	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
how did caller hear V96 about PH	C22-23	1. law enforcement 2. attorney/legal aid 3. friend who used PH services 4. family member who used PH services 5. media 6. advertisement 7. place of worship 8. another shelter 9. mental health 10. social service dept. 11. brochures 12. medical services 13. self 14. other 15. not known

if caller stayed in shelter, how many nights	V97 C24	1. one night 2. 2 nights 3. 3 nights 4. 4 nights 5. 5-7 nights 6. 1-2 weeks 7. 2 weeks to one month 8. more than a month 9. NA
if caller used shelter, which one	V98 C25	1. Lexington short-term 2. local city A shelter 3. local city B shelter 4. other 5. NA
did caller go stay with friends or family	V99 C26	1. yes 2. no 3. not known
if victim left, what duration of abuse did she endure before leaving abuser	V100 C27	1. less than 3 months 2. 3-6 months 3. 6 months to 1 year 4. 1-4 years 5. 4-8 years 6. 8-12 years 7. more than 12 years 8. not known 9. NA
is caller known or anonymous	V101 C28	1. known 2. anonymous
how many x victim has left and returned	V102 C29	1. once 2. twice 3. 3 times 4. 4 times 5. 5 times 6. 6 times 7. 7 times or more 8. not known 9. never
how horrible did abuse get before victim left	V103 C30	1. did not leave 2. left for good 3. left and returned at least once 4. not known
type of sexual abuse	V104 C31	1. yes 2. no 3. not known

type of sexual abuse V105 C32 rape 1. yes 2. no 3. not known  
 does she attend support group V106 C33 1. yes 2. no 3. not known

Case No.	Sexual Abuse (V105 C32)	Support Group (V106 C33)
100-100000-1000	1	1
100-100000-1001	2	2
100-100000-1002	3	3
100-100000-1003	1	1
100-100000-1004	2	2
100-100000-1005	3	3
100-100000-1006	1	1
100-100000-1007	2	2
100-100000-1008	3	3
100-100000-1009	1	1
100-100000-1010	2	2
100-100000-1011	3	3
100-100000-1012	1	1
100-100000-1013	2	2
100-100000-1014	3	3
100-100000-1015	1	1
100-100000-1016	2	2
100-100000-1017	3	3
100-100000-1018	1	1
100-100000-1019	2	2
100-100000-1020	3	3
100-100000-1021	1	1
100-100000-1022	2	2
100-100000-1023	3	3
100-100000-1024	1	1
100-100000-1025	2	2
100-100000-1026	3	3
100-100000-1027	1	1
100-100000-1028	2	2
100-100000-1029	3	3
100-100000-1030	1	1
100-100000-1031	2	2
100-100000-1032	3	3
100-100000-1033	1	1
100-100000-1034	2	2
100-100000-1035	3	3
100-100000-1036	1	1
100-100000-1037	2	2
100-100000-1038	3	3
100-100000-1039	1	1
100-100000-1040	2	2
100-100000-1041	3	3
100-100000-1042	1	1
100-100000-1043	2	2
100-100000-1044	3	3
100-100000-1045	1	1
100-100000-1046	2	2
100-100000-1047	3	3
100-100000-1048	1	1
100-100000-1049	2	2
100-100000-1050	3	3

APPENDIX FIVE

TABLE ONE- SEVERITY BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>BRUISED</u>		
<u>YES</u>	49%	51%
<u>NO</u>	60%	40%
<u>SKIN CUTS</u>		
<u>YES</u>	46.9%	53.1%
<u>NO</u>	60%	40%
<u>BROKEN BONES</u>		
<u>YES</u>	57.9%	42.1%
<u>NO</u>	50.3%	49.7%
<u>INTERNAL</u>		
<u>YES</u>	57.1%	42.9%
<u>NO</u>	50.8%	49.2%
<u>BLACK EYE</u>		
<u>YES</u>	46.2%	53.8%
<u>NO</u>	51.4%	48.6%
<u>ONE INJURY</u>	66.7%	33.3%
<u>TWO INJURIES</u>	40.6%	59.4%
<u>KICKED</u>		
<u>YES</u>	51.4%	48.6%
<u>NO</u>	48%	52%
<u>PUNCHED</u>		
<u>YES</u>	49.3%	50.7%
<u>NO</u>	46.2%	53.8%
<u>BURNED</u>		
<u>YES</u>	66.7%	33.3%
<u>NO</u>	48.5%	51.5%
<u>CHOKED</u>		
<u>YES</u>	56.4%	43.6%
<u>NO</u>	45%	55%
<u>WEAPON THREAT</u>		
<u>YES</u>	46.3%	53.7%
<u>NO</u>	48.4%	51.6%
<u>STABBED</u>		

