WOMEN AND MALE VIOLENCE

Susan Schechter

The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women's Movement

South End Press / Boston
project she had also seen the lack of resources available to poor women. Another woman volunteered at a women’s center out of a desire to reenter her former professional field, social work. A mother with two children, she sought paid part-time work at the center. Unable to find this, she volunteered and became deeply committed, first to the women’s center and then to the shelter that emerged from it. Still others “fell” into the work by answering a few crisis calls at a women’s center. Drawing the connection between one’s own life and that of the woman calling was often a relatively easy step. Since women of all classes, races, and ethnic groups are battered, everyone heard a story that was hauntingly close to her own circumstances.  

Once a part of the battered women’s movement, women’s analyses and understanding grew and changed over time, as they found themselves transformed through shelter and movement life.

CHAPTER 3

The Emergence of the Battered Women’s Movement

No Place To Go

After you have participated in this conference... be ever mindful of the hundreds of women who may never see their children again because... after taking as much abuse as they could... they’ve protected themselves by killing their husbands and are now serving prison terms.

And don’t forget the countless women who have died at their own hands, rather than live in fear of death at the hands of their spouses.

Also keep in mind the endless women going in and out of mental institutions because they just can’t deal with the reality of having an abusive husband so they relinquish their rights to reality.

Do you have any idea of how many battered women there are out there? Women who could live normal lives and be productive members of our society.

Many of these women would leave in a minute if they had a place to go and the help they needed to get on their feet and live in peace.

Although a former battered woman spoke these words in 1979, she captured the pain and rage that motivated hundreds of women to organize in the mid-1970s. Earlier in the decade, no one knew the staggering statistics that soon would emerge on wife abuse; there was no reliable data, even within police departments, on a crime labeled insignificant. Soon, however, documentation substantiated the claims of battered women and feminists. In 1979, extrapolating
from a sample of Kentucky women, researchers estimated that 80,000 women in that state were victimized by their spouses during the preceding twelve months, 33,000 of them seriously.²

Although the programs for battered women that emerged in the 1970s articulated a multiplicity of philosophies, they shared one common belief: battered women faced a brutality from their husbands and an indifference from social institutions that compelled redress. This theme stimulated networks among thousands of women and programs throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. Even in 1982, the experiences of battered women often shook a politically diverse movement back into recognizing the unity imposed by violence, social indifference about that violence, and the desperate lack of services.

The brutal institutional experiences battered women endured are recorded in several excellent books and thousands of pages of testimony that read like the following.

A woman who had experienced 14 years of beatings from a husband... had gotten 1-year Family Court injunctions against his assaults seven times. Frequently, when the police responded they told her to file a violation petition, requesting the court to hold her husband in contempt. They did not arrest him until the night they found her dazed and dripping blood from a large head wound. Her husband had smashed her in the head repeatedly with a chair. He had inflicted several stab wounds with a screwdriver...As the officers arrested the man for attempted murder, he protested, “But she's my wife.”³

Unofficially, the police concurred, further isolating and stigmatizing the woman and lending support to her husband.

Courts generally ignored the problem, consigning it the status of a minor, family squabble. In Washington, D.C., in 1966, prosecutors issued only 200 arrest warrants to the 7,500 women who requested them.⁴ Although 50% of the problems in Chicago’s Domestic Relations Court were family assaults, in those cases that received a hearing, “the most common disposition was an unsecured, unrecorded, blank, fake peace bond.” Even when men pleaded guilty or were found guilty, the official court docket almost always read “discharged for want of prosecution.”⁵

The extent of the harassment was shocking.

One of my clients pressed criminal charges against her husband. The judge asked her if this was the first time she had been beaten up. After observing court proceedings that morning, she knew that if she answered “yes” like all the other women had, her husband would be released with virtually no penalty. So wisely she answered, “No, this is not the first time.” The judge dismissed the case, responding, “Well, it sounds like you must enjoy getting beaten up if it has happened before. There's nothing I can do.”⁶

Women were also harassed if they attempted to leave their husbands. In Chicago in the early 1970s, as in many cities, battered women who left were denied welfare. Still legally married, their husbands' income made them ineligible for assistance. Without welfare, however, women had no money to rent apartments or pay moving expenses. The Chicago housing alternatives for those women without family members or friends to shelter them were revealed in 1976 by the newly formed Chicago Abused Women’s Coalition.

1. The Salvation Army Emergency Lodge
   Description: Crisis Intervention, 24-hour telephone service, emergency housing, casework counseling available.
2. Pacific Garden Mission—Unshackled
   Description: Has limited housing for women with or without children.
   There is no charge. However, women are expected to attend Bible lessons.
3. Gospel League Shelter
   Description: No smoking, drinking, and women must attend Bible classes.

In most cities, fire and catastrophe victims, alcoholics, and battered women found themselves in the same shelters. Often full, these facilities had to turn women away. And those who found shelter were sometimes made to feel responsible for their families’ problems and their husbands’ violence. No specialized assistance was offered nor was violent behavior labeled unjust. In most shelters operated by religious or charitable organizations, women were left to untangle their “personal” problems within a social and political context that extolled family unity and legitimated male dominance.

Prior to the battered women's movement, a few isolated shelters were formed to house victims of alcohol-related violence. For example, in California in 1964, women from Al-Anon opened the first shelter for battered women, Haven House. Outraged that beaten women were sleeping in cars with their children, Al-Anon women rented a large house in Pasadena. Although the shelter was specifically for victims of alcohol-related violence, many battered women simply arrived, asking for and receiving help. Between 1964 and 1972, using peer support and self-help, Haven House sheltered over 1000 women and children, surviving on a shoestring budget and the determination of grassroots women who believed in “women

The Emergence of the Battered Women's Movement
helping women.” In 1972, because of new, strict fire codes, Haven House had to close, reopening in 1974 with a much larger budget and staff. In most cases, however, battered women truly had nowhere to go. Shelters were almost nonexistent, and medical, social service, and law enforcement agencies rarely provided battered women with the kind of support they needed. Although not all institutional personnel treated battered women badly, a pattern of hostility existed, leading many women to conclude: “No one wants to get involved,” or “I guess I’ll have to be dead for them to stop his violence.”

The First Positive Responses

In the 1970s, feminists, community activists, and former battered women increasingly responded in a new way, providing emotional support, refuge, and a new definition of “the problem.”

