

Agency served 440 last year

WomenSpace offers abuse victims shelter

By SHARON KETNER
Of the Emerald

Government statistics and sociological studies estimate that once every 12 seconds a woman is battered in the United States.

At least one out of every 10 married women is subjected to severe and repeated beatings in her own home. Abused women often have no access to funds or transportation, no place to go where they can find safety and emotional support.



Logo courtesy WomenSpace

WomenSpace, a community agency dedicated to helping battered women, was formed in 1977 by a group of women who had been battered themselves. It provides a 24-hour crisis line and a temporary shelter house, which served 440 women and children in 1980.

The shelter is equipped to provide food, clothing and even toothbrushes for families who must leave everything behind to escape an abuser. The location of the shelter is strictly confidential.

Other services of WomenSpace include 24-hour emergency transportation (with police back-up if necessary), and counseling and advocacy to help women explore housing, financial and legal options. Support groups are conducted

weekly in the shelter.

Karen Frazier, a WomenSpace volunteer, outlines the agency's philosophy.

"As participants in WomenSpace, we believe that every person has the right to live a life free from violence and the fear of abuse.

"Domestic violence is a result of a culture which condones violence as a means of conflict resolution, especially among men.

"The overall goal of WomenSpace is the empowerment of women through maintaining a shelter house and support services, and advocating a woman's right to live a life free from abuse."

WomenSpace defines abuse in three ways.

- Physical abuse: any act or behavior that inflicts or is intended to inflict bodily harm.
- Emotional abuse: including ridicule or demeaning remarks and sarcasm.
- Threatened violence: verbal expressions of intent to inflict bodily harm, whether or not they are carried out.

There are several myths surrounding domestic violence, which WomenSpace tries to debunk, Frazier says. It is commonly believed that the abuser is goaded into violence by the woman, she says.

"There is no justification for violence. Whenever people are living intimately, there are bound to be disagreements, Frazier says.

"Certainly people provoke each other, but that's no excuse for a beating. There are other ways to resolve conflicts. We feel that violent behavior is always the responsibility of the violent person."

Many people think the abused woman remains in the home because she likes it.

"None of the women who call us on the telephone or stay in the shelter like being beaten. They stay for a variety of reasons that are complex.

"Breaking up a family is a

heavy thing. Sometimes they might stay because the children aren't abused. Sometimes they stay because they're economically dependent," Frazier says.

"They've often been prisoners in their own homes, have no friends and no self-esteem, and they think they can't make it on their own."

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checks and balances

rights for Nazis, too?

By RON HUNT
Of the Emerald

Everybody loves to see justice done — on somebody else.

"Justice," By Bruce Cockburn

The television movie "Skokie" dramatizes the tension between free speech for views we cherish and for those we despise.

Skokie is a suburb of Chicago, predominantly Jewish, and includes many survivors of Nazi concentration camps. During 1977 and 1978, suburb residents fought to prevent an American Nazi group from marching through its streets.

"Skokie," a dramatization shown Tuesday night on CBS, posed basic questions on the free speech vital to an increasingly pluralistic campus and society.

At a protest meeting, an Anti-Defamation League representative tells the Jews to "quarantine": the worst thing to do is give the Nazis a platform.

Turn your back... Refuse to give them the confrontation they want.

A concentration camp survivor in "Skokie" named Max Feldman says he's heard that line before.

In Germany! They came from the Big City, very fine professional gentlemen from national Jewish organizations... They said, "Storm troopers? Just hoodlums in the street. Don't pay any attention."

Feldman shouts "not this time" and shows his arm, revealing his tattooed number from a death camp.

If you don't want violence, don't let the Nazis march!

Later, the village of Skokie used this argument in the Cook County Circuit Court. And the judge agreed: "I believe he (Nazi leader Frank Collin) intends trouble, to incite to riot."

The American Civil Liberties Union attorney, himself a Jew, protested that Skokie's request for prior restraint was based on the "heckler's veto" argument — prohibiting someone from speaking because his opponents threaten violence.

The ACLU, defending Collin, said its client was merely planning a 20-minute peaceful march.

From the teleplay it appears Skokie Jews were ditching their responsibility. Why is reactionary violence the initiator's fault? The trauma and agony heaped upon Jews from the Holocaust cannot be belittled, but is violent reaction by a survivor anyone's fault but his?

At the show's end, the second attorney quotes Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Not free thought for those who agree with us, but freedom for the thought we hate."

If groups — Nazis, Jews, Communists, Christians, John Birchers, Muslims, ad infinitum — are, at various times and places, unpopular and therefore silenced, would the "popular" view automatically be right?

To shut up violent groups would merely be a Band-Aid. The cancer would remain in society. Venom comes from the gut, not the vocal chords.

Everybody loves to hear silence — from somebody else.

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