<u>YES</u>	46.2%	53.8%
<u>NO</u>	48%	52%
<u>SHOT AT</u>		
<u>YES</u>	37.5%	62.5%
<u>NO</u>	48.4%	51.6%
<u>BATTERED WHILE PREGNANT</u>		
<u>YES</u>	52.6%	47.4%
<u>NO</u>	46.5%	53.5%
<u>SEXUAL FONDLING</u>		
<u>YES</u>	55.6%	44.4%
<u>NO</u>	47.9%	55.6%
<u>RAPE</u>		
<u>YES</u>	50%	50%
<u>NO</u>	47.9%	52.1%

TABLE TWO - FREQUENCY BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>FIRST TIME</u>	50%	50%
<u>ONCE/TWICE PER YEAR</u>	50%	50%
<u>ONCE PER MONTH</u>	50%	50%
<u>ONCE/TWICE PER WEEK</u>	46.5%	53.5%
<u>DAILY</u>	50%	50%

TABLE THREE - TYPE OF ABUSE BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>VERBAL ONLY</u>	36%	64%
<u>PHYSICAL ONLY</u>	48.3%	51.7%
<u>VERBAL AND PHYSICAL ONLY</u>	48.3%	51.7%
<u>VERBAL, PHYSICAL AND DESTRUCTION</u>	46.4%	53.6%
<u>ALL FOUR TYPES</u>	53.8%	46.2%

TABLE FOUR - CONTROL BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>		<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>NO FORMS OF CONTROL</u>	46%	54%
<u>ONE TO THREE FORMS</u>	45%	55%
<u>FOUR OR MORE FORMS</u>	53%	47%
<u>ACCESS TO FRIENDS</u>		
<u>YES</u>	55.8%	44.2%
<u>NO</u>	36.4%	63.6%
<u>ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION</u>		
<u>YES</u>	38.5%	61.5%
<u>NO</u>	51.2%	48.8%
<u>ACCESS TO MONEY</u>		
<u>YES</u>	51.3%	48.7%
<u>NO</u>	48.6%	51.4%
<u>ACCESS TO FAMILY</u>		
<u>YES</u>	49.2%	50.8%
<u>NO</u>	47.1%	52.9%
<u>ABILITY TO LEAVE THE HOUSE</u>		
<u>YES</u>	45.6%	54.4%
<u>NO</u>	50%	50%
<u>ABILITY TO WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME</u>		
<u>YES</u>	44.4%	55.6%
<u>NO</u>	47%	53%

TABLE FIVE - DURATION BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>		
<u>UNDER ONE YEAR</u>	14.1%	11 WOMEN
<u>ONE TO EIGHT YEARS</u>	52.6%	41 WOMEN
<u>EIGHT OR MORE YEARS</u>	33.3%	26 WOMEN



TABLE SIX - FINANCIAL STATUS BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>VICTIM EMPLOYMENT</u>		
<u>YES</u>	48.9%	51.1%
<u>NO</u>	52.1%	47.9%
<u>WELFARE RECIPIENTS AND UNEMPLOYED</u>		
	35.3%	64.7%
<u>NON-WELFARE RECIPIENTS AND UNEMPLOYED</u>		
	45.5%	54.4%
<u>ABUSER EMPLOYMENT</u>		
<u>YES</u>	59.6%	40.4%
<u>NO</u>	35.3%	64.7%

TABLE SEVEN - EFFECT OF PROTECTION ORDERS BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>RETURNED TO ABUSER</u>	<u>NEVER LEFT</u>
<u>YES</u>	81.2%	15.9%	2.9%
<u>NO</u>	32.3%	30.1%	36.8%

TABLE EIGHT - SEVERITY OF ABUSE BY SECURING A PROTECTION ORDER

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
<u>WEAPON THREAT</u>		
<u>YES</u>	57.4%	42.6%
<u>NO</u>	20%	80%
<u>SHOT AT</u>		
<u>YES</u>	52.9%	47.1%
<u>NO</u>	29.9%	70.1%