Feminist women’s centers, like Women’s Center South in Pittsburgh, sometimes offered a safe place for women in crisis. This women’s center, with a kitchen, a place to sleep, a reading room, and an information center, had someone in the house 24 hours a day. In an 11 month period in 1975, “the center logged 191 women sheltered, 86 children, and 839 visitors arriving to talk, create, nap, plan, work, or just be themselves. Incoming phone calls climbed to an astronomically 4961.” Two other Pennsylvania shelters, Women Against Abuse in Philadelphia and the Domestic Violence Service Center in Wilkes-Barre also evolved from women’s centers.

Former battered women or women who had seen violence in their families of origin were among the first to reach out. In Boston in 1976, “Chris Womendez and Cherie Jimenez opened up their five room apartment as a refuge for battered women... At the time, they supported Transition House as well as themselves and two children on their welfare checks and small contributions from friends.” Cherie Jimenez’s earlier stay at Interval House, a Toronto program primarily for battered women, influenced her decision to found the Boston shelter. “I had never seen a place like that before... I had never seen women helping each other out like that.” When asked whether they had considered themselves feminists, Chris Womendez responded, “Cherie was more than I was. I never thought much about it then. I identified myself as a lesbian more.”

Marta Segovia Ashley, whose mother was murdered by her stepfather, describes the earliest discussions among the six women, both feminists and violence victims, who founded San Francisco’s La Casa de Las Madres.

In sharing the violence in our lives, we began to see that we were equally oppressed. There would be no separation between staff and resident...

We did not want the social worker/white missionary establishment to run La Casa. We wrote into the original proposal that the residents would, hopefully by the end of the first year, become staff at La Casa and that we would work ourselves out of jobs.

As a result of discussions during 1973 and 1974 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, battered women in Al-Anon organized a shelter. Their motivation was to help themselves and other women. In their view, battered women needed the support of their peers rather than professional help which often made them feel judged or disabled. The women did not see themselves as part of a feminist movement, although their first staff person did, and “a loving struggle developed between the feminists and the Al-Anon women.” The feminist notion of “empowerment” and the analysis that blamed male domination for violence were foreign to Al-Anon women, but self-help and treating women as adults, important concepts for the women’s liberation movement, were central to their philosophy.

During late 1974, a multi-racial group of women in Boston’s South End began meeting to plan a shelter for neighborhood women and their children. They were concerned about the complete lack of bilingual services for Latina women in crisis and the absence of any Latina controlled organization for women in the city of Boston. The founders of Casa Myrna Vasquez explain further.

The origins of Casa Myrna Vasquez Inc. and the development of its philosophy and structure was not only influenced by the desire of these women to help other community women using a self-help approach (particularly Latina women and other women of color), but it was also closely tied to the fight being waged in the neighborhood to preserve the right of long-term residents to remain in the neighborhood and determine the quality of life there. At the time the South End was a neighborhood undergoing transition and change brought on by urban renewal and public and private interests and capital; people of color, poor people, new immigrants and the people speaking different languages were being rapidly displaced by the affluent. These people were fighting for the right to continue to live and own property in the neighborhood and exercise community control of their space. In keeping with this spirit, these neighborhood women wanted to create and maintain community-controlled services for women and their families to ensure that their work would remain a part of the people receiving the services.
Casa Myrna Vazquez was to become one important model of help emanating from neighborhood based rather than feminist models of organizing.

In the early 1970s, as they listened or reassessed their own experiences, women did more than provide housing for battered women. In a social climate alive with feminist organizing and community self-help projects, these women also uncovered, inch by inch, the sexist ideology that declared nothing wrong with battering a woman unless the violence went too far. Until the 1970s, “mild” forms of chastisement were still considered necessary and even helpful to keep a woman in line. A little slap was a sign of love. Most Americans grew up with ideas like “real men keep their women under control,” “she needed to be brought to her senses;” or “women like men who dominate.” These ideas are a shared and assumed part of the culture. Social workers, probation officers, judges, or police often eagerly recount knowing beaten women who enjoy the violence, offering as evidence, “You know. They always go back.” Activists had to assert that such attitudes deny women options for escape and give men permission to beat. They declared it brutal and misleading to label behavior masochistic or enjoyable when a person has no perceived options.

Activists learned to challenge the ideology that preaches the subordination of women, extols the moral superiority of men, and logically assigns husbands the duty of chastising their wives. Another specifically American form of ideology asserts the belief in freedom. “Women are free to go; why don’t they just leave?” This definition of freedom ignores the fact that many women have nowhere to go and no money to stay there once they arrive. A third form of ideology focuses on the battering of poor women and women of color and asserts that for them, violence is an accepted and expected way of life and therefore need not be considered a problem. This is a racist and class biased distortion of reality which invalidates the suffering of poor and third world women while it hides the violence directed against white, middle class women. As they learned to help battered women, activists had to fight these views within themselves and within the community.

**Shelter Life**

From the beginning, shelters for battered women have assumed a variety of forms. Perhaps 20% share space in YWCA residences or use institutional settings, like motels or abandoned orphanages. Most often, shelters are old houses with many bedrooms where battered women and their children can stay for a few days or a few months. Although the buildings are often run-down, shelter staff become expert at repairing almost anything, valiantly attempting to keep them homelike. Capacity is usually five to ten families although size varies. Many women bring two or more children. Together women residents divide house chores, cook, and clean. Women may rotate tasks; for example, each woman chooses one or two meals that she will prepare for the entire group during the week. In many settings, each woman and her children share one bedroom; in others, because of severe space shortages, families double up in one room. Each shelter has rules about safety, drugs, curfew, care of children, and attendance at house meetings to discuss problems and chores. Often, length of stay agreements are made with residents.

Simply getting used to the shelter is an overwhelming task. As one woman described it, “the shelter is a hard place. Women like it but they also don’t want to be here. It’s just not home. Some women love it and still others hate how overcrowded it feels.” As this Puerto Rican advocate explains, “Puerto Rican women who come to the shelter are very scared. They don’t want to leave their community and come to a new place. They may have language problems. They don’t drive. They may never have paid bills or done a budget. They particularly dislike having to share rooms with other people, both black and white women. They have never lived this way before. They’re not used to living collectively or sharing apartments like white women do.”

During a shelter stay, women often pass through several stages. At first they are frightened and nervous, both about the decisions they have made and about their new environment of fifteen or more strangers. For the first several days or weeks, women are constantly busy with court proceedings, welfare applications or job hunts, medical appointments, and the search for affordable housing so that the next endangered woman can take her place at the shelter. After the initial flurry of activities, women wait for apartments and court proceedings, and at this point may feel intense doubts, fear, and pain. Women struggle with ambivalence, self-blame, and guilt as they contemplate their relationship ending and attempt to make sense of what happened. An Ojibwe resident at Harriet Tubman shelter describes how women cope.
shelter resident after another nod her head in recognition of another woman's plight, confusion, and eventual rage.

Shelters are havens, but they are not utopias. The atmosphere within a house varies, depending on the current group of residents, staff morale, and shelter organization. One resident describes typical problems in her shelter.

Cliques seem to form here and as a newcomer I'm pretty uncomfortable. The older residents toss the new ones around. The women seem to be bored, complaining about missing men and sex. I wish there were more support groups, more to do.20

Often, however, this tension dissipates when women share with one another in groups or at house meetings, forming close bonds at least temporarily.

Because American society is so racially segregated, a shelter may be one of the few places women live interracially. Battering, living in a shelter, and starting over with nothing are the common experiences among sheltered women; racial and ethnic lines are crossed through mutual aid. Because no one escapes the racism in this society, differences and tensions are common.

The kitchen becomes a battleground of ethnic righteousness. Women wrinkle their noses in disgust at each other's food or out-right refuse to eat. The children sit watching and listening, learning well the lessons of prejudice.... The kitchen is where everything happens. Women support each other, they cry with each other, there they prepare the food and eat....

Food is an issue that people can relate to easily. It's an emotional issue, and compounded with women from different races and class backgrounds can be a very explosive one.21

Coming from extremely isolated areas, some rural women confront different problems.

Isolation is intensified when there are not neighbors to hear her scream, when she has no car and there are no buses that come within 15 or 20 miles of her house. She may have no phone. There may be four feet of snow. Furthermore, tradition dictates that one does not bring family problems to anyone external, particularly in a small town where once one's business is known by a few, it is known by all.22

Just getting to the shelter may be an overwhelming task.

Recently in Nebraska, a woman tried to walk to a shelter for battered women that she had heard about. It was 150 miles from her home. She had walked nearly half way with her small children on back roads when she came to a town that had a volunteer task force on domestic violence which arranged for transportation...23
Once at a shelter, rural women may have to adjust to using indoor plumbing or washing machines for the first time. They may be members of a white ethnic minority in the community that is scorned by some women at the shelter.

For rural women and urban women, for women of different races and ethnic groups, shelters offered a chance to escape an unbearable situation. They created an environment in which diverse women came together to live, rebuilding their lives. Finding the best way to do this would not be easy; few models existed and financial resources were always limited.

**Shelter Philosophy and Structure**

As shelters formed, they began to develop their own philosophies and structures and deal with the troubling question of their relationship to the state. Focusing on two of the first shelters, Transition House in Boston and Women's Advocates in St. Paul, highlights early shelter activity and helps clarify the philosophical differences that would emerge in the battered women's movement as it expanded.

The founding of Women's Advocates and Transition House were real and symbolic victories in the struggle of women to free themselves from male violence and domination. Their stories suggest the richness, complexity, chaos, and energy of the early battered women's movement. Women's Advocates emerged from a consciousness-raising group which, in 1971, set itself the goal, typical in the early women's liberation movement, "to do something." This determination led the group to produce a divorce rights handbook and organize a legal information telephone service, staffed by volunteers and two VISTA workers assigned to Women's Advocates through a Legal Aid Office.

...what to do next. The need for emergency housing was the one urgent and recurring problem for which there was no referral...The immediate need of so many women moved us toward turning our vision into a reality.

They began by asking friends for pledges toward the down payment on a house and for operating expenses. By 1973, monthly pledges of $350 helped pay rent for a small apartment and the cost of a telephone and answering service. Calls for help exceeded room in the apartment, and advocates soon took battered women into their homes. After three months, Women's Advocates was evicted from its apartment because of neighbors' complaints about the children. Their office then temporarily moved into the home of one of their VISTA workers.

Several women needing emergency housing stayed together at her home that summer while her family was on vacation, and we realized the importance of women being together in one house, sharing their experiences, and getting support from one another.26

They also learned a lesson about women together can transform fear. Searching all over town for a woman whose kidneys he had damaged in a beating, a pimp threatened Women's Advocates. At that moment, "there was another woman with four children, a woman with one child, and a single woman in the house. We had a meeting about this man. I remember one volunteer argued for everyone leaving the house because of the potential danger. The whole group decided to hold their ground and take shifts, staying up all night in case he showed up. It was the first time I felt that kind of power."27 In this summer experiment, staff and residents had participated equally. Advocates maintained friendships with the women they were housing; staff were not just helpers.28 Staff had seen the strength of battered women, which gave them the courage to move ahead and open a house; they had also experienced the reality of sheltering when women stole from them or did not like one another. Having sheltered women for eighteen months, Women's Advocates moved into their first house idealistic but seasoned, aware of the satisfaction and dangers ahead.

Women's Advocates' philosophy had been hammered out early in practical debates about whether a hotline worker should tell a caller what to do. Battered women's rights to self-determination, including the decision to leave or stay with their husbands, were to be respected; if sexism robbed women of control over their lives, Women's Advocates would work on methods for returning it, even if no one quite knew how. Outside agencies also forced a clarification of values. When the first funding sources suggested that Women's Advocates change its name to something "less inflammatory," the collective refused to compromise on its basic philosophy.

We have never called women needing help "clients" or "cases," and this has not prevented effective communication with the professional community. When we were told that only trained and certified professionals could run the house, we insisted that professionals credentials not be included as job requirements. We asserted our belief
that women in need of shelter were not sick or in need of treatment, emphasizing instead their need for safety, support, and help with practical problems.49

The importance of a collective, rather than a hierarchical, model of work was emphasized as the shelter founders drew the connection between theory and practice.

We want women to be able to take control of their own lives, and to share in an environment which supports their doing just that. For many women and children, being at the shelter may be the first time they have been outside of the controlling authority of an abusive relationship. Each woman who lives and works in the shelter is encouraged to trust herself to make decisions which are best for her, and to participate in determining what is best for the shelter as well. Here, there is no boss who has the answers. It isn’t easy, but together we are learning to trust in ourselves, and in each other, to determine what is best for us.50

At Women’s Advocates, all major decisions are made by the collective, usually through consensus. Sometimes voting has also been necessary, but “a slim majority...never carries a decision. When the collective is split on an important issue, we set it aside, placing it on the agenda for the next meeting.”51

One of the central issues for many shelters is whether the shelter belongs to staff or residents. Often this question surfaces in discussions of rules. When Women’s Advocates opened in 1974, they had no house rules. Immediately, however, they found they had to set limits. The first rules centered around mandatory house meetings, signing up for jobs so that the house could function, and a “no drugs” policy. One founder commented, “on the first day we declared that there were no pets; on the second, no drugs; and on the third, no furniture storage.”52 Rules were made on the basis of experience, often negative ones, and sometimes the collective had to remind itself or be reminded by the residents that it had created too many restrictions.