TABLE NINE - COUNSELING BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>SUPPORT GROUP</u>		
<u>YES</u>	83.3%	16.7%
<u>NO</u>	48.1%	51.9%
<u>INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING</u>		
<u>YES</u>	42.1%	57.9%
<u>NO</u>	DATA UNAVAILABLE	
<u>NUMBER OF CALLS</u>		
<u>ONCE</u>	46.7%	53.3%
<u>TWICE</u>	57.8%	42.2%
<u>THREE TO FIVE</u>	50%	50%
<u>SIX OR MORE</u>	41.2%	41.2%

TABLE TEN - FILING FOR SEPARATION BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>RETURNED TO ABUSER</u>	<u>NEVER LEFT</u>
<u>FILED FOR SEPARATION</u>			
<u>YES</u>	83.6%	14.9%	1.5%
<u>NO</u>	12.8%	37.2%	50%

TABLE ELEVEN - AVAILABILITY OF SHELTER SERVICE  
BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>RETURNED TO ABUSER</u>
<u>LEXINGTON SHELTER</u>	50.7%	49.3%
<u>NEARBY CITIES SHELTERS</u>	88.5%	11.5%
<u>STAY WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS, NOT ANY SHELTER</u>	62.9%	37.1%
<u>NO STAY WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS OR SHELTER</u>	29.8%	70.2%
<u>SHELTER VIOLATIONS</u>		
<u>YES</u>	45.5%	54.5%
<u>NO</u>	35.4%	64.6%

TABLE TWELVE - NO. AND LENGTH OF SHELTER STAY  
BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>RETURNED TO ABUSER</u>
<u>ONCE</u>	66.1%	33.9%
<u>TWO TO SEVEN</u>	50%	50%
<u>NUMBER OF NIGHTS</u>		
<u>ONE TO TWO</u>	53.7%	46.3%
<u>THREE TO SEVEN</u>	58.6%	41.4%
<u>OVER ONE WEEK</u>	78.3%	21.7%

TABLE THIRTEEN - ONSET OF ABUSE BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>BEFORE FOUR YEARS</u>	55%	45%
<u>AFTER FOUR YEARS</u>	25%	75%

TABLE FOURTEEN - ATTRIBUTION BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>NO ATTRIBUTION GIVEN</u>	56%	44%
<u>ATTRIBUTION GIVEN</u>	57.9%	42.1%
<u>THREE ATTRIBUTIONS</u>	20%	80%
<u>FOUR ATTRIBUTIONS</u>	20%	80%
<u>TYPE OF ATTRIBUTION</u>		
<u>ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE</u>		
<u>YES</u>	37.3%	62.7%
<u>NO</u>	51.2%	48.8%
<u>JOB/MONEY PRESSURE</u>		
<u>YES</u>	90%	10%
<u>NO</u>	49.2%	50.8%
<u>JEALOUSY</u>		
<u>YES</u>	59.5%	40.5%
<u>NO</u>	41.4%	58.6%
<u>FAMILY PROBLEMS</u>		
<u>YES</u>	53.3%	46.7%
<u>NO</u>	45.1%	54.9%
<u>HEALTH PROBLEMS</u>		
<u>YES</u>	30%	70%
<u>NO</u>	47.1%	52.9%
<u>PREGNANCY</u>		
<u>YES</u>	16.7%	83.3%
<u>NO</u>	46.9%	53.1%

TABLE FIFTEEN - CHILDREN BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>CHILDREN</u>		
<u>YES</u>	50.4%	49.6%
<u>NO</u>	44.4%	55.6%
<u>ABUSE OF CHILDREN</u>		
<u>YES</u>	50%	50%
<u>NO</u>	50%	50%
<u>AGE OF CHILDREN</u>		
<u>ADULT AGE</u>	38.9%	61.1%
<u>SCHOOL AGE OR YOUNGER</u>	51.4%	48.6%

TABLE SIXTEEN - FEAR OF RETALIATION BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>REPORTED FEAR</u>	23.8%	76.2%

TABLE SEVENTEEN - AGE OF VICTIM BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>20 AND UNDER</u>	56.3%	43.8%
<u>21-29</u>	55%	45%
<u>30-39</u>	51.8%	48.2%
<u>40 AND OVER</u>	42.1%	57.9%

TABLE EIGHTEEN - MARITAL STATUS BY STATUS WITH ABUSER

	<u>LEFT THE ABUSER</u>	<u>REMAINED WITH ABUSER</u>
<u>MARRIED</u>	40%	60%
<u>SINGLE</u>	62.1%	37.9%
<u>SINGLE, CO-HABITATING</u>	60%	40%
<u>SINGLE, NOT CO-HABITATION</u>	66.7%	33.3%

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