For most shelters, a vexing consideration was what relationship to assume toward the government and funding agencies. Women’s Advocates, The Story of a Shelter, an excellent description of the shelter’s organizing activity and history, captures women’s ambivalence toward the state.

For the first two years the shelter was in operation, we made no active effort to affect legislation. Although we were acutely aware of the inadequacy of current laws available to battered women and the need for funding for shelters, we were less certain of the benefits of legislation than we were of its potential dangers. As the only shelter or program of any kind for battered women in our state, we were isolated and in a state of political infancy. Before approaching state politics, we needed to be stronger—to know clearly what we wanted, and to know how to go about getting it without losing what little ground we had gained.53

Cautiously, Women’s Advocates later took foundation funding and one local mental health grant that allowed them to preserve their autonomy. They hired a small staff and depended heavily on volunteers. State funding was to come later with the passage of legislation.

Working in isolation, but relying on feminist insight, battered women’s input, and common sense, Women’s Advocates learned through experience how to best help battered women. In the process, the advocates also found themselves transformed. As one shelter founder explains:

We discovered our politics in the process of discovering ourselves. When we saw how totally the traditional system failed to meet the needs of battered women, we rushed in to save them. What kept us from being a bunch of Lady Bountifuls was that everything learned from the women themselves, and our struggles with policy, direction, and with each other, was moving us off that continuum from victim to survivor. The personal was political. Personally, I didn’t call myself a feminist when we started. It sort of snuck up and embraced me as I lived it.54

Members of the original Advocates collective had neither the extensive experience with violence themselves nor the theoretical commitment that motivated several women at Transition House, the first east coast shelter. In both cases, however, experience led them to the creation of shelters with similar ideologies and practices. Transition House was born in 1976 in the apartment of two former battered women. Believing women together could pool their resources to help others, Chris Womencud and Cherie Jimenez, with determination and no money, simply declared their home a shelter. Betsy Warrior and Lisa Leghorn joined their work as did other radical feminists. Since 1974, Leghorn and Warrior had talked about battering and women’s slavery in the home as a core part of women’s oppression.55 These politics informed the philosophy of Transition House.

We are concerned not only with providing physical and emotional refuge from domestic violence, as a short term goal. We are concerned,
more basically, with helping each woman who comes through here to
discover that she is not alone, that the craziness she's being forced to
deal with isn't unique to her and her children, but that it's a political
issue which touches all women directly and indirectly.

Using informal consciousness raising techniques, the women at
Transition House emphasize the political nature of the work.

In doing support and advocacy work for her, we are telling her that as
sisters, her plight is our plight, and that the only way we can fight
these battles and hope to win is by working together and supporting
each other in every way possible. As soon as a woman comes into
Transition House for the first time, we talk with her about her
experiences, share our own experiences with her, play her tapes we
made of other women who've come through the house talking about
what they'd been forced to deal with and how they came out of it, and
we give her articles and news clippings which address the problem of
wife abuse as a political issue.

Transition House clarifies the desired, liberating outcome.

First of all, she gains a political awareness by viewing her own
suffering for the first time in a social and political framework. And
secondly, she discovers that the most effective way to confront the
entire social, political, and economic system whose expressed interests
are to keep the family with all its trappings of male supremacy and
male privilege intact at her expense is to join together with other
women and address the issues in a political way.36

From the beginning, Transition House has emphasized
women's opportunities to share with and support one another. The
growth of all women who pass through the house, battered women
and staff, is seen as important. As one staffer* explained, "we are
part of a liberating process of women helping each other. We are all
sharing pain and through that similarity we grow. Often we forget to
share our lives and we become objects of services. When we share,
there is a continual transformation of our own lives."37 Transition
House staffers understood that the process of giving to others makes
women feel stronger. Resident strengthening resident, a primary
good of the shelter, was considered more potent than staff helping
residents.38

Because Transition House did not want the experience of staff to
be vastly different from that of residents, women declared hiring
former victims a priority.39 According to Lisa Leghorn, peer support,
especially among battered women, worked better than other models
because it gave hope, power, and validation to women. She explains
the Transition House philosophy further.

We were not providing social services. As staffers, we were not
different from the women except that they were in crisis. We only gave
people safety and information. We emphasized women have to make
their own decisions. Support came sitting around the dining room table
and while doing advocacy. Our advocacy model was a woman who
went to welfare yesterday taking another woman today...if you
caretake, you don't give a woman what she needs. Shelters where
women went back to their husbands were often shelters where they
had been taken care of as opposed to being helped to develop survival
skills. This didn't prepare the woman for living on her own in an often
hostile world.40

Initially, Transition House was crowded and chaotic. Speaking
of the early days in the apartment, one staffer recalls, "we had beds
everywhere and lofts and a closet stuffed with mattresses that we
took out at night....People that did stay were extremely battered and
really needed it. They had absolutely no choice. . ."41 Under
the circumstances, it was difficult for a work structure to evolve. When
Transition House rented its first house, conditions improved and
more structure was created. Paid staff were added. Three working
committees were formed—maintenance, fundraising, and outreach—and
a whole wave of unpaid staff was recruited from a Boston
Women Support Women rally that focused on violence against
women and drew 5000 participants.

Initially, rules came from the women staying in the house. Then
new women would arrive, and, furious at old restrictions, change the
rules. The short-term interests of women staying in the house for a
few weeks and the long-term survival needs of the shelter were
sometimes in conflict. Eventually, the power to make rules and
decisions came to reside primarily with staffers through committee
work and collective meetings; any resident willing to make a longer
term commitment to the shelter was invited to be part of the decision
making process and Board of Directors. However, rules could be
changed by residents, except those that applied to the long-term
needs of the house—like keeping the location confidential and
maintaining safety precautions.42 Rules were based on residents'
experiences together. One staffer emphasized, "Transition House is
for the women who live there and for the women who will come, and
this dual focus has to be maintained."43

Women working at Transition House had to be tremendously

* At Transition House, volunteers and paid staff are all called staffers.
flexible. Change happened continually in a house holding ten women and their children, most of whom stayed six weeks or less and were instantly replaced by new women and children. There was no "correct" approach to the work, and at times the chaos and problems were overwhelming, especially when women had to confront the fact that "not all women are just wonderful." As one staffer said, "women have had to learn survival skills and some of these are negative. They may hurt other people and one has to learn this. It's a tough issue." Learning to live with intense anger was also difficult for many. Staff had to explain why hundreds of women experience so much brutality from men, why the institutions seemed indifferent, and why women were trapped by financial, housing, and child care problems.

Despite the pain and exhaustion that shelter workers sometimes felt, they were politicized through battered women's experiences and strengthened by the courage so many displayed as they reclaimed their lives.

Running a shelter is very taxing...It goes back to mutual sharing, being there for each other...The shelter is a big connecting point between classes. I've changed being there...We get involved, excited, and have great respect and love for women we never would have met otherwise.

A founder of Women's Advocates echoes these sentiments.

As an advocate you get depressed and discouraged from hearing all the pain. The number of women, the severity of their problems, what they faced when they left the shelter—it weighed me down. What kept me going was that the shelter allowed the women's power to emerge. Listening to them was so moving...The women's options often seem hopeless but their spirit rises above hopelessness and gives me hope.

Through redefining a social "problem" into a social movement, women from Transition House and Women's Advocates helped other shelters begin and served as catalysts for state, regional, and national coalitions. Using the self-help methods, egalitarian philosophy, and collective organizational structures developed within the women's liberation movement, these two groups discovered and then articulated a grassroots, non-professional view of battered women's needs. Through their struggle to define a feminist "shelter," they gave birth to one more alternative, democratic women's institution. Although their efforts and ideology were not always replicated in other cities, Transition House and Women's Advocates became respected and often copied pioneers.

Organizing Through a Coalition

Although providing shelter for abused women is a top priority of the battered women's movement, groups in the movement have organized in other ways too. In some cities, women representing a variety of organizations met together and decided to form coalitions. In Chicago, for example, in the spring of 1976, women of the Loop Center YWCA convened a meeting of women's organizations and individuals whom they knew to be concerned about the lack of services for battered women. Over thirty groups were represented at the initial meeting and expressed interest in combining resources for public education on the issues, support groups for the victims, and agency accountability for missing programs.

Women who attended this and subsequent meetings decided to plan a fall conference to found the Chicago Abused Women's Coalition. To the surprise of the organizers, 300 women came to the October conference. The coalition, which defined opening a shelter as an essential goal, also identified other needs of the movement and worked simultaneously on many fronts. Several task forces—shelter, legal, agency accountability, counseling, and publicity—were established and became the core working groups of the coalition. They emphasized the need for creating services and making concrete change. Two elected delegates from each task force formed the steering committee of the coalition, and met together frequently.

The Chicago Abused Women's Coalition's efforts to work on a range of projects is typical of organizing in other locales as well. In many places, women start with a hotline or counseling project and slowly build local support for a shelter. In others, as a result of circumstances or choice, they never open a refuge but continue ceaseless support for battered women through their hotlines, crisis counseling, legal advocacy, public speaking, and transportation to shelters in other towns.

Initially, the Chicago coalition itself offered no services and had no paid staff. Member organizations, specifically the YWCA and Women in Crisis Can Act (WICCA), divided day, evening, and weekend hours to become a crisis hotline for the entire city and sometimes suburbs, answering hundreds of phone calls each month from women with nowhere to go. The Women's Services Department at Loop Center YWCA, with 2½ paid staff, answered all daytime calls from rape victims and battered women... WICCA operated as a collective with no paid staff and answered its phone on
specified weekday evenings and weekend hours. Reflecting on these experiences at the YWCA, I later wrote:

All I can remember is phone calls, constant, never-ending calls from battered women with no place to go and with endless stories of institutional indifference. I can remember just wanting to cry and cry. There were moments I dreaded talking to another battered woman. Working with battered women and not being able to help them find what they concretely need creates a panic, a steady stream of adrenaline that continues until help is found. Where would she go for now; what would she do if the local shelters for homeless people were filled; would she be safe; where would the kids be; what would her husband do if he found her; were there weapons involved; did she have money to buy food; did she have carfare to get to the Salvation Army; where were the birth certificates and medical records for the welfare office or hospital. The details are endless, but they must not be forgotten. We had to assess safety, give her support and information, and help her weigh alternatives. Maybe for shelter workers who can offer a safe place, the feelings are different, but all we had was a crisis phone.48

Early work of the shelter task force revolved around defining a philosophy; what emerged was similar to the values articulated by Women’s Advocates. Learning about shelters for homeless women in the community further clarified the direction in which the task force would move. A former battered woman, who stayed at one of these shelters, testified about the experience.

Oh, you’re my social worker. It’s nice meeting you. Oh, no, I don’t have any money with me. But I do have a job. Do you mean I’ll have to quit my job to receive your services? A leave of absence? Don’t you want me to work? My job will be our only source of income now and I’ve only been on this job a short while. Well, O.K., I’ll see if I can get a leave of absence for a month or so.

Welfare! Yes, I guess you’re right. If I’m on leave from my job, I will need money.

Leave town! No, I hadn’t thought about that: Change our names249

Women on the shelter task force, all volunteers, worked tirelessly to raise money through pledges, legally incorporate, write grants, and find a building. For over a year, financial pledges from individual women were the only source of hope, but were never enough to open a shelter. Discouragement was constant. The city of Chicago did much to obstruct progress through unkept promises of funding. The task force eventually approached religious organizations that owned buildings, and one house was secured in 1978, after the Chicago coalition and other Illinois shelters received funding through state Title XX grants. Two years of persistent work finally achieved results.

In the meantime, the legal task force moved forward. The first Chicago Abused Women’s Coalition newsletter, published in December 1976, defined four primary goals of the legal task force, all of which were accomplished over the next several years. The first goal was to mobilize around proposed state legislation that would provide temporary injunctive relief, protective orders, and custody and property determinations for women who had not filed for divorce; would allow women to sue their husbands for damages; would require police training and statistics gathering; and would declare spouse beating a specific crime. The three non-legislative goals included working with the police to develop new procedures in wife abuse cases, developing a court watch program that would document the problems within the States Attorney’s office and Domestic Relations Court, and establishing a court advocacy program for victims.49 Not only were these goals accomplished but the first Legal Center for Battered Women in the United States was funded by a grant to the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago. For two years, the Legal Center advocated for thousands of individual women, forced the Chicago police department to change its practices, and kept close watch over all local and state legislative and criminal justice systems developments. A legal center specifically geared toward meeting battered women’s needs and changing legal practices had been defined as a necessity; its closing after two years due to lack of funds was a major loss to the battered women’s movement.

Changing social attitudes and generating concrete assistance through educational efforts has been a primary organizing strategy of the battered women’s movement. In its first two years, members of the Chicago Abused Women’s Coalition spoke to hundreds of community groups, women’s organizations, and professional agencies. Early coalition discussions served to clarify the analysis as well as the methods for conveying it. Almost every speaker shared battered women’s stories, explained the significance of violence, detailed how victims are blamed and violence is sanctioned, dispelled common myths, and challenged her audience to help battered women and look at the broader social conditions that create abuse. Social attitudes toward battered women were painfully obvious through these efforts as audiences searched for “characteristics” of abusers and battered women. Professionals in particular hunted for pathology and a “battered woman syndrome,” locating the cause of violence in women’s personalities or their families of origin.
In addition to numerous speaking engagements, the Chicago Abused Women's Coalition, through a grant from the Illinois Humanities Council, co-sponsored three conferences in 1976 and 1977—one in the downtown business section of Chicago; another coordinated by latinas as a Spanish-speaking conference with the first locally translated materials; and a third in the black community on Chicago's westside.

Community education efforts provided an alternative and a challenge to dominant views about violence against women. Although audiences revealed their prejudices, they were often deeply moved and supportive of coalition activity. The movement's ability to balance moral outrage about battering with a deep concern for its victims and a vision of a better world led many to join in the struggle. For example, hospitals and social service agencies began to increasingly ask the coalition to provide their staff with in-service education and training. Some institutions became highly supportive of coalition activity, writing endorsement letters for coalition grants and, in some cases, starting their own services for battered women. These outreach activities had their effect on battered women as well. They heard the messages: "You don't deserve to be beaten; it's not your fault; you are beaten because society sanctions his behavior, not because of anything you do wrong; evidence suggests that no matter how many times you change your behavior to respond to his criticisms, you will probably be beaten again; through the years, violence grows more severe." Battered women reacted by reaching out for help and by involving themselves in the movement.

Activists in the Chicago Abused Women's Coalition developed skills as speakers, lobbyists, and planners. A core of fifteen feminists—lawyers, social workers, psychologists, and activists—fought for essential services. Ideological and political differences were muted until decisions had to be made about applying for government funding, cooperating with religious organizations, or working with men. At this point, after years of hard work, one of the most radical women left in principled and caring disagreement over the choice to work with religious organizations that oppress women. Repeated around the country, sometimes with far greater bitterness and divisiveness, are the stories of many hard working women who never saw the opening of the shelters they had envisioned.

To the Chicago women, shelter was only one step in a long-range, dimly articulated plan to stop violence. Battling with the bureaucracy and raising money for more than two years before a shelter opened, however, were trying. Working on the legal task force, doing community outreach—all took enormous time and energy. Although many women participated in the coalition on a sporadic basis, most of the work was done by a small group of approximately fifteen. In the rush to make concrete change, women stayed task oriented; no one stopped to see herself as an organizer for the coalition itself. In the constant push to respond to battered women and organizational emergencies, there was no time to build the organization's membership, a familiar story within the movement. When several key coalition members "burned out" or moved, the coalition and its newly opened shelter faced difficult days.

**External Influences on the Movement**

Even in its infancy, the battered women's movement had to contend with more than its own internal dynamics. It faced contradictory external reactions and pressures. The media, for example, was both help and hinderance. At first, the plight of battered women—like that of rape victims—made "good news stories." Women reporters, working cooperatively and thoughtfully with battered women's programs, often produced excellent and thorough articles, drawing attention to institutional hostility to abused women and the lack of services available to them. These stories brought more calls from battered women and supporters and also legitimated the need for services and institutional change. A message challenging hundreds of years of male domination reached many. This kind of coverage, combined with the movement's extensive outreach to women's organizations, sometimes led to concrete support from traditional women's clubs or women's auxiliaries who "adopted" shelters, furnishing rooms or coordinating fundraising benefits. Sometimes, however, publicity was counterproductive. Reporters produced sensationalized accounts which made battered women look foolish; worse, they sometimes revealed the addresses of shelters, thereby endangering staff and residents and forcing groups to move after they had spent years finding housing.

Government and community agencies could help direct important resources toward the movement, although, as in the case of the media, the movement's relationship to such groups was ambivalent. Sometimes, a key individual made all the difference.

In 1974, the Ramsey County Mental Health Board...made a grant of $35,000 to Women's Advocates. A woman member of the board, with
several years of experience as a social worker in the county mental health program, worked very hard to get that grant for us because she was impressed with the nontreatment approach of the advocates and the effect it had on women. In her own experience as a social worker she decided that depression was the appropriate response to the situation in which most women found themselves trapped. Moreover, the tools of the treatment system were authoritarian, fostering dependence. The new model seemed to her to be a way out for women.54

Simply recounting the experiences of battered women sometimes brought the desperately needed first grants; in other cases, funders changed their original negative responses after they visited shelters.55 One or two key people, some of them feminists, within welfare departments, community or county planning boards, or United Way agencies, made the issue theirs, pushing others to support programs that had no legitimacy, credibility, or fiscal strength. In Pennsylvania, Ken Nealy, a state legislative aide who was later tragically killed in an automobile accident, invited several women from around the state to attend hearings so that grassroots groups might have an impact on pending state legislation. After a day of testimony, these women, none of whom had previously met, formed the first core working group of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence.56 Women from around the country tell of anonymous donors or key progressive legislators, male and female, who made a real difference in the early years.

Often, however, outside agencies’ impact on the movement has been more negative than positive. Bureaucracies, especially local welfare and legal ones, constantly harassed battered women and their advocates.

We work with the county welfare department a great deal and have had almost every kind of disagreement and misunderstanding imaginable arise between us, but we have worked many things through. For example: women living in our house used to wait for weeks for an intake interview at welfare, trying to exist with no funds for personal expenses.57

Zoning boards and county governments wrought misery upon programs searching for affordable property that met the criteria for shelter. The Pittsburgh shelter experienced a series of disasters with zoning boards and realtors denying them access to one house after another. County governments and fire departments withheld funds or licensing approval for a series of nitpicking reasons. Sometimes community members packed public hearings, insisting that they did not want violent husbands in their neighborhood, and successfully blocked a shelter’s opening.

As in the anti-rape movement, once the issue of battering gained legitimacy and funding was made available, more established organizations took over the issue that grassroots women had worked so hard to raise. One writer describes how this happened in Seattle.

Prior to the funding hearing, the Salvation Army had worked cooperatively with feminist and other community groups in making the public aware of the need for a shelter for battered women. Since then, however, the Salvation Army and the Women’s Commission have disagreed bitterly over the program plan, and the Commission and feminist groups have withdrawn their support. The Commission had been willing to support the Salvation Army as the sponsoring agency provided a Sub-Advisory Committee...was formed to assure that the program meet the needs and basic concerns of the community...The Salvation Army refused to make such an agreement, chose to act unilaterally, obtained United Way funds, and now plans to open in June 1976 a newly purchased facility.58

Competition over limited dollars allowed conservative private and governmental bodies to direct funds toward traditional, non-feminist agencies.

Generalizing about agency and governmental responses to the battered women’s movement is difficult. In some locations, agencies like the United Way, offering funds or legitimacy, or the YWCA, giving its space or staff time, were extremely helpful; in others, similar agencies turned their backs or actively set up barriers to prevent grassroots groups from encroaching on their “turf.” Battered women and their advocates had pointed out that established agencies were not meeting their needs; some of these agencies moved to redress the complaint while others reacted with discomfort and fought back with intense pettiness that caused long delays in shelter openings. Issues of power, control, and funding were often at stake, and newcomers, especially those with anti-professional or non-professional biases, were not necessarily welcome.

The Early Sustenance of the Movement

Battered women’s shelters have, from the beginning, operated under extremely difficult conditions and been subject to many conflicting demands. Living and working in a shelter implies crises for all involved. In addition to dealing with the overwhelming problems of shelter residents, staff had to face daily pressures. Since there was never enough money, women had to learn quickly how to
write grant proposals, lobby, generate publicity, speak on radio and television, apply for loans and mortgages. They also had to learn how to organize staff and develop work procedures. At the same time that shelter work and its accomplishments were exhilarating, the strains were wearing. In the early years especially, worker “burnout” was common, and some staff literally destroyed their health or personal lives.

In a few places, women encountered yet one more pressure. While community groups or individuals might sympathize publicly with battered women, “feminism” did not necessarily evoke similar reactions. Feminists were sometimes accused of hating men, and of being lesbians who were out to seduce battered women. The real purpose of these accusations—to divide collective efforts, undermine women’s activism, and scare battered women away from the shelter—was often obvious. Although most women ignored the attacks and used their anger to continue organizing, some were diverted by this tactic. Bigotry and anti-feminist sentiment caused a few lesbians and heterosexual feminists to suffer through ugly, discrediting power struggles and ultimately lose their jobs.

In the midst of uncertainty, women turned to one another for multiple forms of sustenance. Women uniting, working cooperatively against huge odds, caring about one another and struggling together successfully carried small, isolated programs through the worst days. For many, a feminist analysis of wife abuse that placed the roots of male violence in domination could not be separated from a feminist process that actively struggled against recreating hierarchies and domination among women.

We listened to and respected each other’s opinions. We did not act for ourselves; we were acting for our group and accountable to it. You never dared make a major decision without using some accountability mechanism. You were, therefore, never alone or isolated. You relied on the collective intelligence; you trusted that you would get to the correct solution if you had all the information and you could continue to discuss the issues together. It felt great. I grew so much politically during the days we debated which funds to seek, how to negotiate with police, or how to address a psychiatrist’s attempt to blame the victim.58

Close friendship networks developed in early battered women’s groups. As one shelter worker explained, “The work becomes all-consuming. You live and breathe together the battered women’s movement—the horrible things that happen to women, power struggles with other agencies. I think this is why so many women in the movement become such close friends. The movement is your life.”59

When asked how their programs started or how their work progressed, early movement organizers instead described each group member’s unique skills and personality. With both positive and negative outcomes, the personalities involved were as important as the strategies chosen, and in assessing the movement, women organizers consistently interwove these two topics, insisting upon their inseparability. The energy needed to maintain impoverished shelters often was generated by close, caring relationships which sustained women through demeaning encounters with the police and daily demands from battered women in need of non-existent housing, jobs, and protection.

In feminist shelters, women created a new morality which was in sharp contrast to the ethos within competitive, male dominated organizations and the “heartless” bureaucracies around them. They developed their own organizational forms, celebratory events, music, and measures of success. As a reaction to isolation and as an affirmation of women, activists tried to form a sustaining sisterhood, a community with new cultural norms.

Feminist process, however, with its somewhat unspecified standard of conduct, could be problematic. Early groups, often politically and racially homogeneous and driven to accomplish a task, sometimes experienced or expressed few conflicts. Although differences tended to remain hidden for some time, when they emerged they often did so with great force and venom. Participants in the early movement, overworked and under severe strain, were ill prepared to deal with such problems. The close bonding among women which sustained the movement also made political and personal conflict extremely painful and hard to resolve. Power struggles, difficult in any organization, took trusting feminists by surprise and left them paralyzed or unwilling to resort to tactics that were politically abhorrent to them. Some dedicated women were driven out of the movement by “trashing”—vicious attacks on a woman’s character and political motivations. In a few places, shelters or groups came precariously close to dissolving, and important work was sometimes left unfinished.

Despite difficult times, most women in the movement were sustained by their relationships with others, by the knowledge that their work was essential, and by the ways in which they worked. Many speak of personal transformation and growth.

Doing the work gave me unknown strength. I did so much that I’d never done before, things I never expected to do. We made real changes for battered women in the city. I knew my work was competent and
respected. What is important for us in the movement, or some of us, is to recognize how much we have been given, how much gratification we get from our work. Another woman remarked.

It helped my low self-esteem to help others. I didn’t articulate this to my co-workers. What an incredible thing I was doing in my own life bridging all these differences between women. I just basked in their energy, their sense of humor. I got so much. It changed my life completely. It was a gift. There is a thrill in seeing women’s strength.

Individual growth also signified taking personal risks. Many women recount that friends avoided them when they joined the movement. Others rejected long time friends because they found them too “petty;” it is hard to work with battered women all day and then hear friends brutally criticize welfare recipients. Still other women left their marriages when husbands could not tolerate their wives’ personal success or autonomy. Children sometimes resented mothers who were not always available for them. Some women lost much, but most insist that their self-respect has been a far greater gain.

For women in the movement, participating in something far larger than oneself was exhilarating. Depressing moments were overshadowed by a sense that one was helping to change the world. Each battered woman who moved from depression into anger and pride sustained that belief. Every phone call or scribbled note that said, “thanks for being there,” or every woman who said, “you’re the first person that I’ve ever told this story to, so please don’t laugh at me,” brought sustenance. Watching shelter residents strengthen one another and come back to join the movement reminded all that the world was different.

Being part of a larger national and international movement also energized activists. Initially, informal networks—women traveling from one city to another—conveyed information, strategies, and support. For example, friendships among women from Carbondale, Illinois and Pittsburgh influenced the founding of the Pittsburgh women’s center. Women’s Advocates recalls that after the shelter opened in October 1974

notes and letters began to trickle in from women who had heard about what we were doing and wanted information to help establish shelters and safe housing in their own communities. We tripped over each other in our eagerness to connect with other women with similar purpose, sending encouragement, along with our proposals, budgets, and forms.

Our sense of isolation dissolved with this spontaneous network of women, many of whom we would meet years later through organized networking efforts, incredibly as part of a national movement.

Personal contacts were but one way that women in the movement were linked nationally and internationally. The British battered women’s movement, which began approximately four years before the U.S. movement, was known through Erin Pizzey’s pathbreaking Scream Quietly or the Neighbors Will Hear (1974). In the U.S., women found their work legitimated in the journal of the Feminist Alliance Against Rape (FAAR) and later in the first newsletter of the battered women’s movement, the National Communications Network (NCN). Even before a movement was publicly recognized, activists like Betsy Warrior and Lisa Leghorn wrote and distributed pioneering literature on battered women. In 1976, the first edition of Warrior’s invaluable directory of individuals and groups helping battered women, Working on Wife Abuse, was published. That same year, Del Martin’s Battered Wives became a major source of information and validation for the movement. It legitimated the view, already put forward by local feminist shelters, that violence against women was caused by sexism. This analysis, no longer the “ravings” of a few individuals or groups, was the framework adopted by thousands.

Finally, women were sustained through their commitment to end male violence and female subordination. Helping battered women was, for many, part of a broader struggle for women’s liberation. Testifying before the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, Monica Erler from Women’s Advocates declared helping individuals insufficient.

A last thought. All that I have said describes a Band-Aid measure. That is what our work is. The violence goes on. With Marta Ashley we say, “Don’t ask why she stayed; ask why he hit her.”

For women to have real alternatives to abusive relationships and for men to stop their violence, major social transformation would be necessary. The battered women’s movement forged an analysis and a practice that would be an essential part of that struggle. The very existence of the movement announced that the world was different and that women together would not rest until changes were made.
7. Personal communication from Gail Sullivan, based on an interview with Lisa Leghorn and Betsy Warrior.
8. Although other shelters started before Women's Advocates, these programs often began as services for the wives of alcoholics, rather than as projects for battered women.
9. Author's interview with Sharon Vaughan.
10. Author's interview with Rachel Burger; author's interview with Lisa Leghorn.
11. Author's interview with Freada Klein.
12. Ibid.
14. Author's interview with Freada Klein.
16. Chicago Women Against Rape, undated brochure.
17. Material distributed by Chicago Women Against Rape, undated.
23. Telephone interview with Mary Ann Largen.
25. Notes from the author's journal.
27. Ibid., p. 18, citing Socialist Women's Caucus of Louisville, "The Racist Use of Rape and the Rape Charge."
31. Ibid., p. 52.
33. See Feminist Alliance Against Rape Newsletter (September-October 1976): 11-12.
35. Notes from the author's journal.
36. Author's interview with Freada Klein.
37. Author's interview with Freada Klein.
38. Lisa Leghorn, personal communication.
40. Lisa Leghorn, personal communication.
43. Anonymous interview.
46. Anonymous personal communication.
47. Special thanks to the women who answered my question after a workshop in Pennsylvania in the winter of 1981.

Chapter 3

4. Ibid., p. 249.
5. Ibid., p. 257.
7. Materials distributed by the Chicago Abused Women's Coalition, undated.
8. Telephone interview with Ruth Slaughter.
9. Women's Center-South, undated leaflet.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
15. Author’s interview with Susan Kelly-Dreiss.
17. Author’s interview with Nydia Díaz.
19. Anonymous interview.
20. Anonymous interview.
23. Shirley J. Kuhle, “Foreword” in Bobby Lacy, Domestic Violence Services in Rural Communities, Nebraska Task Force on Domestic Violence, undated, p. 3.
25. Ibid., p. 3.
26. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
27. Sharon Vaughan, personal communication.
28. Ibid.
30. Ibid., p. 58.
31. Ibid., p. 54.
32. Author’s interview with Sharon Vaughan.
33. Women’s Advocates: The Story of a Shelter, p. 75.
34. Author’s interview with Sharon Vaughan.
35. See Betsy Warrior and Lisa Leghorn, The Houseworker’s Handbook, a pamphlet about the social, political, and economic dimensions of women’s roles as houseworker.
36. Materials from the files of Transition House, undated.
37. Author’s interview with Rachel Burger.
38. Ibid.
39. Author’s interview with Lisa Leghorn.
40. Ibid.
42. Author’s interview with Lisa Leghorn.
43. Author’s interview with Rachel Burger.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Author’s interview with Sharon Vaughan.
48. Notes from the author’s journal.
52. Author’s interview with Sharon Vaughan.
53. Author’s interview with Susan Kelly-Dreiss.
56. Notes from the author’s journal.
57. Anonymous interview.
58. Anonymous interview.
59. Author’s interview with Sharon Vaughan.
60. Anne Steytler and Ellen Berliner, personal communication.
62. Author’s interview with Lisa Leghorn.

Chapter 4

3. Colorado Association for Aid to Battered Women, A Monograph On Services To Battered Women, p. 25.
4. Ibid., p. 25.
9. These statistics were generously provided by women around the country and by steering committee representatives to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence in 1980. The complete shelter statistics, from women reporting, were: New Jersey-12; New York-34; Arkansas-4; Maine-5 shelters and 3 safe homes projects; Hawaii-3; Vermont-1; Massachusetts-31; New Hampshire-4 shelters and 5 safe homes projects; Kentucky-11; Minnesota-